



Bleats and Blats

Official Newsletter of the Desert Bighorn
Council

May 2009



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Hello DBC members and friends!

As most of you know, we had a wonderful meeting in Grand Junction, Colorado, on April 8-10, 2009. The meeting was a huge success (with 108 registered participants!) and a fun time due to the great work of our hosts at the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Meeting Chair, Scott Wait, and the Meeting Committee, Brad Banulis, Michelle Gallagher, and Stephanie Duckett, did a wonderful job hosting this meeting, which was partially sponsored by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society, and the National Park Service. Thank you all!

I'm including the conference program in this newsletter so those of you who didn't get to join us at least know what you missed, and we'll be posting photos of the meeting on our website (<http://www.desertbighorncouncil.org>) in the near future. If any of you would like to share additional photos, please send them my way.

Also included in this newsletter are Draft Minutes of the 2009 DBC Business Meeting, and a reminder about membership dues. Please note that after this issue, we will only be sending newsletters to those who have paid their 2009/2010 dues. Remember that your dues also include the 2009 issue of the DBC Transactions. So we urge you to renew your membership soon!

The next newsletter is scheduled for mid-August so if you have updates or announcements to share, please send them to me by July 30th. Also, if you have photos or other materials for the website, they would be most welcome.

Hope to hear from you!

Esther Rubin

DBC Secretary (esrubin@consbio.org)

PROGRAM OF THE RECENT DBC MEETING

**Desert Bighorn Council 51st Meeting
Grand Junction, Colorado
April 8-10, 2009**

Wednesday – April 8th

3:00-8:00 Registration Starts
5:00 SOCIAL sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society

Thursday – April 9th

7:00 Registration
8:00 Welcome and Opening Remarks
8:15 Keynote address - *Bighorn sheep and domestic sheep: Past, Present, and Future* - David A. Jessup, DVM, Senior Wildlife Veterinarian, Supervisor, Office of Spill Prevention and Response, Marine Wildlife Veterinary Care and Research Center, CA Department of Fish and Game

STATE REPORTS

8:50 Arizona (Brian Wakeling)
9:05 California (Mary Conner)
9:20 Colorado (Stephanie Duckett)
9:35 Mexico-Coahuila/Chihuahua (Alejandro Espinosa Treviño)
9:50 Mexico-Baja/Sonora (Raymond Lee)
10:05 BREAK
10:25 Nevada (Pat Cummings)
10:40 New Mexico (Eric Rominger)
10:55 Texas (Calvin Richardson)
11:10 Utah (Anis Aoude)

TECHNICAL SESSION I: STATUS OF NORTH AMERICAN WILD SHEEP

11:25 *The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Wild Sheep Working Group* - Kevin Hurley, Wyoming Game and Fish Department.
11:50 *Further Phylogenetic Analyses of North American Wild Sheep* - John D. Wehausen, White Mountain Research Station, University of California; Clinton W. Epps, Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University; Rob R. Ramey II, Conservation Science Foundation.
12:15 LUNCH

TECHNICAL SESSION II: HABITAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

1:30 *Assessment of Predictive Habitat Models for Bighorn Sheep in California's Peninsular Ranges* - Esther S. Rubin, Conservation and Research for Endangered Species, Zoological Society of San Diego; Chris J. Stermer, Resource Assessment

Program, California Department of Fish and Game; Walter M. Boyce, Wildlife Health Center, University of California; and Steven G. Torres, Wildlife Investigation Laboratory, California Department of Fish and Game.

