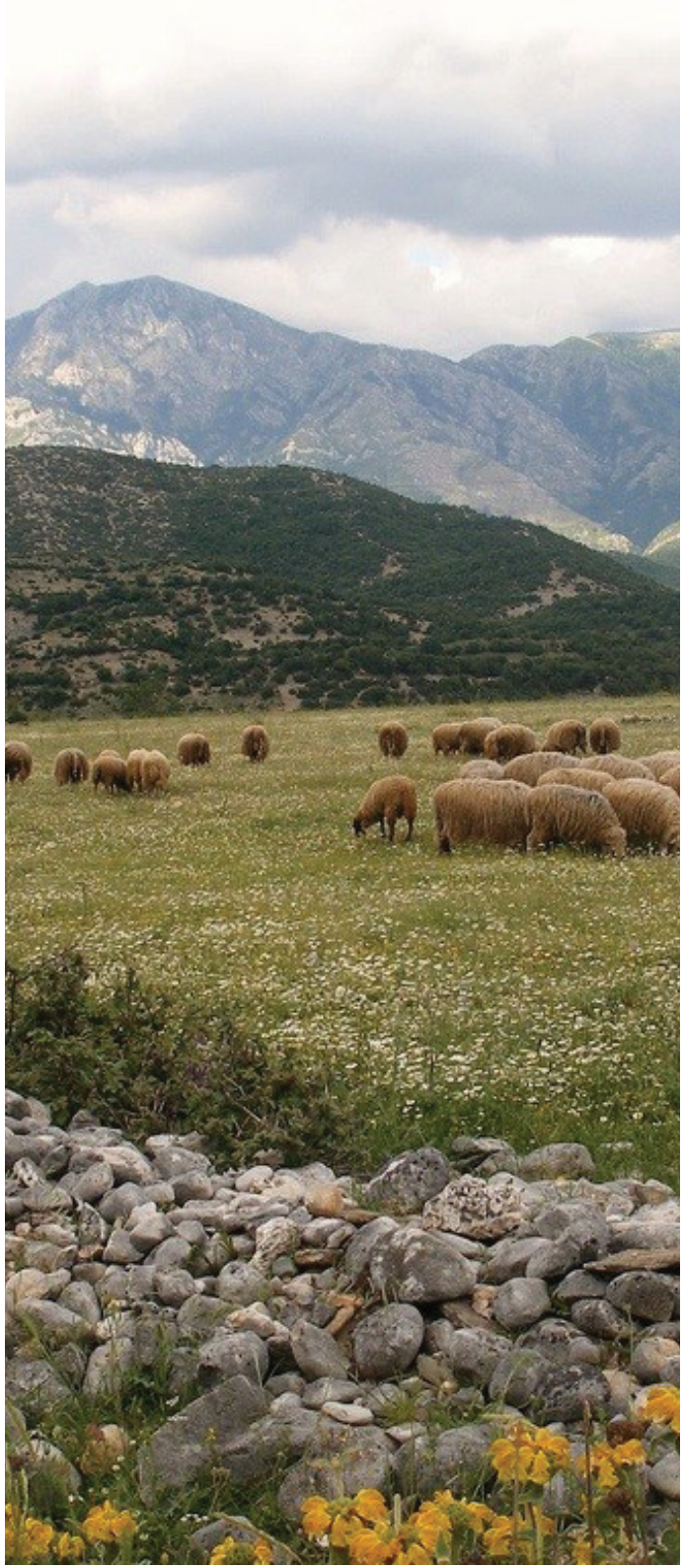
It is important to keep wild bighorns and domestic sheep separated.

