



The NAPgA Bleat!

The Official Newsletter of the North American Packgoat Association

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Page 1

Pack Goats in the Wind River Range

Out of concern for Big Horn Sheep in the Winds, their Land Managers are taking a hard look at pack animals. Goats, due to the limited time of their use in the backcountry, appeared to be in danger of being excluded entirely. NAPgA, therefore has taken a number of steps to attempt to working with land managers to help keep us from being summarily excluded. This Newsletter is primarily about these efforts.

Larry Robinson

Rendezvous 2010

Hey! That's ancient history!

True, but it was the beginning of NAPgA's efforts to let the land managers know that we were here, goats were being used more and more as beasts of burden, and we needed to be able to fit in somewhere in the overall spectrum of pack stock.

The Wind River Range was chosen for this Rendezvous specifically as we wanted to become visible in that area. We knew that there was some resistance to goats & goatpacking in this area, and we wanted them to see what goats & goatpackers were about.

To say that we were resoundingly ignored would be an understatement. Were it not for one local individual we would have been relegated to a gravel pit somewhere in Wyoming. As it was, we were still relegated to a rather remote and less than optimal place to camp, but we at least let them know that we were serious, and we were going to have to be dealt with eventually.

There was some minimal involvement with the local government agents, but in spite of our lack of significant impact at this point, we at least let them know that we were on the radar to stay.

The Winds - The Saga Continues

Based primarily on our lack of significant progress in opening up the Wind River managers to the concept of goats as pack animals, we took the next, and relatively unusual step for NAPgA's BOD, and that was to finance a trip for a couple of our folks to talk directly with the land managers involved.

As Carolyn Eddy, one of the meetings participants noted:

"Our meeting to work with the Forest service in the northern Wind River Range was a **qualified** success. We had been told there would be a blanket closure of the entire northern Winds due to lack of funding to put to use researching and making a forest plan. This "temporary" closure would have turned into a permanent one.

Due to our efforts, the Forest Service is now working with us to implement a plan of ours to keep one key trail through the big horn sheep corridor that will make it possible to get through to a number of other less critical areas.

The meeting with the Forest Service was held in Cody, Wyoming on the 8th of February. In attendance were Charlie Jennings, our land use chairperson, Carolyn Eddy, our education chairperson, Dave Suisse, member, Gregg Shedd, member and Josh Leavitt, interested bystander. Charlie Wilson had planned to attend and was held back by extremely bad weather. My trip over the Wasatch Range was like riding in a crop duster, bouncing all the way over. Charlie, Gregg and Dave followed a snowplow over a few passes coming and going. Apparently the question of the day was "Charlie, can you actually see the road?"

But, from the response we got, it was well worth the trip. A representative from the Bridger-Teton was there by video conference and was obviously scouting out what we were saying to apply to his own forest plan coming up in a couple of years. We tried our best to represent goatpackers as people who want to be good wilderness users and willing to help look at ways to solve problems for the benefit of both packgoats and big horns.

We were given 3 weeks to put together maps and a proposal to be presented to Fish and Game and that was done in a timely manner. There was much burning of the midnight oil by Gregg Shedd and Charlie Wilson, who best knows the area and was a huge asset to this effort. Carolyn Eddy, wrote up the proposal with input from the attendees, Charlie Wilson, Kent Daniels and Perry Burkhart.

Thanks to these hard working people for their efforts. Below is the proposal for the Forest Service (This information will also be on the website: www.napga.org). Maps will be posted also. If this project is approved it will be implemented by NAPgA with the Forest Service's overlooking.

Proposal for program to assist with pack goats in the Winds

The two main goals are to monitor usage and to educate users prior to their trip.

Education

1. One informational brochure that covers preliminary inquiries.

Why the Winds is a sensitive area-need

General pack goat /wilderness ethic information – have what you need to go into the Wind River area

2. We have several handouts already available to NAPgA members and others. Need a combined handout that covers the below:

Packstringing - (already have)

Tethering - need

Means for avoiding contact with big horns and how to haze off big horn sheep if they are in the area you are passing through. Distance to be maintained from sheep

We need Brochures would be provided to the local FS offices to send to interested inquirers at our cost?