- 1:55 *The Role of Fire History in Habitat Selection in Chaparral Ecosystems: Implications for the Restoration of Bighorn Sheep Populations* - Heather E. Johnson, University of Montana; Vernon C. Bleich, Department of Biological Sciences, Idaho State University; Stephen A. Holl, Steve Holl Consulting; Lora Konde, California Department of Fish and Game; Steven G. Torres, Wildlife Investigation Laboratory, California Department of Fish and Game; and Paul R. Krausman, Boone and Crockett Professor of Wildlife Conservation, University of Montana.
- 2:20 *Effects of Fire and Rain on Bighorn Sheep in the San Gabriel Mountains, CA* - Stephen A. Holl, Steve Holl Consulting, and Vernon C. Bleich, Department of Biological Sciences, Idaho State University.
- 2:45 *Considerations When Reprovisioning Water Developments for Mountain Sheep in Desert Ecosystems* - Vernon C. Bleich, Department of Biological Sciences, Idaho State University; Glenn W. Sudmeier, Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep; and George C. Kerr, Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep.
- 3:10 BREAK

TECHNICAL SESSION III: ASSORTED RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT

- 3:30 *Desert Bighorn Sheep Management, 1959-2009: Success and Setbacks* - Raymond Lee, Wild Sheep Foundation; David Brown, School of Life Sciences, Arizona State University; Ron Thompson, Game Management Division, Arizona Game and Fish Department; Brian Wakeling, Game Management Division, Arizona Game and Fish Department; and Mara Weisenberger, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Las Cruces, NM.
- 3:55 *Identifying Key Vital Rates for Endangered Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Recovery* - Heather E. Johnson, University of Montana; L. Scott Mills, Department of Ecosystem and Conservation Sciences, University of Montana; John D. Wehausen, White Mountain Research Station, University of California; and Thomas R. Stephenson, California Department of Fish and Game.
- 4:20 *Trans-highway Movements and Use of Wildlife Crossing Structures by Desert Bighorn Sheep at Arizona State Route 68* - Kirby Bristow and Michelle Crabb, Arizona Game and Fish Department.
- 4:45 *Nocturnal Movements of Desert Bighorn Sheep in the Muddy Mountains, Nevada* - Kathleen M. Longshore, U.S. Geological Survey, Western Ecological Research Center; Chris Lowrey, U.S. Geological Survey, Western Ecological Research Center; Matthew Jeffress, Nevada Department of Wildlife; and Daniel B. Thompson, School of Life Sciences, University of Nevada Las Vegas.
- 6:00 BANQUET (Included in Registration Fees) - Awards & Silent Auction

Friday – April 10th

7:00 Registration

TECHNICAL SESSION III: ASSORTED RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT (cont.)

8:00 *GIS Mapping of North American Wild Sheep Translocations* - Kevin Hurley, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and Richard Jones, Wildland Rangers and Department of Biology, Northwest College.

8:25 *Chemical Immobilization in Bighorn Sheep: Update on New and Old Drug Combinations* - Lisa L. Wolfe and Michael W. Miller, Colorado Division of Wildlife.

TECHNICAL SESSION IV: PREDATION IMPACTS ON DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP

8:50 *Causes of Declining Bighorn Sheep Numbers in Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, Arizona* - Grant Harris, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Lindsay Smythe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Robert Henry, Arizona Game and Fish Department.

9:15 *Diet Assessment of the American Puma (*Puma concolor*) and the Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) Using Fecal DNA Analysis to Address Desert Bighorn Sheep (*Ovis Canadensis*) Predation Management at the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, Arizona, USA* - Ashwin Naidu, Conservation Genetics Laboratory, School of Natural Resources, University of Arizona; Melanie Culver, Arizona Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit (USGS), School of Natural Resources, University of Arizona; Ron Thompson, Arizona Game and Fish Department; and Lindsay Smythe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kofa National Wildlife Refuge.

9:40 *Recovery of an Endangered Ungulate Using Predator Control and Captive Breeding 1979-2007* - Eric M. Rominger, Elise J. Goldstein, and Darrel Weybright, Wildlife Management Division, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.

10:05 BREAK

10:25 Business Meeting

12:00 BREAK

12:15 Field Trip to Colorado National Monument

2009 BUSINESS MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

The following draft meeting minutes were recorded at the 2009 Business meeting. They are being circulated to you at this time simply for information purposes, and will officially be voted upon for approval during the 2011 Business Meeting.

DRAFT MINUTES - 2009 Desert Bighorn Council Business Meeting April 10, 2007

10:37 am – Meeting called to order by Scott Wait (2009 Council Chair).

