

Sheep Fever Journal

Volume 9, Issue 1

Winter Issue

A Publication for the Oregon Chapter of the FNAWS

President's Message

www.oregonfnaaws.org

I hope that each of you had, safe, enjoyable, and productive times in the field this fall with your friends and family. The Bighorn Sheep hunting in Oregon is pretty much wrapped up for another year! Many nice Bighorns in the bag and at the taxidermists. Best of luck to all of you for the 2009 hunting tag drawing opportunities! We have "out sourced" the next edition of the chapter newsletter to a private contractor in Bend. I hope that you like the new format and content. We will discuss the continuation of the newsletter more at the winter meeting in Portland on January 10, 2009. We will still need those terrific photos and stories about your hunting trips afield!



If your busy schedules allow, I hope you can join us for our annual convention in Salt Lake City February 5-8, 2009, the Western Hunting & Conservation Expo (WHCE).

This will be my last President's message as we will elect a new leadership team at our winter meeting. It has been my great pleasure to work with the leadership team that you elected in 2007. Together, as a team, we can accomplish much. I sincerely hope that the programs/projects that we are diligently working will continue to come to fruition down the line. It is really important that we continue to pursue our mission statement.

I hope that you will all take the time to participate in our winter meeting in Portland on January 10, 2009. Your active participation continues to be really important!

All my best to each of you and yours for a superb and safe holiday season.

Kind Regards,

George Houston
President

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Putting Wild Sheep on the Mountain

OR-FNAWS
Winter Board Meeting
January 10, 2009
7:00am

Four Points Inn by Sheraton
Portland, Oregon

Special Guests:
Russ Morgan, ODFW
Wolf Program Manager

Ron Anglin, ODFW Update
Wildlife Division Manager



Oregon Chapter for
FNAWS

A conservation organization
aimed at enhancing wild
sheep populations and wild
sheep habitat.

Feature Story

Don's Ram

Don Phillips Jr., Phoenix OR



I arrived at work on Monday morning at 6:00am (twenty minutes earlier than usual) anxious to check on whether or not I had drawn a tag this year. So, I

logged into my computer and typed my hunter ID#, which of course I know by heart. I couldn't believe what I was seeing, maybe I was still blurry eyed from too much fishing and fun over the weekend, the screen was telling me that I had drawn a Sheep tag! I ran back to my truck to get my license so that I could make sure that I had the right number and that I wasn't seeing things. Sure enough, I had drawn a Sheep tag! That night I called all the people I was sure needed to know (everyone in my address book).

Over the next few days reality started to sink in. After 32 years of trying for a tag and I got it this year of all years. Why couldn't it have been when gas was \$2-something a gallon in stead of close to \$5 a gallon? Why did it have to be the year that I was expecting a newborn child in 3-4 weeks. To top it all off, my Eastern Oregon buddies had an Alaska fishing trip planned for the week of my hunt so I was on my own. I gave my oldest hunting partner every out when I asked him to go but finally the urge to go was too bad for my dad to pass up. I even convinced him to let me borrow his rifle so that he would feel a little more a part of the hunt.

I had found a small band of sheep last year when we were deer hunting and I figured I'd have them pretty much to myself. I just had to make sure that there was a way into that rugged country and then a way to get a ram, my 70 year old Dad and myself out in once piece. So, a couple of weeks before the season, my 4 week old son, the pretty lady that tags along with him, and I went on our first Bighorn sheep scouting trip.



Two days before the season Dad and I arrived at our camping spot pulling my little tent trailer. It was fifteen miles or 1 1/2 hours from where we could park the truck. The day before opening day found Dad and I walking right up to 8 rams which were near the center of that four mile long, nearly vertical rim they call home.

As daylight crept over the rim we found ourselves right where we had left those rams the afternoon before. By two o'clock in the afternoon however, the doubt started to creep in. After searching the entire length of the rim, those rams where no where to be seen.

