



Bleats and Blats

Official Newsletter of the
Desert Bighorn Council
August 2017



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Hello DBC members and friends,

Thank you all for your patience and understanding in my slow turnaround of newsletters. Sometimes it has been due to a busy schedule and others do to lack of content. We are always looking for interesting things to share – What's going on with desert bighorn sheep in your jurisdiction that folks would be interested in knowing a little bit more about? Research updates, changes in management, translocations, disease concerns... please take a moment write an update.

This will be my last newsletter. I will be moving on but not far. At our meeting in April, I was elected to the Technical Staff (which mainly means I am passing on the duties of the newsletter). Our new DBC Secretary is Erin Butler. Erin works for the Arizona Game and Fish Department (one of my right hands here) and is the Game Program Specialist in our Kingman Region. Erin has been a member of the DBC for many years; please welcome Erin to her new role.

Outside of work, my daughters are growing up on me. My oldest is interested in engineering so we took a tour of the Colorado School of Mines (loved the school but she is not sure she would survive the cold; in July she wore her jacket during the entire trip; definitely a desert rat). Now she has applied to 2 universities; I can hardly believe she is nearly grown up. My younger daughter is still very active with club softball; we have been coast to coast playing (or watching for me) ball. She is excited to go to a university where the weather is cooler.

For more information about the Desert Bighorn Council or to download a membership form, please visit our website at www.desertbighornCouncil.com.

*All the best to you,
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Desert Bighorn Council Meeting – St. George, UT

The 54rd meeting of the Desert Bighorn Council on April 18-21, 2015, was attended by 104 desert bighorn sheep biologists and aficionados from the United States and Mexico. Rusty Robinson (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources) chaired the meeting. The key focus of the meeting was building partnerships and momentum for bighorn sheep conservation. Registered meeting participants represented a wide variety of agencies and organizations, including State wildlife agencies and Mexico (62%), universities (10%), Federal and other state agencies (10%), and non-governmental organizations (4%), with the remainder representing Native American tribes, commercial businesses, and non-affiliated attendees.

The next Council meeting will be held in 2019 and will be hosted by the Nevada Division of Wildlife resources; the location and dates for the meeting are still to be determined. The 2019 meeting chairman will be Steve Kimble, with Mike Cox as co-chair.

2017 DBC Transactions

We invite and encourage you to publish your work in the DBC Transactions. Submissions for the 2017 Transactions will be accepted through September 30, 2017. If you would like to submit a paper or if you are working on a 2017 state report, this is the time to get materials prepared and sent to Jimmy Cain, DBC Transactions Editor. So far, Jimmy has only received a couple of state reports so we hope the rest of the states complete their reports soon! The 2017 DBC Transactions will be provided as a downloadable electronic version on the website with a “Print on Demand” purchase option.

Please remember that any manuscript addressing the ecology, biology, management, and conservation of desert bighorn sheep, even if not presented at a Desert Bighorn Council meeting, may be submitted for publication in the Transactions. For more information, please email Jimmy Cain at jwcain@nmsu.edu.

Desert Bighorn Council Awards **Submitted by Vern Bleich, Awards Committee Chair**

Recipients of the Ram Award were:

- Walter M. Boyce (UC Davis): For decades of research that span the disciplines of parasitology, epidemiology, and population genetics that have yielded countless professional contributions to the conservation and management of Desert Bighorn Sheep, and for mentoring the dozens of students and others that have gone on to contribute to the conservation of the wild sheep of North America.
- Clinton W. Epps (Oregon State University): For pioneering work exploring habitat fragmentation and its implications; contributions to understanding the genetic structure of populations; contributions toward understanding the consequences of a changing climate; and, your desire and ability to work closely with agency personnel, all of which have yielded substantial benefits to the conservation of Desert Bighorn Sheep.

Recipients of the Honor Plaque were:

- Raul Valdez: For many years of service, both as an educator and as a research biologist; your dedication to the conservation not only of Desert Bighorn Sheep, but the wild sheep of the world as well; and, being an inspiration to your many students that have gone on to contribute to conservation both in the United States and in Mexico.
- Marine Air Corp at 29 Palms Marine Base: For unstifled enthusiasm and unending cooperation in the restoration of Desert Bighorn Sheep to the Bullion Mountains, California; ongoing efforts to enhance habitat and expand the numbers and distribution of that species; and leadership demonstrating a conservation ethic while ensuring the national security of the United States of America.



Farewell to Dick Weaver

Dick Weaver, a founder of the Desert Bighorn Council, passed over on February 10, 2017, after a short illness. Dick is considered the father of bighorn management in California, where he worked almost his entire career as a wildlife biologist for the (then) California Division of Fish and Wildlife. He is widely remembered for his passion about desert bighorns west-wide, his mentoring and support of younger bighorn biologists, his knowledge of wildlife, their habits, habitat, and local history, and being a fine *raconteur*. A dedication to Dick was shared at the DBC meetings in April.

