



Wild Sheep Foundation Policy on Domestic Sheep & Goats

The Wild Sheep Foundation believes in scientific solutions to resource management challenges. To this end, the Foundation has invested heavily in wild sheep disease research through the Rocky Crate/Wild Sheep Foundation Endowed Chair for Wild Sheep Disease Research at Washington State University.

This research has shown unequivocally that disease transmission from domestic sheep to wild sheep occurs, reinforcing our belief that potential contact between wild and domestic sheep and goats is a primary challenge facing wild sheep survival, enhancement, restoration, and management in many western states and provinces. Because of this, the Wild Sheep Foundation supports comprehensive strategies to manage for effective temporal and spatial separation of domestic sheep and goats from wild sheep; risk assessments of the potential for contact should be completed, periodically re-evaluated, and revised as necessary.

The Wild Sheep Foundation recognizes, supports, and promotes multiple use on public/Crown lands while acknowledging that not all multiple uses can occur on each and every acre. The Wild Sheep Foundation believes in collaboration and consensus-building among diverse interests, including traditional conservation partners as well as those that do not necessarily share the Foundation's views, to achieve effective separation of domestic sheep and goats from wild sheep.

The Foundation also believes that federal/government land management agencies, in collaboration with wild sheep conservation organizations, other stakeholders, and domestic sheep and goat interests, must work to identify and offer alternative grazing options outside of wild sheep habitat for domestic sheep and goat permittees currently grazing within the known distribution of wild sheep. Where appropriate, the Foundation supports conversion of domestic sheep and goat grazing permits to alternative classes/kinds of livestock and/or negotiation amongst stakeholders of financial incentives for domestic sheep or goat permittees to waive public land grazing permits as a means to facilitate separation.

The Wild Sheep Foundation supports cooperative efforts to identify and secure research and management funding essential to ensure the viability of wild sheep populations as well as the domestic sheep and goat industries.

Where collaborative solutions cannot be reached, the Foundation recognizes that administrative appeals or legal challenges may be necessary in resolving land-use conflicts that impact populations of wild sheep.