

# Bighorn Sheep Status In Montana

CMR Working Group  
October 6, 2016

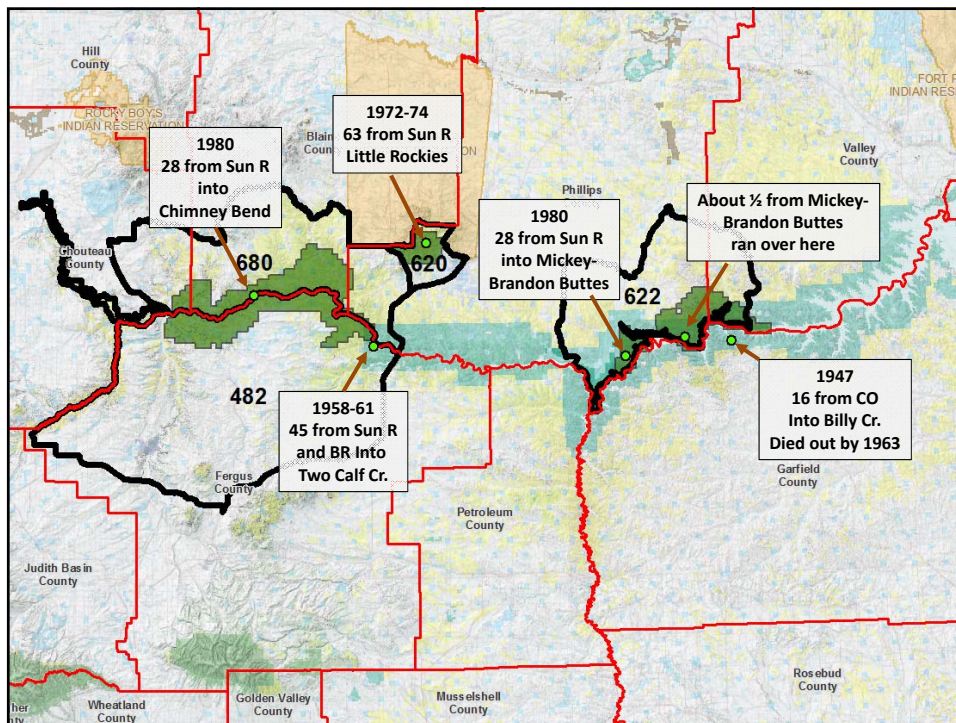
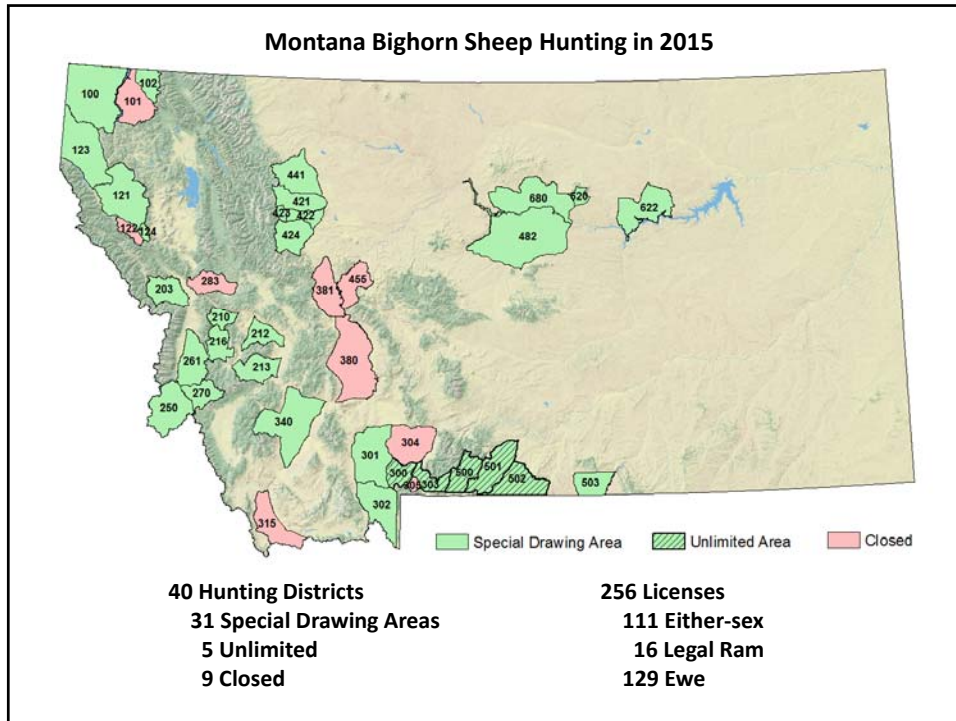
