



## **Position Statement**

### **Transfer of Federal Public Lands In The Lower 48 United States**

The Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) opposes the comprehensive sale or transfer of federal public lands to the states. The WSF does support exchanges and transfers that improve the net conservation value of the federal estate. We also support improved management and administration of these lands.

America's federal public lands are national treasures and are a defining aspect of American heritage. The WSF recognizes the value of our federal public lands and their vital role in sustaining populations of wild sheep, and the importance of public access to these lands. Federal public lands in the lower 48 United States provide irreplaceable habitat upon which more than 90% of wild sheep depend. The productivity of public lands as habitat affords hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreational opportunities from which every American benefits.

Federal public lands in the lower 48 States also provide 66 percent of the Western downstream water supply and an incredible array of recreational pursuits, thereby contributing billions of dollars to local economies. Communities that have capitalized on the interface between federal public lands and adjacent private lands have experienced economic benefits, lower unemployment rates, and a high quality of life for residents and visitors. The broad-scale disposal of federal public lands would not serve America as a whole.

The Wild Sheep Foundation believes in and supports the value of our federal public lands, the multiple use mandate they are managed under, the absolute need for continued and expanded public access to those lands, and the retention of those lands in federal ownership held in trust for the public. The WSF acknowledges this as an obligation we have to future generations.