

Nevada Department of Wildlife

**BIG GAME  
RELEASE PLAN**

For

**FISCAL YEARS 2012 AND 2013**

(August 2011 - June 2013)



**August 2011**

**FY 2010 and 2011 BIG GAME RELEASE PLAN  
SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Number Released</b>
<b>Desert Bighorn</b>	11/09	Southwest end Stillwater Range	Churchill	A	25
	1/10	Meadow Valley Mountains	Lincoln	A	5
	1/10	Delamar Mountains	Lincoln	A	11
	1/10	Virgin Mountains	Clark	A	5
	1/10	Gold Buttes	Clark	A	4
<b>California Bighorn</b>	1/10	Jackson Mountains	Humboldt	A	15

**FY 2012 and 2013 DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP  
PROPOSED RELEASE SUMMARY**

<b>Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Virginia Range	Storey	Reintroduction	50	Private
Excelsior Mountains	Mineral	Augmentation	50	BLM – Carson City
East Range	Pershing	Augmentation	30	BLM - Winnemucca
South Pahroc Range	Lincoln	Augmentation	30	BLM - Ely
Meadow Valley Mountains	Lincoln	Augmentation	30	BLM - Ely
Delamar Mountains	Lincoln	Augmentation	40	BLM - Ely
Gold Buttes	Clark	Augmentation	30	BLM – Southern Nevada

**Proposed source populations:** Monte Cristo Range, Silver Peak Range, Stonewall Mountain, River Mountains, Muddy Mountains, Bare Mountains, Last Chance Range, Clan Alpine Range, Desatoya Mountains, Toiyabe Range, Sand Springs Range, Fairview Peak, Gillis/Gabbs Valley Range

**FY 2012 and 2013 CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP  
PROPOSED RELEASE SUMMARY**

<b>Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Santa Rosa Range, Calico Mountain	Humboldt	Augmentation	30	USFS – Humboldt Toiyabe, Santa Rosa and BLM – Winnemucca
Santa Rosa Range, Martin Creek	Humboldt	Augmentation	30	USFS – Humboldt Toiyabe, Santa Rosa and BLM – Winnemucca
Jackson Mountains	Humboldt	Augmentation	30	BLM – Winnemucca
Massacre Rim	Washoe	Augmentation	30	BLM – Surprise
Santa Rosa Range, Peterman Creek	Humboldt	Augmentation	30	USFS – Humboldt Toiyabe, Santa Rosa and BLM – Winnemucca
Hays Canyon	Washoe	Augmentation	40	BLM – Surprise

**Proposed source populations:** Pine Forest Range, Calico Mountains/High Rock Canyon Area (Unit 012), Black Rock Range, Montana Mountains, and McGee Mountain

**FY 2012 and 2013 ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP  
PROPOSED RELEASE SUMMARY**

<b>Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Agency</b>
East Humboldt Range	Elko	Augmentation	30	USFS – Humboldt Toiyabe, Ruby Mountains and BLM – Winnemucca
Ruby Mountains	Elko	Augmentation	20	USFS – Humboldt Toiyabe, Ruby Mountains
Goshute Mountains	Elko	Reintroduction	30	BLM – Elko

**Proposed source populations:** Alberta and Colorado

**FY 2012 and 2013 PRONGHORN ANTELOPE  
PROPOSED RELEASE SUMMARY**

<b>Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Delamar Valley	Lincoln	Augmentation	50	BLM – Ely
Hamlin Valley	Lincoln	Augmentation	50	BLM – Ely
South Spring Valley	Lincoln	Augmentation	50	BLM – Ely
Northern Antelope Valley	Elko	Augmentation	50	BLM - Elko

**Proposed source populations:** Area 3 and Area 6 pronghorn herds.

**Goal and Purpose of Release Plan**

The release plan serves to identify opportunities in meeting the objectives of the various big game species management plans for herd restoration, allow for concurrence from the Board of Wildlife Commissioners, inform and collaborate with land management agencies and permitted users of public land on which most releases will occur, and keep sportsmen and the general public informed on efforts to restore and populate big game herds across the state for their enjoyment and benefit. The identified releases are truly only opportunities and are not set in stone. If habitat conditions change from the present, weather prevents safe capture operations, source stocks are not adequate, or scheduling conflicts arise with capture crew, some releases may be postponed into the future or all together cancelled. Some releases are pending assessments, actions, and/or habitat treatments to occur that are estimated to be completed during the next 2 years. Obviously if they are not completed, releases will be postponed.

## **BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY**

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Desert Bighorn Sheep                      Reintroduction                      FY2012 - 2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 50

**RELEASE SITE:**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Virginia Range                      **SITE NAME(S):** Clark Mountain  
**COUNTY:** Storey

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

This is a private lands release in Storey County onto land owned by Tahoe-Reno Industrial (TRI). TRI is the primary private landowner in this area, controlling approximately 100,000 acres of land (61% of Storey County). The majority of the Virginia Range lies within Storey County with smaller portions in Washoe and Lyon Counties, and Carson City. The extreme southern and eastern portions of the range contain private land holdings checkered with public land administered by the BLM Carson City District. The northern section however, which is the area in which NDOW estimates will be where the bighorn sheep will establish their home range, is almost entirely under private ownership.