Or a file could be sent to them to print their own.

3. Forms and test posted online

Test on bighorn/pack goat concerns and how to meet the criteria-need online, to be sent in with Wilderness stock permit application with an agreement to abide by any seasonal closures, and parameters for said closures, ie. lambing, elevation, emergency-added to the test.

4. Form to go with GPS collars-print and online for those who have collars

Mandatory reporting procedure for BHS sightings, GPS co-ordinates, date/time. Online means for doing so-need form

Before the trip requirements

Health certificate required including in and out of state residents.

Stock permit required (available from Forest Service) showing how many people, goats, and proposed locations of campsites. To be submitted with copy of online test

and affirmation of willingness to abide by Forest Service Rules.

Limit number of stock to 10 or less

Radio tracking collars rented to anyone planning a trip into this area unless they provide their own.. One collar per each unique group of goats. Each individual owner needs to collar his lead goat or goats

During the Trip and Monitoring

Packstring on the trail

Tether by high lining, lowline or dog stake or other tying at night in sheep sensitive areas

A GPS collar for each unique group of goats

Move thru sheep sensitive area as quickly as possible. This 10-mile stretch could be labeled a no camping zone. (This agreement needs to be on the test form with the permit.)

Data gathered and compiled by NAPgA about each trip, as reported by the radio collar renters. Summary sent to the FS at regular intervals.

Data to include number of goats, dates and duration of trip, any big horn sightings, campsites used, number of nights each site. Form could be included when the collars are sent out. Returned when collar is returned. Or downloadable for those who have their own collars.

On the ground checking of sites.

Volunteers to go into the area to visually check sites for damage, goat usage, (any thing else.) We can ask anyone going into the area to volunteer to check this. Just need a handout for what to report back on.



NAPgA's Meeting Participants:

Carolyn Eddy, & Charlie Jennings

President's Corner

Members:

I have served as the 'President' for about a year now, and I can tell you that I am not gravitating any nearer my 'comfort zone' than I was in the beginning. However, NAPgA is serving a very vital function in the packing community, and those that are available must serve, comfortable or not.



This newsletter is a case-in-point of the need for a group like NAPgA to be there to speak for goats in the wilderness, as in lieu of that voice, you could eventually be relegated to having to hike with your animals in your backyard. Great thanks to Carolyn, Charlie J., Charlie W., David, Kent & Gregg for their efforts to keep the Winds open. All NAPgA members are definitely in their debt.

Now, the bad news. Renewals this year are not 'proceeding apace'. In fact, for those of us who depend on the contributions of our members to keep our cash flow going, the stress level is definitely on the rise. Please check the website and attempt to log in. If you can't, 'Ding!' you're overdue! If you need information or help, pls contact me: lrobinson@napga.org

Also, as I harp on at every opportunity, NAPgA will not grow significantly without your active involvement in telling those who have goats, or are contemplating obtaining them, about the organization. NAPgA has the greatest chance of member growth by **members talking to others** and letting them know what NAPgA is doing, and the value of having a group like NAPgA in the first place. Pls take the effort to increase our population in the coming year.

Larry Robinson

The Website: Why More Than One Log In

Our website is an effort that was undertaken as cheaply as possible due to NAPgA's small budget for such items.

Therefore, instead of designing it from the ground up, our webmasters used pre-programmed 'modules' or 'plug-ins' to form the various parts of the site, rather than program it from scratch.

That is why there are separate log ins for, the website, the gallery, and the store. It is a necessary part of keeping the costs down and having a functional website. It is much easier if you use the same log in information for each section of the site instead of having to remember 3 different log ins.

For the record, I not only have to remember 3 log ins as you do, I have to remember 'Admin' log ins for the Gallery, and the Store as well. So there!

Goat Tracks – Journal of the Working Goat

It seems that the rumors of its demise were greatly exaggerated.

Yes, it has been on hiatus for much of 2010, but I have taken it over and will produce the first issue April 1 (or so) of this year, with other issues to follow June 15, September 1 and December 1.

For those of you that have been subscribers, I am going to update the end of your subscription to reflect the fact that you missed issues in 2010, but the amount of time will depend on the actual number of issues you missed, depending on the actual end of your subscription.