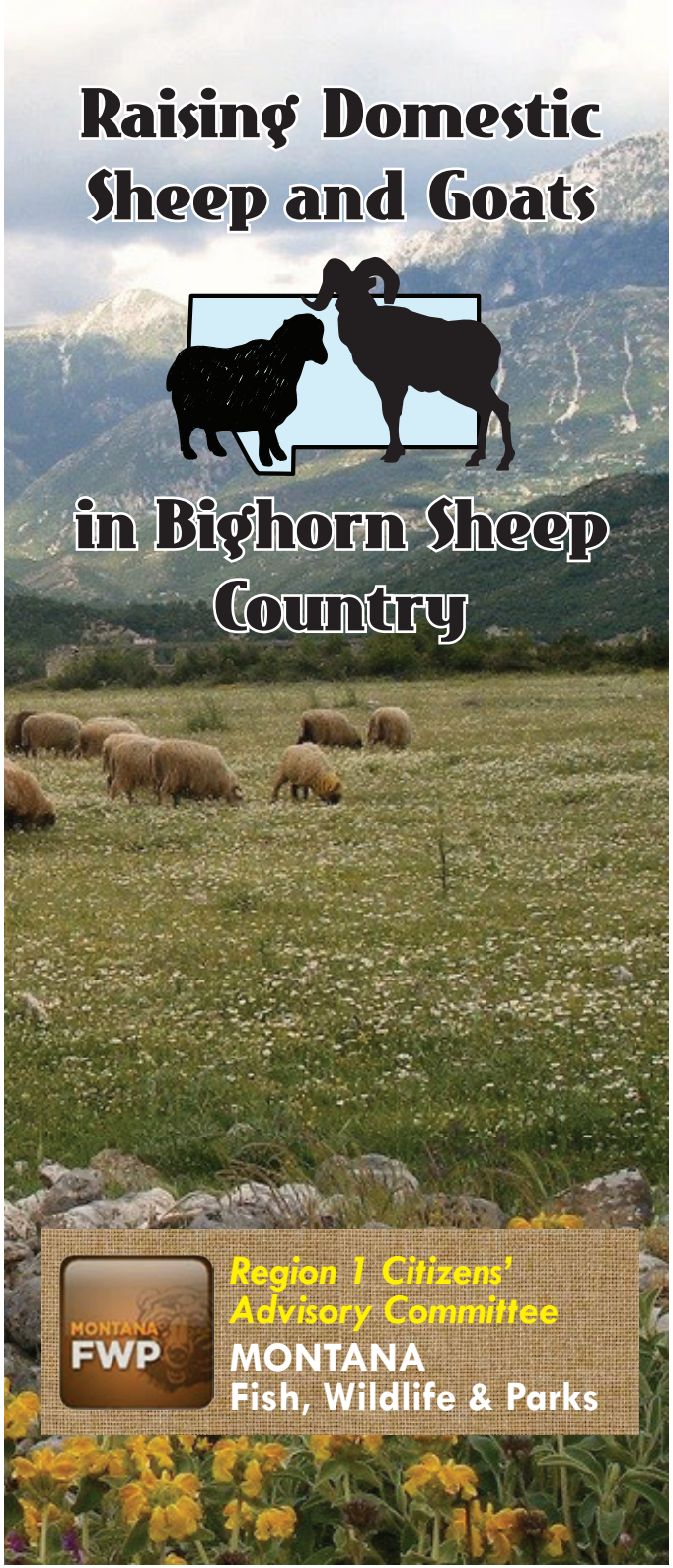
--For more information on bighorn sheep and to determine if bighorn sheep are in your area contact Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks:

Region 1	Kalispell	(406) 752-5501
Region 2	Missoula	(406) 542-5500
Region 3	Bozeman	(406) 994-4042
Region 4	Great Falls	(406) 454-5840
Region 5	Billings	(406) 247-2940
Region 6	Glasgow	(406) 228-3700
Region 7	Miles City	(406) 234-0900

For more information about raising domestic sheep and goats contact your local county extension office.



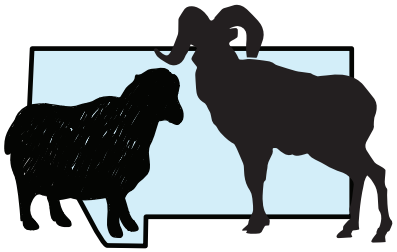
Raising Domestic Sheep and Goats in Bighorn Sheep Country



Region 1 Citizens' Advisory Committee

MONTANA Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Bighorn ram near Thompson Falls, 2010. The bighorn is a symbol of wild Montana



Livestock and wildlife are important in Montana. They are part of our history, our society, and our economy. Raising domestic livestock is a way of life for many Montana families. The bighorn is a symbol of wild Montana. The shared goal for everyone is to focus on ways to have healthy herds of domestic livestock and bighorn sheep.

It is good practice to keep domestic and wild animals separated. This is particularly important for bighorn sheep and domestic sheep and goats. Domestic sheep and goats can carry bacteria that can kill bighorn sheep. A particularly important bacteria is Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae or Movi.

Bighorn ewe near Thompson Falls

Here are some important things to keep in mind:

- Raising livestock, including sheep and goats, can be fun and rewarding.
- Bighorn are an iconic species and important to the people of Montana and tourism.
- Diseases that have severe effects on wild sheep; can be transfered between domestic sheep, domestic goats and wild sheep.
- Bighorn sheep can carry diseases that may be transferred to domestic sheep and goats.
- Bighorn sheep can be attracted to domestic sheep and goats and vice versa.
- Feeding or attracting wildlife into an area can also attract predators.
- Bighorn sheep populations can be severely impacted by disease. When bighorn sheep co-mingle with sheep and goats, and a die-off in bighorn sheep occurs it can reflect poorly on domestic sheep and goats. Movi also has an impact on domestic sheep. Domestic sheep flocks infected with movi are less productive.

For more information on bighorn sheep, pneumonia, movi and how to be movi free, visit http://fwp.mt.gov/regions/r1/

Domestic sheep

"Best Management Practices" for raising domestic sheep and goats include:

- Identify if bighorn sheep are in the surrounding area.
- If you see a wild sheep in or around your domestic sheep or goats report it to Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks immediately.
- If a domestic sheep or goat is missing, or wanders off, report this to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. There may be people who can help you find your missing animal.
- Fencing areas where domestic sheep and goats are raised can help minimize contact. Fences need to be at least 6 feet high. A single fence is good, but double fencing with a gap between the fences is better.
- Properly trained guard dogs can help to keep bighorn sheep away from domestic sheep and goats.
- Don't allow domestic sheep and goats to share feed or water sources with bighorn sheep.
- Raise Movi free domestic sheep.

Consider raising different livestock if in areas where wild bighorn live.