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

A Virginia Range Reintroduction Plan was written in 2009/10 and contains all applicable details of the release site, land ownership, adjacent grazing allotments and management considerations. A cooperative agreement between TRI and NDOW was signed in July 2010 outlining the details of the release, subsequent monitoring of the herd and each parties obligations.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

A letter from NDOW to all landowners and adjacent permittees will be sent out resolving them of any liability in the case of any disease or mortality events of the bighorns following the release.

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

Several meetings were held in 2009/10 with TRI representatives to discuss the cooperative agreement and release details. The Board of Commissioners of Storey County and the county's Wildlife Advisory Board were involved in these discussions and have given their full support(see Reintroduction Plan attachments). Wildlife Advisory Boards, adjacent livestock permittees and interested participants in this process will be notified by mail or phone to participate in the release..

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

The target area which NDOW has evaluated for this reintroduction is comprised of Clark Mountain, the designated release area, with its surrounding canyons, and the Truckee River corridor. Elevation varies from approximately 4,500 feet on the alluvial fans to 7,198 feet at Clark Mountain. The topographic features of Clark Mountain include north, south, east and west facing exposures with numerous breaks and drainages providing adequate escape cover for bighorn sheep. God's Throne Canyon, which extends northwest off Clark Mountain is a representative sample of good bighorn sheep lambing habitat. Though much of the understory has been invaded by cheatgrass, there is still adequate coverage of perennial grasses and palatable shrubs to support a bighorn sheep population. Topographic features of the Truckee River corridor provide mostly north facing cliffs and steep slopes descending abruptly down to the Truckee River and the Derby Ditch. The Truckee River corridor and Interstate 80 will both be major impediments to northward expansion of the reintroduced bighorns. Bighorn habitat is in fair to good condition in most places with water availability being the limiting factor in the northern part of the range. Feral horses occupy the unit and are the most abundant ungulate. Two water developments will be built upon approval of the release by the Commission. These and existing water sources in the area will be

fenced to preclude use by feral horses and thus reducing this competition. \_\_\_\_\_

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

Area biologist recommendations and current mountain lion harvest statistics indicate predator control in the release area is not necessary at this time. A request will be made to Wildlife Services to conduct a field evaluation of predator sign and the need for predator removal prior to the bighorn release. The areas surrounding Clark Mountain are hunted by lion hunters every year, mainly due to it's proximity to Reno. Mule deer populations are low due in part to the expansion of the Truckee Meadows and U.S. Highway 395 which cut off migration routes into the unit two decades ago. Lions in the Virginia Range have already shown a tendency to prey almost exclusively on feral horses, a major competitor with other ungulates. There are radio-collard lions (at least one) occupying the north part of the Virginia Range and these lions are part of a cooperative study between the University of Nevada, Reno and NDOW, along with several other contributors. These collared lions will be avoided during pre-release predator control due to the scientific and economic investment that NDOW and other contributors have in the study. If these lions should prey on released bighorn sheep it will be known immediately and appropriate action will be taken at that time to target the specific lion. \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:** The goal of this release is to reestablish a herd of desert bighorn sheep into their native habitat within the Virginia Range. There are many benefits of a reintroduction of this type, including: having a site that would help alleviate higher densities of sheep elsewhere in the state by providing a release location; allowing for potential release stock if the population persists in the future; having a population of desert bighorn sheep within minutes of the State Capitol and Reno would provide viewing opportunities for school age children. The landowners have already agreed to hunting the population per NDOW recommendations, and they are eager to facilitate the educational aspects of the release site as described above. \_\_\_\_\_

**NDOW REGION:** \_\_\_\_\_ Western \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE PREPARED:** \_\_\_\_\_ August 2010 \_\_\_\_\_

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Desert Bighorn Sheep                      Augmentation                      FY2012 & 2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 25 - FY2012 and 25 - FY2013

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Excelsior Mountain Range      **SITE NAME(S):** Marietta and Douglas Canyon

**COUNTY:** Mineral **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T 5N R 33E Section 31

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management Carson District, Stillwater Resource Area.

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Walker Resource Management Plan, BLM MOU Supplement 9, Mina HMP.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

None

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM Carson District will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees prior to release. The Mineral County Advisory Board to manage wildlife, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited Chapters, adjacent livestock permittees and interested participants in this process will be notified by mail or phone to participate in the release.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Adequate water has been constructed in the release area coupled with abundant escape cover and forage. The majority of the sheep habitat is in good condition due to the rough topography and degree of slope.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

Nothing suggests that predator populations are excessive or will prevent the initial bighorn release complement from growing. No predator control is recommended at this time. If post-release monitoring confirms predator kills are occurring, efforts will be made to receive assistance to conduct selective predator removal to prevent excessive mortalities that would limit population growth.

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** June 2011

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Desert Bighorn Sheep                      Augmentation                      FY2012

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** East Range, Unit 044                      **SITE NAME(S):** Inskip Canyon/Willow Creek

**COUNTY:** Pershing                      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T 31 N R36 E S 18 or 12

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management-Humboldt River Field Office, Winnemucca District Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Amended Sonoma-Gerlach MFP III decisions, resource activity plan/cooperative agreement

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

none

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM Humboldt River Field Office will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees prior to release. The Pershing and Churchill County Advisory Boards to manage wildlife and Nevada Bighorns Unlimited Chapters will be notified of the projected release date.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Habitat in the Inskip, Johnson, Reed, Mitch and Leach Canyons is considered good to excellent for bighorn propagation. Wildfires occurred within the project area in the early 2000s, greatly reduced juniper trees and allowed forbs and annuals to flourish. Adequate water sources exist in all of the canyons listed earlier as well as escape and thermal cover for bighorns.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

Units 043-046's mule deer population is currently at all time high levels. Furthermore, mountain lion harvest has increased in the project area of Unit 044. NDOW biologists recommend predator control for mountain lions and coyotes within the project area during the first two years following post-release.