Larry Robinson

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The Website: Interactivity and All That

One of the things that I was the most excited in the website that we settled on, was the ability of our members to log in and change their own information. As a long-term computer user, I thought that was the beauty of this particular design.

However...

Practice has shown that most folks are either uncomfortable with the interactivity function, or are afraid of 'messing something up'.

Almost everything on the screen that comes up when you log in is changeable by you the member. After you change whatever field is necessary, if you hit 'Submit' at the bottom of the page, it is done.

And you cannot mess something up that I cannot fix.

I can help if you need it, but the opportunity is there for you to do it as well.

Larry Robinson

lrobinson@napga.org

Packgoats Pitching In!

Hi Everyone!

I just wanted to start getting the word out for my new campaign "Packgoats Pitchin' In!"



It's something I know many of you do already and I hope to get a lot more packgoat folks involved. My family and I love to clean up the trash with the goats along roads, trails, beaches, campgrounds or where ever. It amazes me how much trash is out there. My son and I went down our road and barely made it 1/4 of a mile and our bags were full!

All you have to do is get out, have some fun and pick up some trash with the goats!

Email me at least your name, date, location (town, state), goat names and pounds of trash. (*Pictures too please!*) I'm going to start keeping track and posting on my web page for now and hopefully soon get a dedicated one. I'm having some great

new artwork made and there will be prizes just for participating and more great gifts when you reach other motivational mile markers.



Derek & one of the 'boys', Pitchin In!

(*Details to come soon!*)

The best prize of all will be the act itself! We have just gone out 2 times this year and have collected 44 pounds of trash. 10 more times... 200 pounds? 20 more times... 400? And 10 others do the same... 4,000 pounds? Together our results could be staggering!

Can you reach 250lbs this year? 500lbs? 1000lbs? Together we can make an amazing impact!

Get started TODAY!

Here is a start on the web page: <http://www.pacificpackgoats.com/index.php?categoryID=154>

Make sure you check out the sub categories:

Trash Collected,
Heaviest Item &
Collection Totals.

(*Any other ideas for fun categories like heaviest item to have?*)

Thank you for your efforts!

Rachel Suomela

Pacific Pack Goats.com

"Life is goat! Pack at it!"

Summer(?) on the Continental Divide

It was in the summer, July 24, 2008.

Me, my two younger sons and a neighborhood friend were about to embark on our trip *up and over* the Continental Divide in the Wind River Range.

18 miles each way to our destination. This photo was taken at 11,200 ft on the East side of Washakie Pass. We crossed the Continental Divide about 11 in the morning, and the view was breathtaking.

However, we were getting pelted by hail, and the driving wind was relentless. I remember that Macon Lake, the first landmark that we would come to, was still about 30% ice covered. I still kick myself that we didn't camp right there and fish for Brookies, because it is great fishing at "ice-out".

At the time, our goat Rufus was 2-1/2 yrs old, & Buford and Festus were yearlings. I had about 30 lbs on each of them and they handled it fine.

Unfortunately, we also had a 2-1/2 year old goat named Rastus that just was not born to be a pack animal. He hated every step of the journey, and my son eventually had to tie him to the back of his backpack and drag him from place to place. I gave him up as a brush goat as soon as we arrived back home.

The mosquitoes were horrendous this time of year. The goats would rub their heads and necks in the coals of fire rings, just to try to get some relief from the bloodsuckers. We would dive in the tent and zip up the doors, only to find 30 or so mosquitoes had followed us in.

The trip was a 5-day venture into the South Fork Lakes, in a cirque on the backside of the famous Cirque of the Towers. Jaw-dropping scenery the entire way.

The fish were spawning at the inlet of the lake we finally camped at. You could've practically walked across the stream on their backs as the spawners were swimming upstream from the inlet.

We encountered many boulder fields on our way up to these lakes, and had to dislodge goats that would get stuck in between car-sized boulders.

Looking back, it was a real stretch out of our comfort zone to take on this type of adventure, but it has made us want to go back every year since then.



Charlie Jennings
Deweyville, UT