



February 12, 2008

For Immediate Release

Subject: ISCAC Expresses Concern over Governor Otter's Proposed Interim Policy on Idaho Bighorn Sheep and Domestic Sheep

From: ISCAC Member Organizations

Purpose

To protect and improve Idaho's wildlife heritage of hunting, fishing, and trapping, for present and future generations by:

- o Providing an organization where Idaho's sportsmen's organizations can come together to seek consensus on issues important to sportsmen.
- o Providing education to the Idaho sportsmen's organizations, the Idaho Legislature and other governmental entities on sportsmen's issues.
- o Being an information resource to the Legislature and other governmental entities on issues, legislation and rules affecting Idaho's wildlife heritage of hunting, fishing and trapping.

Member Organizations

*Ada Co Fish & Game League
Backcountry Horsemen of ID
Backcountry Hters & Anglers
Blackfoot River Bowmen
Bonner County Sportsmen
Citizens Against Poaching
Deer Hunters of Idaho
Fou. for N. Amer. Wild Sheep
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
ID BASS Federation Nation
ID Conservation Officers Ass.
ID Falconers Association
ID Houndsmen Association
ID Mule Deer Foundation
ID Poachers Club
ID Rifle & Pistol Ass
ID Safari Club International
ID State Bowhunters
ID Steelhead & Salmon Unlim.
ID Traditional Bow Hunters
ID Trappers Association
ID Trout Unlimited
ID Wildlife Federation
Land Owners & SportsmenUn.
National Wild Turkey Fed.
N. ID Tree Hound Association
Pheasants Forever
Rocky Mountain Elk Foun.
Snake River Cutthroats
S.E. ID Mule Deer Foundation
The Idaho Bass Federation*

ISCAC is part of the working group tasked to develop policies that enable bighorn sheep in Idaho to flourish. The purpose of the working group is to develop a unified long-term policy addressing issues related to interaction between wild bighorn sheep and domestic sheep in Idaho.

While the formation of the group is positive, ISCAC is concerned about several issues in the interim policy. Specific concerns and comments ISCAC has include:

- All policy (both interim and long term) must be consistent with existing federal laws and regulations in Idaho.
- More data needs to be available and presented to the working group to develop a science based policy including:
 - o Maps of historic, current and potential unoccupied and suitable bighorn sheep habitat
 - o Maps of current domestic sheep allotments on State and Federal lands
 - o Maps shown showing overlap of the bighorn sheep range and allotments
 - o Population data for current habitats and trends where data exists
 - o Data on transplant of bighorn sheep
 - o Reports on disease over time for various areas of bighorn habitat
 - o Plan to gather data where existing data is deficient
- Current and possible future management strategies for bighorn sheep including results of research and aid to develop an updated species management plan for the Idaho Fish & Game Department
- Plans for developing future management tools for bighorn sheep including management of disease based only on science
- Plans for developing future standards and policies for domestic sheep grazing allotments
- A schedule for development of the long-term policies and a time frame to implement all parts of the policy

Given the amount of work that needs to be done to gather the data needed for the working group to make informed decisions based on hard data ISCAC recommends that no interim policy be set and that the working group be allowed to gather the needed data, perform analysis, discuss results, collaborate and gain a consensus before a policy is developed.