**COMMENTS:** This augmentation is anticipated to further expand bighorn distribution north in the East Range. Currently, bighorns only occupy the Root Springs area in the southernmost part of Unit 044.

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** June 22, 2011

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Desert Bighorn Sheep Augmentation FY2012 - 2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** South Pahroc Range **SITE NAME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY:** Lincoln **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T6S R62E Sec. 6

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management - Ely District, Caliente Field Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Big Rocks, Mount Irish, and South Pahroc Range Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment - January 14, 2008. South Hiko Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat Management Plan. This document has been in effect since 1987, but water developments and wildlife releases are under additional scrutiny since part of the area has been designated as wilderness. This release will be done outside of the wilderness boundary. Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) states - "Release wildlife on public lands within the planning area in conformance with Manual 1745, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife".

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

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**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees. The Lincoln County Advisory Board to manage wildlife and local sportsmen groups will be notified of the projected release date.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

Bighorn sheep habitat was evaluated as good in the South Pahroc's in the 1980's. A 25,000 acre wildfire occurred in 2005 that removed a great deal of encroaching pinyon-juniper. Post-fire vegetation is grasses, forbs, and shrubs which has greatly increased suitable bighorn habitat.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

Nothing suggests that predator populations are excessive or will prevent the bighorn release complement from growing. No predator control is recommended at this time. If post-release monitoring confirms predator kills are occurring, protective efforts may be extended to the South Pahroc Range from the adjacent Delamar Mountains where bighorn sheep protection is ongoing.

**COMMENTS:** The release location would be near Eight Mile Spring in the southwest portion of the range. Bighorns were released in 1985 and 1986 in this area and are still present in relatively low densities. The 2005 wildfire has substantially increased suitable bighorn habitat for an expanding herd. As the population grows, additional water sources based on seasonal habitat use patterns of marked bighorn may be necessary to further the expansion of this herd into the 2005 wildfire area.

**NDOW REGION:** Southern **DATE PREPARED:** 8/24/2009

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Desert Bighorn Sheep Augmentation FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Meadow Valley Mountains **SITE NAME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY:** Lincoln **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T12S R64E Sec. 7

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management - Ely District, Caliente Field Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Meadow Valley - Arrow Canyon - Delamar Habitat Management Plan. This document has been in effect since 1992, but water developments and wildlife releases are under additional scrutiny since the area has been designated as wilderness. This release will be done outside of the wilderness boundary. To date, 5 water developments have been constructed. Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) states - "Release wildlife on public lands within the planning area in conformance with Manual 1745, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife".

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

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**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees. The Lincoln County Advisory Board to manage wildlife and local sportsmen groups will be notified of the projected release date.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

The 242 square miles of occupied and potential bighorn sheep habitat in the Meadow Valley Mountains are classified as good to excellent. Desert bighorn use of the Meadow Valley Mountains has historically been yearlong, but available habitat has increased with the construction of water developments (bighorn sheep guzzlers). This bighorn population was estimated at 155 animals in the mid-1980's but declined in the late 1980's and has remained at low levels up to present. A bighorn release, coupled with increased water distribution, would encourage the bighorn population to increase to historic levels. One additional water development is planned at this time.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

Nothing suggests that predator populations are excessive or will prevent the bighorn release complement from growing. No predator control is recommended at this time. If post-release monitoring confirms predator kills are occurring, protective efforts may be extended to the Meadow Valley Mountains from the adjacent Delamar Mountains where bighorn sheep protection is ongoing.

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NDOW REGION:** Southern

**DATE PREPARED:** August 2009

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Desert Bighorn Sheep Augmentation FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 40

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Delamar Mountains **SITE NAME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY:** Lincoln **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T8S R65E Sec. 30

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management - Ely District, Caliente Field Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Meadow Valley - Arrow Canyon - Delamar Habitat Management Plan. This document has been in effect since 1992, but water developments and wildlife releases are under additional scrutiny since part of the area has been designated as wilderness. This release will be done outside of the wilderness boundary. To date, seven water developments have been constructed and one additional water development is planned at this time. Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) states - "Release wildlife on public lands within the planning area in conformance with Manual 1745, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife".

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

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**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees. The Lincoln County Advisory Board to manage wildlife and local sportsmen groups will be notified of the projected release date.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

Bighorn sheep habitat was evaluated in the Delamar Mountains in 1988 with 113 square miles of the southern portion rated good to very good bighorn habitat. Water was the only limited factor in this southern portion. To date, seven water developments have been constructed in this southern portion of the the Delamars. Wildfires in 1994, 1999, and 2005 burned over 225 square miles of the southern and northern portions of the Delamars. Though the invasive red brome grass can be found throughout much of the lower elevations due to the wildfires, large areas of pinyon-juniper were removed along with extensive areas revegetated post-fire with new growth of perennial grass/forb/shrub understory. The combined southern and northern portions of the Delamars are now estimated to have over 400 square miles of bighorn habitat. This is one of the largest continuous bighorn habitats in Nevada. Due to its great expanse, effective surveys and assessments of occupied areas and bighorn densities have been difficult.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

A bighorn sheep protection project is ongoing in this area. The protective efforts may be extended to adjacent areas when necessary. The past removal of lions and bobcats by Wildlife Services have allowed for increased adult survival and lamb recruitment based on limited aerial surveys and images from trail cameras at water sources. Ear-tagged ewes from earlier releases over 7 years ago have been recently documented by trail cameras.

