



Wild Sheep Society of BC

Abbotsford, BC

December 28, 2018

To: Kyle Stetler, President

Re: Wild Sheep Foundation Funding

I wanted to express my appreciation of the funding support from the Wild Sheep Society of BC (WSSBC) through the provision of funding from the Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF). This WSF funding has been immensely helpful in the 'Ellis Creek Bighorn Sheep Winter Habitat Restoration' (Project). I can say, undoubtedly, that this Project would never have been undertaken without the WSF funding.

We were able to complete 50 ha of thinning operations in critical sheep habitat that had been overgrown and infilled through the last 100 years of fire exclusion. This WSF funding allowed us to acquire another \$50,000 from the provincial government. This will allow us to thin at least another 50 ha this spring. In total, we anticipate having over 100 ha to burn this Spring and Fall due to the generous support of the WSF. This is a first in the Okanagan Valley!

Moreover, the WSF funding was instrumental in opening collaborative doors between the provincial government, First Nations, local government and the private sector. Knowing that funding was secure for operations, I was able to bring parties to the table that have been known to not get along, never mind cooperatively work on projects together.

Historically, First Nations, the provincial government and forest licensees have not shared the same values on the landscape. The WSF funding placed parties at the table with varying values on the landscape working towards inclusive goals in a collaborative manner. This successful collaboration and cooperation were noticed by the Ministry, forest licensees and other Bands/Nations and our model is now being emulated on other projects within the Okanagan Valley. The importance of this collaborative model cannot be understated or under-valued. I believe we have opened previously locked doors, and created an inclusive model, that will create future opportunities for work of this nature.

Similarly, the local governments are appreciative of the Project work as the resultant fire-resistant stands will reduce wildfire risk within the wildland-urban interface and contribute to community protection. After experiencing the two worst fire seasons in BC history the last two fire seasons, the importance of such wildfire risk reduction has never been higher.

As equally important to note, is that the WSF funding has provided full time, meaningful employment to members of the Penticton Indian Band. Their members wish to be out working on the land as their elders did in times past. This funding has contributed immensely to that cause and to employing workers with less opportunities typical of non-First Nation workers. This, too, has caught the attention of the Ministry and, hence, why I believe they were forthcoming with the \$50,000 contribution from their Ecosystem Restoration program.



We recently held a media event for the Project and had over two dozen media, government and local government staff, and First Nations members in attendance, as well as the Executive Director of the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC funded the prescriptions that led to the operations). The Director was incredibly impressed with the Project, the collaboration and the efficient use of multiple funding sources. So much so that I received an appreciation email stating us much from the FESBC communication officer.

I have included this email as well as links to the media stories submitted from that day. I would draw your attention to the comments made by the PIB Chief within the Global News and Castanet reports. You will see the appreciation and support the Chief and Elders present have for this Project. Again, not something we would have seen without WSF support. The opportunity provided to the Band by the WSF funding will garner their ongoing support for future similar projects.

I would like to express my gratitude for the support of the WSF and WSSBC and appreciate you passing this along. I look forward to continuing to work with your agency to restore sheep habitat, reintroduce fire to the landscape through prescribed burning, collaborate with First Nations and to improve sheep populations.

Without a doubt, this successful project brought about by WSF funding was a decisive factor in my enrolling with the WSSBC as a Life and Monarch member. I consider it a privilege to work with such a resoundingly passionate organization.

Sincerely,

John Davies, RPF

Wildfire Management Specialist

Davies Wildfire Management Inc

Global News:

<https://trib.al/bjUyRWj>

Castanet:

<https://www.castanet.net/news/Penticton/244257/Getting-ahead-of-fire-season>

Penticton Western:

<https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/news/wildfire-mitigation-work-helps-restore-sheep-habitat-in-south-okanagan/>

Castanet:

<https://www.castanet.net/news/Penticton/244257/Getting-ahead-of-fire-season>



Davies Wildfire Management Inc

Aleece Laird - Communications FESBC

Tue, 18 Dec, 08:00 (10 days ago) ☆ ↩ ⋮

to John, Steve ▾

Hi John,

We wanted to share with you our appreciation for helping to host such a great media tour last week regarding the RDOS and PIB collaborative, of which FESBC is a partner in.

You and your team hosted not only a great event, but our Executive Director said he was so impressed with how well spoken you are and could tell you have a mutually respectful and great relationship with the many partners who are a part of the project. We were very thankful to be involved in the day's events and appreciated the opportunity to also promote the good work FESBC funds.

Thank you again for involving FESBC in this day and for going the extra mile to organize this event.

Aleece



Forest Enhancement
Society of British Columbia