

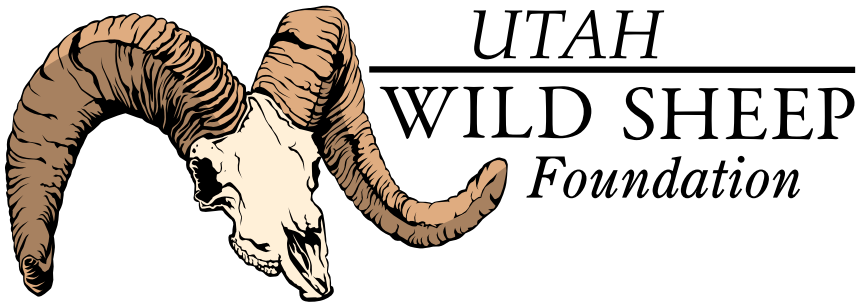


UTAH

WILD SHEEP
Foundation Magazine



2024-2025 Edition



Mission

The purpose of Utah WSF is to promote and enhance increasing populations of indigenous wild sheep to Utah, to safeguard against the decline or extinction of such species, and to fund programs for professional management of these populations, keeping all administrative costs to a minimum.

We are vigorously involved in the conservation, propagation and intensive management of the remaining wild sheep populations and their habitats. The Foundation annually funds a wide variety of meaningful and essential projects with some major areas of consideration being; wildlife enhancement, management, the re-establishment of wild sheep, and sportsmen's rights.

Vision

The vision of Utah WSF is to be the leading wild sheep conservation chapter in North America, known for exceptional efficiency, excellence in management, respect in the field and amongst our peers, while having a significant impact on wild sheep populations in Utah and throughout Western North America.



On the Cover:

Cameron Gillman Desert Bighorn
with Mossback Outfitters

Special Thanks to

John Petersen and Kate Calei, of Brame Creative, for helping with the layout, design, and publication of the annual Utah WSF magazine and Chris Carling for helping with the production and printing.



Message From The President

Travis Jenson

As I look back on 2024, I can hardly contain the excitement I have for the future of our organization. The annual fundraising banquet has sold out the past two years and we will be looking for a larger venue for 2026 and beyond. Organizational revenues continue to grow and I am sure most of you have been receiving emails and social media posts regarding the Desert Bighorn sweepstakes we are currently running. As a result, we anticipate giving away two sheep hunts at our 2025 banquet, an ARRO Dall's sheep hunt and an Old Mexico Desert Bighorn hunt! Please see our website for ticket sales and like all hunt applications, the only rule is that if your hat's not in the game, you're certainly not going to win! It is still my personal goal to give away hunts for all four species of North American wild sheep at our banquet and we are closer than ever to achieving that objective.

Our board of directors continues to expand with passionate, motivated individuals and as a result of a tremendous donation from one of our long-time supporters, Utah WSF couldn't be in a better position going forward. The opportunity for growth is unique and as a result, the Board has transitioned Hadli Sorenson, our banquet and fundraising director, into a full-time executive director's position. Please see the executive director's write-up for her short and long-term goals for the organization.

This year Utah WSF had a booth at the Sheep Show in January and in February we will also have one at the WHCE. If you are planning on attending make sure to stop by the booth to say hello and talk sheep hunting, tag applications, etc.! This will also be the inaugural year of

the Utah WSF summer golf tournament and fundraiser. This event, like our 2025 banquet will sell out, so get your tickets ASAP to enjoy a day on the course to support Utah WSF!

In 2024 Utah was the beneficiary of 20 Desert Bighorns, 17 ewes and 3 rams, from the Valley of Fire in Nevada, which were captured in July and moved to the new nursery herd facility to augment that population. A significant amount of capture work is planned for this winter throughout the State as well. In total, 111 Utah Bighorns will be captured, collared and disease tested. The units being tested include the Kaiparowits (40), Pine Valley (26), Flaming Gorge (25), Henry Mountains (10) and Pilot Mountains (10). These captures will increase the ability of the DWR to evaluating herd health and unit specific management plans, set tag numbers, track Bighorn movements and monitor disease events.

I hope as a member that you have seen the increased effort the organization has made in "telling our story." With a greater social media and website presence in place, we will continue to improve in this area with monthly/quarterly newsletter's, email correspondence, etc.

As always, I would like to thank all of our conservation partners, especially SFW and the Utah DWR, who have helped Utah WSF in pursuit of its Mission Statement. I would also like to thank the Utah WSF Board of Directors for their support and once again, thank our membership for making our organization one to be proud of!

Respectfully, Travis Jenson

—President, Utah WSF



Message From The Executive Director

Hadli Sorenson

It is with great excitement and gratitude that I step into the role of Executive Director for the Utah Wild Sheep Foundation. As a passionate advocate for wildlife conservation and a long-time supporter of the outdoor community, I am honored to lead this incredible organization as we continue our mission to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of wild sheep populations in Utah and beyond.

My vision for the Utah Wild Sheep Foundation is to foster an environment of collaboration, innovation, and education, building upon the strong foundation already in place. As we move forward, one of my key objectives is to cultivate and strengthen both new and existing relationships within our community—whether with hunters, donors, conservation partners, or volunteers. By working together, we can amplify our efforts to protect and conserve wild sheep, restore critical habitats, and promote sustainable wildlife management practices.

In alignment with this vision, I am excited to focus on two major objectives for the foundation's future:

Increasing Membership & Community Engagement:

We aim to grow the foundation's membership base and actively engage with the local community. A key goal is to increase membership by 20% through targeted marketing campaigns, events, and outreach initiatives.

Improving Fundraising Capacity:

We will diversify and expand fundraising channels to support our mission. This includes launching 2-3 new initiatives, such as donor programs, corporate sponsorships, and community-driven events like golf tournaments and auctions.

Beyond these goals, I am also committed to expanding our outreach efforts, especially in engaging the next

the next generation of conservationists. Through educational initiatives, community events, and hands-on involvement, we can instill a sense of stewardship in future generations. I believe that through unity and shared purpose, we will continue to make great strides in our conservation efforts.

Additionally, I will prioritize:

- **Networking & Relationship Building:** Attending conservation events, conferences, and networking meetings to build valuable relationships with other organizations, local businesses, and potential donors.
- **Consistent Communication:** Utilizing newsletters, social media, and local media outlets to keep members, partners, and the community updated on the foundation's progress and successes.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Regularly assessing the effectiveness of our programs, fundraising efforts, and outreach to ensure our strategies align with the foundation's mission and long-term goals.

Looking ahead, our foundation will not only focus on the health of our wild sheep populations, but also on building a strong, inclusive community passionate about preserving Utah's diverse wildlife. I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead, and I look forward to working alongside all of you to ensure the future of wild sheep in Utah for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support. I am eager to see where this journey takes us. Together, we can achieve great things.

— Hadli Sorenson, Executive Director
Utah Wild Sheep Foundation



WIN A

DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP HUNT

IN SONORA MEXICO

Win a 10-day free-range Desert Bighorn Sheep hunt in Sonora Mexico with Extreme Desert Outfitters! The winner also gets \$5,000 cash to cover travel and other hunt related expenses. The hunt dates are December 1-12, 2025. Retail value totaling over \$55,000 USD.

**Tickets are \$150 each.
Drawing will be limited to
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(First come, first served tickets. Sales are now open)



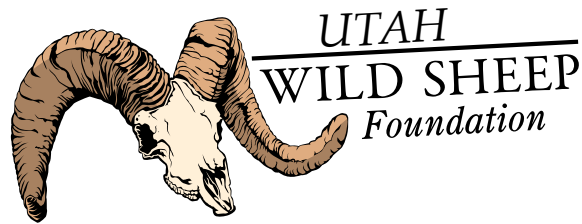
Scan for Tickets



Proceeds benefit the Utah Wild Sheep Foundation.

For full details visit utahwsf.org.

The drawing will take place as soon as tickets are sold out.



Committee Volunteers and Board of Director Nominations

The Board of Directors of Utah WSF is looking for experienced, motivated individuals that are interested in volunteering their time to facilitating wild sheep conservation in Utah. As a result, the Board would like to reach out to our membership in order to solicit nominations for committee members and potential future Board members.

Areas of opportunity include:

- Banquet and fundraising
- Membership support, social media and outreach
- Magazine development
- Apparel and point of sale support
- Projects and volunteer coordination
- Games, sweepstakes and event oversight
- Financial advisory, Endowment fund and Legacy Society support

An individual can nominate himself or herself or be nominated by another. All nominees will be provided a formal questionnaire that outlines volunteer expectations, areas of interest, career, hunting and conservation background, etc. Please email our President, Travis Jenson at tjenson@xmission.com with potential nominations.

Utah WSF Officers and Directors



Gordon Tattersall

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD,
DIRECTOR AND CO-CHAIR
BANQUET & FUNDRAISING
COMMITTEE



Greg King

ASSISTANT CHAIRMAN OF
THE BOARD, DIRECTOR
AND CO-CHAIR FINANCIAL
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DIRECTOR AND LEGISLATIVE
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COMMITTEE MEMBER



Travis Jensen

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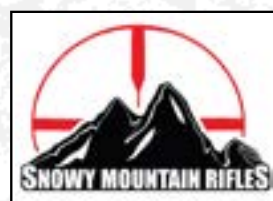


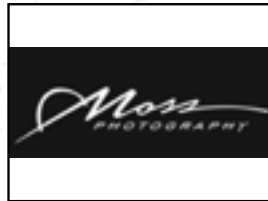
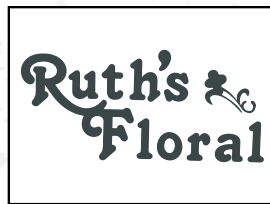
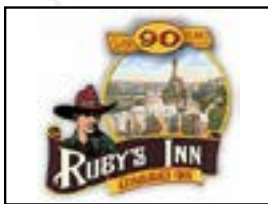
Hadli Sorenson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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2024/2025 Utah WSF Conservation Permit Funding



Through the Utah DWR WRI project funding meeting, Utah WSF committed \$603,430 to 21 conservation related projects for the 2025 fiscal year.