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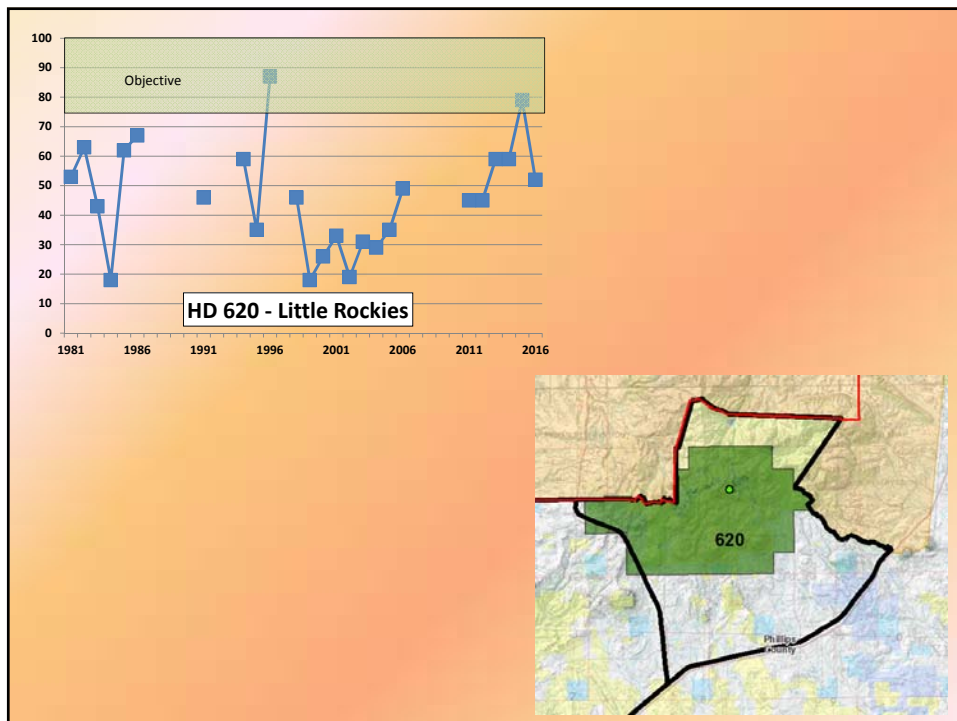
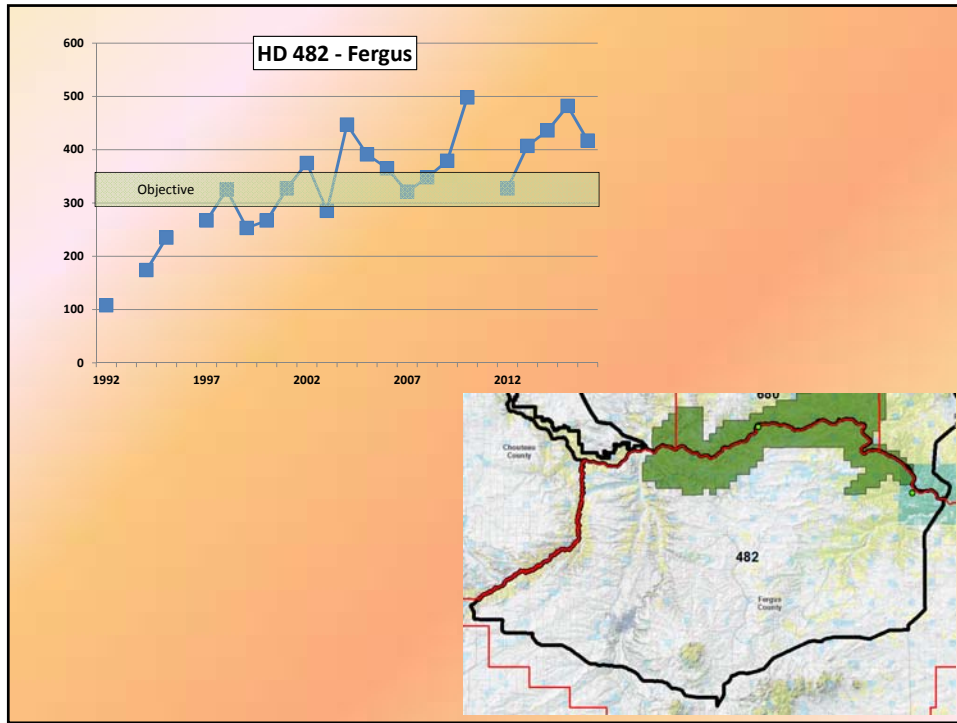
## 43 Bighorn Sheep herds in Montana

