



STATE OF NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE


Game Division

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MEMORANDUM

October 19, 2018

To: Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife, and Interested Publics

From: Brian Wakeling, Administrator, Game Division 

Title: **Fiscal Year 2019–2020 Big Game Release Plan – For Possible Action**

Description: The Department will present the Fiscal Year 2019–2020 Big Game Release Plan for the Commission’s consideration. The Commission may vote to approve or amend the planned big game releases for FY 2019 and 2020.

Presenter: Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox

Summary:

In accordance with Commission Policy 22 (Introduction, Transplanting, and Exportation of Wildlife), the Department presents the anticipated captures and translocations in a big game release plan for the Commission’s consideration and action.

For Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020, the Department anticipates the potential for five bighorn sheep translocations (two in FY 2019, three in FY 2020). These captures are intended to occur within the state, and other translocations out-of-state are described in separate presentations to the Commission. The details of the planned translocations are provided in the attached plan.

Recommendation:

The Department recommends that the Commission **VOTE TO APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2019–2020 BIG GAME RELEASE PLAN AS PRESENTED.**

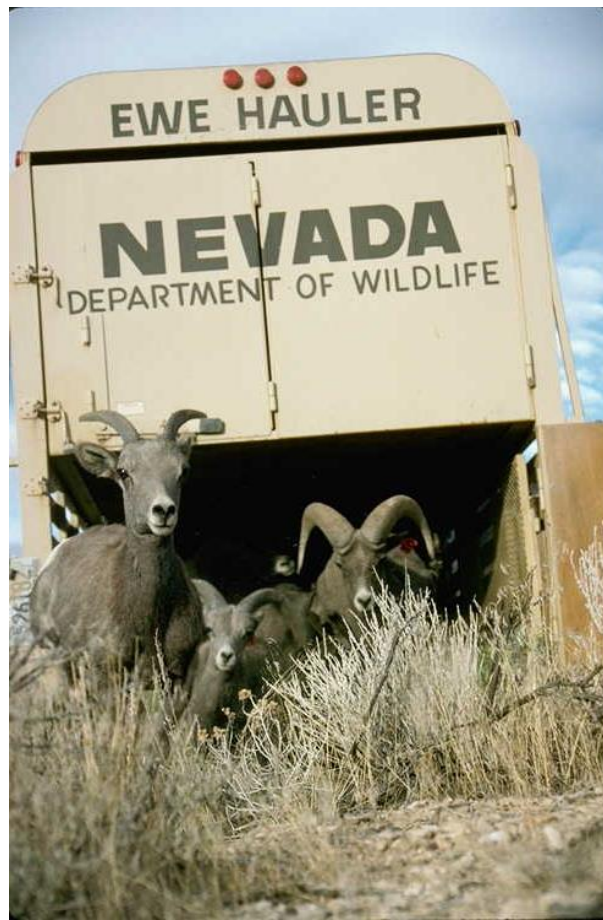


Nevada Department of Wildlife

Biennial Big Game Release Plan

Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020

(July 2018 - June 2021)



November 2018

FY2019 BIGHORN RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES: California Bighorn Augmentation FY2019

RELEASE SITE:

MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA: Massacre Rim, Unit 011 **SITE NAME(S):** Big Point
COUNTY: Washoe

APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED: 20 - 30

COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:

Bureau of Land Management Applegate Field Office, California.

AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:

BLM Surprise Field Office Resource Management Plan Record of Decision 2008 (Field Office name has since changed to Applegate); Categorical Exclusion (CX), Notice of Field Manager's Decision 2014; pending CX for second augmentation to Massacre Rim by BLM Applegate Field Office.

OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:

None

NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:

BLM Applegate Field Office will be contacted at least one month in advance notifying them of the bighorn release. Other groups to notify include Washoe County Advisory Board, Nevada Woolgrowers, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited Chapters, adjacent livestock permittees, and interested participants.

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

Two additional big game guzzlers are currently in the BLM planning process for Massacre Rim and would be beneficial to the bighorn herd to improve water distribution and availability, especially during prolonged drought periods. Vegetation and forage is adequate for additional augmentation and herd growth. Massacre Rim is over 40 miles NE of nearest public land domestic sheep grazing allotment. Not aware of any private farm flocks in the vicinity.

PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:

Lion predation has and continues to be a concern on the Massacre Rim. Predator control by USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services was initiated in association with the most recent bighorn augmentation 2014 and is ongoing in response to detected bighorn kills determined to be caused by mountain lions. GPS collared bighorn in this augmentation will be monitored closely and predator control efforts will be targeted in response to lion-caused bighorn mortalities.

COMMENTS: _____

NDOW REGION: Western

DATE PREPARED: October 2018

FY2019 BIGHORN RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES: California Bighorn Reintroduction **FY2019**

RELEASE SITE:

MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA: Bloody Run Hills, Unit 035 **SITE NAME(S):** Crawford Farms Private Lands on west side of Bloody Run Hills, Pinson Canyon **COUNTY:** Humboldt

APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED: 30 - 40

COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:

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

AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:

Winnemucca BLM Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision 2015; pending Cooperative Agreement with NDOW and Crawford Farms.

OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:

NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:

BLM Humboldt River Field Office will be contacted at least one month in advance notifying them of the bighorn release. Other groups to notify include Crawford Farms, Humboldt County Advisory Board, Nevada Woolgrowers, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited Chapters, adjacent livestock permittees, and interested participants.

HABITAT/PATHOGEN ASSESSMENT (be specific; include any limiting factors both short- and long-term): Ample water developments exist to support augmentation and current bighorn herd. Nearest public land domestic sheep grazing allotment is 23 miles to the northwest. A BLM domestic sheep trailing route is 27 miles to the west. Not aware of any private farm flocks in the vicinity. The core Bloody Run's bighorn habitat is 20 miles from southern-most bighorn subherd in the Santa Rosa Range previously exposed to Mycoplasma ovinpneumoniae. This will necessitate collaring and monitoring Bloody Run rams, removing bighorn that may disperse toward the Santa Rosa Range and monitoring subherd performance and pathogen surveillance in southern Santa Rosa Range.

PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:

May consider a pre-release predator control effort. If not, will monitor GPS collared bighorn sheep and work closely with USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services to respond quickly to bighorn mortalities, ascertain cause of mortality, and if confirmed lion kill, attempt to remove offending lion.

COMMENTS: _____

NDOW REGION: Western

DATE PREPARED: October 2018

FY2020 BIGHORN RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES: California Bighorn Augmentation FY2020

RELEASE SITE:

MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA: South McGee Mountain, Unit 032
SITE NAME(S): Above Gridley Lake **COUNTY:** Humboldt

APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED: 20 - 30

COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:

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

AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:

Winnemucca BLM Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision 2015; NEPA to be completed in 2019

OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:

NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:

BLM Humboldt River Field Office will be contacted at least one month in advance notifying them of the bighorn release. Other groups to notify include USFWS Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge staff, Humboldt County Advisory Board, Nevada Woolgrowers, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited Chapters, adjacent livestock permittees, and interested participants.

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

There is ample natural water sources and stream flows to support bighorn herd without the addition of water developments. Healthy perennial grass, forb, and shrub forage base exists on McGee Mountain. Nearest public land domestic sheep grazing allotment is 23 miles to the east. Not aware of any private farm flocks in the vicinity.

PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:

May consider a pre-release predator control effort. If not, will monitor GPS collared bighorn sheep and work closely with USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services to respond quickly to bighorn mortalities, ascertain cause of mortality, and if confirmed lion kill, attempt to remove offending lion.

COMMENTS: _____

NDOW REGION: Western

DATE PREPARED: October 2018

FY2020 BIGHORN RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES: California Bighorn Augmentation FY2020

RELEASE SITE:

MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA: North McGee Mountain, Unit 032 **SITE NAME(S):** Oregon Canyon
COUNTY: Humboldt

APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED: 20 - 30

COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:

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

AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:

Winnemucca BLM Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision 2015; NEPA to be completed in 2019

OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:

NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:

BLM Humboldt River Field Office will be contacted at least one month in advance notifying them of the bighorn release. Other groups to notify include USFWS Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge staff, Humboldt County Advisory Board, Nevada Woolgrowers, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited Chapters, adjacent livestock permittees, and interested participants.

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

There is ample natural water sources and water developments to support bighorn herd without additional water developments. Healthy perennial grass, forb, and shrub forage base exists on McGee Mountain. Nearest public land domestic sheep grazing allotment is 20 miles to the east. Not aware of any private farm flocks in the vicinity.

PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:

Will monitor GPS collared bighorn sheep and work closely with USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services to respond quickly to bighorn mortalities, ascertain cause of mortality, and if confirmed lion kill, attempt to remove offending lion.

COMMENTS: _____

NDOW REGION: Western

DATE PREPARED: October 2018

FY2020 BIGHORN RELEASE SITE PLANNING AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

SPECIES OR SUBSPECIES: California Bighorn Augmentation FY2020

RELEASE SITE:

MOUNTAIN RANGE/AREA: Granite Range, Unit 014 SITE NAME(S): Negro Creek
COUNTY: Washoe

APPROXIMATE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED: 20 - 30

COOPERATING LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY:

Bureau of Land Management - Winnemucca District -Black Rock Field Office

AGENCY APPROVAL DOCUMENT AND STATUS:

Winnemucca BLM Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision 2015; NEPA to be completed in 2019

OTHER DOCUMENTS AND THEIR STATUS:

NOTIFICATION OF USER GROUPS:

BLM Black Rock Field Office will be contacted at least one month in advance notifying them of the bighorn release. Other groups to notify include Washoe County Advisory Board, Nevada Woolgrowers, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited Chapters, adjacent livestock permittees, and interested participants.

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

There is ample natural water sources and stream flows to support bighorn herd. Perennial grasses and forbs are still recovering from past fires. Excessive cattle grazing continues to occur in the Negro Creek area. A BLM domestic sheep trailing route is 13 miles to the south. Not aware of any private farm flocks in the vicinity.

PREDATOR MANAGEMENT NEEDS:

Will monitor GPS collared bighorn sheep and work closely with USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services to respond quickly to bighorn mortalities, ascertain cause of mortality, and if confirmed lion kill, attempt to remove offending lion.

COMMENTS: _____

NDOW REGION: Western_____

DATE PREPARED: October 2018