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RC 024

Update on the Prevention of M.ovi Transmission AK WSF Perspective

Working Group. We are still awaiting the development and release of an RFP for a facilitator – AK WSF has provided input to the working group and ADF&G. We have also been recruiting other hunting conservation organizations to be a part of the working group to provide for broader input and support of the outcomes (SCI, Outdoor Council and APHA). We are strongly encouraging the domestic producers to ensure that they provide representatives of groups as opposed to a collection of individuals so that any agreements reached could be considered as binding to domestic producers as a whole. This working group should ultimately lead to a joint recommendation to government officials on how to implement a solution to the M.ovi threat.

Development of M.ovi Free and Disease Free Herds. AK WSF has developed a testing and mitigation protocol in conjunction with our science advisors at Washington State aimed at creating M.ovi Free herds and flocks as a result of the discussions at the last BOG meeting. This allows us to fully fund vet visits, laboratory testing and mitigation of infected animals as promised – which was one of the voiced criticisms. We have also included an optional small ruminant panel screen including CAE/OPP, CL, and Johne's (pronounced yonnies) into the testing protocol at no cost to producers as an added benefit based on the suggestion of domestic producers.

We are validating the program currently with volunteers and have a few other people interested in volunteering. The program requires a series of three nasal swabs three weeks apart and a blood test done during the first series of nasal swabs. So far we have run two of the required sets of tests with our first participant, identified and paid for the mitigation of three infected animals. We are awaiting test results for the second series of tests now. The herd could be designated as M.ovi Free after the third series of

tests assuming there were no additional positives. Specific details of the testing and participants identity are covered by confidentiality agreement.

We hope to enter a few more volunteers in the very near future and continue to refine the process and procedures. The big difference between this and the testing done by the State Vet is that mitigation of infected animals is required. Our position is that testing without subsequent mitigation is not a solution. During this process we paid the vet directly, paid the testing Lab (WADDL) and paid the individual for the replacement of the infected animals as promised.

Required Funding. We continue our fund raising efforts to secure the resources necessary to cover the projected costs of approximately \$.5M. These efforts of course require thousands of volunteer hours from wild sheep enthusiasts to raise fund to limit the out of pocket expenses of affected domestic producers. Our parent organization, WSF, fully supports our efforts so we don't anticipate any problems covering the costs necessary to go M.ovi Free in Alaska and protect 25% of the wild sheep in North America.