



POSITION OF THE WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION

Title: Ewe Hunting
Submitted by: WSF Staff
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Overview

Some people will view hunting female sheep (ewes) as philosophically at odds with the traditions and practices of male-only harvest, which have been successful in maintaining or re-establishing wild sheep populations in North America.

Occasionally, favorable environmental factors or management successes result in wild sheep populations that meet or exceed their habitat's capacity to support them. In these instances, their health could be at risk due to overpopulation and resulting nutritional limitations or disease transmission within the population. Maintaining wild sheep populations below carrying capacity also helps reduce dispersal and potential forays into areas containing domestic sheep or goats where pathogen transmission can occur.

The Wild Sheep Foundation is dedicated to conserving wild sheep and their ecosystems. As the catalyst for innovative conservation initiatives to restore, manage, and enhance wild sheep populations, the Foundation supports agency use of all proven methods to keep populations healthy.

Position

The Wild Sheep Foundation believes that reductions are warranted when wild sheep populations exceed their habitat's carrying capacity, whether through translocations or the harvest of females. To maintain wild sheep populations at or below the carrying capacity of their habitats, the Foundation encourages translocations to suitable vacant habitats or to augment existing populations, as determined by wildlife agency personnel. However, when suitable areas are

unavailable, and a population reduction is still a desirable management strategy, it is the position of the Wild Sheep Foundation to encourage the harvesting of female sheep by hunting to bring population numbers in line with the estimated habitat carrying capacity.

The Wild Sheep Foundation will continue to make significant investments in research, disease investigations and mitigation, population management, wild sheep translocations, habitat enhancement, control of non-native wildlife, predator management, and conservation education. These efforts, which are in collaboration with universities, governmental agencies, and non-governmental organizations, demonstrate our commitment to effective and informed conservation.