

July 8, 2026

To: Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission

Re: Proposal to Conduct a Competitive Auction for the 2027 Bighorn Sheep License

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal for the 2027 Montana bighorn sheep license. We respectfully request the Commission's consideration to auction this license in a manner that maximizes revenue, promotes transparency and public confidence, and enhances Montana's bighorn sheep conservation efforts.

Organization Purpose

Grand Slam Club/Ovis (GSCO) is a 501(C)(3) organization of hunter/conservationists dedicated to improving and perpetuating wild sheep and goat populations worldwide, as well as other North American big game. GSCO exists to document and preserve the legacy of the world's most significant hunting achievements while advancing the principle that hunting is the number one conservation tool. Since 1956, GSCO has served as the official records-keeping authority for the **Grand Slam of North American Wild Sheep®**, **Ovis World Slam®**, **Capra World Slam®**, and the **Super Slam of North American Big Game®**, along with the **Super Ten®** and **Super 25™**. While these milestones remain a cornerstone of our identity, our purpose extends beyond recognition. We are committed to promoting ethical, legal, and fair chase hunting, supporting sustainable wildlife management, and investing in boots-on-the-ground conservation efforts that produce measurable, science-based results. Through transparency, education, and active engagement, we work to ensure healthy wildlife populations and protect the future of hunting for generations to come. GSCO stands as a bridge between hunters and conservation, grounded in the belief that responsible hunting and active conservation are inseparable.

Previous Involvement in Bighorn Sheep Conservation

We have supported bighorn sheep conservation for 70 years. However, In early 2025, GSCO formally organized a new "boots-on-the-ground" conservation program – "GSCOnservation". One hundred percent of the funds generated by member donations to this program are applied directly to impactful wildlife conservation projects. Last year, nearly \$200,000, of those funds, were applied to desert bighorn sheep and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep translocation and collaring projects in Nevada and Arizona respectively. Additional funds, including pass through money from the auction of various North American and international hunting permits, resulted in a total conservation contribution surpassing \$1,000,000. Our conservation budget moving forward in 2026 has increased substantially and we have committed funding to several bighorn sheep projects scheduled for later this year in Colorado, Wyoming and North Dakota.

GSCOnservation collaborates with wildlife agencies, universities, conservation organizations, first nations, private landowners and others to identify and fund high-impact projects that contribute to meaningful advancements in wildlife conservation. Our conservation work has included habitat restoration, wildlife translocations, water developments (guzzlers) collaring efforts with specific management related deliverables, disease surveillance and response, R3 programs and more. We recognize that bighorn sheep management requires sustained investment, and we are prepared to invest in Montana beyond the revenue generated by this auction.

Experience Conducting Competitive Auctions

Since 2005, Grand Slam Club/Ovis has organized annual conventions in which numerous big-game hunting permits have been auctioned to promote and raise money for state agencies and various hunting and conservation organizations. We have experience planning and conducting competitive fundraising events and high-value auctions that emphasize legal compliance, bidder qualification, clear terms and conditions, financial accountability, and post-event reporting. We understand that the successful administration of a conservation license auction depends not only on event execution, but also on bidder outreach, sponsor cultivation, marketing, and donor confidence.

Proposed Auction Method and Administration

If selected, we will conduct a competitive auction for the 2027 Montana bighorn sheep license during our annual convention, which will be held in Nashville, TN on January 24, 2027. The auction will take place that evening during the dinner banquet, which was attended by approximately 1,000 people earlier this year and generated roughly \$1,000,000. Our event has domestic and international reach with remote bidding encouraged. The auction plan will include bidder registration, clear auction rules, professional auctioneering, secure payment collection, and timely reconciliation and reporting to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Advance promotion of the license auction opportunity includes:

- Email notifications - emails are sent throughout the year with information on the upcoming convention and auction items. The email frequency is ramped up considerably prior to the event. Reach is approximately 30,000 people/email.
- Social media - like email, multiple posts will be made throughout the year, with increasing frequency prior to the actual convention. 23,700 followers on Instagram and 9,400 on Facebook.
- Online Hunting Auctions - complete auction list is posted at OnlineHuntingAuctions.com. The world's premier marketplace for hunters and outdoor enthusiasts.
- Convention catalog - Auction items are listed in our professionally composed, full color auction catalog that is posted online as well as print format for the convention auction venue. Each item receives a complete description, time of hunt, location and all other pertinent details.

Potential Revenue

Money generated from special license auction sales can vary greatly from year-to-year based on many factors including the quality of available animals within the designated hunt area. Considering recent market performance, we believe the 2027 Montana bighorn sheep license auction will generate between \$300,000 and \$400,000. While final proceeds will depend on market conditions, our objective will be to maximize returns through strategic outreach, competitive bidding, and disciplined event execution.

Auction Expenses

If selected, GSCO would allocate retained funds (10%) in a manner that maximizes measurable conservation impact within Montana while maintaining the operational integrity required to generate those funds. A portion of the funds retained would be used to cover the necessary costs associated with marketing, auction execution and other expenses required to successfully generate these funds. The remainder would be used for GSCO conservation and advocacy initiatives as well as the promotion of hunting. This approach ensures that the resource generates both immediate conservation value within Montana and sustained funding capacity for future conservation initiatives.

Commitment to Partnership

We understand that selected organizations must meet Commission criteria and enter into a cooperative agreement with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks before conducting any auction. We will provide all

required supporting materials and work collaboratively with agency staff on implementation details, financial accounting, and post-auction reporting.

We appreciate the Commission's consideration of this proposal. If selected, we will conduct the 2027 Montana bighorn sheep license auction with the professionalism, transparency, and conservation focus necessary to deliver a successful outcome for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and for the future of bighorn sheep in Montana.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Price". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "P".

Jason Price
Executive Director

Attachment:
GSCO Articles of Incorporation
GSCO 2026 AL Cert of Compliance
GSCO Bylaws