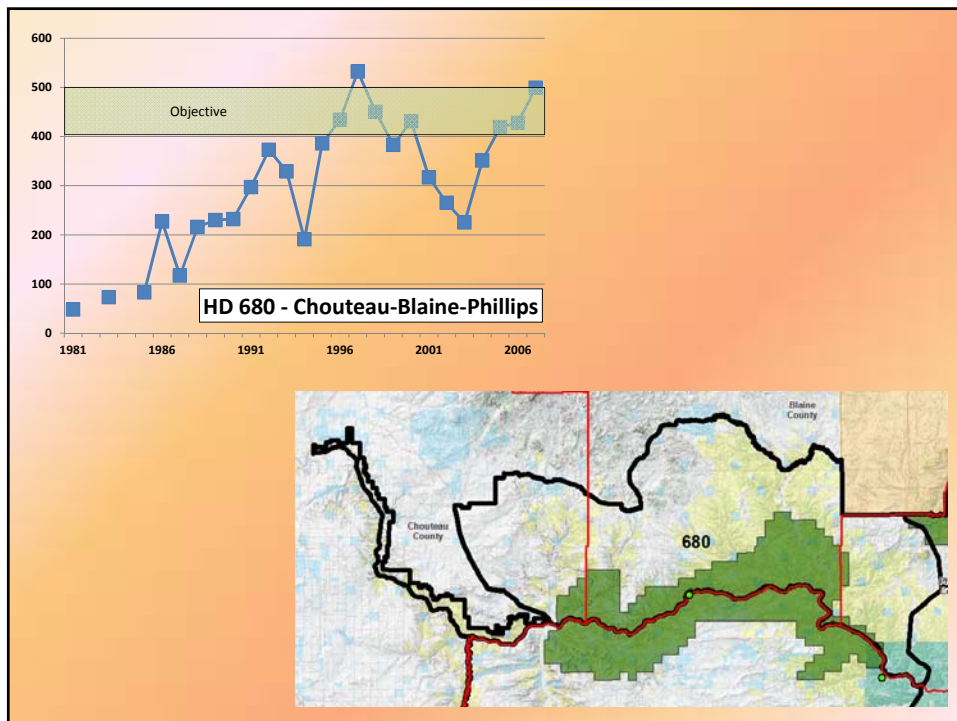
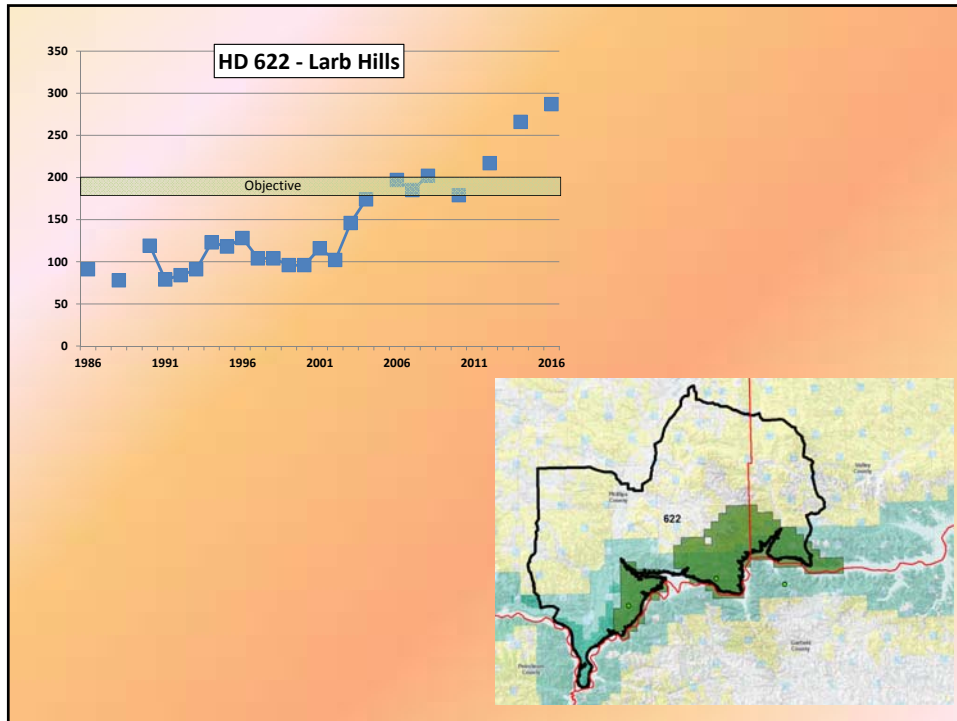


