

Attachment 7: 1998 Revised Guidelines for Domestic Sheep and Goat Management in Native Wild Sheep Habitats

Note: These guidelines for domestic sheep and goat management in native wild sheep habitats were included as Attachment 1 to BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 98-140 (July 10, 1998). The 1998 revised guidelines were developed following a review of the 1992 Guidelines for Domestic Sheep Management in Bighorn Sheep Habitats (Instruction Memorandum 92-264) in June 1997, and a follow-up meeting of bighorn and domestic sheep specialists in April 1998. Instruction Memorandum 98-140 states that these revised guidelines "should be followed whenever reintroductions, transplants, or augmentations of wild sheep populations, or proposed changes in a livestock grazing permit on BLM administered lands are being considered...."

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The Bureau of Land Management desires progressive native wild sheep management compatible with appropriate grazing on public lands by domestic sheep and free-ranging goats.

It is recognized by State and Federal agencies, native wild sheep organizations, and the domestic sheep industry that:

- There are some disease agents that occur in both domestic sheep and goats and native wild sheep. There is evidence that if native wild and domestic sheep are allowed to be in close contact, health problems and die offs may occur. Some disease agents may be transmitted between both species. There is evidence indicating that some disease agents could be transmitted between domestic goats and native wild sheep;
- There are native wild sheep die-offs that occur with no apparent relationship to contact with domestic sheep or goats;
- The above observations are both valid and not mutually exclusive;
- Bacterial pneumonias are not the only diseases of concern, although perhaps they are the most catastrophic;
- The risks of disease transmission are often unknown; they may, however, be site-specific; and
- Reasonable efforts must be made by domestic sheep and goat permittees and wildlife and land management agencies to minimize the risk of disease transmission, and to optimize preventive medical and management procedures, to ensure healthy populations of native wild sheep and domestic sheep and goats.

In recognition of the above factors, the guidelines set forth below should be followed in current and future native wild/domestic sheep and goat use areas unless a specific cooperative agreement that includes the State wildlife management agency, the BLM and the livestock permit holder is in place. When such agreement is in place, the agencies and the livestock permit holder will be held harmless in the event of disease impacting either native wild sheep or domestic sheep and

goats.

1. State wildlife and Federal land management agencies, native wild sheep interest groups, and domestic sheep and goat industry cooperation and consultation are necessary to maintain and/or expand native wild sheep numbers. When agency and industry agreement has been reached to maintain and/or expand native wild sheep numbers, the agencies and the domestic sheep industry will be held harmless in the event of disease impacting either native wild sheep or domestic sheep and goats.
2. Domestic sheep or goat grazing and trailing should be discouraged in the vicinity of native wild sheep ranges.
3. Native wild sheep and domestic sheep or goats should be spatially separated to reduce the potential of interspecies contact.
4. In reviewing new domestic sheep or goat grazing permit applications or proposed conversions of cattle permits to sheep or goat permits in areas with established native wild sheep populations, buffer strips surrounding native wild sheep habitat should be developed, except where topographic features or other barriers minimize physical contact between native wild sheep and domestic sheep and goats. Buffer strips could range up to 13.5 kilometers (9 miles) or as developed through a cooperative agreement to minimize contact between native wild sheep and domestic sheep and goats, depending upon local conditions and management options.
5. Domestic sheep and goats should be closely managed and carefully herded where necessary to prevent them from straying into native wild sheep areas.
6. Trailing of domestic sheep or goats near or through occupied native wild sheep ranges may be permitted when safeguards can be implemented to adequately prevent physical contact between native wild sheep and domestic sheep or goats. BLM must conduct on-site use compliance during trailing to ensure safeguards are observed.
7. Cooperative efforts should be undertaken to quickly notify the permittee and appropriate agency to remove any stray domestic sheep or goats or wild sheep in areas that would allow contact between domestic sheep or goats and native wild sheep.
8. Unless a cooperative agreement has been reached to the contrary, native wild sheep should only be reintroduced into areas where domestic sheep or goat grazing is not permitted.
9. Extraordinary precautions will be followed to protect special status subspecies, e.g., federally listed threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate subspecies, State listed subspecies and BLM sensitive subspecies.
10. For desert bighorn sheep, (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*, *a.c. mexicana*, and *a.c. cremnobates*), the following additional guidelines are recommended:

- a. No domestic sheep or goat grazing should be allowed within buffer strips less than 13.5 kilometers (9 miles) surrounding desert bighorn habitat, except where topographic features or other barriers prevent physical contact.
 - b. Domestic sheep or goats trailed and grazed outside the 13.5 kilometers (9 mile) buffer and in the vicinity of desert bighorn ranges should be closely managed and carefully herded.
 - c. Unless a cooperative agreement has been reached to the contrary, domestic sheep or goats should be trucked rather than trailed, when trailing would bring domestic sheep or goats closer than 13.5 kilometers (9 miles) to occupied desert bighorn sheep ranges, especially when domestic ewes or nannies are in estrus.
11. These guidelines will be reviewed at least every 5 years by a work group comprised of representatives from the domestic sheep and goat industry, State wildlife agencies, BLM and native wild sheep organizations.