



*"Putting and Keeping Sheep on the Mountain."*

November 30, 2020

Bryan Bartlett, Pres.  
NM Wild Sheep Foundation  
PO Box 134  
Garfield, NM 87936

Travis G Moseley, Forest Supervisor  
c/o Peggy Luensmann  
Lincoln National Forest  
3463 Las Palomas Road  
Alamogordo, NM 88310

Subject: Integrated Non-Native Invasive Plant Management Project Draft EIS Comments.

Dear Ms. Luensmann,

The following are our comments on the draft EIS. The comments deal specifically with desert bighorn sheep in the Sacramento Mountains.

Both alternatives B and C include the possible use of controlled livestock grazing to eliminate non-native invasive plant species. The use of domestic sheep or goat controlled grazing would present a serious disease threat to the desert bighorn sheep (DBHS) herd in the Sacramento District of the Lincoln National Forest. This potential risk-of-contact should be addressed in this draft EIS.

A significant number of domestic sheep and goat herds carry a *Mycoplasma Ovipneumoniae* (Movi) pathogen which can cause a serious or complete die-off in a DBHS herd. Although the Sacramento DBHS herd already carries the less virulent "Kofa" strain of Movi, introduction of an additional similar pathogen from domestic sheep or goats would prove to be very serious.

Prior to using controlled domestic sheep or goat grazing in the Sacramento district, a risk-of-contact analysis should be conducted. This analysis should be coordinated with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, who maintain the Sacramento DBHS herd location and movement data.

As general information, prior to 2018, the last DBHS recorded in the Sacramento Mts. was in the early 1940's. There are now more than 60 DBHS in the Sacramentos. In October of 2018, 34 DBHS were relocated from the San Andres Mts. to the Sacramentos. Another 24 were relocated from the Caballo Mts. to the Sacramentos in October of 2020. So far, this new herd seems to be doing very well.

Thank you for allowing us to comment on this important wildlife disease issue.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bryan Bartlett", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bryan Bartlett, Pres.

NM Wild Sheep Foundation, 575-635-3499



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