From Larry the NL Editor:

Well, once again I am late arriving at the gate. Just seems like there just isn't ever enough time to get all the things done that one would like to. Not to mention having to take some time during the week to go up near Stanley and look for my lost gear (want to understand that pregnant comment?, subscribe to Goat Tracks magazine. www.goattracksmagaine.org/magazine.htm)... not to mention-#2, having to spend a number of days doing a major carpentry-related honey-do, as I was facing ‘honey’s’ imminent return from a 2-week vacation. And one reason that it is ‘slow going’ when I am building, is that I definitely cannot be remotely confused with a ‘carpenter’. If you want to know if I built it, just look at it careful. Is it crooked? *its mine!*

**Land Use** kind of keeps on keeping on. When you are waiting for the government to take action, don’t be holdin onto your breath... you will turn mighty blue. Pls see land use article later in this NL.

Late breaking, the Inyo NF has abruptly switched gears, and has switched from an EA (environmental analysis) to an EIS (environmental impact statement-in a manner of degree, infinitely more comprehensive). The EA is in the can, and the EIS is active. Which means that once again we have to take action.

As I said in my eMail, same subject, there is a very definite possibility of folks getting ‘crisis burnout’ due to the continued requests for input. But if we are going to hold on to the little that we have, we need to keep on letting them know that we are not going away, that we are going to be their ‘thorn in the flesh’.

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**NAPgA Membership**

One thing that comes up with regularity at the NAPgA BOD meetings, is discussion re: the need to increase our membership. And we do! The number of folks that we represent directly affects our ability to impact the decisions of land managers. Numbers, quite simply, is power.

In my opinion, and that is based on experience in the pilot community, the most effective way to increase membership, is for current members to talk to prospective members. Those that already recognize the value of NAPgA are the best qualified to convince others that they need to get on board and support the organization.

Need a handout? We can provide a PDF to print, or can print some and send them to you.

Regarding dues, our dues are probably as low as any other organization that exists.

Bottom line? We need the support of those who desire to not have the forests closed to us. We have been fighting that action to 2011, and will apparently have to continue for the foreseeable future.

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**Du**

Speaking of dues, every year at mid-year, July 1, our dues drop to half-price for new members. The reason for that policy is that since we bill our members for the following year on the 1st of January, it doesn’t seem fair to charge new members joining in the latter half of the year for an entire year’s dues. Since they will only get 1/2-year of membership before we bill them again.

If you are talking to someone about joining, pls inform them that it will be half-price until the beginning of the next year. And, yes, it does note that on the website.

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As we have recently discovered once again, it is frequently possible to get passed by, and left in the dust by government and the incessant changes in their plans. Which is why I have said on previous occasions, we need the input of you out there in order to keep abreast of what is going on in the hiking/packing world. In many cases, if you don't let us know about things that are happening in your area, we will be unaware, and incapable of taking the necessary action.

**You are the ‘Eyes and Ears’ of NAPgA. PLEASE keep us in the loop when you become aware of events/actions that affect (y)our ability to use the forest.**
Land Use Issues

What follows is the apparent end of the ongoing saga of Tommy DiMaggio’s packgoat guiding permits, and the FS’s hell-bent policy to shut him out of the woods he has been guiding in for almost 20 years.

Note well how conciliatory and willing to be flexible Tommy was, in order to hold onto his permits, and note as well the incredible double-speak from the FS as they stick it to him in order to fulfill their pie-in-the-sky plans of reintroducing BHS into this area that hasn’t had any for a very long time.

It is also noteworthy that their grandiose scheme has suffered greatly, losing half the Bighorn Sheep that they attempted to introduce. To Goats? Sheep? Pneumonia? Hardly. To the predators that already were making this their home, cougars. What the FS & G&F have managed to do, is to bring the buffet table right into the cougar’s back yard. And it did not arrive without them noticing. They put on their bibs, and got to work.

Tommy’s Letter to the FS Regarding his Permit(s)

From: azpackgoat@aol.com
Sent: Friday, July 04, 2014
To: Helin, Stan -FS; Bennett, Duane A -FS; jupchurch01@fs.fed.gov
Subject: Purple Mountain Pack Goats outfitters permit

Dear Stan,

Thank you for your phone message last week. It was encouraging to hear that the Forest Service is still working on my outfitter’s permit. I know everyone’s overworked and I guess under paid. Guess how I feel? I have been feeding and taking care of 10 goats for over a year now without being able to go to work. At least you guys get to work.