A few of those projects included:

- Guzzler installation and maintenance--\$161,640;
- Bighorn sheep captures, in State--\$60,000
- Mountain goat captures, in State--\$18,000
- Migration initiative, bison and pronghorn captures--\$15,000
- Habitat improvement projects benefitting sheep, mountain goats, Mule deer, elk, pronghorn, upland game--\$381,290.

Additionally, in 2024 Utah WSF contributed \$474,805 to an additional 20 projects, including:

- Nevada to Nursery Bighorn Transplant--\$40,850;
- Once-in-a-lifetime Coordinator position--\$19,350;
- Guzzler installations and maintenance--\$59,790;
- Pico Mountain land acquisition--\$150,000;
- Bighorn sheep Outreach Coordinator--\$65,000.



Paul Pennie
801-361-1890

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY



Become a Legacy Society Member



**Contact Gregory King at 801-360-5948
or Travis Jenson at 801-641-5453 with
questions or to participate.**

utahwsf.org/legacysociety.htm



Legacy Society Members

1	Dallas Smith	Bronze
2	Ryan Foutz	Bronze
3	Travis Jenson	Bronze
4	Dave Myrup	Copper
5	Shad & April Hulse	Bronze
6	Gregory King	Silver
7	Hood Family Trust	Bronze

The Utah Wild Sheep Foundation Legacy Society was created in 2022 as a way for Utah WSF supporters to contribute to the organization, and the pursuit of its mission statement, beyond the levels offered by regular or life memberships.

The Utah Wild Sheep Foundation Legacy Society has five Benefactor Levels enabling tax deductible, donor-directed gifts starting at \$500 per year. Donations may be directed to the Utah WSF Endowment Fund or to fund specific Utah WSF projects. Legacy Society members may join at any level and apply any previous level of donation to the next level at any time during or subsequent to their donation being made. Legacy Society members will be recognized with gifts recognizing their contribution to the society.

BENEFACTOR LEVELS:

• Copper	\$2,500
• Bronze	\$5,000
• Silver	\$10,000
• Gold	\$25,000
• Diamond Legacy	\$50,000+

DONATIONS MAY BE DIRECTED AS FOLLOWS:

- Endowment Fund
- Specific Utah WSF project
- Greatest area of need

The Utah WSF Endowment Fund Policy statement is available on our website at www.utahwsf.org Utah Wild Sheep Foundation is a 501(c)3 non profit organization and any contribution made to the organization is fully tax deductible.

Marketable securities may be donated which allows an individual to avoid capital gains and still receive the full value of the donation as a charitable gift. For those members over 70.5 years of age, mandatory IRA distributions may also be utilized for donation purposes, which are also fully tax deductible.

Contact Gregory King at 801-360-5948 or Travis Jenson at 801-641-5453 with questions or to participate.

Utah WSF Endowment Fund

In 2018 the Utah WSF Endowment Fund was established. This process included the creation of an Endowment Fund Policy Statement, establishment of an independent financial board and the retention of a professional financial advisor.

2020 was the perfect example of why an endowment fund is critical to the future of Utah WSF. Without the ability to host a banquet our organization lost an entire year of fundraising revenue. As a result, we were forced to be very conservative in our utilization of retained revenue.

Our endowment fund is limited by policy to using the earnings from the fund for operating expenses. Contributions are invested according to policy and are not distributed. Disbursements from the fund are derived from earnings and must be approved by both the independent financial board and the Board of Directors of Utah WSF.

Beginning with a modest principal balance of \$120,000 we have been able to grow the account

to a current balance in excess of \$250,000. Over the next 3-5 years the goal of the foundation is to reach \$1,000,000 in contributions. This goal will guarantee Utah WSF the ability to operate and complete critical wild sheep projects on an annual basis, ensuring the future of wild sheep in Utah for years to come.

How can you help? While cash contributions are always accepted, we can also accept appreciated stock contributions. Donating appreciated stocks allows an individual to avoid capital gains and still get the full value of the donation as a charitable gift. For our more seasoned members (over age 70 and 1/2), mandatory distributions from an IRA can be donated as fully tax-deductible charitable gifts.

Contact Greg King, Utah WSF Board Member (801) 360-5948 or Travis Jenson, President Utah WSF (801) 641-5453 with questions or to participate.

—Respectfully, Greg King
Utah WSF Board Member





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Bighorn Sheep Water Projects 2024

By Brent Miller- Utah WSF



Utah WSF started the year off with the anticipation of completing 10 different guzzler and apron projects for our Bighorn Sheep here in Utah. Due to many delays by different federal agencies the UWSF in cooperation with the UDWR, SFW and Moab BLM and many Volunteers were only able to complete 5 of these projects.

The first project of 2024 I traveled to the Potash Desert sheep unit near Moab. Myself and the Moab BLM folks completed an apron on the Long Canyon guzzler. In mid May UWSF along with Volunteers and the UDWR Completed 2 guzzler and 2 apron installs on the Newfoundland mountains. We were flown in to each site and then materials were flown in. Once complete we then packed all the tools and any extra materials off the mountain.

The next project was to complete 2 guzzler and 2 apron installs on the Desert Nursery herd property. Due to many trips up to the site to determine best location for the 2 guzzlers and other delays we finally got the guzzlers in place in July. Then in August UWSF, Volunteers and UDWR were able to complete

the 2 aprons. Thanks to everyone who helped at the Nursery for enduring the Mosquitos and the heat!

We are hopeful that in the upcoming year the 5 remaining projects from 2024 will be completed. We are also looking to complete an additional 2 water projects on the Newfoundland Mountains this year. Thanks to all the people listed below for your help and dedication to Utah Wild Sheep!

Volunteers: Ali Miller, Yates Prevedel, Duke Boyington, Tyler Scheffler, Nate Long, Jace Taylor. UWSF: Brett Miller, Brett Caldwell, Dave Myrup, Travis Jensen, Hadli Sorenson, Russell Casey, Craig Mitton, Gordon Tattersall, Greg King.

UDWR: Steve Hunt, Josh Butcher, Murlin Wood, Spencer Baxter, Shane Hill, Zack Oman.

SFW: Greg Bird.

Moab BLM: Yoni Argov, Paul Irby, Lucas Barth.

Happy Hunting!

—Brett Miller UWSF



Working Group Update

Travis Jensen, President Utah WSF



position within UDAF. It is hard to put into words how important these projects are to the future of wild sheep in Utah.

In 2-3 years, the Utah DWR will be in a position to begin moving sheep off the nursery herd to other Desert Bighorn units throughout the State. Additionally, Phil Crowther, the Sheep Outreach Coordinator, has been working diligently to address conflicts between wild sheep and domestic sheep and goats. That work includes testing of domestic sheep and goat herds, fencing projects, etc. Phil has also been successful in addressing predator issues on several wild sheep units and I am very excited about the future expansion of this program.

Working relationships are critical to any successful venture and having the ability to work with our partners, both sportsman and ag related, will continue to benefit wild sheep going forward.

As I mentioned in last year's magazine, Utah WSF is one of the sportsman groups that participates in a working group led by Jusin Shannon of the Utah DWR and Troy Forest from the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food ("UDAF"). This working group consists of representatives from the sportsman community (Utah WSF, SFW and RMEF), the Utah DWR, UDAF and the agriculture community (Utah Woolgrowers Association, Cattlemen's Association and Farm Bureau).

The purpose of this working group is to address conflicts between wildlife and ag, discuss legislation that may affect the respective groups, facilitate working relationships between the respective parties, etc.

Several major wildlife related projects that have come to fruition as a result of the working group include development of the Desert Bighorn nursery herd on Promontory Point by SFW and creation of the Sheep Outreach Coordinators





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Desert Bighorn Sheep Nursery Herd Update

Travis Jenson, President Utah WSF



On December 22, 2023 the Desert Bighorn sheep that were located at the Skyriders Ranch in Tabiona were captured and moved to the new nursery herd location on Promontory Point. The new location was acquired and high fenced by SFW. SFW President Troy Justensen was instrumental in identifying and securing the new home for our Desert Bighorn nursery herd. The new facility is approximately 1200 acres in size, consisting of open mid elevation habitat with adequate escape terrain and lambing grounds.

In late June 2024, an additional 20 Desert Bighorns were captured in the Valley of Fire state park in Eastern Nevada and moved to the nursery herd to supplement the existing population, which brought the total population to approximately 38 animals. There was a good lamb crop in the spring of 2024 (10) and we anticipate another 30+/- lambs to hit the ground this year.

Utah WSF, in partnership with Iowa FNAWS added two guzzlers to the property in 2024 along with additional perimeter fencing which was funded by

SFW. Unfortunately, the fencing work did spark a fire that burned approximately 200 acres of low elevation terrain on the facility and resulted in the death of 3 sheep. However, predation issues have been non-existent at the new facility, which was the primary goal of moving the sheep to the new location.

Greg Bird of SFW, outreach coordinator Phil Crowther and the regional DWR biologist have been consistently monitoring the health of the herd, running trail cameras, maintaining the integrity of the fence, leaning hard on the predators and generally keeping a very close watch on this valuable resource.

As the herd continues to grow, in partnership with the Utah DWR, capture and transplants out of the facility should be able to start in one or two more lambing cycles. One again I would like to thank SFW and the Utah DWR, along with Utah WSF volunteers for their hard work and dedication to this project which will certainly help ensure the future of Utah's Desert Bighorn herds for years and hopefully decades to come.



*Taking Utah's
Best Rams!*

Rocky Mtn Bighorns



California Bighorns



Desert Bighorns



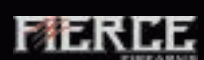
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Bighorn Sheep Management in Utah —2024 Utah DWR Update



In 2024, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), with the help of Utah Wild Sheep Foundation and other partners, was able to make great strides in Bighorn sheep management. This year the UDWR continued its disease monitoring and collaring programs by capturing over 100 Bighorn sheep on nine units including Kaiparowits, East and West, Pine Valley, Beaver Dam and Virgin River, Henry Mtns, North Slope, Summit/West Dagget and Three Corners, Book Cliffs, and Pilot Mtn. The GPS collars fitted on Bighorns are equipped with mortality alerts and act as an early warning sign to detect problems associated with disease or predation.