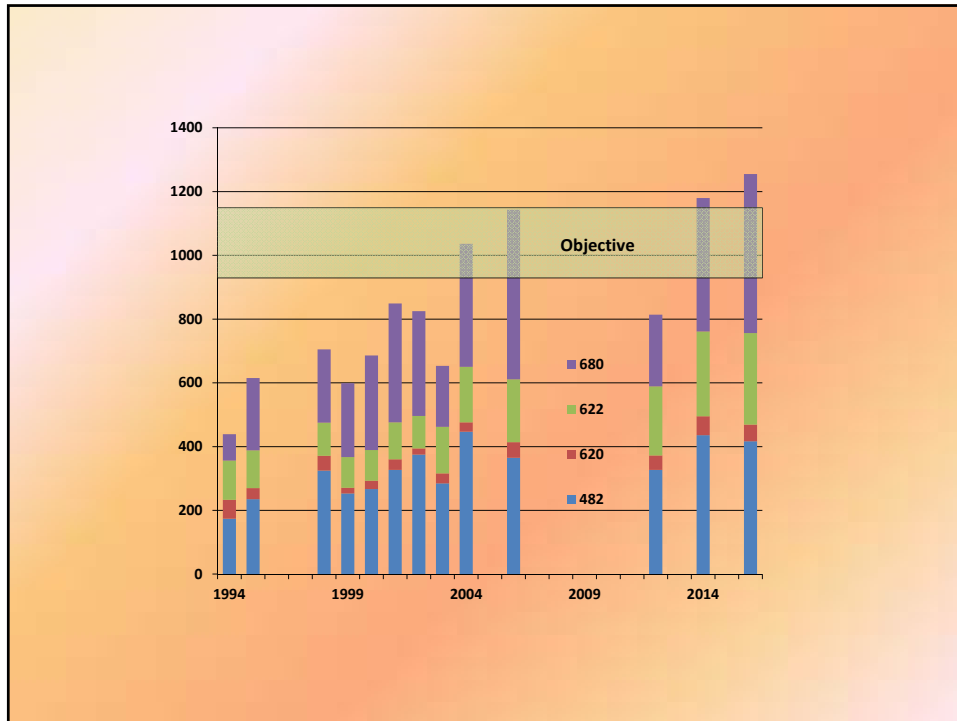
~6,500 BHS in Montana  
~5,500 in herds managed by FWP  
~4,800 in areas open to hunting

15 Native Herds  
28 Reintroduced Herds









### Montana Bighorn Sheep Conservation Strategy



January 2010



Wildlife Division • Helena, MT 59624  
406.444.2612

Establish five new viable and huntable populations over the course of the next 10 years and augment existing populations where appropriate.



