

1994 NWS&GC MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE: THE FOUNDATION FOR NORTH AMERICAN WILD SHEEP - PUTTING WILD SHEEP ON THE MOUNTAIN

DUNCAN GILCHRIST, Director, Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, 720 Allen Ave, Cody, WY 82414, (307) 527-6261

The Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS) may be the world's most successful hunting-oriented wildlife conservation organization. It is composed of over 5,000 members that are dedicated to the concept of putting wild sheep on the mountain. Each year the group holds an annual convention during a four-day period in February or March with some 2,000 attending members. All states having a sheep auction permit have chosen this group to auction a ram permit to the highest bidder. In all cases, the funds are earmarked by the state for sheep projects. In addition, FNAWS itself funds up to \$500,000 for wild sheep and associated projects each year.

This group, headquartered at Cody, Wyoming, is very cost effective as there are only 6 paid employees. This number is far lower than any of the other major organizations. The overhead of the organization is held to a minimum. The 11 elected officers and directors are unpaid except for expenses. Some directors even pay their own expenses. In addition, there are other members that contribute much time in their respective fields of expertise to the organization at no cost.

I am proud to say that I am an elected director of FNAWS. As a director, I am spending approximately 50 nights away from home on FNAWS business in 1994. This includes attending board meetings and functions to which FNAWS normally sends a representative. In addition, I spend many days in the field talking over sheep management projects with biologists and others. There is so much that needs to be done.

Article III of the bylaws states:

"To promote and enhance increasing populations of indigenous wild sheep on the North American

continent, to safeguard against the decline or extinction of such species, and to fund programs for professional management of these populations, keeping all administrative cost to a minimum."

The organization publishes a quarterly magazine titled WILD SHEEP. It is a quality publication filled with information on wild sheep, FNAWS activities, as well as hunting reports from members.

There are many FNAWS Chapters throughout the country who are likewise working towards the same or similar goals. Monies raised by the chapters are their own to spend. I have attended several chapter fundraisers and have been most impressed by the people that I have met.

Bidding at the convention is spirited with a close ratio of value to bid price, and bids are 80% of value or higher overall. Most bidders have a genuine dedication to the organization because of the high percentage of money that returns to the ground in the form of funded projects compared to the other major hunting organizations. About 80% of FNAWS net income is spent on grant-in-aid funding.

The national headquarters in Cody, Wyoming, are located almost next door to the Buffalo Bill Museum. This building houses a fine collection of Boone and Crockett trophies, western and wildlife art, the Winchester gun collection, the museum of the Plains Indians, and the Buffalo Bill collection. It takes time to visit this museum.

The FNAWS headquarters is beginning to house a respectable collection of wild rams and ram literature.

The annual membership dues are \$45.00 (1994)