In addition to these captures, the UDWR partnered with Utah Wild Sheep Foundation and Nevada Department of Wildlife to translocate 20 Bighorn sheep from Valley of Fire, Nevada to the Desert Bighorn nursery facility on Promontory Point. The 20 Bighorns added to the 13 adults and 10 lambs that were already in the facility and gave the nursery herd a much needed boost. The Promontory facility is approximately 1,000 acres of steep, rocky slopes with open view sheds, natural springs, and nutritious forage. It's surrounded with a state of the art high fence and has low predator densities. It's an ideal location to keep these sheep protected from disease for future generations and provide the source stock for transplants for years to come.

The Interagency Bighorn Outreach Coordinator position, partially funded by Utah Wild Sheep Foundation was established in 2023 and is a collaborative partnership with the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food. The position is tasked with seeking out domestic sheep and goat producers in

proximity to occupied and unoccupied Bighorn sheep habitat and working with producers to reduce the risk of disease transmission while providing mutual benefit to producers and their livestock. Because of this position, many solutions have been reached to maintain spatial separation including fencing projects, livestock relocation, and stray sheep round-ups. This position has proven extremely valuable for the health of Bighorn sheep as well as establishing positive relationships with the agricultural community.

In 2024, the UDWR established the first Desert Bighorn hunt on the Mineral Mountains and is set to begin hunting Rocky Mountain Bighorns on Antelope Island again in 2025. After successful reintroductions to the Mineral Mountains in 2019 and to Antelope Island in 2020, these populations are both doing very well. This is great news and a major success for Bighorn conservation and sportsmen alike.

There are currently around 3,000 Desert Bighorn sheep and 1,700 Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep in Utah. Despite the challenges that face Bighorn sheep, they continually bounce back in spite of setbacks. Utah remains at the cutting edge of Bighorn research and management and is fully invested in the conservation of Bighorn sheep throughout the state. Without organizations like the Utah Wild Sheep Foundation and passionate individuals that invest their time, money, and energy, this would not be possible. The UDWR wishes to thank all who care about the future of Bighorn sheep in Utah. It is not an easy journey, but the cause is well worth the effort. The future of Bighorn sheep is bright, and we value our continued partnership with the Utah Wild Sheep Foundation to put and keep wild sheep on the mountain.



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Neil Clayton



My goal to finish the Grand Slam or Full Curl started 18 years ago in 2005 with Artic Red Outfitters, hunting Dall sheep in the great Mackenzie Mountains, with one of the best guides, Al Klassen. I am grateful to have shared this hunt with great friend Mike Barney. It was a 10 Day hunt, for which we trained hard. I harvested a 9 1/2 year old ram on day 3 and to finish it off, 4 days later, Mike harvested his great 10 1/2 year old ram.

In 2006, good friend Ryan Foutz with the Utah Wild Sheep Foundation called me with a cancellation hunt for Stone Sheep. I harvested my Ram in BC with Alan Larson of Indian River Outfitters. Again, with Mike by my side we headed out not knowing what a long 14-day hunt it would be. Despite the rough weather I harvested my 8 1/2 year old Stone on day 12. Mike was very fortunate to harvest on day 2.

In 2012 I was lucky to draw my Desert Bighorn tag in New Mexico. With help from Mike, his son Scott and my cousin Tony Tolbert, I harvested a 9 1/2 year old Ram. We hunted the Fra Crystobal unit in the month of November.

Finished in 2023 with my Rocky Mountain Bighorn in Alberta Canada with Rob and Brenda Erickson of Scalp Creek Outfitters. This was an 18-day horseback hunt. After dodging a few grizzly encounters and seeing a lot of sheep, on day 2, Justin, Gordon and I saw a band of 13 rams with 5 of them being legal. We found a 10 1/2 year old ram in the bunch and I made the shot.

Every hunt was shared with great friends who I really appreciate and I have come away with many new friends and great memories along the way. A special thanks to my wife for all her love and support.

Byron Bateman



In 1992 a phone call from an Alaska Guide with a Dall cancellation hunt started my quest for the Full Curl...little did I know that it would be 31 years and 2023 before I completed it.

I went on the hunt and on day ten we were heading off the mountain with no sheep, when we spotted Rams across the canyon and I was able to connect with the largest Ram. We couldn't get to him as it was almost dark and had to retrieve him the next morning. Then we had to get off the mountain and down to where the super Cub would pick us up.

Everything arrived back in Salt Lake except the box holding my cape. The airline couldn't find it, but I got a call the next day that my cape had ended up at a local sea food restaurant and was on its way to our house.

My 2000 Stone Sheep hunt in the Yukon was supposed to be a horseback hunt but they were unable to get horses into the mountains due to excessive snow melt and swollen rivers. No problem I said, I can do a back pack hunt. It took 2 days to hike into our camp and I had to pull the guide out of a deep hole in the creek we crossed getting to camp. It started snowing the next day and I told the guide let's go hunt. We topped over a ridge and a small band of Fannin Rams took off. I was able to connect with the largest ram. It was 2 days back to the lake but we had to spend 3 more days waiting for the weather to clear before the float plane could land to retrieve us.

In 2008 I drew my Utah Rocky. We made several trips to the Green River area to get familiar with the unit, including one trip on horses. Although we didn't see any sheep, we were confident that when the rut started we would find plenty of Rams. The season opened and we were in Rams almost every day but I waited to harvest until I was sure we had seen every Ram on the unit. After 15 days most of the other permit holders had tagged out and there was one particular Ram I liked, so I decided to focus on him. I was driving up the river where I had last seen the Ram when I came around a corner and there he was with a bunch of ewes and smaller Rams. I got my spotting scope out to take another look, he had chipped the end of his right horn but he still looked great to me and I decided to take this old Ram to close my hunt.

In 2023 we were at The Western Hunting and Conservation Expo when my son Brett and daughter Jennifer along with my Wife Peggy started talking to me about buying the Dirty Devil Desert Bighorn permit to complete my Full Curl. We had quite the discussion and we ended up buying the permit! My son Brett took his Dirty Devil Desert Bighorn the year before with Randy Johnson and I contacted Randy to see if he was available to guide me on my Grand Slam Ram. Thank God Randy was all in and we scouted several times before the opener. We were successful in taking an ancient 12 old ram "Old Warhorse", as Randy had named him, to complete my Full Curl at age 77.



34th Annual **Utah WSF Banquet**

Saturday, March 22nd, 2025 - 5pm Doors Open & Social Hour - 6pm Dinner
Utah State Fair Park

**Banquet Hunt Winner
Adam Bronson with
his 2024 ARRO
Dall Sheep!**

Early Bird Drawing for a Rifle

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Plus... Bonus Moose, Elk, & Rocky Mountain Goat Tags

Purchase tickets at utahwsf.org or contact:
Hadli Sorenson at (435) 840-0786, hadlisorenson@gmail.com



AUCTION TAGS

(Anyone can bid)

- Hunt #1** - Box Elder, Newfoundland Mtns (Late) California Bighorn Sheep
- Hunt #2** - Fillmore, Oak Creek (Late) California Bighorn Sheep
- Hunt #3** - Kaiparowits West Desert Bighorn Sheep
- Hunt #4** - Pine Valley, Beaver Dam Desert Bighorn Sheep
- Hunt #5** - San Rafael South Desert Bighorn Sheep

DRAWING TAGS

Sweepstakes Hunt:

Bighorn Sheep Señora Mexico with Extreme Mexico Desert Outfitters (Pursuant to rules as long tickets sell out)

Dall Hunt:

Dall Sheep hunt with Arctic Red River Outfitters

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BANQUET PACKAGES

- ☐ \$350 — 1 sheep ticket, one year membership, dinner for 2, 5 raffle tickets
- ☐ \$450 — 3 Sheep tickets, one year membership, dinner for 2, 10 raffle tickets
- ☐ \$650 — 5 sheep tickets, one year membership, dinner for 2, 20 raffle tickets
- ☐ \$1200 — Family table, One Year Membership, Dinner for 6, and 20 Sheep Tickets, 50 Raffle Tickets
- ☐ \$2000 — Corporate Table, Dinner for 10, 40 Sheep Tickets and 100 Raffle Tickets

ADDITIONAL SHEEP TICKET PRICES

- ☐ \$100 = 1 Ticket
- ☐ \$250 = 3 Tickets
- ☐ \$500 = 8 Tickets
- ☐ \$1,000 = 20 Tickets

DONATIONS/SPONSORSHIP AND DONATIONS IN LIEU OF ATTENDANCE

- ☐ \$100 = 1 Ticket
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- ☐ \$500 Raffle Item/Gun Sponsor
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- ☐ \$125 1 Dinner Package for 1
- ☐ \$250 2 Dinner Packages for 2 with a One Year Membership and \$50 for a youth dinner ticket
- ☐ \$75 1 Youth Dinner # of Youth =

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Questions? Contact Travis Jensen (801) 641-5453

Hunt Rules: There will be no dinner tickets sold at the door unless seating is available, then sold first-come-first served until seats are gone. Ticket package upgrades will be allowed. Tables will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Hunts specified the night of the drawing may not be changed, unless it is a mutual agreement of both Utah WSF and the hunt winner. Any winner who fails to meet all required financial obligations to Utah WSF by May of the year of the hunt, forfeits all rights to the hunt. Winners may NOT sell the hunt to other individuals.

TAGGED ON TIMPANOGOS

Zac Spilker, Utah Rocky Mountain Bighorn

In November 2023, I was thrilled to draw the 2024 Utah Sportsman's Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep permit. This coveted tag allowed me to hunt any open unit for Rocky Mountain or California Bighorn sheep in Utah from September through December. This opportunity felt like winning the lottery—a chance few hunters ever experience.

From the moment I drew the tag, I dove into research. I made numerous phone calls to various sheep experts. I grappled for months with whether to hire a guide and ultimately decided that I wanted to do this DIY with the help of my dad, Byron, and my 10-year-old son, Lincoln. I knew I had my work cut out for me and in no way would I be saving money by going solo. The plan was to scout as many units as possible throughout the summer months. There were 5 units that I wanted to focus on. Three of these units I had never set foot on, two I had extensive knowledge of.