## Protocols for Transplanting Bighorn Sheep

1. Preference to historic habitat on public land.
2. Approve only where FWP has determined there is sufficient range.
3. Encourage naturally connected metapopulations.\*
4. Consider only sites that are mostly public land and/or landowner-granted legal hunter access.
5. Consider public input including negative impacts to agriculture.
6. Use hunting and trapping to control herd sizes.
7. Approve only where public benefits outweigh public concerns.
8. Assume risk of transplant failure.
9. Evaluate consumptive and non-consumptive uses, including access.
10. Produce a management plan.
11. If bighorns establish in an unexpected area seek solutions to mitigate impacts on ranching.

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### Montana Bighorn Sheep Conservation Strategy



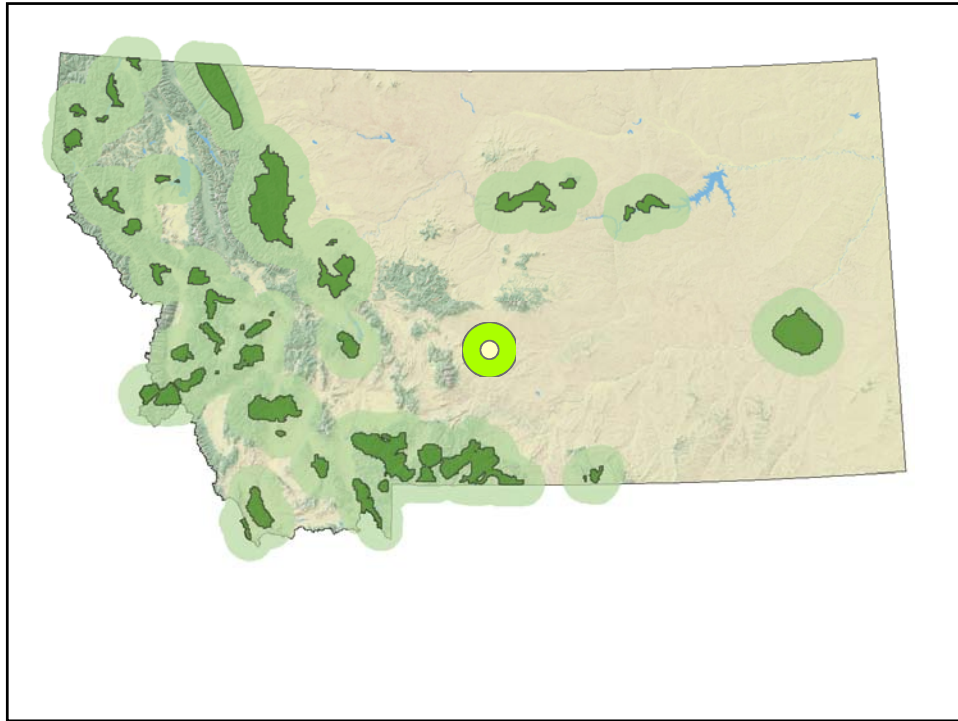
January 2010



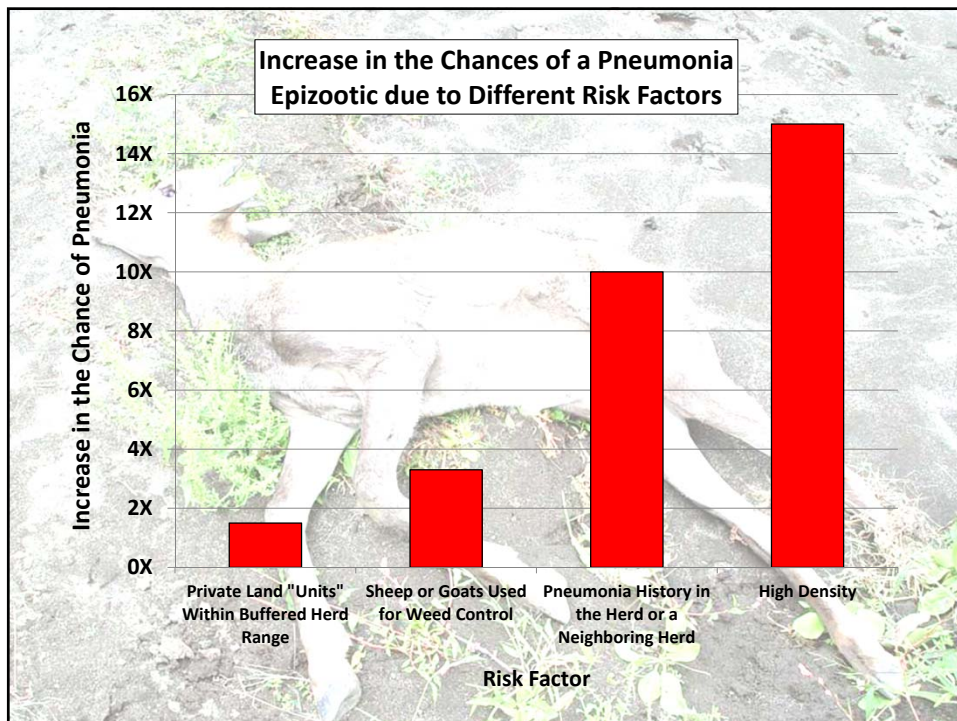
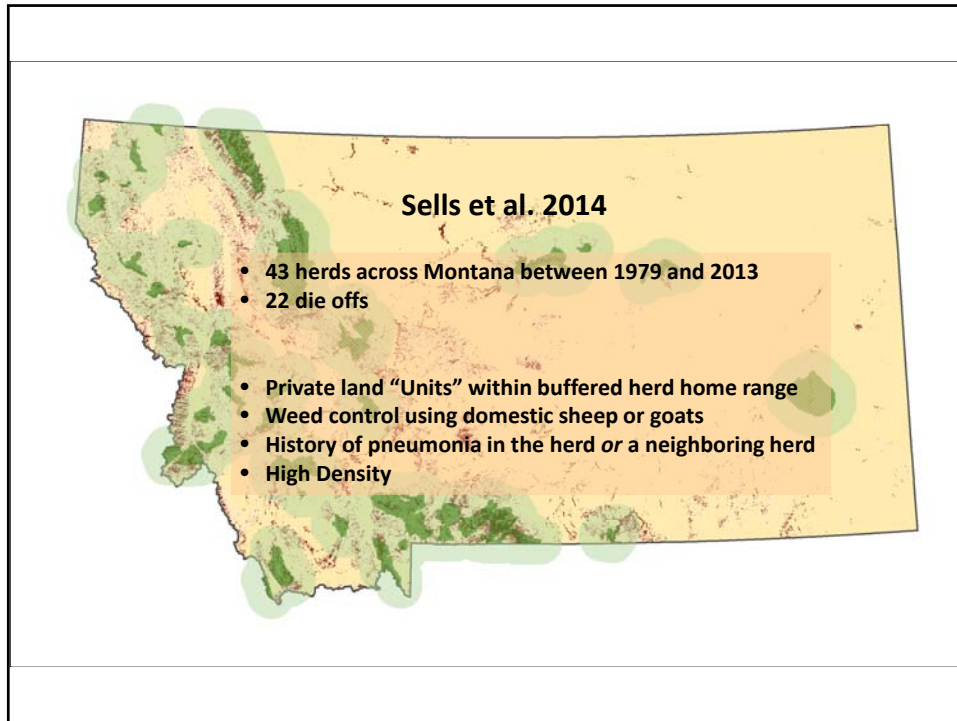
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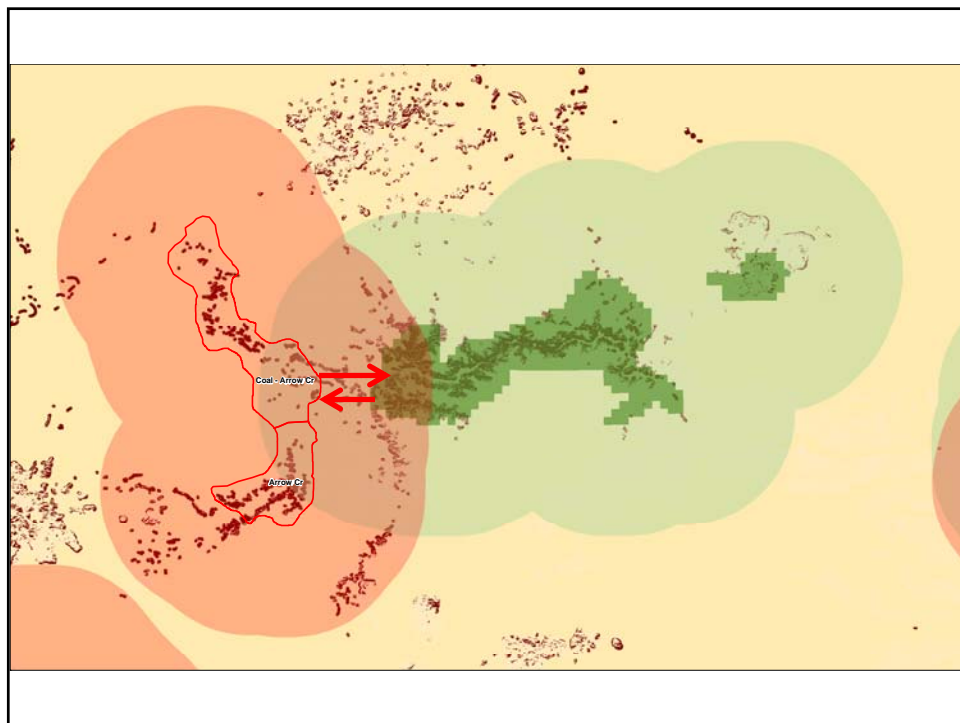
While connecting existing populations with new populations ... is desirable to improve genetic flow, this should not occur if the potential for disease transmission exists because contact with domestic animals is a possibility...**the protection of the integrity and health of existing populations and metapopulations has to be the first priority** ... as opposed to creating new metapopulations.