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NDOW REGION:** Southern **DATE PREPARED:** August 2009

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Desert Bighorn Sheep Augmentation FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Gold Buttes **SITE NAME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY:** Clark **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T20S R71E and/or T16S R70E

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management - Southern Nevada District Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Gold Butte Habitat Management Plan (1983)

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

Las Vegas Resource Management Plan - 1998

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

Clark County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife and local sportsmen groups will be notified of the projected release date.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

In May 2004, the Virgin #1 water development was constructed northwest of Whitney Pocket as a measure to enhance habitat prior to the bighorn sheep release (augmentation) that was accomplished in October 2005. In March 2006, Virgin #2 was constructed north of Whitney Pocket. Although the LVRMP ROD closed all allotments in the Virgin Mountain-Gold Butte complex to livestock grazing, trespass cattle remain in the area. The levels of OHV use and proliferation of unauthorized trails/roads in the area has increased rapidly since the latter half of the 1990s. Wildland fires caused by lightning strikes in 2005 and 2006 impacted vegetative associations in the Virgin Mountains and Gold Buttes. In general, the fires may have enhanced bighorn habitat at upper mid to higher elevations by removing dense vegetation, yet at lower elevations degraded areas exist due to establishment of exotic annual plant species.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

In the Gold Buttes, there is little information to suggest predator populations are excessively large or expanding. No predator control is recommended in the Gold Buttes. No predator control is recommended at this time. If post-release monitoring confirms predator kills are occurring, efforts will be made to receive assistance to conduct selective predator removal to prevent excessive mortalities that would limit population growth. There is information to suggest predation pressure in the adjacent Virgin Mountains has limited expansion of bighorn release complements (2005 and 2006). A bighorn sheep release in the Virgin Mountains may be pursued pending results of a fall 2009 aerial survey that reflects bighorn detections in proximity to water developments and the Whitney Pocket area

**COMMENTS:**

Information in NDOW files suggests the decline of the bighorn sheep population in the Virgin Mountains between 1920s and 1950s was attributed to disease (domestic sheep grazing), competition with livestock and poaching. Subsequently, aerial survey data also indicate two bighorn sheep complements released at Cabin Spring in 1979 and 1980 failed to produce a viable population. As recently as the early 1980s, domestic sheep were trailed through St. Thomas Gap from an allotment on the Arizona Strip District to the Mormon Mesa area. In addition, because of past accounts of exotic sheep observed in the area,

releases were not recommended in the Virgin Mountains due to unresolved concerns of the potential for disease-induced die off. At present, these concerns appear partly resolved. Bighorn sheep released in the Virgin Mountains may be naïve to virulent pathogens harbored by resident free-ranging bighorn. In October 2005, in accordance with NDOW's biennial Big Game Release Plan (FY 2006-07), 25 bighorn sheep were released at Virgin #1 water development. The release contingent was comprised of 17 ewes and 8 lambs. In October 2006, 27 bighorn sheep were released midway between Virgin #1 water development and Whitney Pocket. The release contingent was comprised of 22 ewes and 5 lambs. In that some individuals from the 2005 and 2006 releases have dispersed over a large area, the overall success of the augmentations remains under evaluation.

**NDOW REGION:** Southern

**DATE PREPARED:** August 2009

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** California Bighorn Sheep      Augmentation      FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Calico Mountains, Santa Rosa Range **SITE NAME(S):** Calico Creek/Mahogany Pass

**COUNTY:** Humboldt **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T 46N, R 42E, SEC 30 and T 45N, R 42E, SEC 7

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

USFS Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Santa Rosa Ranger District; Bureau of Land Management - Winnemucca District; Private Landowner

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Consistent with Forest Service Plan Direction and BLM land use plan

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

None

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

Humboldt County Advisory Board to manage wildlife, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Nevada Chukar Foundation, and Nevada Muley's will be notified of the projected release date. Paradise Valley School will be notified prior to the release. Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow them to notify livestock permittees.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Habitat for bighorn sheep is in excellent condition. Elevational changes in this area range from 6000 feet up to 8400 feet. Though much of the understory has been invaded by cheatgrass in the lower elevations, there is still adequate coverage of perennial grasses and palatable shrubs to support a bighorn sheep population. Steep terrain is ideal for both lambing and escape cover in this area with plenty of available water. This Mountain has many springs available throughout the year providing many areas for dispersal. These herds have the potential to expand greatly within this range. This mountain allows connectivity with the main stem of the Santa Rosa Range. In the higher elevations very little competition exists between livestock and bighorn sheep. This release will aid in the expansion of this herd.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

A request will be made to Wildlife Services to conduct a field evaluation of predator sign and the need for predator removal prior to the bighorn release. If predator control work is deemed necessary it is recommended that this area receive bighorn sheep protection prior to the release and during the first 2 years post-release.