In my research I found many photos on social media and DWR harvest data that I was able to connect on an Excel spreadsheet and map on my On-X maps. I did this for every year the DWR has available on their web site, 2014-2023. This gave me some great locations in multiple units to start my summer and fall scouting plans. I noticed a few areas that seemed to have bigger sheep harvested. I scoured social media looking at pictures people had posted of sheep, dead and alive. One particular picture caught my eye on Andrew Seegmiller's Instagram page, @andrewseeg. To me this ram had everything and my 10-year-old son Lincoln was constantly talking about finding a full curl ram. This ram had a beautiful big body, what appeared to be a full curl to me, and great mass. Surely if I saw that ram on my hunt, it would be a no-brainer.

Determined to make the most of this DIY hunt, I

planned summer scouting trips to four units: Book Cliffs South, Nine Mile Gray Canyon, Jack Creek, and Wasatch. Each unit offered its own challenges and rewards.

Book Cliffs South presented rocky, boulder-strewn terrain that felt more suited to Desert Bighorns than Rockys. Spotting sheep was difficult and my first encounter came when falling rocks alerted me to three ewes just 50 yards away. Their ability to blend into the rugged landscape was remarkable.

Nine Mile Gray Canyon required navigating the Green and Price Rivers, either by kayak or UTV. Floating across the Green River was relatively straightforward, but accessing sheep perched high on cliffs seemed nearly impossible. Guides I talked to from the area generously offered advice and assured me they'd help retrieve a sheep if needed.

Jack Creek was a maze of locked gates and deep, steep canyons. I found a newly erected gate that I'm certain I was the first to come across that summer. It was in a location I was not expecting a gate to be at as I had seen pictures from past hunts of folks accessing the area. Frustrated by restricted access, I adapted my plans and headed for the oil pads up on top of this unit and found a handful of rams using the nearby water holes. Conversations with local landowners provided valuable insights about sheep behavior and movement patterns.

Having grown up on the Wasatch front and hunting it throughout my life, I felt very confident in being able to hunt this unit and find sheep. Some great rams had been taken from the unit the previous year, so I had reservations about finding a big ram there. Anytime I accessed this unit looking for sheep I couldn't help but think to myself about how amazing it would be to shoot a ram up on the



@andrewseeg



face of Mount Timpanogos, one of the most iconic mountains in all of Utah.

Sheep were hard to find in the summertime, I found them tucked away in steep rocky canyons well above 10,000'. Knowing that these sheep mostly move way down the mountain when the rut kicks in I was confident I would be able to find a respectable ram anytime from November to December. Having the luxury of the statewide tag in my pocket with the extended dates, kept my anxiety of not getting a ram at bay.

Opening day on September 1st marked the start

of a long, challenging adventure. I planned to have that week off from work and had planned to spend a day or two in each of the four units I had scouted. I really wasn't planning on finding and killing a ram on that trip. I had been told sheep hunting is so much better in November during the rut and it's easier to find the big rams. I hunted the Wasatch unit with my dad glassing the high elevation basins looking for sheep. Unfortunately, all we found were deer, elk, and goats. My dad had to head home that evening so the next day I headed out to Green River solo to hunt the Book Cliffs and Gray canyon units. The days were long and hot, many of the sheep



held tight on the shady sides of the canyons. No big rams were spotted. I hunted the Jack Creek unit next. A few sheep were spotted but they were pretty sparse on that trip.

I made many trips back and forth to these units—mostly solo trips. I like to carry a lot of gear with me when I go hunting, so my truck was always packed full. I always kept my front seat open though. My brother passed away of cancer about 4 years prior, I have fond memories of hunting with him. I felt this was a hunt he would have loved to have experienced. I don't know if he was there, but I kept the front seat of my truck open for him just in case he wanted to tag along.

By November, larger rams began to appear. My trigger finger itched as I observed them, but I

couldn't shake the feeling that the perfect ram was still out there. Despite spotting sheep, I struggled to find the full-curl ram I was searching for. Friends and family thought I was crazy for passing on some of the impressive rams I saw, but I remained focused on finding the right one. Lincoln's high standards echoed in my mind, urging me to hold out for a truly exceptional sheep.

After hunting other units I decided to head back to the Wasatch to spend a few days trying to find some new rams. Glassing near Provo Canyon brought a breakthrough! I spotted a magnificent ram high on Mount Timpanogos at 10,000 feet. This ram was different—massive, with a full curl! He joined a group of ewes and another large ram. They moved across four basins as I tracked him through my spotting scope. I followed a hiking trail that



got me up high on a peak called Big Baldy to get a better look. Excitement surged as I realized exactly what ram this was—a ram many people had known about, and many people had been looking for. I had seen pictures of this ram from last winter. I knew it was him and could immediately tell he had put on a bit of extra growth and mass. I watched him through the scope until the sun was about to go down. This was the ram I'd been waiting for.

I worried about relocating him all night, but luckily I was able to find him with a group of sheep early the

next morning as soon as the sun hit them. I quickly drove to the trailhead, got my pack together and headed up the trail. The ram was 4,500' up the mountain from my starting location and 4.5 hiking miles away. I knew it was going to be a long hike and there was no guarantee the ram was going to be in the same place when I got there.

For the first 2.5 miles of the hike I couldn't see the basin the ram was in, so there was no way to check if he was still there. As soon as the trail wrapped around Big Baldy peak there was a clearing and I

could see up into his basin. In no time at all, I was able to locate the group in the same spot I had last seen them. I decided to ascend the face of the mountain and no longer follow the trail, this would keep me out of sight and I estimated I would be within about 600-700 yards of the sheep once I crested the ridge.

The face was so steep, at times I had to crawl and grab brush with my hands just to pull myself up the hill. I also started to hit snow patches. This added snow-mud mix just about got the best of me. When I made it to the top of the ridge, I slowly looked over and located them about 700 yards up the mountain and across the canyon from me. I tried to find a closer shooting position but the lay of the land made it impossible. I couldn't cut any distance and decided to set up for a shot. I had practiced

at this distance and further many times at the gun range. Confident I could make the shot I dialed my elevation turret for the shot—no wind at the time. I steadied the crosshairs on the ram who was broadside. I took one shot and then another and nothing. The ram just stood there.

I frantically started looking at my scope. Somehow on my brutal hike up the mountain my windage turret had rotated to 1 MOA. I quickly dialed back to zero, repositioned, ranged, and fortunately the ram was still at 700 yards. I took another shot and watched the ram go down. He fell off one snowy cliff and rolled down the steep face for what felt like an eternity. Then he finally came to a rest about two rolls away from going over another large cliff. It was a big enough tumble that I was worried about him being broken up. Walking up to the ram





I immediately noticed his horns had no damage—then elation took over! I couldn't believe how heavy his horns were. There is no way to explain it other than holding them in your hands.

I snapped a few pictures as the sun started to go down. I realized my light would soon fade and killing him at 10,000' gave me a steep 4,500' descent—there was no way I could make multiple trips back up the brutal face during the night. I field dressed him as quickly as I could and got him completely skinned up to the neck. I got the quarters, backstraps, and tenderloins off and stashed some meat and three quarters there in the snow. I loaded a hind quarter in my pack and headed down the mountain.

Walking down the mountain I got very emotional. All at once I realized it was over and all of the sacrifice and hard work had paid off—bigtime. Not only my sacrifice and work, but also that of my amazing wife, my kids, and my dad. My once in one hundred lifetimes hunt was finished and I more than likely will never get to do this again.

When I got back to the truck, I called family and friends with the good news and an invitation to help pack a sheep off the mountain the next day. Luckily my cousin Andrew, my brother-in-law Joe and Sister Heidi were eager to help and my Dad and son Lincoln would be able to meet us at the trailhead. My 10-year-old son Lincoln's face was glowing when he got to see and hold this ram. I'm so grateful for my main hunting buddy, my dad. He's always played a huge role in all our hunting adventures, whether he has a tag or not he's always been there to support and help however he could.

Very few people get to experience hunting sheep at the top of Mount Timpanogos. I couldn't help but think how lucky I was to have had the opportunity to pursue this giant ram in such a place. I hope every hunter gets to experience a hunt like this at least once in their lifetime. Thank you to all those involved with sheep and who work so hard to put sheep on the mountain and keep the population growing and healthy. This has without a doubt been the pinnacle of my hunting adventures.

THE SHEEP HUNT OF A LIFETIME

Jerald Olsen, Utah Desert Bighorn




I'll start by introducing myself. My name is Jerald Olsen, and I am from West Haven, Utah. I grew up in the south part of the Salt Lake Valley where I attended Hillcrest High school in Midvale, Utah. I had an awesome and blessed childhood where I was very fortunate to explore many facets of the outdoors with my dad and grandpa. From the time I was seven years old, the deer hunt always peaked my interests and became a favorite fall activity with my dad, Mark Olsen. Later duck hunting became even more favored because at 12 years old, I could participate and love to hunt ducks.

However, there was one animal that I asked my dad about when I was nine years old, dad how come you don't hunt a Bighorn sheep? My dad responded,

Bighorn sheep are very limited and very few tags are given out for them every year. So, I asked the next logical question, if it's a limited draw, than why don't you try to put in for it? He told me you would never draw out for one, it's too hard. It turns out that my dad told me a lie, I did draw a sheep tag although it was 40 years later. Drawing that out of sight sheep tag never left my mind as a kid and teenager, just though it was out of reach until later in life.

I had put a pause in my dream of drawing out for a Bighorn sheep, I listened to my dad and started out my Once-In-A-Lifetime hunting career putting in for moose. However, my college professor, for my advanced statistics class asked me to pick a real-



world problem that I was passionate about and solve it with statistics. My problem to solve was if I start today how long will it take me to draw out on a Desert Bighorn sheep in my home state of Utah? So, my statistical question to answer was the following. With zero bonus points today with the current supply of Desert Bighorn sheep tags there were in the state of Utah how many years would it take me to draw a sheep tag?