Minutes of 2007 Business Meeting: Esther Rubin (Secretary) distributed copies of the minutes of the Business Meeting held in Las Vegas, Nevada, and summarized the meeting minutes for the Council. Council reviewed and approved the 2007 meeting minutes (D. Weaver/R. Brigham, all approved).

Secretary's Report: Esther Rubin noted that 94 people had registered for the meeting, and she thanked the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) staff (S. Wait, B. Banulis, M. Gallagher, S. Duckett, B. Bavin, and A. Holland) for all their efforts and for an excellent meeting. To date, 42 people had paid their dues, so all were reminded of the benefits of membership and encouraged to join the DBC. All were also reminded that their contributions to the website and newsletters are welcome, and it was noted that Karsten Kelm is still maintaining our website.

Treasurer's Report: Kathy Longshore (Treasurer) distributed a summary of our financial information (attached at end of minutes), and provided an overview of our accounts. She noted that Tech Staff members Eric Rominger and Joe Cresto reviewed the financial records with her yesterday, as part of the Treasurer's Audit, and that all records and accounts were in order. The Council approved the Treasurer's report (D. Weaver/R. Brigham, all approved).

Committee Reports:

Publicity Committee: (no report)

Arrangements and Program Committees: Brad Banulis provided an overview of the meeting, and acknowledged all CDOW staff who helped coordinate and make the meeting a success.

Constitution Committee: Ray Lee (Tech Staff Chair) proposed the following changes to the DBC Constitution and Bylaws:

- A proposal to change the term of Technical Staff members from 5 years (Bylaws Article 4, Section 1) to 6 years, to better coincide with biennial meetings.
- A proposal to alter the DBC's committee structure to increase efficiency and reduce redundancies. Ray proposed that a) the Resolutions and Constitution committees be combined into one "Constitution and Resolutions Committee", b) the Publicity, Program, and Arrangements committees be combined into a single "Meeting

Committee”, and c) the Dissolution Committee be dissolved and its duties be integrated into responsibilities of the Technical Staff.

- A proposal that a “Promotions Coordinator” position be created and be part of the Meeting Committee. The Promotions Coordinator would be responsible for selecting, purchasing, and maintaining DBC promotional merchandise (Mara Weisenberger, Tech Staff member, has been filling this role).

The Council approved all the above proposals (R. Brigham/M. Jorgensen, all approved).

Editor’s Report: Brian Wakeling (Transactions Editor) provided a brief update on the Transactions. He reported that the biennial schedule of the Transactions is working well, but that he would like to receive paper submissions sooner. He currently plans to have 2009 Transactions completed by April 2010 and asked authors to submit manuscripts to him by June 2009.

- A question was posed about the possibility of posting talks from this meeting on our website, possibly in PDF format. B. Wakeling indicated that past speakers had been reluctant to have their presentations posted, but that he would be willing to investigate feasibility and willingness of current speakers.
- D. Weaver proposed that the 2009 Transactions be dedicated in honor of past DBC member, Bonnar Blong, who recently passed away. The Council approved this proposal (R. Brigham/V. Bleich, all approved).

Awards Committee: Dick Weaver provided an additional thank you and congratulations to those who received awards at the banquet last night:

The Desert Ram Awards: Mark Jorgensen
 Esther Rubin

Honor Plaques: CEMEX (award accepted by Alejandro Espinosa Treviño)

Dick also noted that he and Rick Brigham would welcome the assistance of an additional member to this committee (possibly as Chair of the Committee), and called for volunteers to contact him or Rick.