Farewell to Don “The Bear” Armentrout

Don Armentrout, long time Desert Bighorn Council member, passed over August 3, 2017 from pneumonia. He served as Secretary-Treasurer from 1988-1991 and Historian from 2007 to present. He spent much time getting the old files and photos into usable shape.

Don was a wildlife biologist for the BLM, starting in Nevada, then moved to Riverside, California in the 1990's. He recognized the problems with the Peninsular Range desert bighorn sheep metapopulation and worked with others to develop a management plan. While his plan was not accepted by the BLM, it became the backbone of the federal recovery plan for Peninsular bighorns when they were listed as endangered. He retired from the BLM in 2006, while stationed at Susanville, California. He was very well known for his keen knowledge, plus his insight, persistence, and political savvy.

He is survived by his wife Judy. Sympathy cards may be sent to her at 1130 Shadow Mountain Drive, Susanville, CA 96130. There will be a celebration of life for him on **September 30, 2017** at Susanville, CA.

2017 Business Meeting Minutes

St. George, Utah, April 20, 2017

5:36 pm – Meeting called to order by Rusty Robinson (2017 Council Co-Chair).

Minutes of 2015 Business Meeting: Amber Munig (Secretary) distributed, via e-mail prior to the meeting, the minutes of the 2015 Business Meeting held in Borrego Springs, California. The draft minutes had previously been distributed to the membership for review. Council approved the 2015 meeting minutes (R. Lee/B. Wakeling, all approved).

Secretary's Report: (details provided after the meeting) Amber Munig reported that 104 people registered for the 2015 meeting. Registered meeting participants represented a wide variety of agencies and organizations, including State wildlife agencies (62%), universities (10%), Federal and other state agencies (10%), and non-governmental organizations (4%), with the remainder representing Native American tribes, commercial businesses, and non-affiliated attendees. This year's registration fees included membership dues for 2017 and 2018. (R. Brigham/B. Gonzales, all approved)

Rusty Robinson, Justin Shannon, and the DBC planning team were thanked for their efforts towards coordinating a great meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Kathy Longshore (Treasurer) distributed a summary of our financial information (attached at end of minutes), and provided an overview of our accounts. She noted that our balance as of the beginning of fiscal year 2017 was \$192,124.79, which was slightly more than the balance at the beginning of the previous fiscal year (\$190,183.80). All four Certificates of Deposit (CD) have low interest rates, with an annual gain of \$561.04; total value of all CDs was \$137,190.32. CD #1920 has matured; this CD has the best interest rate at 1.01% and will roll over for another term. The Parnassus Fund was purchased in August 2016 at a value of \$25,000. The value as of March 31, 2017 was \$27,475.77 for a gain of \$2,475.77. Kathy has quarterly reports available if desired. Technical Staff voted to withdraw CD #2885 when it matures in September and re-invest those funds in the Vanguard 500 Fund. The Council approved the Treasurer's report (R. Lee/C. Brewer, all approved).

The Executive Committee appointed an Audit Committee comprised of Pat Cummings, Kathy Longshore, and Ray Lee to audit the financial records of the Treasurer. This audit was completed following the close of the fiscal year on April 18, 2017.

Committee Reports:

Meeting Committee: Rusty Robinson provided an overview of the meeting, and thanked all those who helped coordinate and make the meeting a success, with 104 registrants. He thanked Utah FNAWS and 17 additional partners that helped make this meeting a success. Registration fees brought in \$9,680 and Utah FNAWS donated \$6,000 for total revenue of \$15,680. Total expenditures were \$12,300 for a net gain for the workshop of \$3,380.

Executive Committee: No report.

Constitution and Resolutions Committee: No report.

Transactions Report: Jimmy Cain (Transactions Editor) provided a brief update on the Transactions. He noted that the 2015 Transactions were provided electronically on the DBC website or a bound copy could be ordered through the "print-on-demand" option also found on the website. Jimmy noted that the Transactions have started to get a bit thin; actual submissions have been low. All presenters are encouraged to submit their 2017 papers to the Transactions, but also stressed that papers not presented at a DBC meeting are also welcome. Jimmy requested that papers be submitted to him as soon as possible, and also urged state representatives to submit their state reports for inclusion in the Transactions.

Technical Staff: Clay Brewer (Technical Staff Chair) reported that the Technical Staff met on April 18, 2017. No applications for the Hansen-Welles Memorial Scholarships were received.

Awards Committee: Awards were not announced at the business meeting because they were to be awarded at the banquet later that evening.

Award recipients:

Ram Award – Walter M. Boyce (UC Davis): For decades of research that span the disciplines of parasitology, epidemiology, and population genetics that have yielded countless professional contributions to the conservation and management of Desert Bighorn Sheep, and for mentoring the dozens of students and others that have gone on to contribute to the conservation of the wild sheep of North America.