**COMMENTS:** This proposed project is an augmentation to existing populations of bighorn that exists in the Santa Rosa Range. Release of bighorn into the Calico Mountains would expand bighorn use of this mountain range.

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** 6/24/11

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** California Bighorn Sheep      Augmentation      FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Santa Rosa Range, Martin Creek      **SITE NAME(S):** Martin Creek  
**COUNTY:** Humboldt      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T 43N, R 41E, SEC 8 & 9

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

USFS Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Santa Rosa Ranger District; Bureau of Land Management - Winnemucca District; Private Landowner

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Consistent with Forest Service Plan Direction and BLM land use plan

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

None

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

Humboldt County Advisory Board to manage wildlife, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Nevada Chukar Foundation, and Nevada Muley's will be notified of the projected release date. Paradise Valley School will be notified prior to the release. Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow them to notify livestock permittees.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Habitat for bighorn sheep is in excellent condition. Elevational changes in this area range from 5000 feet up to 7000 feet. Though much of the understory has been invaded by cheatgrass in the lower elevations, there is still adequate coverage of perennial grasses and palatable shrubs to support a bighorn sheep population. Steep terrain is ideal for both lambing and escape cover in this area with plenty of available water. These herds have the potential to expand greatly within this range. Very little competition exists between livestock and bighorn sheep. This release will aid in the expansion of this herd.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

A request will be made to Wildlife Services to conduct a field evaluation of predator sign and the need for predator removal prior to the bighorn release. Predator control work for this release will be unlikely due to the results of the attempted work in 2010. This area, due to accessibility, has had ample sport harvest and has kept these populations low. Average age and number of lions being harvested within this range has dropped indicating that predator populations are within a manageable level. Other small game species are doing well with increases in their populations also indicating a lack of predation pressure.

**COMMENTS:** This proposed project is an augmentation to existing populations of bighorn that exists in the Santa Rosa Range. Release of bighorn into the Martin Creek drainage would expand bighorn use of this mountain range. This would bolster the small population that exists in Martin Creek from the 2006 release.

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** 6/24/11

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** California Bighorn Sheep      Augmentation      FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Jackson Mountains      **SITE NAME(S):** Parrot and King Lear

**COUNTY:** Humboldt      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T40N, R31E, SEC 5, T39N, R30E SEC 22, T40N, R31E SEC 29 &30, and T40N, R32E SEC 5

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management - Winnemucca District.

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Land Use Plan supports big game transplants.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

This release site is outside the wilderness boundary

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow them to notify livestock permittees. Humboldt County Advisor Board, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Nevada Chukar Foundation, and Nevada Muley's

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Steep canyons in both the north and south end of the range have the best available habitat with ample water in the bottoms of canyons as well as springs and seeps. The habitat is in good condition due to the steep terrain which in some areas excludes livestock grazing. Some impacts do occur from the expanding feral horse population. This release is to increase densities of existing sheep populations within the Jackson Mountains. This population has been holding steady the last several years with very little increases or decreases. The first release that took place was in 1984 with 2 others following in the late 80's. In 2010 another release took place that had only 15 animals. Plenty of existing habitat is available to increase the current herds within this range.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

A request will be made to Wildlife Services to conduct a field evaluation of predator sign and the need for predator removal prior to the bighorn release. Due to the type of terrain and the wilderness boundaries, pre and post treatment for predators may be considered. Predator control should continue for at least one year after release. Sport harvest is extremely low due to wilderness access issues.

**COMMENTS:** Feral horse population need to be closely monitored by BLM and kept at low HML. This release will be to further bolster this herd and to follow-up the augmentation that took place in 2010.

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** 6/24/11

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** California Bighorn Sheep      Augmentation      FY2012

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Massacre Rim, Unit 011      **SITE NAME(S):** Big Point  
**COUNTY:** Washoe      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T44N R20E sec 29

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management Surprise District

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Surprise District Resource Management Plan 2007. NDOW Big Game Release Plan. NDOW Bighorn Sheep Management Plan 2000.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

The Bureau of Land Management will complete NEPA documentation well in advance of the planned capture and release of bighorn. The NDOW will provide the BLM with written notification of the planned augmentation so that the BLM has ample time to contact other user groups.

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow them to notify livestock permittees. The Western Region would notify the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife and the Reno and Fallon Chapters of Nevada Bighorns Unlimited regarding impending capture and release plans.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Habitat conditions along the Massacre Rim are excellent for bighorn sheep. Abundant forage and water exist in the area. Excellent escape cover exists with a large rim running for over 10+ miles on public land southwest of the Sheldon Refuge. The rim continues running north into the Little Sheldon (6 miles) and is connected to the Coleman Rim that runs north of the Sheldon to the Oregon border (8 miles). Bighorn were first released on the Sheldon portion of the Massacre Rim in March 1995. Bighorn numbers on the southern portion of the Massacre Rim are known to fluctuate as bighorn move back and forth along the rim between the Sheldon and the public lands to the south. Current bighorn numbers in the area of the release site vary but are estimated at between 10 and 20 animals.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

An average of 3.5 lions per year have been removed from hunt Unit 011 through sport harvest and/or depredation between 2005 and 2010. A request will be made to Wildlife Services to conduct a field evaluation of predator sign and the need for predator removal prior to the bighorn release.

