



# WILD SHEEP SOCIETY OF BC

## *2020 President's Report*

*May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021*

Our 2020 year marked another unprecedented year of commitment to wild sheep conservation in British Columbia. With our focus on our mission, we were able to allocate over \$320,000 to wild sheep conservation project support. A further \$250,000 in commitments from other conservation partners seen us reach that half million-dollar mark for wild sheep conservation efforts in the province. Revenue wise, we were on par with 2019 at \$1.22 million dollars. With concerns around the Covid-19 pandemic managing costs was a priority and we managed to reduce our expenses 14% year over year.

This past year, we continued to diversify in search of new opportunities and partnerships that would help support our project growth. We continued to develop partnerships and project funding opportunities with Abbotsford Fish and Game Club and Wild Sheep Foundation- Midwest. The Wild Sheep Foundation continued with their unprecedented support in the province.

We have continued our Conservation Partnership agreement with SITKA Gear. This is the third year of our agreement where SITKA is contributing a minimum of \$25,000 in funds or merchandise each year to WSSBC. We have released a WSSBC logoed line of clothing fully donated by SITKA with all these funds going back on the ground for conservation in BC.

In terms of membership, year over year we continued to enjoy considerable growth with our membership at an all-time high. Our Life Membership list approached that 500 member mark with continued interest and growth in our Monarch Membership program.

Throughout the year our Board of Directors passed a motion to have our Directors seek out Charitable status opportunities for the Wild Sheep Society of BC (WSSBC). A sub-committee was set up and led by a team of Directors and past WSSBC volunteers with a goal of creating a charitable venue for WSSBC supporters. This process is lengthy, and it is not expected that we will have an outcome until later in 2021.

In 2020 we welcomed a new executive assistant Michael Surbey to our team, who has been an incredibly valuable addition to our team. Michael has been an important asset and without the support of our paid contractors, namely Michael Surbey and Kelly Cioffi we could not continue to grow the organization like we have done.

Our Communications platform remains strong seeing increased growth particularly in our social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram. Including our email subscriber list, we have grown followers and subscribers to close to 20,000.

In terms of advocacy and outreach we have been working with elected officials on a variety of issues. We meet regularly with the Minister of Agriculture as we are striving to further our domestic-wild sheep separation initiatives. Chris Barker has been working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and FLNRORD in Victoria making inroads for a policy around wild sheep and domestic sheep separation. This has been a multi-decade approach, but we have a Minister of Agriculture (Lana Popham) that is committed to find a solution and has dedicated resources to a successful outcome.

Our Hunter Heritage campaign 1Campfire continues to grow and we enjoy our shared partnership on the initiative with the Wild Sheep Foundation. We have an aggressive marketing plan for 2021 and work is being done on developing content for the coming year.



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In terms of fundraising, we have broken several barriers. With the Covid 19 crisis we approached 2020 cautiously both from a fundraising but also an expense perspective. We were able to successfully host the 2020 Northern Fundraiser with 450 attendees. However, the Kamloops Convention was cancelled at the very last moment with provincial health restrictions making hosting the event untenable. We were able to pivot and host an online auction through Facebook which proved very successful. Again, due to covid-19 our 2020 Jurassic Classic Fundraiser was cancelled.

Due to overwhelming support from our members, donors, sponsors, and volunteers we set new fundraising records in 2020. Our WSR raffle was incredibly successful and 2020 despite the Covid-19 pandemic allowed us to net our highest fundraising numbers to date.

2020 has been an incredibly successful year thanks to you our members, our hard-working volunteers, donors, and supporters. I am incredibly excited about the coming year and feel that we have many great things ahead for the wild sheep of BC. Thank you to all of you for your support and commitment to conservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Heitsman", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

David Heitsman  
WSSBC President