



Santa Catalina Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction Project

May 21 – June 3, 2015

BRIEFING

The following is a summary of bighorn sheep reintroduction activities on the Coronado National Forest from May 21 – June 3, 2015.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Both collared and uncollared sheep continue to be observed in the Pusch Ridge Wilderness. Groups are sometimes comprised of rams only and sometimes are a mix of ewes, lambs, and rams. Among one mixed group was an unconfirmed sighting of a yearling sheep.

MORTALITIES

There were no known mortalities of collared sheep during this reporting period. The last known mortality was on December 23, 2014.

CURRENT POPULATION STATUS

As of May 20, 2015, 40 collared sheep are known to be alive.

FIELD NOTES FROM AZGFD RESEARCH BRANCH

From June 2-4, a research biologist recorded visual observations of 22 of the 40 collared sheep in the Santa Catalina Mountains. Three notable groups were observed in the Pusch Ridge Wilderness area. The first group included 7 ewes and 7 lambs; the second group was composed of 1 ram, 8 ewes, and 5 lambs; the third group included 5 ewes and 1 lamb. All observed lambs appeared to be between 3-5 months old, with the exception of one lamb that looked to be about 1 month old. Some of these lambs were observed nursing, while the larger lambs in the groups were seen feeding alongside adult sheep. All observed collared sheep as well as the lambs appeared to be healthy and in good body condition.

These observations are part of an on-going Research Branch project evaluating habitat selection by the re-introduced Santa Catalina herd. Additionally, visual observations and lamb recruitment data will be used in a population-modeling exercise that will inform management decisions related to the re-introduction effort.

LINKS

For project background and previously-reported information on project events, including photos and videos, as well as meeting notes and minutes please visit www.azgfd.gov/catalinabighorn.

Additional project information can be obtained by visiting the Arizona Game and Fish Department Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CatalinaBighorns, the Arizona Game and Fish Department webpage at www.azgfd.gov/catalinabighorn, the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society webpage at www.adbss.org or by visiting the Catalina Bighorn Advisory Committee webpage at www.catalinabighornrestoration.org. This update is a public document and information in it can be used for any purpose.

TO SUBSCRIBE

If you would like to receive project updates as they are published please send your email address to ldesouza@azgfd.gov.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

The next written briefing will be provided on June 19, 2015.

CONTACT

Mark Hart is the Public Information Officer for this project and can be reached at (520) 628-5376.