

RESUME OF BIGHORN SHEEP IN NORTH DAKOTA

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North Dakota is included in the historic range of the now extinct Audubon bighorn sheep. The last recorded Audubon sheep was shot on the Magpie Creek drainage of the badlands in about 1905. The badlands include the Little Missouri River drainage of western North Dakota.

Eighteen California bighorns were obtained from British Columbia in 1956 - so after an absence of 51 years, bighorns were again resident to a portion of their historic range.

We have utilized a total of three holding pastures and have made six releases into the wild - one other release is planned.

There is an estimated population of somewhere between 250 and 300 animals, and they have resulted entirely from the initial reintroduction in 1956.

Our present management is directed toward perfecting a reliable population trend census technique. We are attempting to utilize our regular mule deer census technique.

We have not been able to hunt bighorns due to a quirk in our big game permit law. Legislation is needed to accomplish this.

RESUME OF WYOMING'S BIGHORN SHEEP MANAGEMENT

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Wyoming's current sheep management program consists of establishing hunting seasons, setting the number of permits in each area, and transplanting sheep to areas to establish or augment existing herds.

The number of bighorn sheep permits issued annually has increased until there are approximately 400 allotted. It appears these numbers will stabilize in this area for a while.

Hunter success ranges roughly between 30 and 40 percent, with slightly over 100 animals taken on the average.

The trapping and transplanting program has furnished 722 bighorns since 1956. This program has had varying degrees of success. Sheep hunting has been initiated in some areas as a direct result of the transplanting program. Some areas have shown no influence from additional sheep being introduced. Recent transplants in two areas have not had enough time to determine their success.