



The NAPgA Bleat!

The Official Newsletter of the North American Packgoat Association

August 2015

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From President Charlie

Another NAPgA Rendy has come and gone... and it was one of the more successful Rendy's I have ever attended. Guest speakers John Mionczynski and Dr. Maggie Hyland were definitely *the* highlights of the weekend. NAPgA came away with \$5000.00 more dollars from fund raising (*much of which was already obligated to Andy Irvine for past work on our issues*)

to assist in our fight to keep the forests open. Many thanks to Dwite Sharp for his generous donation from the sale of many gorgeous goat kids (*A large part of the \$5000 came from Dwite's donation(s)!*)



Also thanks to Kent Daniels and the other Board members for making this such a success. If you didn't make the Rendy this year, you really missed out! But NAPgA Rendy 2016 is in the works, so plan on it. More details will be forthcoming.

Finally, NAPgA has recently filed a lawsuit against the United States Forest Service due to their alleged illegal use of information from advisory committees from 2009. This info was used in the formation of the Forest Plan Revision for the Shoshone National Forest in Wyoming. In short, the USFS ignored a directive and our attorney called them out on it. Folks this is what we have been waiting for. Hopefully it will have the impact of reversing the ban in the Shoshone National Forest. Time will tell. Thankfully we have a competent attorney who is helping us with this. NAPgA could not have come this far without your help! So, thank you very much! We will keep you informed how this plays out. I also suspect that the Forest Service will want to settle this out of court.

We hope that you are able to get out this summer and enjoy your four legged friends. Remember to highline and be exemplary in your goat packing adventures. We have a lot of eyes watching us. If you are able, please consider donating to our [GoFundMe](#) website. The closure in Oregon's Blue Mountains is still percolating in the background, and we will need Andy's help with this one when they issue their final DEIS.

All donations are acceptable. Size is not important. The number of folks that care enough to help, *is!*

Happy packing!

Charlie Jennings
President, NAPgA

Land Use Issues!

NAPgA Goes to Court

In a much-anticipated, and long-awaited action, NAPgA's attorney, Andy Irvine, has filed suit in Idaho Court. This is based on a contempt action because of the Shoshone NF's action in relying on the Payette RADT (*Risk Analysis for Disease Transmission Between Domestic Sheep and Goats, and Bighorn Sheep*).

In 2009, the Federal Court ordered, "the Committee's findings and/or conclusions are not to be relied upon by the Forest Service with respect to any future agency decisions."

However, that is just exactly what the Shoshone NF did in their recent forest planning action. Therefore it is NAPgA's position that by using this document in their action, they are in contempt of the court's 2009 decision and order that this document was not to be used in future actions.

Further developments will be produced in future newsletters.

?? Why, if our primary issue is with the Shoshone NF, are we filing our first action in Idaho??

At least that was *my* first question and point of confusion. The explanation below was Andy's answer and attempt to clear up the questions for us non-legal folks. :-)

On June 24, 2015 the North American Packgoat Association (NAPgA), together with the Idaho Wool Growers Association (IWGA), filed a motion in the United States District Court for the District of Idaho for an order holding the United States Forest Service in contempt of court.

The motion is related to the Forest Service's recent decision to prohibit goatpacking on the Shoshone National Forest in northwestern Wyoming. In reaching such decision on the Shoshone, the Forest Service appears to have relied on the findings and conclusions of two big-horn sheep science committees—the Payette RADT and Payette Principles Committees—that were established and utilized by the Forest Service on the Payette National Forest in Idaho.

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Because these committees were established and utilized in violation of the procedural mandates of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), the IWGA sued the Forest Service in the United States District Court for the District of Idaho seeking to have the committees declared unlawful and to prohibit further use of the committees' reports by the Forest Service. The Court ruled in favor of the IWGA and ordered that the Forest Service shall not rely upon the findings and conclusions of the Payette RADT and Payette Principles Committees in reaching future agency decisions. The committees were not informed by public participation or by members of NAPgA or the IWGA and, as a result, the findings and conclusions of the committees were not well-informed and appeared biased.

Despite the clear order of the United States District Court for the District of Idaho, the Forest Service on the Shoshone National Forest appears to have relied on the illegal Payette RADT and Payette Principles Committee reports. Indeed, these reports are directly cited in the Shoshone National Forest's own "Risk Analysis of Disease Transmission between Domestic Sheep and Goats and Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep" (Shoshone RADT Report).

As the Forest Service's use of the uninformed and biased findings and conclusions of the Payette RADT and Payette Principles Committees on the Shoshone appears to be a violation of the Court's order in Idaho, NAPgA has teamed up with the IWGA to seek enforcement of the Court's order against the Forest Service. This action takes place in Idaho because that is where the IWGA originally filed its lawsuit. If successful, however, NAPgA and IWGA are requesting that the Shoshone RADT Report be thrown out as it improperly relies upon the Payette RADT and Payette Principles Committee reports. If the Shoshone RADT Report is thrown out, the Forest Service will likely have to reconsider their decision to prohibit goatpacking on the Shoshone National Forest, as the Shoshone RADT Report provided the so-called "scientific" basis for that decision. As with any litigation, there is some uncertainty here, but NAPgA is hopeful for a favorable outcome and is continuing to work to protect members' ability to goatpack on our public lands.

And a big NAPgA THANK YOU! to Andy for all the work he has done for us on this issue. NL Ed.

Why Should I Highline?

Some questions like this one, at least for those of us that have been in the forefront of the fight to hold on to our access to the National Forests, provoke a reaction that borders on visceral.

In the many packgoat venues, including my wife's FB site, now and then some packer that has apparently figured it all out (*generally with about 2 months of actual experience*), will make the patently absurd statement, "Why would I need to highline my goats? I just do 'xxxxxxx' and they are just fine."

ARE THEY?? And what is it in these predator-filled woods that gives you the absolute confidence that no predator will ever come near and spook your boys into departing stage left?

Oh, but you think it can't happen to you, eh? Interesting. It happened to George Bogdan.

So who was George Bogdan?

George Bogdan was the 'father of goat packing' in Idaho. George had as much time in the woods with his boys as anyone in this business. Harkening a few years back, did George and Wade (his hiking partner) wake up from their nighttime slumbers to an early morning tête-à-tête with their goats? NO! There was no 'interacting' with their goats because their goats were just GONE! Some time in the night, with absolutely no night sounds to let our campers know what was happening, there was evil afoot. And they were never found.

And this is not the only instance of lost goats since we began to use them for packing. Even the contractor that was working for John 'M', in the Whiskey Mountain area of the Winds lost a goat.

It has happened before, and it can happen again. George, after this incident, made the statement, "I will never NOT highline again.

The **BOTTOM LINE** here, is that with the incredible bias against goats in the woods that has crept completely through the wildlife biologist community, it would only take ONE high-profile incident of a packgoat getting loose and finding a herd of Bighorn Sheep, and buckaroo, you can forget about goatpacking. Period! Anywhere!

The fact is, that not only is it the right thing to do, but at this point, in this country, it is the mandatory thing to do.

Highlining... is the **ONLY** Option!

