



**REPORT TO THE 63rd MONTANA
LEGISLATURE**

**SHEEP, MOOSE, MULE DEER, ELK AND
MOUNTAIN GOAT AUCTION LICENSE
ACCOUNTS**

MCA 87-1-272 (5) (b)

**PREPARED BY
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS**

January 2013

The 49th Montana State Legislature authorized the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission to auction one male sheep license each year to provide for the benefit of sheep. The 50th Montana State Legislature authorized the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission to auction one male Shiras moose license each year to provide for the benefit of moose. The 58th Montana State Legislature's provided authority for the sale of one male mule deer and one male elk auction/lottery license, and the 59th session provided authority for one mountain goat auction/lottery license. Rules and procedures to conduct the auction have been adopted by the commission each year and have been expanded to include all five species now available. The auction/lottery license rules provide for FWP to solicit proposals to conduct the auctions (and or lottery if appropriate) from conservation organizations involved in the conservation and management of these big game species. The commission reviews the proposals and selects an organization to conduct the auctions. Organizations can submit bids to conduct more than one species auction. Organizations that have been selected to auction the various species licenses for 1997-2012 are summarized in Table 1 and include the Boone and Crocket Club, Wild Sheep Foundation (formerly the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep), Mule Deer Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Montana Outfitter and Guides Association, Skyline Sportsmen Association and Safari Club International (including the MT Chapter and the Great Falls chapter). The successful bidder for each of the auction licenses is allowed to hunt for a legal animal during the open season in any of the legally described species hunting districts as described in the appropriate hunting regulation.

Table 1. License Auction Sales History.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Org</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Org</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Sheep	97	FNAWS	238,000	Moose	97	RMEF	17,000
	98	FNAWS	300,000		98	MOGA	14,000
	99	FNAWS	130,000		99	SSA	10,000
	00	FNAWS	95,000		00	SSA	11,000
	01	FNAWS	100,000		01	MOGA	15,000
	02	FNAWS	90,000		02	RMEF	20,000
	03	FNAWS	132,500		03	RMEF	19,000
	04	FNAWS	160,000		04	SSA	17,250
	05	FNAWS	160,000		05	BCC	15,000
	06	FNAWS	115,000		06	BCC	13,000
	07	FNAWS	140,000		07	FNAWS	20,000
	08	FNAWS	195,000		08	FNAWS	12,500
	09	WSF	245,000		09	RMEF	14,000
	10	WSF	275,000		10	RMEF	11,000
	11	WSF	<u>290,000</u>		11	RMEF	<u>16,000</u>
TOTAL			2,665,500	TOTAL			224,750

Species	Year	Org	Bid Amount	Species	Year	Org	Bid Amount
Mule	04	MDF	6,250	Elk	04	RMEF	20,000
Deer	05	MDF	6,700		05	RMEF	23,000
	06	MDF	13,000		06	RMEF	36,000
	07	MDF	15,000		07	RMEF	27,000
	08	MDF	13,000		08	RMEF	17,000
	09	MDF	8,500		09	RMEF	16,000
	10	MDF	9,000		10	RMEF	12,000
	11	MDF	<u>18,000</u>		11	RMEF	<u>19,000</u>
TOTAL			89,450	TOTAL			170,000

Species	Year	Org	Bid Amount
Mtn	06	RMEF	13,500
Goat	07	RMEF	9,000
	08	RMEF	9,000
	09	WSF	10,000
	10	SCI – GT Falls	17,000
	11	SCI – GT Falls	<u>11,500</u>
TOTAL			70,000

BBC = Boone & Crockett Club
FNAWS = Foundation for North American Wild Sheep
MDF = Mule Deer Foundation
MOGA = Montana Outfitters & Guides Association

RMEF = Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
SSA = Skyline Sportsmens Association
SCI – GT Falls = Safari Club International – GF

Budgeted Allocations and Expenditures:

As prescribed by enabling legislation, funding is to be used for the beneficial management of the identified species. Funding is typically allocated for specific survey work to deal with localized issues, capture and relocation efforts, research efforts, habitat enhancement and herd health issues or in the case of bighorn sheep, a portion of the funding is allocated to a capital account for habitat protection. For FY10–11, funding by species was allocated as follows:

BIG GAME AUCTION EXPENDITURES FY10 – FY11 BIENNIUM

	<u>FY10</u>	<u>FY11</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Mountain Sheep Auction - Field Work	\$ 86,404	\$ 115,118	\$ 201,522
Mountain Sheep Auction – Capital	\$	\$	\$
Mountain Sheep Auction – Auction			
Commission	\$ <u>27,500</u>	\$ <u>29,000</u>	\$ <u>56,500</u>
TOTAL	\$ 113,904	\$ 144,118	\$ 258,022
Moose Auction - Field Work	\$	\$	\$
Moose Auction – Auction Commission	\$ <u>1,100</u>	\$ <u>1,600</u>	\$ <u>2,700</u>
TOTAL	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,600	\$ 2,700

Mule Deer Auction - Field Work	\$		\$		\$
Mule Deer Auction – Capital	\$	48,000	\$		\$ 48,000
Mule Deer Auction – Auction Commission	\$	<u>900</u>	\$	<u>1,800</u>	\$ <u>2,700</u>
TOTAL	\$	48,900	\$	1,800	\$ 50,700
Elk Auction - Field Work	\$		\$	17,965	\$ 17,965
Elk Auction – Auction Commission	\$	<u>1,200</u>	\$	<u>1,900</u>	\$ <u>3,100</u>
TOTAL	\$	1,200	\$	19,865	\$ 21,065
Goat Auction - Field Work	\$		\$		\$
Goat Auction – Auction Commission	\$	<u>1,700</u>	\$	<u>1,150</u>	\$ <u>2,850</u>
TOTAL	\$	1,700	\$	1,150	\$ 2,850

Accomplishments:

Habitat: MFWP mule deer auction dollars were used to purchase mule deer habitat represented by an 80-acre addition to the Beckman Wildlife Management Area (WMA) near Denton.

Bighorn Sheep Capture and Herd Health:

2010: Netgunning was used to capture 40 bighorn sheep (BHS) from Wild Horse Island; 16 of these sheep were released on the Kootenai Falls Wildlife Management Area in NW Montana, while 24 sheep were released on Berray Mountain in NW Montana. Both releases were augmentations to existing populations. Due to a lapsed vendor contract, the Montana Wild Sheep Foundation handled the capture contract logistics and paid for ~60% of capture costs; Utah FNAWS and Midwest WSF covered the remaining 40%. All sheep were tested for herd health parameters. Auction dollars were used to collect biological samples from captured sheep and to pay for other capture logistics. Auction dollars and financial assistance from MT-WSF was also used in Montana's effort to cull pneumonic BHS and collect samples during population die-offs.

2011: Netgunning was used to capture 50 bighorn sheep from Wild Horse Island; these sheep were released onto portions of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal lands in NW Montana. An additional 46 sheep were captured from the Missouri River Breaks; these sheep were released near the Missouri River in Cascade County, central Montana. Both releases were augmentations to existing populations, with all BHS tested for herd health parameters. Auction dollars were used to capture, test and transport sheep for both releases.

During the biennium, approximately half of the auction proceeds were set aside for sheep habitat conservation. No significant big horn sheep project proposals needing these dollars were forwarded, so the funds are being banked for future conservation efforts.

Moose:

No authorized capital or field expenditures in either year. Moose funds are being banked to fund a research study into moose declines in western Montana.

Mule Deer:

No authorized field expenditures in either year. See capital expenditures above under "Habitat".

Elk:

A portable ultrasound imaging machine was purchased. This machine has been used to measure elk body fat as an integrative and relative measure of elk habitat quality in studies of brucellosis and predator-prey interactions in 11 elk herds across southwest and western Montana. More than 300 elk have been examined with this machine to date, with several hundred more elk captures scheduled for the current fiscal year.

Mountain Goat:

No authorized capital or field expenditures in either year.

Auction proceeds are often banked to assist efforts/purchases that are uniquely different or larger than routine efforts and expenditures. In addition to habitat conservation efforts, this includes trap/transplant, research and significant field equipment purchases.