Technical Staff: Ray Lee (Tech Staff Chair) reported that the Tech Staff met on Wednesday, April 8, 2009. In addition, Ray reported that:

- Don Armentrout will continue to be our Historian.
- The Tech Staff voted to award three Hansen-Welles scholarships this year, for a total of \$9,500:
 1. Ashwin Naidu – “Diet Assessment of the American Puma”, funded for \$3,500.
 2. Ben Gonzales and Heidi Zurawka – “Temporal and Spatial Distribution of *Mycoplasma*”, funded for \$4,500
 3. Kevin Hurley and Richard Jones – “GIS Mapping Project of Wild Sheep Translocations”, funded for \$1,500.
- The DBC will continue to fund the scholarship on an annual basis.
- The Tech Staff elected Ray for another 2 year term as Tech Staff Chair.

Nominating Committee: Ray Lee reported that the next meeting will be in Arizona, and proposed the following officers:

Meeting Chair: Brian Wakeling
Meeting Vice-chair: Erin Riddering

Treasurer: Kathy Longshore
Secretary: Esther Rubin

Council members were asked if any other individuals were interested in running for these positions, but no additional candidates stepped forward.

Election of Officers: The Council approved the above slate of officers (M. Jorgensen/R. Brigham, all approved).

Election of Technical Staff members: Ray Lee reported that the following four Tech Staff positions were up for renewal: Mara Weisenberger, Mark Jorgensen, Joe Cresto, Clay Brewer. He noted that all had agreed to run for another term, and asked if there were other nominations. Ben Gonzales was nominated and agreed to run for a Tech Staff position. The Council voted and elected the following four members to the Tech Staff: M. Weisenberger, M. Jorgensen, B. Gonzales, and Clay Brewer. The Tech Staff therefore now includes:

Ray Lee (Chair, term expires April 2011)
Rick Brigham (term expires April 2011)
Eric Rominger (term expires April 2011)
Clay Brewer (term expires April 2015)
Mara Weisenberger (term expires April 2015)
Mark Jorgensen (term expires April 2015)
Ben Gonzales (term expires April 2015)

Burro Report: Ross Haley provided the burro report, noting that overall numbers are down. He further noted that status and trends of wild horses will influence burro management.

- Kevin Hurley will provide a copy of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' statement on H.R. 1018.
- M. Jorgensen notes that the economic situation is causing more domestic horses to be released, and that this is decreasing adoption of feral horses or burros.
- The Council had a brief discussion about developments/issues related to the management of surplus feral horses and burros.

Old Business: (none)

Gavel passed from Scott Wait to Brian Wakeling.

New Business: K. Hurley announces that the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council will meet in Oregon on June 8-11, 2010.

Ray Lee thanked CDOW for a great job in arranging this meeting, and thanked the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society for their support of the meeting.

11:30 am - Meeting adjourned

**DESERT BIGHORN COUNCIL
TREASURER'S REPORT - KATHY LONGSHORE
APRIL 2009**

Account Balances

(\$188,603.41 as of April 2007 meeting)

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Checking Account (Citibank) | \$ 71,416.68 |
| Robert Campbell Memorial Fund | |
| CD#3618 (1.39% interest, 6 mo/matures 8/23/09) | \$ 54,088.70 |
| Subtotal General & R. Campbell Fund | \$ 125,405.38 |

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Hansen-Welles Memorial Fund | |
| CD#1920 (3.92% interest, 5 yr/matures 4/16/12) | \$ 41,574.49 |
| CD#2885 (2.13% interest, 18 mo/matures 3/28/2010) | \$ 23,663.16 |
| CD#8022 (1.54% interest, 18 mo/matures 07/05/2010) | \$ 8,248.37 |
| Subtotal Hansen-Welles Fund | \$ 73,486.02 |
| Total Assets | \$199,991.40 |

AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE MEETING

One of the highlights of the meeting was the DBC meeting banquet. Dick Weaver and Rick Brigham (Awards Committee) presented the following awards. Congratulations and Thank You!

