

**ONTANA WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Minutes – December 10, 2013
Location – Telephone Conference Call**

Board Members present: Jack Chambers (President), Brian Solan (Vice President), Max Bauer, Jr. (Treasurer), Jeff Mortensen (Secretary), Mike Colpo, Tom Carlson, Steve Kline, Bruce Sterling, & Jim Weatherly (Executive Director).

Board Member absent: Shane Clouse

Members present: none

Call to Order: The Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by President Jack Chambers at 6:34 p.m.

Minutes: Approval of the September 3 & October 15, 2013 Board Meeting minutes, both conducted via a telephone conference call. **Motion:** It was moved and seconded that the September 3 & October 15, 2013 minutes are approved, as written. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Jim Weatherly reported cash on hand of \$90,361.41. Accounts payable include Grant In Aids (GIA) of \$15,000.00: GIA 12-8 Cutoff herd habitat improvements \$5,000, GIA 13-12 Lazy J Cross Conservation Easement \$5,000, & GIA 13-14 Priscilla Peak Habitat Improvements \$5,000.

Membership: Current membership is 301 including 158 Life Members. Successful 2013 sheep hunters are sending in memberships per Jim Weatherly.

Informational:

- The Sestrich fencing project in Anaconda was completed successfully. A letter of appreciation was received and previously distributed to the Board.
- Sheep capture projects this winter include the planned Wall Creek capture and Wildhorse Island. The Wall Creek project is set for December 18, 2013 with Jim Weatherly and Brian Solan planning to lend a hand. Bruce Sterling reported that the Wildhorse Island capture is likely to occur in February, 2014, with approximately 50 sheep to be captured and moved to augment the Bull River (Berray Mountain) and Kootenai Falls herds.
- The Montana FWP Commission meets on December 12, 2013, with Jim Weatherly to attend. The Commission will consider the Bridger transplant, which carries a recommendation to not approve; and the Madison transplant which comes with a recommendation to approve, as well as changes to 2014-2015 hunting seasons, quota ranges and hunting district boundaries, along with a proposal to open the Highlands (closed since 1994), and a recommendation to close ewe hunting in the Sun River area. The Board specifically discussed the Highlands proposal relative to FWP's guidelines and whether this meets sufficient criteria. The consensus was to discuss the issue further prior to taking a position.
- Jack Chambers, Tom Carlson, and Jim Weatherly attended a meeting with the Montana Woolgrowers and FWP on October 28, 2013. Items discussed included transplants, wild sheep die-offs, public ground leasing by producers, and 9 sites for potential future wild sheep transplants. The group also reviewed possible legislation to control stray domestic sheep and

goats as there is currently no clear authority for the FWP to remove stray domestics. Finally the attendees agreed to explore creation of a wild sheep working group, noting the Montana WSF alone among wildlife proponent groups does not oppose public ground grazing.

- Tom Carlson reported that the Bozeman Chronicle is covering the situation near Gardiner. An educational article has been discussed with Chronicle reporter Laura Lundquist with possible cooperation from the Montana Woolgrowers, with the goal of educating the public about the consequences of domestic contact with wild sheep and the frequency that it occurs.
- Bruce Sterling detailed the existence of approximately 200 domestic sheep near St. Regis, Montana, in proximity with the Cutoff herd. Wild sheep have been reported to be mixing with the domestics. Jim Weatherly and Bruce Sterling are in contact the owner relative the this issue to attempt a resolution.
- The Montana WSF booth at the Reno Sheep Show to be held January 22 – January 25, 2014 will be staffed by Jim Weatherly and the Board/Members. Steve Kline has obtained several photos of 2013 Montana rams and will have ready for the booth. Bruce Sterling confirmed that FWP has authorized a booth for the Show as well.
- The deadline for the upcoming newsletter is January 18, 2014 with a February 1, 2014 publication date. Items are needed for this publication.

Old Business:

- The Bear Trust educational program was briefly discussed, with the Board to monitor interest in the program.

New Business:

- A brief review of the 2013 Bighorn sheep hunting system was conducted. Board members noted that issues arose in HD 680 due to competition for trophy rams.
- Jim Weatherly confirmed that tickets will be distributed to the Board shortly and that save-the-date postcards will be mailed in December 2013. As well table sponsor tickets will be available for \$360 at the February 28 –March 1 event. Hunts arranged for auction include an Alberta deer hunt, Texas Aoudad hunt, and youth cow elk hunt near Drummond, Montana.
- Jim Weatherly indicated that he will not be available to attend the January 9, 2014 Montana FWP Commission meeting.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board meeting will be Wednesday, February 12, 2014, at 6:30 p.m., via telephone conference call.

Adjourned: The Meeting of the Board of Directors as adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Mortensen

Jeff Mortensen, Secretary
Montana Wild Sheep Foundation

