



The NAPgA Bleat!

The Official Newsletter of the North American Packgoat Association

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Well, Virginia, is there Ever Gonna be any Good News?!?!

As a matter of fact, THERE IS!

Judge Winmill, the Idaho judge that had the responsibility to determine the merits of NAPgA's case against the Shoshone NF, has decided that there is a cause for a Contempt of Court action against the Shoshone, and his judgment reflects that decision.

The flip side is that his judgment had two parts, the upholding of the Contempt action, and the following, best stated here by Andy Irvine, NAPgA's legal advisor;

“Rather than immediately holding the Shoshone LMP, Record of Decision (ROD) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) unlawful and setting those documents aside, as requested by the Wool Growers and NAPgA, the Court deferred its ruling on this request until after a status conference with the parties.”

It is too early to comment on when that status conference will be held, it will undoubtedly be 100% more fair than the last meeting NAPgA was a party to, where the Shoshone FS immediately ruled, for the purposes of the meeting, the 'procedural' issues, *OFF THE TABLE!* Which had the intended effect of benching our legal guy, and emasculating our presentation at that meeting.

I can't wait for this next one!

Links:

Andy Irvine's Complete Analysis of the Court Order:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7RfskiMpNdNRUg00GJYc3NzbW90ZFIIYThDZmxXUTVMblpB/view?usp=sharing>

First Article to Appear, this one from the Casper, WY paper, 2-24-16:

http://trib.com/lifestyles/recreation/judge-holds-forest-service-in-contempt-over-wyoming-goat-and/article_3fbc9dd5-8b4b-5074-8325-87d937ec0708.html

Next article showed up in the Jackson Hole News & Guide, 2-25-16:

http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson_hole_daily/local/goatpackers-score-win-over-shoshone/article_d43d80bf-a4ac-5f48-9c8e-8e5130d820d1.html

And the next was from The Capital Press, Ag's Website, 2-26-16:

<http://www.capitalpress.com/Idaho/20160226/idaho-judge-holds-forest-service-top-leaders-in-contempt>

And the judge's order itself:

<http://www.goattracksmagazine.org/downloads/winds/judgesorder.pdf>

Thanks to all of you who have contributed money and time to NAPgA.

NAPgA's primary mission is to help YOU enjoy the wilderness and to keep the trails open.

What does the future hold? Well, I believe that the judge will be requiring the Forest Service to conference with NAPgA to work out a solution. Whether that be a settlement, a compromise, I don't know at this point. The Court knows that the Shoshone Forest Plan was put together with documents that were biased, and they didn't look too kindly on that. I sincerely hope that we can work something out, such as them requiring a health certificate that requires MOVI tested negative packgoats, allowing us to have a right-of-way corridor through the Bighorn Sheep habitat, and, pertaining to the Whiskey Mountain area of the Shoshone NF, perhaps require us to camp outside the critical area which is possible up there. NAPgA genuinely cares about Bighorn Sheep, but an all-out BAN really bothers me for a number of reasons, so I do not believe that is the answer. Government officials seem to get carried away with the word BAN, like a blank check or something.

What can the general membership do at this time? Donate \$\$ and recruit members. There is strength in numbers. We always need to have a pile of cash in hand to defend our rights to the wilderness. We have the very finest Attorney in the nation when it comes to goats and bighorn sheep. The money allows us to have him help you and me put out fires across the country. National Forests all over the western U.S. want to close their boundaries to goats.

Lots of work to do, but it was really sweet to savor a victory this past week. Lots of us spent an enormous amount of time on this, hoping and praying that we'd win this time around.

Happy packing!
Charlie Jennings

It Ain't Over 'til It's Over

Lest anyone think that the battle is over, and we can all go hiking and forget about this political stuff; It not only isn't over, it is just getting going. The Blue Mountains are going to issue their FEIS any time, and other forests, such as the Bridger-Teton, are just priming their administrative engines for a run at their land use plan. As Massala said in the movie Ben-Hur, "The battle goes on."

The NAPgA Website, www.NAPgA.org, Gets a Well-Needed Facelift!

If you haven't visited napga.org in a while, now would be a good time to check it out! The website's been overhauled and has some new features that we think will be helpful to our members. The front page stays relevant with the latest news while past articles are saved in easy-to-access archives. We hope you will take a few moments to drop by and check it out!

One exciting feature of the new website is the "Members Map". This "members-only" feature allows you to locate other NAPgA members in the continental U.S. There is also a members search feature similar to the one on the old website. For all current 2016 and expired 2015 members, your membership information from the old website was imported into the new one. If you aren't sure whether you have an account, or if you don't know your username and password, use the "Forgot Password?" link on the left side. If you don't remember the email address associated with your account, please use the 'Contact Us' form and we can help you out.

Renewing your membership is now easier than ever with a new feature that allows members to pay annual dues on a subscription basis. This eliminates the need to mark your calendar every year and will hopefully also cut down on the number of "nag" letters and eMails Larry sends out every January.

Finally, membership classes have changed! Individual, and Family memberships have been rolled into one simple \$20 "Bronze" membership level. We also offer \$50 "Silver" and "\$100 "Gold" memberships for those who wish to donate extra to the cause. Finally, "Associate" membership was discarded in favor of a new "Youth" membership for kids 13-18 who wish to join NAPgA. We hope you enjoy the changes to membership and to the website. We encourage your feedback!



Getting the Jump on Positive PR in the Bridger-Teton

I have recently been on the phone with the USFS folks who will be responsible for revising the Forest Plan for the Bridger-Teton NF, which comprises the West side of the Wind River Range, west of the Continental Divide.

They seem to be quite open to working with us. I have mentioned that it is critical that PackGoats are looked at as a different group than brush goats and a different species altogether than domestic sheep, and that any risk analysis needs to be done with goats being a separate species than domestic sheep from the very beginning, instead of being thrown in to the Plan Revision at the last minute as an afterthought. Opportunities for public comment will be coming in 2017.

We also discussed the fact that we will be testing goats for MOVI; preliminary results are showing that packgoats are testing 100% negative up to this point.

There are opportunities for trail maintenance in 2016 and 2017 in the Bridger-Teton NF, so anyone that has the time are welcome to volunteer to assist the Forest Service in trail maintenance. They are very excited about our willingness to help out. I really feel that this may help them to look at us in a different light if we do in fact come through with volunteers.

John Mionczynski has been involved with discussions with the Wyoming Game and Fish Biologists about the importance of Bighorn Sheep (BHS) health management. Several of the younger biologists in Lander are very interested in John's data that there is a direct correlation between proper nutrition with high selenium levels, and higher long-term survivability of BHS lambs. The BHS in Coyote Gulch in Utah's Escalante, an area rich in Selenium, have shown high birth success, and a steady population over many years.

Happy packing!
Charlie Jennings

RENDY 2016

South of Ukiah, Oregon in an area about 60 miles south of Pendleton, OR

Dates are June 23rd - 27th.

Mark your calendars and come join us!

The website information for the Rendy has pictures of the area as well as Google Earth links.

We will have guest speakers, potluck dinners, hoof trimming classes, nasal swab sampling of your goats for MOVI, the annual NAPgA Auction, etc. Always a great time to renew old friendships!