

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is there a research project studying Packgoats?

Packgoat use on public lands defined as bighorn sheep habitat is being prohibited across the Western US. This prohibition is based on the "potential" that packgoats carry bacterial agents that can cause bighorn sheep to die. There is no available research in this country on the prevalence of these bacterial agents in packgoats. Despite this lack of scientific evidence a number of National Forest Land Management Plans have excluded use of packgoats on public lands. A leading research expert on this subject has offered his opinion to the National Forest Service stating goats have a 90% prevalence rate of the bacteria known as MOVI. Our current testing on packgoats indicates this is not true. We need scientific data to determine if packgoats pose a risk to bighorn sheep to retain our right to access public lands.

What defines a Packgoat for this research?

A packgoat is defined as any age goat that is being raised to hike/walk with its handler for the purpose of packing cargo or as a trail companion. Packgoats are kept current on vaccinations, parasite control, hoof trimming and matters of goat health husbandry.

Packgoats are NOT defined as weed-eaters that can number into the hundreds turned on to any land, public or private, for the purpose of clearing vegetation, or goats specifically raised for meat.

Who can participate?

Any packgoat owner. You do not have to be a member of or affiliated with any association. You do not have to be a user of bighorn sheep habitat. We really need representation from every state in the US

What do my packgoats have to do to participate?

Please see the 2 different study protocols in the "Screening packgoats" document. Your protocol will depend on whether your goats live or visit the Western US.

Who is doing the study?

M. A. Highland, DVM, PhDc, Dipl. ACVP
Animal Disease Research Unit - Agricultural Research Service - USDA

Will there be a cost to me for the testing?

No, all costs will be covered by ADRU to perform this prevalence/surveillance study, including veterinary charges (if applicable), supplies, shipping, and testing

When does the research start?

All we need at this point in time are names, addresses, and number of goats. We will contact you when everything is finalized and ready to begin sample collection.

Can I use my own veterinarian for collecting my packgoat's nasal and eye swabs?

We need to get an idea of the number and locations of packgoats willing to participate. This is important for funding estimates and identifying veterinarians/field personnel that are nearby for sample collection. We will contact you with details when this information becomes available.

Will I get the results of the testing for my animals? Yes

Where can I get more information?

Review the "Screening Packgoats" research document. If you still have questions please call or email Charlie Jennings, NAPgA President 434-764-1111, or vigilguy@gmail.com .

To request copies of sample research documents email Nancy Clough, NAPgA Member at idahonancy@roadrunner.com or 208-699-2702

How do I sign up?

Send name, address, and number of goats to Nancy Clough idahonancy@roadrunner.com