This was long before the advent of Go Hunt, Epic Outdoors, and Eastman's and all the other hunting consultants that have great layers and databases to pull from which could've easily answered that question. I had to do my own research, I had to look at the Utah DWR data, and I had to apply statistics of which I was learning a lot from to answer that fundamental question. Then a nervous day came after a two-part statistics class. I didn't think my professor would care about answering my hunting related question. I was dead wrong. He gave me an A on the paper and asked, would you be able to do the same work up for a Henry's Mountain Once-In-A-Lifetime Buffalo tag. I have a .45-70 Sharps rifle that I've always wanted to shoot a buffalo with. So long story short, never make assumptions about your college professors, and follow their exact directions. Pick a problem in life that is real and important to you and use your knowledge to gain knowledge and solve real world problems.

At that time as a data point when I wrote that paper, the answer to my statistical question is if I started putting in for sheep that day it would take me 23

years to draw my prized Desert Bighorn sheep tag. This is where the story begins to be very interesting. I started to understand the draw system more as I put in for eight western states for more than two decades. I started looking at random draws versus bonus point tags, and I realized that my random odds were not as bad as I thought for the Virgin Pine Valley Desert Bighorn sheep tag compared to other units with more tags allocated to them. There was one max point holder tag and one random tag. I got that email that still shocks me to this day. DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP - VIRGIN PINE VALLEY SUCCESSFUL. I did that with only 14 bonus points.

For all the cynics out there in the world a point system that has a max points component and a minority random component, is the most equitable and fair system to everyone. It keeps all stakeholders engaged and involved, and if you truly study and understand it everyone is in the random draw pool until you are a max points holder so put in for your hunts accordingly. If you study every state with unique draw systems and what they all have to offer, you can create a multi-state draw strategy that will indeed provide you with lots of opportunity and success, if you pay attention year after year. As a side note I guess Jason Carter and Brady Miller aren't the only pioneers in this space, I just never did it as profession, just for myself.

I started preparing for my hunt immediately. I listened to Jay Scott's podcast about scoring sheep and while I am a lifelong deer and elk hunter, I have never been on a sheep hunt before. I knew scoring



a sheep would be very tough for me to do having never done it myself. The closest thing that I had done is one Audad hunt in New Mexico where I ate a tag and never got close enough to really score and study a good Audad ram. I knew that I had one of the two best units in Utah so I needed to make the most of this tag. Also, I live in the Ogden area and the tag was in the St. George area so there was a significant amount of distance involved to get to know it properly. I picked up the phone to talk to a good friend of mine, Jason Quick from Paso Robles, California who previously worked at the NRA. Jason is one of the most connected guys that I know and always great to talk to. In 30 seconds he said I've got your guy. We talked for another 10 or 15 minutes about life, kids, and hunting and I proceeded to call his guy Randy Johnson.

Randy Johnson is the owner of High Desert Sheep outfitters in Marysville, Utah and has been in the Utah Sheep Hall of Fame since 2010. I had an awesome conversation with Randy. Within the first three minutes I knew I had the right guy, I would be dumb to not take the opportunity to get to know Randy and use his expertise, coaching, and mentoring to help me find the sheep of a lifetime. In the process talking to Randy we started to talk about different people that we knew, he mentioned my longtime friend Paul Niemeyer from Anabella, Utah. I took the opportunity to ask Paul Niemeyer about Randy, simply put Paul said, "Randy is the best there is in Utah Sheep guides".

A few phone calls and texts were made back-and-forth between Randy and I leading up to the season. I had finally received my Gunwerks Nexus, 7MM PRC rifle and I spent lots of time making sure that I would make my first shot count. The gun did exactly what they claim, 1,000 yards out of the box. It was a more accurate gun than I am a capable shooter. As we led up to the week before the hunt Randy started to fill me in on details and that Jesse

Shipp would be my guide. Jesse lives down there next to the Virgin Unit in the St. George area. For me personally, it was a little bit of a complicated start to the fall hunting season as I was making a job transition and just started a new job with BHI Construction as their Director of Procurement on October 21. At the end of my first week at a new job my hunt opened on October 26. I notified my boss Shan Miller, who also lives in the St. George area what my circumstance was, and he quickly said, do what you need to do go get your sheep.

I would never have gone on this hunt without my dad, who is the guy that started me off in the outdoors. The outdoor experiences have created a special bond that we have enjoyed over many days and memories while hunting and fishing over the years. Also, my best friend Keith Facer from Farmington Utah had to be there. Keith and I have had so many good adventures over the past 15 years, and this was one I needed him there by my side to participate in. My three daughters Brinley, McKenna, and Aubrey, all at Utah State couldn't break away from school, but they all expressed interest and wish me the best luck possible. Maybe my biggest surprise of this whole thing was when my wife Tiffany told me you need to hire an outfitter, they can save you so much time and help you in this process. Tiffany was 100% right.

Opening day came along, Randy and Jesse had been out scouting and already had several target sheep identified. There was one in Arizona by the name of Big Charlie. He represented his name very well. However, he was content to sit and watch over a herd of Ewes and keep them within line of sight. We never saw big Charlie in a shootable position in Utah. On the opening morning Jesse and I were in the sheep first thing and most all through the day, but no real big sheep that Jesse and I laid eyes on that day. We knocked on the door of a 155-160" type ram, but that was not our goal. Day two



came and again similar rams were available, some high 150s and near 160s type rams, everybody was splitting up in different directions covering all the country that we could. This is the day that I really figured out Jesse had been putting his heart and soul into finding big sheep in this area for 20 years. His knowledge of the area was impressive and comprehensive. He always knew exactly where to look, particularly those hidden up little ledges and back pockets that you don't know about until you directly stumble upon them. His knowledge of the area, saved me weeks if not months of covering that whole country. So if you are lucky enough to draw a Sheep tag in the State of Utah, give Randy a call, you won't be sorry.

If you ever drive the Virgin River Gorge to Mesquite from St. George to Mesquite, on both sides of the gorge it's sheep country. I will never look at that country the same because as I sat on the top of those cliffs, looking down, picking out sheep and wondering what those people in the cars were thinking? Could they see us up there and if they could what the heck are those guys doing up there? It's as rugged as it looks from I-15. It can turn from flat meandering ground to a straight box canyon in 100 yards. It has catacombs of winding little dead-end canyons that all can hold sheep, and you can only see those from little angles here and there

where Jesse and Randy have perched and looked up into them over the years. Days three and four we had extremely challenging weather conditions, turns out Desert Bighorn sheep don't particularly love wind as we had 40 mph winds come through with a storm on day three. The sheep count for the entire day three was two or three total animals and no rams. Day four came along and we saw a few more rams, but the cold and the rain with the continued storm limited the animal count and activity for a second day in a row.

After two really good days of hunting and two not so great days of hunting, everybody was certainly willing and excited for another opportunity to go hunt in the morning of day 5. We were in luck, warm calm weather came, first thing in the morning Jesse and I saw a ram that Jesse named Muffin Top. This ram had it all, pie crust horns, mass, character and was 9 to 10 years old. But as big sheep seem to do, he found a way to give us the slip. We tried to go after him through the winding canyons, but never could turn him back up.

At 11 o'clock or so in the day, we got a text message from one of our friends, sitting all the way in Arizona looking 3+ miles up into some of the back canyons in Utah. Bam the North 40 ram was spotted and identified and he was a shooter. This ram was called



the North 40 because Randy and Jesse had never seen a big shooter sheep in this unit as far north as he was. Jesse and I were a long way away from where the sheep was located, so we had to maneuver and figure out how the best way would be to get over to the area he was at after 3+ hours of driving and hiking back around we found him ourselves. We put a plan into place and were able to slip up over a little hill that had questionable wind, but we used the lip of the hill to shield our profile and wind from the North 40 Ram.

There were two Ewes with the North 40 Ram and he was not going anywhere as long as they were around. It was a hurry up maneuver to get on this ram only to sit and wait for him to leave his bed. Jesse and I were set up at 340 yards on that ram

for over an hour and a half and it was getting kind of hot. I was cramping a bit in my back and legs from laying down perched on a slight decline. Jesse and I took turns, watching to make sure that the sheep didn't move out of its bed. However, when it did move, I was ready. I had been preparing for this moment for my entire life. A count of 1,2,3 went by, boom my first shot rang out and perfectly hit center mass through the lungs. He was sick and in big trouble. I hurried and put in a follow up as a measure of insurance and within a manner of seconds it was done.

I had achieved my goal of harvesting a Desert Bighorn Sheep 40 years later after I asked my dad, hey dad, why don't you hunt a Bighorn Sheep. My North 40 ram ended up being 9 1/2 years old



and 162 inches full of all the things that you want, character, pie crust, mass with 15 1/2 inch bases good length with 33 inch horns, all of that was icing on the cake. However, it was the cast of characters that were associated with me on this hunt that for me was every bit as important as the sheep itself. Every person that was involved in this hunt is someone I would call "The Best of the Best" in every aspect they know who they are. There were lifelong relationships that were made on those desert mountain peaks and cliffs on October 30th, 2024.

Randy and Jesse were true professionals, they were absolutely the coaches and mentors I had heard about and expected. They took extremely good care of us in all aspects of the hunt. We even had the pleasure one night of having some Uber eats deliveries from Jesse's significant other Laura. Laura's chili and cornbread were exceptional and hit the spot in the middle of a multi-day grind.

I feel very lucky, fortunate, and so thankful to all of the people that have participated in the conservation work that led up to this moment. There are multiple guzzlers on this unit increasing the carrying capacity of the landscape and allowing a landscape that otherwise wouldn't have the same potential for

sheep. Now, this unit is in great shape with the gift of water through the DWR, hunting conservation groups, and ranching groups have been working together for many years and in this particular unit. The animals in this unit are exceptional, the genetics have cross pollinated with Arizona, which means mass for days. Again, I am so thankful and indebted to all those pioneers of conservation in all the various agencies and wildlife groups that have done such good work transplanting and developing water resources over the years.