**COMMENTS:** California bighorn were first released into the northern portion of the Massacre Rim in March of 1995. The release occurred on the west side of the Little Sheldon. Most of the bighorn currently inhabit areas within the borders of the Sheldon Wildlife Refuge, however, numerous observations of bighorn along the southern portion of the rim (public lands) have been reported or observed by NDOW over the past twenty plus years. In 2007, a California bighorn tagholder harvested a mature ram during the bighorn sheep hunting season from the southern end of the Massacre Rim in hunt Unit 011.

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** 6/20/11

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** California Bighorn Sheep      Augmentation      FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Santa Rosa Range      **SITE NAME(S):** Peterman Creek  
**COUNTY:** Humboldt      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T 41N, R 37E, SEC 13

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

USFS Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Bureau of Land Management - Winnemucca District.

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Consistent with Forest Service Plan Direction and BLM land use plan

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

None

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

Humboldt County Advisory Board to manage wildlife, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Nevada Chukar Foundation, and Nevada Muley's will be notified of the projected release date. Orovada School will be notified prior to the release. Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow them to notify livestock permittees.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Habitat for bighorn sheep is in excellent condition. Elevational changes in this area range from 5200 feet up to 8200 feet. Though much of the understory has been invaded by cheatgrass in the lower elevations, there is still adequate coverage of perennial grasses and palatable shrubs to support a bighorn sheep population. Steep terrain is ideal for both lambing and escape cover in this area with plenty of available water. These herds have the potential to expand greatly within this range. This would bolster the population within the Andorno/ Porcupine drainages. Very little competition exists between livestock and bighorn sheep. This release will aid in the expansion of this herd.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

A request will be made to Wildlife Services to conduct a field evaluation of predator sign and the need for predator removal prior to the bighorn release. This area, due to accessibility, has had ample sport harvest and has kept these populations low. Average age and number of lions being harvested within this range has dropped indicating that predator populations are within a manageable level. Other small game species are doing well with increases in their populations also indicating a lack of predation pressure.

**COMMENTS:** This proposed project is an augmentation to existing populations of bighorn that exists in the Santa Rosa Range. Release of bighorn into the Peterman Creek drainage would expand bighorn use of this mountain range.

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** 6/24/11

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** California Bighorn Sheep      Augmentation      FY2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 40

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Hays Canyon Range      **SITE NAME(S):** Hays Canyon

**COUNTY:** Washoe      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T.39N,R.18E section 5.

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management Surprise District

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

Hays Canyon Bighorn Sheep Re-establishment Habitat Management Plan, Resource Management Plan Surprise District (2007), NDOW Bighorn Sheep Management Plan 2001.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

The NDOW will provide the BLM with written notification of the planned augmentation so that the BLM has ample time to contact other user groups. The Surprise District of the BLM will complete the NEPA documentation well in advance of the release.

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

The Western Region would notify the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife and the Reno and Fallon Chapters of Nevada Bighorns Unlimited regarding the impending capture and release plans.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

The Hays Canyon Range provides bighorn with excellent high quality bighorn habitat. Population estimates prior to the die-off in late 2007 were as high as 110 to 120 bighorn. Sufficient water, forage and escape cover are found throughout the range. However, additional water developments are currently planned in some areas of the Range in order to provide additional water sources at the upper elevations. Currently two domestic sheep/goat farm flocks are located at the lower elevations on the northwestern portion of the Range. NDOW and the BLM will be working with the private landowners to try and reduce the potential for any bighorn/domestic sheep or goat interaction. A domestic sheep trailing route exists along Hwy 447 which is located on the extreme southwestern portion of the Hays Canyon Range.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

An average of 4.2 lions per year were harvested through sport harvest/depredation/illegal kills from within hunt unit 013 between 2005 and 2010. A request will be made to Wildlife Services to conduct field evaluation of predator sign and the need for predator removal prior to the bighorn release.

**COMMENTS:** The Hays Canyon bighorn population experienced a severe pneumonia related die-off in October and November of 2007. A small number of animals are believed to have survived this disease event and exist in the range today (estimated at 5-10 animals). This augmentation is an effort to re-establish a self sustaining bighorn population in the Hays Canyon Range. Future coordination and discussion will include working with private landowners to reduce the potential for bighorn/domestic sheep and goat interaction. The initial release of bighorn within the Hays Canyon Range occurred in 1990 with a second augmentation of animals in 1995.

**NDOW REGION:** Western

**DATE PREPARED:** 6/27/11

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep      Augmentation      FY2012-2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** East Humboldt Range      **SITE NAME(S):** Willow Creek  
**COUNTY:** Elko      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

USFS Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Ruby Mountains Ranger District

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

To date, the District Ranger has verbally expressed agreement to the concept, but the final decision is pending a formal proposal from NDOW, at which time the District Ranger would determine the level of necessary NEPA.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division is awaiting a signed letter from the NDOW Director, formally requesting the sheep for release in the East Humboldt Range. Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife has a formal process for approving out-of-state transplants; no formal request has been made as of July 2011

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

All interested parties will be notified of the release and the NEPA will dictate the appropriate public involvement process.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

The East Humboldt Range has historically sustained a viable sheep population upwards of 200 animals. The habitat potential of this area is evidenced by both the quantity and quality of the sheep previously realized in this area.