My goal is a simple one, to have that one trail, the Prison Camp to Sycamore Reservoir by September. My packing season won’t start up until then. I have told some of my clients, The Arizona School for the Deaf & Blind, Project Origins, COPED, Arts for All, and the leader of my Veterans hiking program I would be up and running by September and we could continue our hikes & picnics at that time. Hiking with the goats has been a very popular experience for people of these populations. I listen to the Forest Service advertisement on the radio about how much fun it is to go out into the forest, I have been taking people/families into the forest since 1997. Why would you deny me my permit to do such a worthwhile endeavor?

As I have explained before, the reason I need the Prison Camp trail is, it’s close to Tucson. Many of these groups can’t travel any further then that. It has picnic tables, many of my people have a hard time sitting on rocks. It has a bathroom, I can’t begin to explain the positive side of that!

Please help me out on this, I feel you’re trying to help, but I can’t hold out much longer. I have given up all my other trails in the Catalina’s and stopped doing overnight trips. The chances of running into a bighorn sheep in that area is slim to none, and you guys know that. It’s time to be reasonable, share the forest. Remember it’s “the land of many uses”.

Thank you,

Tommy Di Maggio
Purple Mountain Pack Goats, Tucson, AZ

Their Response to Tommy’s Appeal

Dear Tommy,

We have been endeavoring to find a solution that both meets your needs for providing a backcountry experience for a list of notable clients and the needs of the Desert Bighorn Sheep reintroduction project. I appreciate the effort you brought forward and willingness to modify the scope of your trips, timing of your trips, and the use tracking collars, domestic goat inoculations and trail restrictions.

We have gathered substantial information from Arizona Game and Fish Department veterinarian Anne Justice-Allen, your veterinarian Barb Page, and research on other National Forests in looking for ways to accommodate your request. I can forward a copy of the email letter we received from Barb Page for your reference if you would like.

At this time, I am recommending that Jim Upchurch, Coronado NF Forest Supervisor, deny your permit application on the Santa Catalina District. The information we received indicated that the risk cannot be mitigated sufficiently to guarantee success of both your request and the ongoing sheep reintroduction efforts.

Though this is not the answer I am sure you hoped for, I do believe it is the right one for now. I would
be happy to explain more to you and your clients if that will be of help.

Stan

So, how do you ‘explain’ the taking away of a man’s livelihood simply so you can tinker with the environment. Do you really think that either Tommy or his clients will respond, “Oh well, since you explain it that way, its OK.” Ed.

What is Occurring in the Other Forest Services?

While the Coronado NF is spending our tax dollars converting the ‘Land of Many Uses’ into the ‘Land of Only their Favorite Uses’, what is going on in the other areas we know to be worshipping the BHS at the expense of goats and goatpackers?

In the Shoshone (WY), we appealed their record of decision, and are still waiting for a final resolution. At this point, we have an answer of sorts, and that is; 1) that they have extended their time to answer due to the complexity of the issues involved; and 2) that they have committed to a meeting of the ‘interested parties’, which means those that held their feet to the fire over this closure or other pertinent issues. The only date we have for that meeting is late summer to early fall.

In the Inyo [see following article on the Inyo]

In the Blue Mountains, on August 14th, we posted our comments to their DEIS. NAPgA responded with another great presentation by Andy Irvine, with assistance of NAPgA member and law school student, Jacob Thomas, a 36-page explanation of why they cannot legally do what they are trying to do, and so now it is the waiting game as they evaluate our, and the other’s, comments.

In the Owyhees, since there were two interested parties that pointed out some serious deficiencies, such as a complete lack of applicable science used to justify the closure to packgoats, the BLM has been remanded to return to the drawing board on this one and so the outcome is still up in the air.

Inyo National Forest

In the Inyo, a bias against packgoats, ostensibly due to the perceived threat to Bighorn Sheep, has existed for a number of years. There has been closures previously and one exists at present. We came to the party a little late on their recent EA (environmental assessment), and only were able to provide comments after-the-fact. However, at some point recently, they switched gears, and decided to do an EIS (environmental impact statement) as a part of a land use plan, and so the procedure begins all over again. Fortunately, we are in on the ground floor on this one, so that may just turn out to be a good thing. The bad part of a land use plan update, is that whatever the outcome, we will be stuck with it for about 20 years.

Carson, Washington Campout 2014

Hello Everyone, We had a wonderful campout last weekend attended by 19 people, 11 goats and 1 mini horse. The weather was fantastic, the food was wonderful and the company.... well you know how it is when goat people get together! Perry and I brought home a dog lead that says Santa Paws and also a cable with clips on each end, let me know if these items belong to you. They will stay in the camp trailer until next year unless you live close by!