We truly live in the best of times for several species in the West, and this is not done by accident. Desert Sheep are at an all-time high as far as range and current populations in the West. As a parting thought, I challenge you all to take your kids and go outdoors, make memories with them and teach them that conservation doesn't happen by accident. Hunting is conservation, and without animals to hunt we have no hunting traditions. So go get involved where you can and make a difference and enjoy the outdoors and continue those hunting traditions, so they are not lost. A special thank you too Randy Johnson, Jesse Shipp, Travis Jenson, Marshall McCrosky, Keith Facer, and Mark Olsen for the hunt of a lifetime.

San Rafael Desert Bighorn

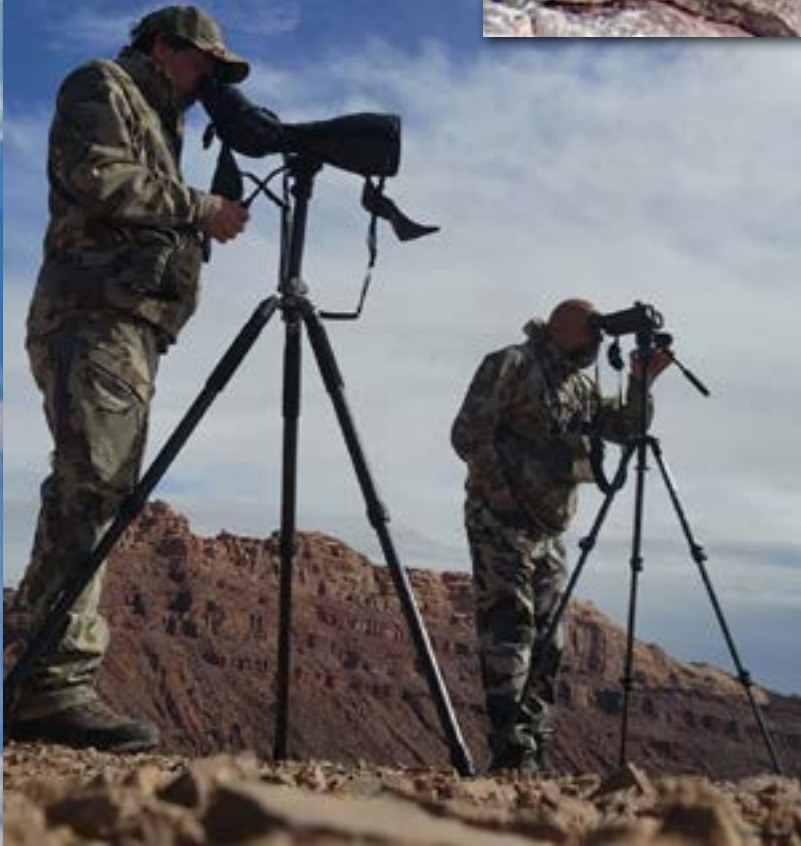
Mark Chaves, Sheep Hunt Written by Paul Anthony Chavez



When applying for a once-in-a-lifetime Bighorn sheep hunt, the anticipation and uncertainty rival purchasing a lottery ticket for a lifetime hunt.

Imagine hitting it once; my cousin Mark defied the odds, scoring not once, but three times in a single year. That astonishing stroke of luck came after 41 years of applying for the Bighorn sheep draw in various states. His first stroke of fortune landed him

in New Mexico's Hatchet Mountains for the Desert Bighorn Sheep. Shortly after, he snagged the Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep tag in Wyoming and the Desert Bighorn in Utah. When Mark called me with the news about Utah, I joked, "You're on a winning streak! Go grab a lottery ticket." I felt thrilled and privileged to receive an invitation from Mark to join him and his wife, Gina Chavez, on all three hunts. It



was an opportunity I eagerly embraced, alongside our good friend Matthew CDeBaca.

Mark plunged into preparation mode for these once-in-a-lifetime hunts. Mentally and physically gearing up, researching San Rafael Desert Bighorn Sheep, organizing equipment, and honing his fitness became paramount. Mike Fisher, an

acquaintance from Utah and several other hunters Mark contacted lent invaluable guidance. Initially advised to skip the hunt's early days in September and focus on the last two weeks of October, we hesitated. Yet, heeding this counsel turned out to be a game-changer, coinciding with the arrival of the magnificent rams during their rut.



By mid-October, the four of us embarked on our journey to Green River, Utah, where Gina had arranged an Airbnb for our stay. The scenic drive through Utah's landscapes heightened our excitement for the vast wilderness awaiting us. Setting out early one morning, we spotted some ewes off the road, hoping for a ram among them. Suddenly, Matthew spotted a colossal ram chasing a ewe. Our attention snapped to the giant ram, prompting a frantic scramble to prepare for a stalk. Mark opted for his bow but after losing sight of the

ram, our pursuit turned into a days-long search, passing several younger rams in the process. We continued hunting but couldn't find the big ram again.

On the seventh day, we spotted a pair of rams walking a ridge line, not as massive as our elusive target but boasting great trophy potential. Mark resolved to pursue them, leading us on a challenging two-mile hike and another failed stalk. Undeterred, the next morning found us back in the same area, glassing them across the canyon through Mark's spotting



scope. Witnessing their behavior on the cliffs—a dance of nudges and clashes—we were spellbound, feeling like spectators in a wildlife documentary.

While Matthew stayed behind to watch the rams, we maneuvered the ATV to a vantage point for a nerve-wracking stalk along the narrow ledge of the cliffs. Peering around corners, we finally spotted them a quarter mile away. We slowly made our way to set up at 255 yards. Mark secured a rock ledge, taking a clean shot that brought the ram down instantly.

This hunt transcended mere hunting—it embodied camaraderie and a profound connection with nature. Mark and Gina now accrue points in other states for future Bighorn sheep draws, confident that lightning might strike again with their accumulated points.

They are hoping for the lucky number 7.

We have been blessed to be able to hunt these magnificent animals.

THE SHEEP HUNT

Kolbi Sorensen, Utah Desert Bighorn Sheep



This once in a lifetime Desert Sheep hunt was an experience our family will never forget. As soon as I drew the tag I had people telling me that I better get in sheep shape! I'd never hunted sheep before, but I also knew if I was getting warnings about the hiking I better lock in and prepare.

We were in the middle of moving out of our home and our daughter coming home from Peru after serving an 18 month religious mission. We were holding the hunt off until she got home, knowing some of the fondest memories we have as a family we have made on the mountain hunting something. She got home on a Wednesday and two days later, Friday, we left for my hunt on the San Rafael. We

packed up 7 people, two dogs and a tent and away we went to make memories and get my sheep!

The first night we got in later than expected and were turned around and camped somewhere by the Muddy Creek Wilderness area. We immediately had our binoculars out looking for anything with horns, but nothing. We settled for a campfire and some star gazing. Having great hopes for the morning hunt we went off to bed. Soon after we laid down we heard wild horses running through our campsite and coyotes singing in the canyon.

The next morning was beautiful but nothing to bring us closer to finding a sheep. We changed



locations, found deer, wild horses, enjoyed a flat tire and enough wind to test the tent's warranty! But not a sheep in sight.

After two nights of that, and an entire sand box worth of sand in our hair, we pulled stakes and drove into Hanksville for a shower and a bed.

We got up early the next day and started hiking, two adults, 5 kids, and two dogs. My husband Ryan

spotted a ram from about 1,800 yards away, it was the first ram we'd seen up to that point—so we were locked in. We hiked 11.5 miles and climbed 115 stories that day getting on the ram, we got within 450 yards but made a miscalculation about the drop on the ammo at that distance and shot under him. Feeling tired we decided to go home, drop off the dogs and come back the next day, this time with a guide.



We called Jace Guymon and met him off the freeway South of Salina. We started glassing for sheep as soon as we crossed into my area. In less than 24 hours we found a ram about 3 miles off the road. We all checked him out and got pretty pumped about going after this guy. In the glass he looked like a terrific ram. Jace was pretty sure he was the big one he'd seen in the same general area the year before. Off we went, leaving two spotters at the road to watch while Jace led the rest of crew on a speed hike up the canyon.

We got as close as we could but we were still

1,000 yards away. We talked about it and what we thought our chances were of getting any closer, but this old bruiser was smart, he could hear every noise we made. We made the call to stay put at 1,000 and take the shot from there. We got all set up, I laid down behind the gun and waited about 45 minutes while the ram was bedded. Ryan and Jace were trying to keep me calm, but I could hear the excitement in their voices. I made a few dry fire shots to get a feel for the pull of the trigger and as soon as the ram stood, I made the shot. What a moment! All the kids had been on a lower ledge waiting to hear the report from the rifle and us



yelling that we got him! Holy cow, all the hiking, all the effort and sleepless nights in the tent, all worth it!

We cleaned up and hiked over to check him out. It took about an hour and a half to cross the canyon and as we walked up he was magnificent! Such a cool ram!

The best part was being there with almost all of our family (our oldest son Conner is on a mission in Africa). It's a moment I will never forget—the smiles, the retelling of the event, the excitement in

all of our voices. Mostly the gratitude we felt to God for this experience and this amazing ram was just incredible!

He measured 155.25 and was 10 ½ years old.

In all our preparation there were so many wonderful people and companies who help us out. I just want to thank the guys at Vortex Optics, Grayboe Stocks, and of course Jace Guymon for sharing his expertise with us on this hunt. It takes a village and we have a great one.

2024 Utah WSF Annual Fundraising Banquet

Utah WSF continues to grow as an organization and our 2024 banquet was a testament to the hard work and commitment of our officers, directors and volunteers. Once again, a new record was set for banquet only revenue in excess of \$235,000, surpassing our previous banquet record (2023) of \$220,000 and 2022 record of \$166,000. We sold out the Fair Park with over 480 attendees, not including banquet volunteers and continued to increase the quality of hunts, guns and hunting gear available for our membership! A special thanks goes out to our members that attended the banquet and supported the organization in its fund raising efforts. As a result of our continued banquet growth, we are looking for a larger venue for 2026 and beyond.