Ram Award – Clinton W. Epps (Oregon State University): For pioneering work exploring habitat fragmentation and its implications; contributions to understanding the genetic structure of populations; contributions toward understanding the consequences of a changing climate; and, your desire and ability to work closely with agency personnel, all of which have yielded substantial benefits to the conservation of Desert Bighorn Sheep.

Honor Plaque – Raul Valdez: For many years of service, both as an educator and as a research biologist; your dedication to the conservation not only of Desert Bighorn Sheep, but the wild sheep of the world as well; and, being an inspiration to your many students that have gone on to contribute to conservation both in the United States and in Mexico.

Honor Plaque – Marine Air Corp at 29 Palms Marine Base: For unstifled enthusiasm and unending cooperation in the restoration of Desert Bighorn Sheep to the Bullion Mountains, California; ongoing efforts to enhance habitat and expand the numbers and distribution of that species; and leadership demonstrating a conservation ethic while ensuring the national security of the United States of America.

There are many deserving of our awards. Please submit nominations.

Historian Committee: Donald Armentrout provided a written Historian’s report prior to the meeting. To date all correspondence, Transactions (if available), and pictures have been filed by meeting year. Electronic versions of the Transactions have been downloaded from the DBC website for archival. This year he hopes to review all meeting minutes to build a sheet describing why each person or group received the Ram Award and Honor Plaque.

Nominating Committee and Election of Officers: The next meeting (2019) will be held in Nevada, possibly Laughlin or Mesquite.

Council officers and three Technical Staff positions were open for nominations. The following individuals’ Technical Staff positions expire this year: Ray Lee, Mara Weisenberger, and Brian Wakeling. Clay Brewer agreed to continue as the Technical Staff chair.

Officer nominations included: Steve Kimble for Council Chair, Mike Cox for Co-chair, Erin Butler for Secretary, and Kathy Longshore for Treasurer. No other nominations were received.

Nominations for Technical Staff positions included: Brian Wakeling, Amber Munig, and Bruce Garlinger. No other nominations were received.

The Council voted in the following slate of Technical Staff members (V. Bleich/B. Gonzales, all approved):

Technical Staff:	Brian Wakeling
Technical Staff:	Amber Munig
Technical Staff:	Bruce Garlinger

The Council voted in the following slate of officers (B. Gonzales/M. Jorgensen, all approved):

Council Chair:	Steve Kimble
Council Co-Chair:	Mike Cox
Secretary:	Erin Butler
Treasurer:	Kathy Longshore

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Vern Bleich, Steve Torres, and Rick Brigham presented to the Council a request to do something in Dick Weaver’s name and fulfill a “Weaver Dream – boots on the ground.” This could be an award or scholarship in Dick Weaver’s name. Clay Brewer suggested that they draft an actual proposal with specifics for the Council. Brian Wakeling

suggested we all think about how something like this could be perpetually supported and not result in a negative financial output. Many ideas were provided: consider completing a habitat project in Dick's name instead of a scholarship, sportsman's groups may donate to a scholarship like this, add a spot in our registration that allows for donations to scholarships, and make the award a pair of boots. This will move to Old Business for consideration in 2019.

- Technical Staff proposed an amendment to the bylaws. Council bylaws state that meetings will be held during the first 2 weeks of April during odd years. Several recent meeting organizers have asked for an exemption to host the meeting later in April; though not permissible according to bylaws, Technical staff approved the shift in dates. The proposal is to amend the bylaws to give some flexibility to when the workshop can be held. Suggested amendment:

Article VI - Meetings

Section 1 Council Meeting - The meeting of the Council shall be within the first two (2) weeks of April, on a biennial basis, during odd numbered years. *The host state may request permission to deviate from these dates for logistical reasons, but the alternative dates for the meeting must be approved by a majority of the Technical Staff.*

Motion to support change in bylaws (J. Wehausen/R. Brigham, all approved).

- Mark Jorgensen very graciously thanked Ray Lee for his time on the Technical Staff.

Gavel passed from Rusty Robinson to Steve Kimble.

6:11 pm - Meeting adjourned

Minutes prepared by A. Munig

DBC Officers and Technical Staff Members

The Council Officers and Technical Staff members are as follows:

Council Chair:	Steve Kimble
Co-chair:	Mike Cox
Secretary:	Erin Butler
Treasurer:	Kathy Longshore
Transactions Editor:	James Cain
Technical Staff Chair:	Clay Brewer
Technical Staff:	Mark Jorgensen, Brian Wakeling, Patrick Cummings, Ben Gonzales, Bruce Garlinger, and Amber Munig



Interested in the Desert Bighorn Council?
Questions about our organization or any of our projects?
Please contact us – we'll be happy to answer your questions.

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