The past success of this herd speaks volumes to the availability of the necessary summer and winter range, escape terrain, and overall habitat characteristics necessary to sustain a viable and productive sheep herd (winter range may eventually limit the herd between 150 and 200 sheep). The current estimate of less than 30 animals, due to a recent die-off, indicates a large availability of unoccupied habitat.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

Predator control prior to the release would certainly benefit this small initial population.

**COMMENTS:** This proposed release is part of a larger project to assess post die-off bighorn recovery and respiratory pathogen transmission and epidemiology among bighorn, mountain goats, and domestic livestock. The most devastating long-term impact of an all-age bighorn sheep die-off is the years of poor lamb survival and recruitment. Thus there is a shared interest among wildlife managers and veterinarians westwide including Canada concerning the appropriate management strategies of the surviving animals and post die-off herd recovery. Based on observations of low lamb survival in the East Humboldt Range following the 2009-2010 die-off, it appears that population recovery in this herd will be poor. Following discussion with wildlife managers, veterinarians and researchers with extensive experience in wild sheep respiratory diseases and post die-off management, a proposed study has been outlined. The study would involve capturing all remaining bighorn sheep from the East Humboldts and translocating the ewes into

the surviving herd in the Ruby Mountains. Because rams poise the greatest threat to dispersing back to the East Humboldts, they may either be taken to Dr. Srikumaran's research facility at Washington State University or fitted with satellite collars and released into the Ruby Mountains and intensively monitored to ensure they do not return to the East Humboldts. New bighorn sheep from an outside source with a documented history of strong lamb recruitment and nonvirulent pathogens would be released into the East Humboldt Range. Intensive monitoring (demography and movement) of the wild sheep and goats, as well as pathogen sampling of wild ungulates and associated domestic livestock will be conducted for a minimum of 3 years. This study will compare population responses and pathogen/herd health profiles between the newly transplanted East Humboldt herd and the post die-off survivors in the Ruby Mountains.

**NDOW REGION:** Eastern

**DATE PREPARED:** 7/25/2011

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Augmentation **FY2012-2013**

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 20

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Ruby Mountains **SITE NAME(S):** Lamoille Canyon  
**COUNTY:** Elko **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):**

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

USFS Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Ruby Mountains Ranger District

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

To date, the District Ranger has verbally expressed agreement to the concept, but the final decision is pending a formal proposal from NDOW, at which time the District Ranger would determine the level of necessary NEPA.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

All interested parties will be notified of the release and the NEPA will dictate the appropriate public involvement process.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

The Ruby Mountains have historically sustained a viable sheep population of well over 150 animals. The current estimate of less than 30 animals due to a recent die-off, indicates the availability of unoccupied habitat. The habitat potential of this area is evidenced by both the quantity and quality of the sheep previously realized in this area. The past success of this herd speaks volumes to the availability of the necessary summer and winter range, escape terrain, and overall habitat characteristics.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

Predator control prior to the release would certainly benefit this small initial population.

**COMMENTS:** This proposed release is part of a larger project to assess post die-off bighorn recovery and respiratory pathogen transmission and epidemiology among bighorn, mountain goats, and domestic livestock. The most devastating long-term impact of an all-age bighorn sheep die-off is the years of poor lamb survival and recruitment. Thus there is a shared interest among wildlife managers and veterinarians westwide including Canada concerning the appropriate management strategies of the surviving animals and post die-off herd recovery. Based on observations of low lamb survival in the East Humboldt Range following the 2009-2010 die-off, it appears that population recovery in this herd will be poor. Following discussion with wildlife managers, veterinarians and researchers with extensive experience in wild sheep respiratory diseases and post die-off management, a proposed study has been outlined. The study would involve capturing all remaining bighorn sheep from the East Humboldts and translocating the ewes into the surviving herd in the Ruby Mountains. Because rams pose the greatest threat to dispersing back to the East Humboldts, they may either be taken to Dr. Sriksuraman's research facility at Washington State University or fitted with satellite collars and released into the Ruby Mountains and intensively monitored to ensure they do not return to the East Humboldts. New bighorn sheep from an outside source with a documented history of strong lamb recruitment and nonvirulent pathogens would be released into the East Humboldt Range. Intensive monitoring (demography and movement) of the wild sheep and goats.

as well as pathogen sampling of wild ungulates and associated domestic livestock will be conducted for a minimum of 3 years. This study will compare population responses and pathogen/herd health profiles between the newly transplanted East Humboldt herd and the post die-off survivors in the Ruby Mountains.

**NDOW REGION:** Eastern

**DATE PREPARED:** 7/25/2011

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep      Reintroduction      **FY2013**

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 30

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Goshute Mountains, Unit 106      **SITE NAME(S):** Ferguson Mtn.,  
**COUNTY:** Elko      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T30N, T31N, R69E

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management - Elko District.

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Bureau of Land Management Wells Resource Area Management Plan.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

Pending NEPA documentation including an EA that will address a change of livestock kind by the current permittee from domestic sheep to cattle.

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees. The Elko County Advisory Board to manage wildlife and local sportsmen groups will be notified of the projected release date.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

A habitat evaluation by several NDOW biologists indicate there is ample summer and winter range to support bighorn populations although there are large areas that are somewhat limited because of relatively heavy tree cover including P-J at the lower elevations and mahogany and white fir at higher elevations. Water is available at limited spring sources and there is opportunity to enhance habitat availability through future guzzler construction.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

No serious problems identified since deer and associated lion populations are at low levels. It is possible that a few mountain lions may encounter bighorns primarily during the winter as they follow migrating deer into the area.