Our 2025 banquet is scheduled for Saturday, March 22nd, 2025 at the Utah State Fair Park. By the time you receive this magazine, you should have already received several save the date notices, mailers, etc. Tickets may be purchased at the Utah WSF website utahwsf.org and we expect to sell out again this year. So get your tickets early, which automatically enters you in the early bird drawing for a rifle. Our goal is to be the best single night conservation event in Utah with more guns, more hunts and an overall more exciting experience for 2025! So please mark our 2025 banquet on your calendars and join us at the Utah State Fair Park to “Help put and keep sheep on Utah’s Mountains.”





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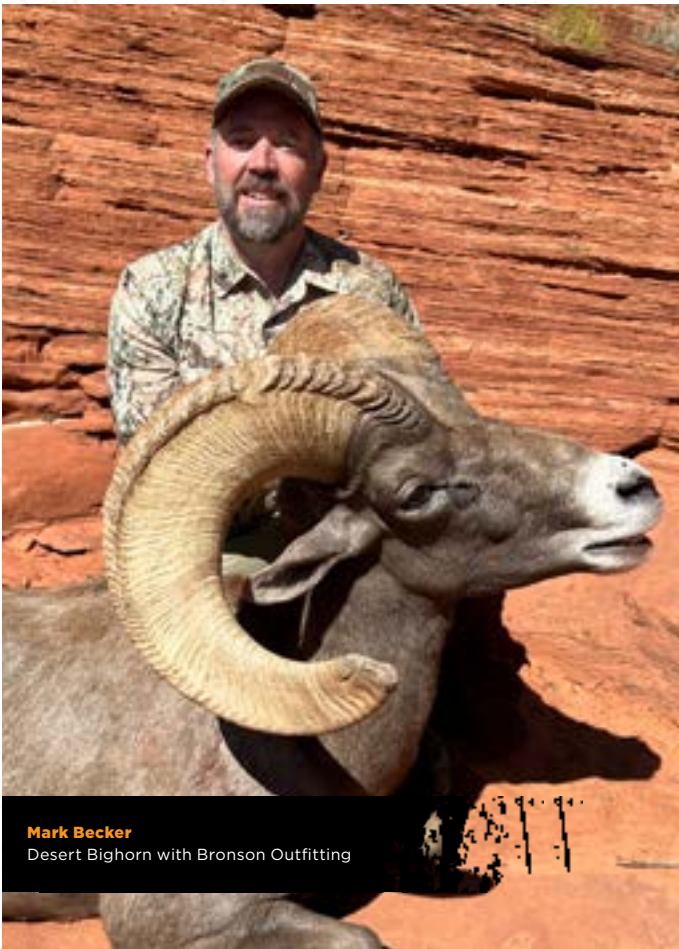
Trophy Takers

In each issue of Utah Wild Sheep Foundation Magazine, the Utah WSF highlights its members' success on the mountain. In many ways, these photos are what results from the countless hours and financial donations of Bighorn sheep conservationists who contribute to Utah's growing Bighorn sheep populations.

Congratulations to all Utah WSF members who have recently taken sheep. We look forward to a successful year in 2025 as well.

If you have photos of a successful sheep hunt in Utah or elsewhere, you can submit them to us via email at tjenson@xmission.com.

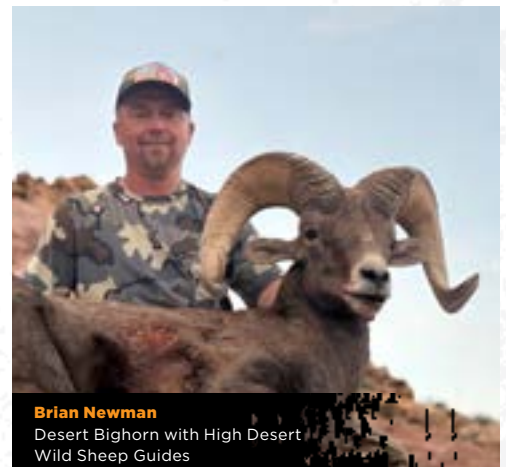
Thank You!



Mark Becker
Desert Bighorn with Bronson Outfitting



Adam Bronson
Dall's Ram with ARRO



Brian Newman
Desert Bighorn with High Desert Wild Sheep Guides



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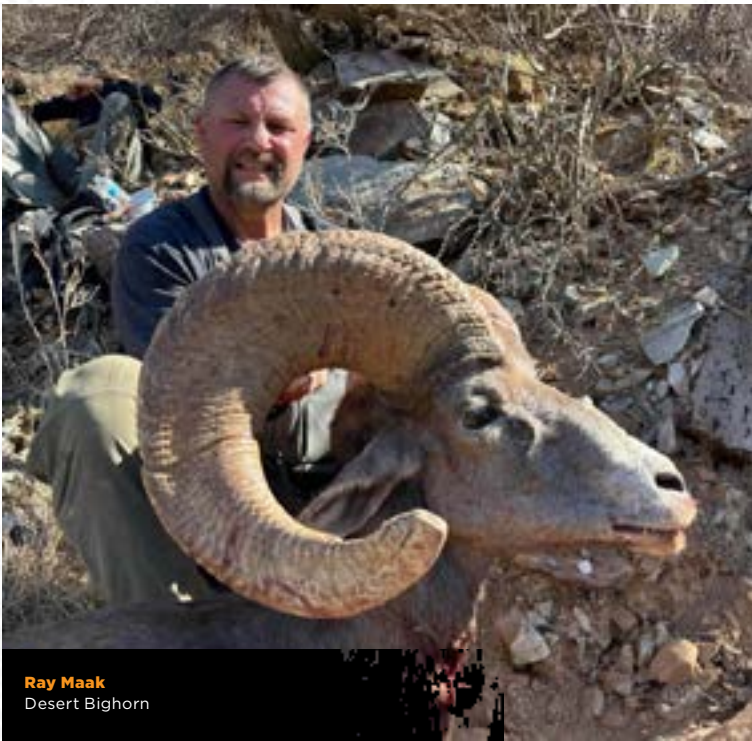




Brandon Cline
California Bighorn with Bronson
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Kolbi Sorensen
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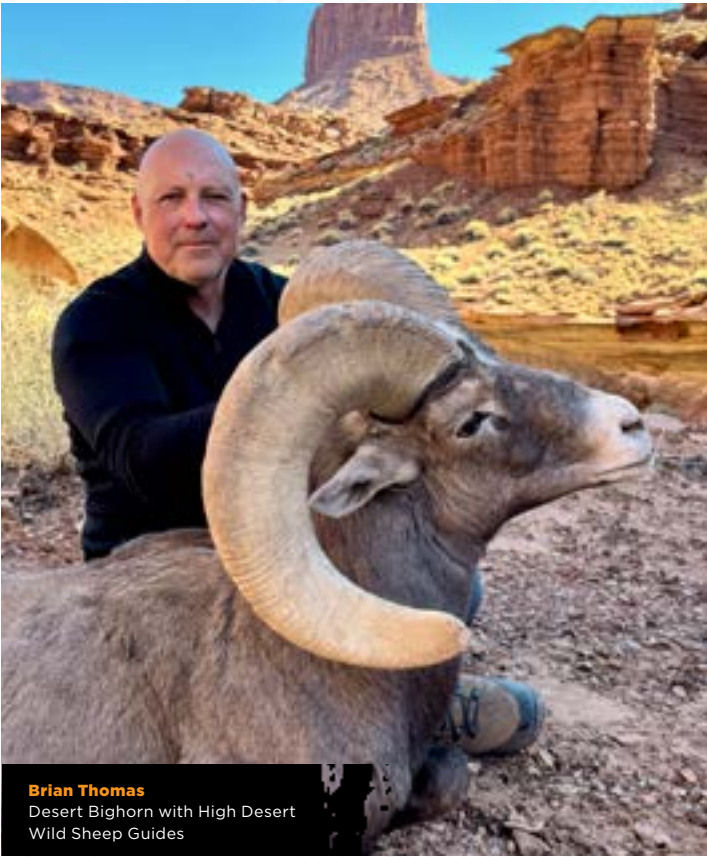
Austin Foutz
Mid Asian Ibex



Dave Laws
Desert Bighorn



Will Peterson
Stone's Ram



Brian Thomas
Desert Bighorn with High Desert
Wild Sheep Guides



John Mark
California Bighorn with Mossback Outfitters





Bill Appgood
Desert Bighorn



Bud Tolliver
Desert Bighorn



Cameron Gillman
Desert Bighorn with Mossback Outfitters



Drew Dennison
Rocky Mountain Bighorn
with Bronson Outfitting



Richard Katsma
Stone Sheep



Tim Kinzel
California Bighorn
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Chadd Hartwig
Utah Desert Bighorn with
Bronson Outfitting



Steve Harris
Desert Bighorn with Mossback
Outfitters



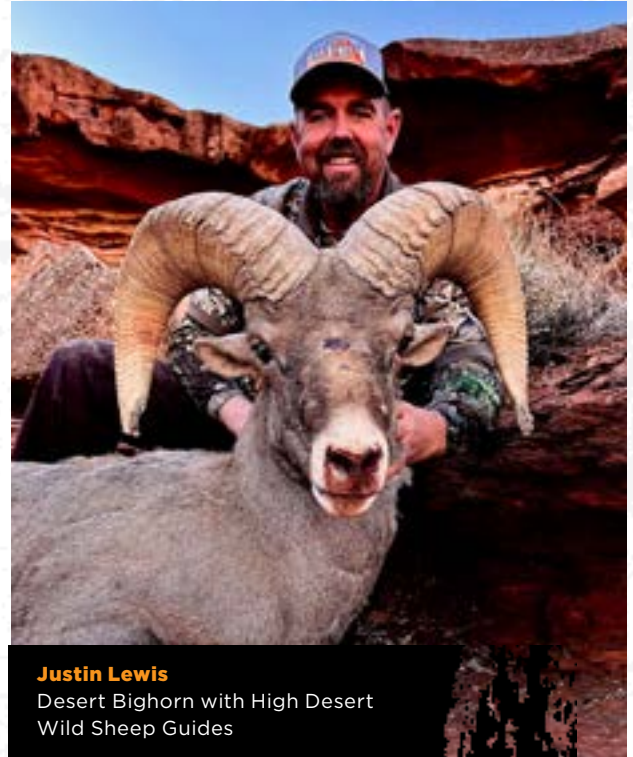
Ryan Foutz
Mid Asian Ibex



Ryan Foutz
Mid Asian Ibex



George Bierman
California Bighorn with Bronson Outfitting



Justin Lewis
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 The bottom half of the advertisement is a collage of six photographs. The top photo shows a guide standing on a rocky ridge with a backpack. Below this are five smaller photos: a guide with a trophy sheep, three guides smiling together, a guide with a trophy sheep, and a close-up of a trophy sheep's head. The text "EST. 1989" is visible in the bottom right corner of the collage.



