

**MONTANA WILDSHEEP FOUNDATION  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
Minutes-March 9, 2013  
Location-Copper King Motel, Butte, MT**

**Board Members Present:** Mike Menke (President), Jack Chambers (Vice President), Doug Dreeszen (Secretary), Brian Solan (Treasurer), Mike Colpo, Glenn Erickson, Steve Kline, Jeff Mortensen, Jim Weatherly (Executive Director).

**Board Members Absent:** Shane Clouse

**Members Present:** Carole Beebe, Gordon Beebe, Ray Vinkey, Dennis Harms, Mike Marshall, Patty Dreeszen, Paul Cockrell, Tom Powers, Kevin Hurley, Bruce Sterling, Jack Atcheson Jr, Harry Liss, Vanna Boccadori, John "Timmer" Reeves, Scott DeMars, and Jim Seykora.

**Call to Order:** The General Membership Meeting was called to order by President Menke at 8:30 AM. Menke requested that the members present introduce themselves.

**Approval of the Minutes:** Minutes of the Board Meeting, January 23, 2013, a conference call.  
Minutes of Special Directors Meeting regards to Legislative Matters, February 7, 2013, a conference call.  
Minutes of the Board Meeting, February 20, 2013, a conference call.

**Motion: It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the January 23, February 7, and February 20 Board Meetings be approved as written. Motion Passed.**

**Treasurer's Report:** J. Weatherly reported that the balance in the check book is \$81,029.04. The balance will change in the near future because of the fundraiser cash flows. The only account payable is the GIA invoice for \$5,000.00, to the National Wildlife Federation regards to the Bighorn Sheep Restoration Study in Garfield County. Our MT WSF specialty license plate is now out of the black and providing a steady income. We are receiving 100% profit and if the trend continues we could show a \$7-8,000.00 income on the license plates for 2013. MT FWP Region 3 Biologist Vanna Boccadori will be returning our \$1000.00 donation that was for flight time on a bighorn sheep survey in the Highland Mountains. FWP cannot accept donations-funds during the legislative session.

**Motion: It was moved and seconded that the Treasurer's Report be approved as written. Motion Passed.**

**Membership:** J. Weatherly reported that for the first time in our chapter history we will have over 300 members. One half of the memberships are life members.

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**Informational:** M. Menke reported that the bighorn sheep capture on Wild Horse Island was cancelled due to the ramifications of SB 83. MT FWP Biologist B. Sterling further reported that they had intended to remove approximately 40 bighorns off the island and that a large percentage removed would be rams. Currently there are 191 bighorns on the island. The FWP goal is to have 140 bighorns on the island. The island is 2100 acres in size. There are also 30-40 mule deer and 7 wild horses on the island.

**Legislative Update:** J. Weatherly reported that SB 118, a bill that originated out of the Bitterroot was tabled. This was the bill that set a side 8 bighorn sheep licenses for residents over 65 years old. J. Weatherly reported that he had just sat in a 2 ½ hour hearing with some other conservations groups regards to SB 83. It is everyone's desire that this bill will be tabled. If SB 83 passes, it will hurt future bighorn sheep management in Montana by not allowing transplants and augmentations to the existing bighorn sheep herds. J. Weatherly reported that SB 341 could also have the same results if passed as this bill will stop any transplants of all game animals in Montana. The House will have a hearing on these bills on Tuesday, March 12. Everyone is asked to contact their legislator and ask them vote against SB 83 and SB 341.

**Old Business:** Discussion continued on present legislative matters concerning future bighorn sheep management in Montana.

- Kevin Hurley asked what will happen after the legislative session and what happens to future transplants and gave the Bridger Mountains as an example.
- Jack Atcheson Jr. addressed the concerns to free up more bighorn sheep tags in the future, including ewe tags and harvesting more of the ram population including the harvest of ½ curl rams in certain areas if needed to keep a certain population in check. This could provide the biologists with more tools to work with in managing certain herds. ½ curl rams were harvested in the past.
- Doug Dreeszen mentioned that the Pryor Mountains need an augmentation as it appears the rams have hit a bottle neck in their genetic potential. However, due to a domestic goat situation in the area, just across the Wyoming line, this has stopped any future plans to increase the population of sheep in the Pryor's.
- Jack Chambers reported that due to a recent study in the Missouri Breaks, the Montana Wildlife Federation has met with some anti government sentiment towards the FWP and the Federal Government, in general. Because of these attitudes, getting a future bighorn transplant in the area is doubtful.

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**New Business:**

- Jack Chambers reported that we have been approached by an Eagle Scout, Jackson Servheen and that he would like to work on a project to install signage/kiosks about the struggles of bighorn sheep on Rock Creek, in the Missoula area, with the purpose to help educate the public about the dangers of disease and traffic problems. Servheen is asking for assistance for funding.

**Motion: It was moved and seconded to donate up to \$750.00, towards this project. Motion Passed.**

- M. Menke reported that it is that time of year for us to consider our annual donation to the U.S Sportsman Alliance. They are the watchdog for anti hunting and trapping movements in the U.S and have worked with the WSF in the past. We have donated to them in the past.

**Motion: It was moved and seconded to donate \$1,000.00 to the U.S. Sportsman Alliance. Motion Passed.**

- Jim Weatherly reported that we have been contacted by Patrick Byrne who lives in the area of the Blue Eyed Nellie near Anaconda, and is requesting our help to encourage his neighbor to repair and convert their fence to a wildlife friendly fence. Recently, this winter, a bighorn ram was caught in the fence and before it got released it broke its front leg. Jim reported that he is familiar with the landowner, who is from out of state, and he will contact him and Ray Vinkey the area biologist and get the fence repaired.
- Past President Tom Powers gave a short presentation on the S.H.E.E.P. Youth Program that is sponsored by Midway USA, and that he would like to start a Pilot Youth Program in the Bitterroot area near Stevensville, MT. Tom further stated that he has been in contact with Ryan Brock, the youth coordinator with WSF and has been researching the matter and has been in contact with several wildlife groups in the Bitterroot area that will assist him in this endeavor. This program ties in with the current youth program developed by WSF and the Boone and Crockett Club. Tom explained the concept to the membership of engaging youth to hunting, fishing and the outdoors, who wouldn't normally have the opportunity to do so. Tom asked for volunteers to help represent the MT WSF. He is shooting for a May 4<sup>th</sup> Youth EXPO. T. Powers asked for assistance for funding this Youth Project.

**Motion: It was moved and seconded to fund up to \$3,000.00 for a committee to look into and help with this Youth Project. Motion Passed.**

- **Next Meeting Date: Was not scheduled.**

**Adjourned: It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 AM. Motion Passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Doug Dreeszen*

Doug Dreeszen, Secretary  
Montana Wild Sheep Foundation