**COMMENTS:** This release is contingent upon the BLM and the permittee working out an agreement for an exchange of livestock kind on the allotment and an environmental assessment that assures that range conditions will not be adversely affected by that change.

**NDOW REGION:** Eastern

**DATE PREPARED:** August 2009

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Pronghorn Antelope                      Augmentation                      FY2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 50

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Delamar Valley                      **SITE NAME(S):**                     

**COUNTY:** Lincoln                      **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T6S R63E Sec. 26

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management Ely District - Caliente Field Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) states - "Release wildlife on public lands within the planning area in conformance with Manual 1745, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife". Two water developments are planned at this time that should allow antelope to utilize areas away from livestock use areas.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

                    

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

Contact BLM at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees and other affected parties prior to release.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

Delamar Valley has large areas of habitat suitable for pronghorn antelope. Currently, pronghorn are found throughout the valley in very low densities. Water sources do exist in the valley but new guzzler construction is necessary to provide adequate water distribution before a pronghorn augmentation could occur.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

No predator control efforts are recommended at this time. Moderate to high furbearer trapping pressure in addition to numerous predator calling contests occur in Lincoln County.

**COMMENTS:** The release would be done when source stock becomes available. Should emergency trapping efforts be necessary in other parts of Nevada, this area would be considered for antelope releases.

**NDOW REGION:** Southern                      **DATE PREPARED:** August 2009

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Pronghorn Antelope Augmentation FY2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 50

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Hamlin Valley **SITE NAME(S):**                     

**COUNTY:** Lincoln **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T8N R69E Sec. 28

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Bureau of Land Management Ely District - Schell Field Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) states - "Release wildlife on public lands within the planning area in conformance with Manual 1745, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife". Three water developments were installed in this area for antelope and other wildlife in 1990. Five additional water developments are planned at this time that should allow antelope to utilize areas away from livestock use areas.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

Operation Plan - To be developed cooperatively by BLM and NDOW.

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

Contact BLM at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees and other affected parties prior to release.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

Hamlin Valley has large areas of habitat suitable for pronghorn antelope. Pronghorn are found throughout the valley in moderate densities. Several water sources exist that allow antelope to utilize large expanses of habitat. New guzzler construction is necessary before a pronghorn augmentation would occur to reduce forage and water use conflicts with livestock.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

No predator control efforts are recommended at this time. Moderate to high furbearer trapping pressure in addition to numerous predator calling contests occur in Lincoln County.

**COMMENTS:** The release would be done when source stock becomes available. Should emergency trapping efforts be necessary in other parts of Nevada, this area would be considered for antelope releases.

**NDOW REGION:** Southern **DATE PREPARED:** August 2009

## BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Pronghorn Antelope                      Augmentation                      FY2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 50

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** South Spring Valley    **SITE NAME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY:** Lincoln    **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** T8N R68E Sec. 34

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Ely District Bureau of Land Management, Schell Field Office

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT:**

Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) states - "Release wildlife on public lands within the planning area in conformance with Manual 1745, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife". To date, one water development has been constructed in South Spring Valley. for pronghorn and other wildlife.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

BLM will be contacted at least one month in advance of release to allow BLM to notify livestock permittees.

**HABITAT EVALUATION:**

South Spring Valley has large areas of habitat suitable for pronghorn antelope. Pronghorn are found throughout the valley in fairly low densities. Though several water sources exist to support the current pronghorn herd, it is recommended that additional water developments be constructed before an augmentation occurs.

**PREDATOR EVALUATION:**

No predator control efforts are recommended at this time. Moderate to high furbearer trapping pressure in addition to numerous predator calling contests occur in Lincoln County.

**COMMENTS:** The release would be done when source stock becomes available. Should emergency trapping efforts be necessary in other parts of Nevada, this area would be considered for antelope releases.

**NDOW REGION:** Southern

**DATE PREPARED:** August 2009

**BIG GAME RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY**

**SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES:** Pronghorn Antelope Augmentation FY2013

**APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED:** 50

**RELEASE SITE(S):**

**MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA:** Northern Antelope Valley, Unit 106 **SITE NAME(S):** Antelope Valley\White Horse Mountain\Ferber Hills

**COUNTY:** Elko **LEGAL or COORDINATE DESCRIPTION(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:**

Elko District Bureau of Land Management

**AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:**

To date, no NEPA has been prepared for this augmentation. However, due to the nature of the release being an augmentation, a Categorical Exclusion (CX) should be an appropriate level of NEPA for the release.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:**

All interested parties will be notified of the release and the NEPA will dictate the appropriate public involvement process.

**HABITAT ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term):**

Antelope Valley and the Ferber Hills provide sufficient topographical and vegetative habitats which are suitable for thriving pronghorn populations. Abundant forbs, grasses and shrubs, mixed with rolling hills, create ideal habitat conditions. However, the area is water limited. The limited water resources will be resolved through the construction of 3 new water developments. These developments would be situated in order to facilitate maximum use of the available habitat by both the existing population and the animals to be released.

**PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

Predator is not necessary to ensure the success of the augmentation. Due to the presence of domestic sheep operators in the area, a large emphasis is placed each year on controlling coyote populations.

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NDOW REGION:** Eastern

**DATE PREPARED:** 7/01/2011