*Montana Bighorn Sheep Conservation Strategy, P. 42*











**Montana State University**  
Mountain Ungulate Research

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Welcome to the Mountain Ungulate Research Portal! We are a team of researchers (from Montana State University in collaboration with various wildlife management agencies across Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho) seeking to better understand the ecology of bighorn sheep and mountain goats in the greater Yellowstone area and the state of Montana.

We invite you to explore our two ongoing research initiatives:



**Greater Yellowstone Area Mountain Ungulate Project**

Studying the ecology of bighorn sheep and mountain goats across the greater Yellowstone area through collaboration with various regional land and wildlife management agencies.

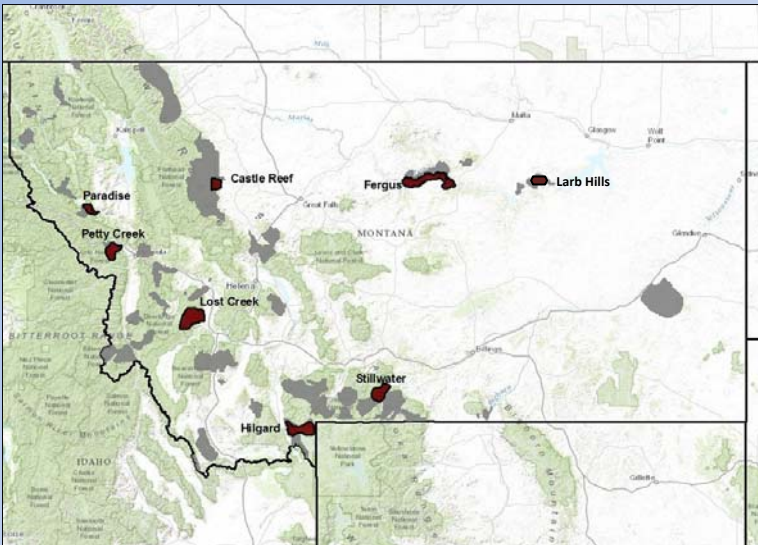


**Montana State-wide Bighorn Sheep Initiative**

Evaluating bighorn sheep population dynamics, respiratory disease, and spatial ecology throughout Montana in collaboration with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.



### Garrott - MSU



The goal of this research effort is to assess the role of herd attributes, annual variation in climate, disease pathogens, and habitat conditions on bighorn sheep recruitment, adult survival and population dynamics.

### FWP Health Testing in Montana Herds

