



Santa Catalina Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction Project

August 25 – September 28, 2016

BRIEFING

The following is a summary of bighorn sheep reintroduction activities on the Coronado National Forest from August 25 through September 28, 2016.

MORTALITIES

The last GPS upload from the collar for Ewe #37438 was August 28, however the VHF signals remained live until August 30, when volunteer monitors detected a mortality signal. The carcass was discovered on August 31 with no obvious injuries, and it was determined that the bighorn sheep had not been killed by a mountain lion. Due to the state of decomposition, it was not possible to test for potential disease. Ewe #37438 was captured in the Plomosa Mountains in 2014.

On September 6, both the GPS and VHF components of the collar for Ewe #39560 indicated a mortality. The carcass was discovered on September 7, and it was determined that the bighorn sheep had been killed by a mountain lion. Based on the GPS data, the ewe was likely killed late in the night on September 5. Tracks at the site indicated it was a female lion with young kitten(s). According to recommendations of the project's Advisory Committee regarding the mountain lion management plan, female lions preying upon bighorn sheep in the project area will not be removed if they are accompanied by spotted kittens. Therefore, pursuit of the lion responsible for this kill was not initiated. Ewe #39560 was captured in the Imperial Hills in 2015. She had a lamb earlier this year.

CURRENT POPULATION STATUS

As of September 28, 2016, 34 collared sheep are known to be alive. Helicopter surveys of collared and uncollared animals were conducted on September 28, and the results of those surveys will be used to develop a population estimate for bighorn sheep in the Catalinas. This will be reported on in the next update.

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 and click on "Wildlife", then "Catalina Bighorn Sheep" under the heading "Additional Wildlife Information".

Additional project information can be obtained by visiting the Arizona Game and Fish Department

Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CatalinaBighorns, 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 October 28, 2016.

CONTACT

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