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Comments:

Thanks, Brittany, for sending me the link to these scientific documents that were used to inform the GMUG working draft plan. After scanning through them I found only one document that mentioned domestic goats (Foreyt, W.J. 1994. Effects of controlled contact exposure between healthy bighorn sheep and llamas, domestic goats, mountain goats, cattle, domestic sheep, or mouflon sheep. Proceedings Biennial Symposium of the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council 9:7-14.) It can be found on the web here:
<http://media.nwsgc.org/proceedings/NWSGC-1994/1994-all.pdf>

I looked up this document and it actually shines very favorably on goats. I wish I could copy/paste excerpts from the paper, but the scanned image format prevents me from doing that. Basically, a controlled contact exposure experiment was conducted using captive bighorn sheep, domestic sheep, llamas, cattle, domestic goats, elk, and mountain goats. Page 3 has a chart showing the cytotoxicity status of *Pasteurella haemolytica* isolates from this variety of species. Goats (and elk) had 0 cytotoxic isolates. Page 4 says, "To date, no cytotoxic isolates have been identified in domestic goats..."

Further down on page 8 we see Experiment 2 in which 2 bighorns were housed with 3 domestic goats purchased at auction(!). (Auction houses are notorious breeding grounds for disease, and goat owners are strongly cautioned against purchasing animals at auction because they have no herd or disease history. Packgoats simply do not come from auction houses!) Yet despite using the riskiest domestic goats possible, the bighorns suffered no illness from being housed with them. Page 10 says, "Contact experiments between bighorn sheep, domestic goats, llamas, cattle, and mountain goats did not result in respiratory disease or death of any of the animals."

From what I can see from the source you provided, the only science regarding domestic goats that is being used to shape the GMUG working draft provides evidence that goats are NOT a threat to bighorns. So where did the "science" regarding packgoat risk come from if not in this list of sources? I would love to see the packgoat ban stricken from the draft before it reaches the next stage. None of the other BLM or NF areas in Colorado ban packgoats, so this new plan is the outlier. Before banning an entire taxpaying user group that uses packgoats, it seems the burden of proof is on you to determine that packgoats are in fact a real and unmanageable threat to bighorn sheep--more so than grazing domestic sheep which are not banned. That proof is not presented in any of the current supporting scientific documents.

I plan to write these findings and some other thoughts that came up after yesterday's webinar to the official comment page, but I thought you might be interested in what I found in the sources you gave me.

Thank you for your time,

-Nan

P.S. We are very interested in having a meeting with your wildlife biologist(s) who inform the GMUG working draft plan. How do we go about arranging such a meeting? Since we'll be coming from both sides of Colorado, I think Gunnison might be the best location if we can pinpoint a date. Thank you for mentioning this possibility. We love the bighorn sheep and we are all on the same page with keeping those herds strong and healthy.

On Wednesday, June 26, 2019, 12:17:52 PM MDT, Duffy, Brittany - FS
brittany.duffy@usda.gov> wrote:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gmug/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fseprd563243>

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