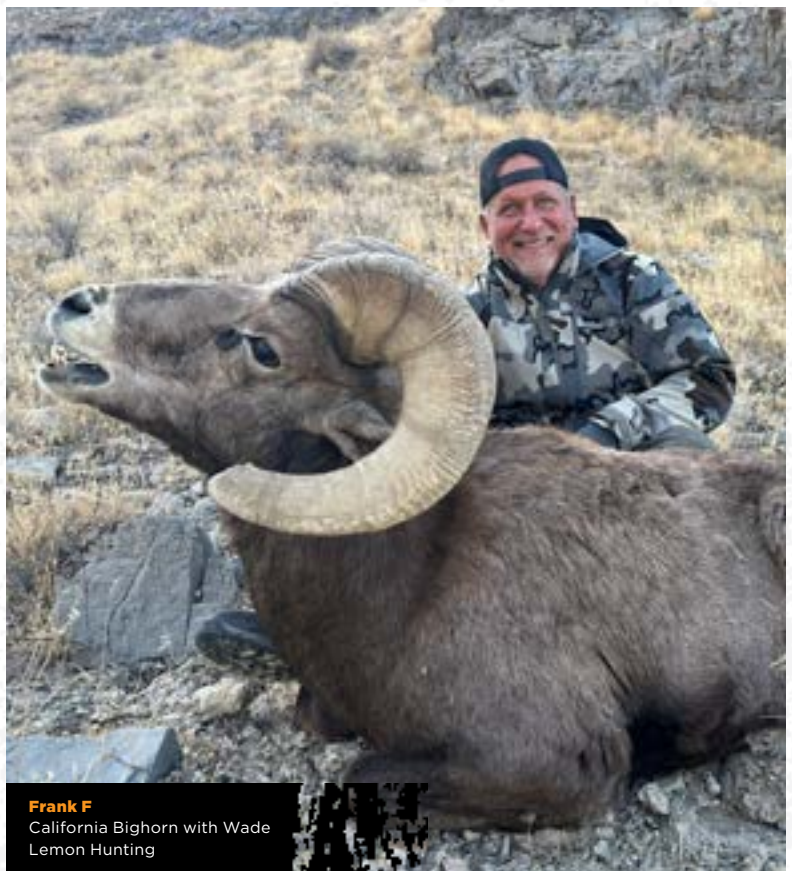
Clint Proctor
Desert Bighorn



Jimmy Z
Rocky Mountain Bighorn with Wade
Lemon Hunting



Matt Tolliver
Dall's Ram



Frank F
California Bighorn with Wade
Lemon Hunting



David Tuttle
Desert Bighorn with Bronson Outfitting



Mark Trione
Dall's Ram with Big Game Backcountry Guides



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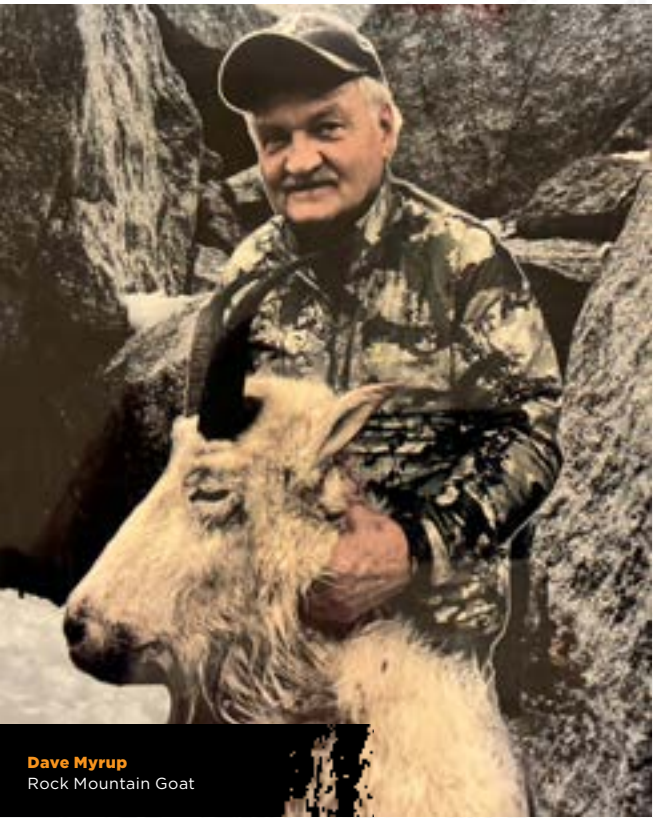


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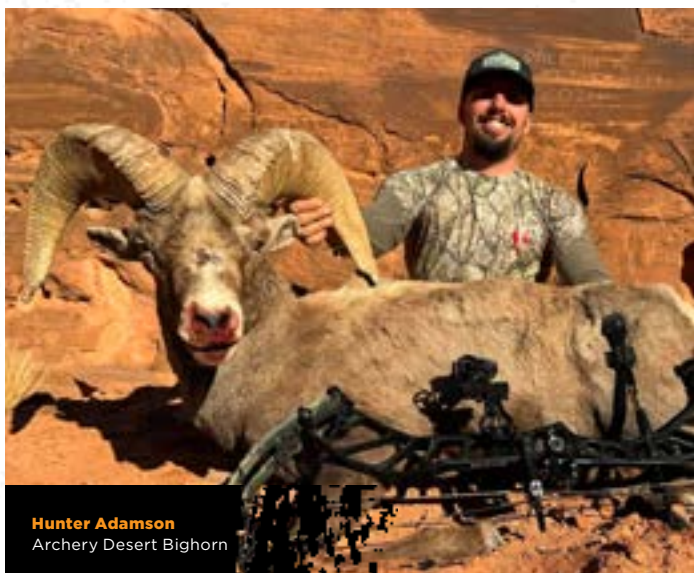
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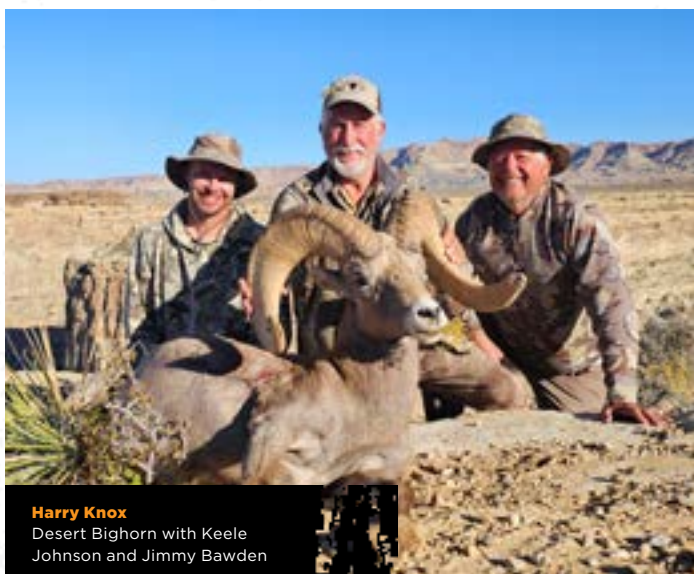
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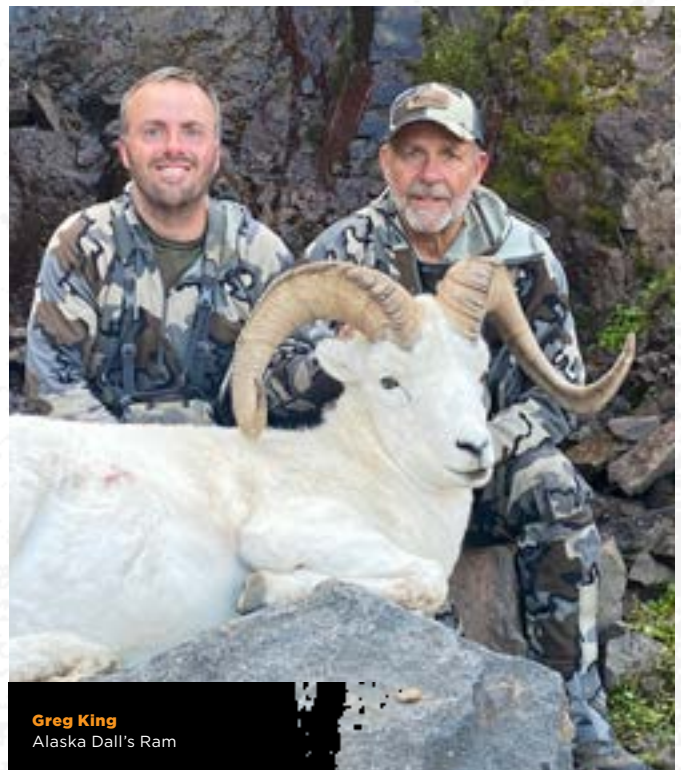
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Desert Bighorn with Bronson Outfitting



Rob Davidson
Dall's ram with Bonnett Plume Outfitters



Gary Sorensen
82 years young with his 2024 South San Rafael Sheep



Greg King
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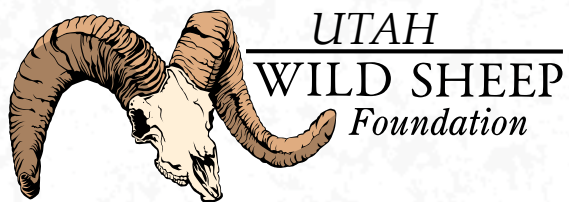
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Ticket sales are available at www.utahwsf.org.