



WILD SHEEP SOCIETY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

And Partners



South Okanagan Bighorn Sheep Disease Symposium

February 22nd, 2024

Penticton Trade & Convention Centre

Penticton, BC



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South Okanagan Bighorn Sheep Disease Symposium

Managing Sheep Health with Multiple Diseases: *From Disease to Resiliency*

Introduction:

The Wild Sheep Society of BC (WSSBC) is sponsoring a South Okanagan Bighorn Sheep Disease Symposium on Thursday, February 22nd, 2024 during the WSSBC Annual General Meeting from February 22nd – 25th, 2024 in Penticton, British Columbia (BC). The symposium will follow up on a commitment made by the WSSBC at the 2022 BC Wild Sheep Summit, in Prince George, BC. The South Okanagan Disease Symposium will be collaborative, bringing wild sheep researchers, First Nations, wildlife professionals, knowledge holders, hunters, outfitters, guides, government staff, and wild sheep advocates together to listen, network, and promote the use of science in the management of wild sheep health in general, and for South Okanagan Bighorn Sheep specifically. Sharing and building on all ways of knowledge, methods, results, and lessons learned here in BC and elsewhere are the recipes to recovery and conservation of wild sheep in BC.

Workshop Goal:

The goal of the symposium is to have invited speakers present, discuss, and share information among attendees. The symposium will create a shared knowledge base and identify opportunities for cooperation in addressing BC's most critical wild sheep health challenges, strengthening the collaborative approach that continues to support wild sheep management and conservation in the South Okanagan and across British Columbia. Our goal is to take these sheep populations *from Disease to Resiliency*.

Benefits to Attendees:

Assessments of thimhorn and bighorn sheep herd health in BC have created a variety of herd health profiles. They vary tremendously with some herds not apparently affected by infectious diseases, others suffering from acute or chronic respiratory diseases in a similar manner as other jurisdictions, and some periodically impacted by short-term viral diseases or long-term parasitic infestations. The BC South Okanagan bighorn metapopulation is unique, with cumulative health challenges that include most, if not all the above conditions.

The symposium creates a unique venue for WSSBC members and regional government biologists to meet with colleagues, wildlife professionals, advocates, and researchers for updated information, knowledge sharing, and networking on wild sheep disease management challenges. For BC residents it is an incredible opportunity to mix with friends, colleagues and researchers to truly understand BC wild sheep disease management challenges without the need to travel outside of BC.

How will the Symposium address wild sheep health challenges:

Invited speakers from BC, Alberta, and the USA will summarize the current knowledge and research on wild sheep diseases and the potential management options, particularly for those diseases that affect the South Okanagan bighorn metapopulation. Topics will include summaries on hemorrhagic disease viruses (*Bluetongue and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease viruses*), Psoroptic mange caused by external mites, and respiratory disease associated with *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae*. Discussions will include recommended approaches to management of the diseases where they exist, the successes and failures experienced over time, and new directions and research recommendations. The outcome is expected to lead to the creation of a cooperative process and sheep health management direction for BC's wild sheep.



Agenda

Thursday, February 22nd – Room: 1, 2, 3

- 7:00am Breakfast
- 8:00am Symposium start
- 8:00am Welcome & Introduction from organizers and partners
- 8:30am Plenary(ies) – Description of disease types
- 9:30am South Okanagan Bighorn Sheep Herd Health, population status/trends, health issues – historic/recent/current
- 10:30am Break
- 10:45am Update on disease recognition and surveillance methods
- 11:30am Update on herd health assessment methods in BC and elsewhere
- 12:00pm Lunch
- 12:45pm Update on disease management tools:
 - What are the objectives?
 - What is the science?
 - What are the policies?
- 1:45pm Break
- 2:30pm Bighorn Disease Management Examples – successes and failures in BC and elsewhere
- 3:45pm Panel discussion: Recommendations and next steps for SOK BHS disease and herd management – *From Disease to Resiliency ...*
- 4:45pm Wrap up and Thank You's



Symposium Sponsorships

Thank you to our generous sponsors of the Wild Sheep Society of British Columbia's, 2024 South Okanagan Bighorn Sheep Disease Symposium.



Symposium Contacts

If you have any Registration issues, questions, or require assistance please reach out to:

- Rebecca Peters, Admin Assistant |#: 778-886-3097 | wildsheepsocietyofbc@gmail.com

If you have any concerns, comments, or questions for the WSSBC please reach out to:

- Kyle Stelter, Chief Executive Officer |#: 250-619-8514 |@: kstelter@wildsheepsociety.com
- Michael Surbey, Executive Assistant |#: 604-690-9555 |@: exec@wildsheepsociety.com

If you have any questions, concerns, additions, or have relevant content to contribute/present:

- Dr. Helen Schwantje, Disease Symposium Lead @: helen.schwantje@gmail.com

Symposium Registration & Hotel Information

Web-site link: <https://www.wildsheepsociety.com/sokdiseasesymposium/>