Then suddenly a mile up the rim, those eight rams emerged. We watched them travel another mile along the rim and then watched them bed down on an open hillside just below the peak. My plan worked perfectly as I worked around and belly crawled right into their beds where they had been only a half hour before. I was tired so I was sure that Dad was too so I decided that with three miles to go to get back to the truck we would try another day. I felt done for the evening but Dad insisted on one last try.

Once in the sagebrush all your landmarks start to look alike. As I got closer my walk turned into a crawl (which seemed to last forever). The tell-tale circle through the brush, not unlike spotting the fan of a gobbler in full strut through the brush told me that I was within 20 yards. The six smallest rams all lay facing the edge of the rim. One step and they were gone. The second biggest ram stood facing me and for a full five minutes. Then as if on cue he turned and took three steps and was off the ledge and gone with no knowledge of what the crosshairs at the base of his neck meant. One by one the smaller rams followed suit leaving my ram suddenly in the clear. His mistake was facing away from the rim. As that last ram disappeared and my ram's shoulders locked as he arose from his bed, my bullet found that locking point. Those strong shoulders just didn't work as he hit the ground after the leap from my shot.

After the slaps on the back and hugs from Dad I realized that in four miles of some of the most rugged rim top country in Oregon, my hunt came down to getting within 74 yards of the biggest sheep on the mountain.

Putting Wild Sheep on the Mountain

2008-2009 Calendar of Events

January 10, 2009 - OR-FNAWS Winter Board Meeting

January 21-24 2009 - Safari Club International Convention in Reno

Feb 5-8 2009 - Wild Sheep Foundation, Salt Lake (WHCE)

April 10 - 12 2009 - 10th Anniversary Celebration Weekend and Banquet



Project Highlight

OR-FNAWS donates pickup truck for Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep recovery.

The Oregon chapter of the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep donated a pickup truck valued at \$11,000 to ODFW for use in the Hell's Canyon Initiative, a multi-state effort to recover bighorn sheep and Rocky Mountain goat populations in the region. The vehicle will be used by an ODFW wildlife technician based in Enterprise Oregon devoted to working on bighorn sheep and goat recovery and involves getting to various locations throughout Wallowa County to monitor radio-collared sheep and goats, test for disease and collar additional animals. Many of these locations are at high elevations off rough roads. This is the second truck donated to the effort. The previous truck that was donated was donated by Tom and Connie Thompson of Aurora Oregon. The funds to purchase this vehicle were raised during a "Frenzy Auction" at the 2008 OR-FNAWS annual fundraiser held in Redmond Oregon. The significant recovery and research efforts underway in Hells Canyon could not be accomplished without the assistance of OR-FNAWS," said Vic Coggins, ODFW district wildlife biologist, Wallowa County. "We thank them for donating this truck and for all the help they have provided over the years." The Hells Canyon Initiative is a group created in 1997 to restore bighorns to the Hells Canyon area in Oregon, Washington and Idaho and all three state wildlife departments are members of the group

"The significant recovery and research efforts underway in Hells Canyon could not be accomplished without the assistance of OR-FNAWS."

OR FNAWS Membership Application

Name _____ Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Annual \$30 Family \$55 Life \$500

Visa MC AX Card Number _____ EXP _____

Credit Card Charge For \$ _____ Signature _____

Check Enclosed For \$ _____

Send application to: **Membership Committee Oregon FNAWS**
c/o Linda South P.O. Box 1088, North Plains, OR 97133

For questions contact Linda South at dljsouth@gmail.com



Putting Wild Sheep on the Mountain



OR-FNAWS
P.O. Box 1088
North Plains, OR 97133
www.oregonfnaws.org

Event Highlight

Banquet time is right around the corner.

April 10th, 11th & 12th 2009

Mark your calendar for a fun filled weekend for the entire family! Join us for our 10th anniversary celebration weekend and annual banquet fundraiser to raise thousands of dollars for the continued success of our numerous programs designed to conserve and enhance wild sheep populations and wild sheep habitat.

Oregon FNAWS Board of Directors



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