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Ram Awards: | Mark Jorgensen (California Dept. of Parks and Recreation, retired) Esther Rubin (Conservation Biology Institute) |
| Honor Plaques: | CEMEX (award accepted by Alejandro Espinoza) |

HANSEN – WELLES SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

The following three Hansen-Welles Scholarships were awarded for a total of \$9,500:

1. Ashwin Naidu (University of Arizona) – “Diet Assessment of the American Puma”, funded for \$3,500.
2. Ben Gonzales and Heidi Zurawka (California Department of Fish and Game) – “Temporal and Spatial Distribution of *Mycoplasma*”, funded for \$4,500
3. Kevin Hurley (Wyoming Game and Fish Department) and Richard Jones (Wildland Rangers and Northwest College) – “GIS Mapping Project of Wild Sheep Translocations”, funded for \$1,500.

If you could use some funding for your bighorn sheep projects, remember that the Hansen-Welles Scholarships will continue to be funded on an annual basis, so potential funding will be available again in spring of 2010, with applications due at the end of this year. Although any person is eligible to apply for this scholarship, graduate students will receive preference in our selection of applicants. Check our website for more information on how to apply!

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Many of you renewed your memberships last month, and we thank you tremendously for your support of the Desert Bighorn Council. At \$20 for two years (your membership is good for two years, until April 2011), this is an inexpensive way to show your support for the DBC, and your dues help pay for our biennial meetings. In addition, your current membership will include a copy of the 2009 DBC Transactions, which

will be distributed in April 2010. They will be mailed to you, so please be sure to let us know of any address changes.

For those of you who haven't yet renewed your membership, this is the time to do so! After this issue, we will only be sending newsletters to paid members, so be sure to renew your membership soon. Please visit our website to download the membership form, or print out the last page of this newsletter.

COMMITTEES SEEKING MEMBERS!

Awards Committee Needs Help! Submitted by Rick Brigham (Tech Staff Member)

DBC members: the DBC Awards Committee, comprised of me and Dick Weaver, needs new blood! The two of us have been the committee for well over 15 (or 20?) years. George Welsh from Arizona was on it for several years, but isn't able to participate in DBC doings, so he has dropped out. The biennial task is to seek nominations for three types of DBC awards: Certificate of Appreciation, Honor Plaque and the Ram Award, then develop the wording to be used. It is not a tough job, but Dick and I are NOT getting any younger (as those of you who attend the meetings can attest). So, now is your big chance to get on a DBC committee, and do something for the Council. Please think about it, and then act—if you are interested in being part of this committee, please contact the Council Chair, Brian Wakeling (BWakeling@azgfd.gov). Or contact me (rickceil30@cableone.net or 509-751-0310) or Dick Weaver (575-539-2378 or P.O. Box 100 Glenwood, NM 88039) if you have questions about the committee. Thank You!

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Committee work is a great way to become involved and support the DBC, and there are a number of committees that could use additional members. If you are interested in serving on any of the following committees, please contact the Council Chair, Brian Wakeling (BWakeling@azgfd.gov). (Please note that you must be a DBC member to serve on a committee):

- Meeting Committee
- Awards Committee
- Feral Burro Committee
- Constitution and Resolutions Committee
- Transactions Committee
- Nominating Committee

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## **WHERE IS THE NEXT DBC MEETING?**

The next DBC meeting will be held in Arizona, in April 2011. The exact location is yet to be decided. Brian Wakeling is the Chair for the next meeting and can be contacted at BWakeling@azgfd.gov. Detailed information will be posted on our website at a later date.

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# DESERT BIGHORN COUNCIL

Established to promote the advancement of knowledge concerning the Desert Bighorn Sheep and the long-range welfare of these animals.

## 2009/2010 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home, *optional*) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Can we include your contact information in future DBC Transaction membership lists?  
Yes\_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If "NO", please specify which information should remain confidential:

2009/2010 Membership \_\_\_\_\_ (\$20.00 per person)

TOTAL ENCLOSED ..... \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is good for 2 years starting April 15, 2009 and includes the 2007 Transactions and electronic copies of our newsletter. Please send completed form and check, payable to the Desert Bighorn Council, to:

Esther Rubin (DBC Secretary)  
Conservation Biology Institute  
PO Box 369  
Borrego Springs, CA 92004

For additional information please visit our website at [www.desertbighorncouncil.org](http://www.desertbighorncouncil.org)