

Goats getting shut out of wilderness

Packers at odds with bighorn conservationists

By Matt Entrup
EO Media Group

As far as locations for holding a national convention go, the tiny eastern Oregon town of Ukiah may seem like an odd choice.

But to the 100 or so “heartbeats” gathered for the North American Pack Goat Association’s annual rendezvous at a campground on the fringe of the John Day Wilderness, the region lies at the heart of the largest issue facing them and their kind.

A growing number of goat packing enthusiasts are coming into conflict with public land managers over their rights to access and enjoy areas that are also home to bighorn sheep.

In Eastern Oregon’s Blue Mountains, a proposed buffer zone around bighorn sheep habitat would close the range to goat packers entirely.

The reason, say those leading the bighorn sheep conservation efforts, is pack goats could potentially spread the bacteria *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (sheep pneumonia).



EO Media Group/Matt Entrup

Charlotte and Clay Zimmerman pose with a goat named Mocha, which is owned by Curtis King, at the North American Pack goat Association national conference at Twin Ponds south of Ukiah on Saturday.

It’s the greatest threat to bighorn sheep populations, but NAPGA co-founder Carolyn Eddy of Eagle Creek said goat packers are being unfairly lumped in with domestic sheep and goat farmers. It’s an issue they say

reaches beyond the classification of pack goats and delves into the turbulent waters of civil liberties and public land usage.

Eddy said it’s a tough situation “to have to fight an organization that every-

body else loves.” It’s a fight NAPGA has been slowly losing ground in since its founding in 1999, and as bighorn sheep are reintroduced to more areas the goat packers’ territory shrinks.

“We’re not a danger to their sheep,” Eddy said. “And we’ve spent as much money and time trying to prove that as they have on the other side, and there just isn’t any research that backs (their claims) up.”

Eddy doesn’t deny that domestic herds could easily transmit sheep pneumonia to native populations and should be kept far apart. It’s the idea that pack goats are nothing more than livestock that seems to be at the heart of conflict.

When it comes to the relationship they have with their owners, Clay Zimmerman of Evanston, Wyoming, likens pack goats to the family pooch.

“My goats are my family, they’re my pets, they’re my friends,” he said.

Zimmerman and his wife, Charlotte, own and operate the only pack goat rental service in the country, High Uinta Pack Goats, which they founded in 1994 after purchasing their first goats to make hiking easier on Charlotte’s bad knees.

Zimmerman doesn’t rent his “family” out lightly either. His vetting process includes a three-hour instructional class at the family farm, and he won’t

send his goats out with a customer he doesn’t trust.

Even then, there was audible disbelief among those at the conference that he could trust a stranger with his goats in the wilderness for days at a time.

NAPGA member and conference organizer Curtis King of Burbank, Washington, raises and trains pack goats for personal use and sale, and said there’s a deep bond that forms.

“The training with these guys start the minute they get home. Daily walks, lots of interactions with their human handlers. You have to become the alpha goat,” he said. “They’re as smart as dogs. They’re as smart as pigs in my opinion. Goats are a very intelligent animal.”

Many owners of pack goats raise them in groups of less than 10, and in close proximity to their homes. These goats are well tended and carefully vaccinated, said Eddy, and therefore much less likely to be a carrier of sheep pneumonia, which was found in more than 80 percent of domestic commercial herds tested in 2011 by the National Animal Health Monitoring System. The tight bonds with their owners and the goat’s natural herd behavior also ensure they won’t wander off and accidentally come in contact with a bighorn sheep.

HEAVEN

If you were an ancient man, living two or three or four thousand years ago, you knew some things to be true in the absolute. For one: the Earth was flat. You could see it for yourself, with your own eye. If it wasn’t, things would fall off. It was simple logic. It was as irrefutable as “What goes up, must come down.” After all, the air supports nothing: not a boulder, not a feather and Newton had not yet observed “Gravity” so that it was not recognized as any sort of force pulling objects down.

You also spend many a night gazing at the lights in the night sky. Not the handful of muffled lights that penetrate our cities’ afterglow, but countless stars, shimmering against a black as ink moonless night. You wondered at them and at their movements, and over the ages you noticed that they moved in a rhythm that repeated, much like the tides. By the time Jesus was born the Zoroastrians had mapped enough of the stars to anticipate the one that would proclaim the birth of the Messiah. That’s the “Star of Wonder” that the three Wise Men followed in the night sky until they were led to Bethlehem where they delivered their gifts to The Newborn King destined to rule the world. (Turns out that it was probably a comet).

So when Moses brought back the first five books of The Bible (The Hebrew Torah that included “Genesis”) that God gave him, and God spoke of a “Firmament of Heaven,” it made perfect sense that the lights, the stars, “Floated” in this firm realm; this “Firmament,” which lie above the “Void” which was the air in which all God’s creatures of the land and of the air lived.

If you had lived in the time of the Hebrew Prophets, you might very well have lived in a tent in the desert. That tent would have been made of goatskins sewn together. It would have had a pole, or poles at the center of the tent to holdup the roof and other poles around the outer perimeter of the tent to give the tent headroom like a 20th century circus tent. That portion of the roof between the center poles and the outer poles would sag under its own weight between the poles enough so that when it rained, the water would gather there. Left unattended, the weight of the water would soon build to the point that the roof would be “rent” (that is torn or ripped). Comparing the immense power of God and His “Nature” to the Mankind’s goatskin roofs, Job writes: ⁸ He bindeth up the waters in this thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. Job 26:8 (KJV: meaning from The “King James Version,” or “translation” of the Bible.)

So that, Job is referring to the rain clouds “Above” as the “Waters.” This reference makes all the difference in interpreting this next passage when you realize that the “Waters Below” are the lakes, rivers, oceans and even ground waters of the earth:

⁶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. ⁷ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven.

Gen 1:6-8 (KJV)

This is Heaven as described in the very beginning of The Bible. It describes our atmosphere: that single “Sweet Spot” in the universe (predicted by God) where Mankind can exist, and yet you have probably never heard this interpretation before. That’s because the Bible was “Sealed” to “Blind Guides” and their church doctrines by the “Will of God” until these very days. The Prophet Isaiah wrote about the “sealing up” long before Jesus was born. Jesus had this to say about it:

And when he had said these things, he cried, **He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.** ⁹ And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? ¹⁰ And he said, **Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.**

Luke 8:8-10 (KJV)

“That seeing they might not see” is a reference to Isaiah’s prophecy in “Isaiah 29:10 & 11.”

¹⁰ For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath covered. ¹¹ And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed.”

Jesus also said this about Heaven:

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, **Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand** (meaning within reach).

Matt 4:17 (KJV)

²¹ **Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.**

Luke 17:21 (KJV)

Jesus revealed the “keys” that lead to that Heaven when He taught His Disciples “The Lord’s Prayer,” so that you would know what to pray for. But how can you get there when most churches make up their own prayers and leave you blind, and deaf as well? You and your guides are enslaved by the corruption of the world and yet you suffer from a kind of “Stockholm Syndrome” in which you have come to love your captivity out of fear of your captors. If you want to uphold the law that “Delivers” you to Heaven on Earth, you will need to know more than those who hear but do not understand. You must see the path for yourself.

²⁰ **For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

Matt 5:20 (KJV)

The idea of this last bit of scripture is that you are lost because you follow blind guides who couldn’t even show you where Heaven was when it was right there in the midst of us, as described at the beginning of the Bible itself. Just as the Pharisees denied Jesus because they awaited a warrior King who would “Smite” their enemies, I’ll wager that your “Church” awaits a “Second Coming” in which Jesus “Smites” anyone who doesn’t believe the doctrine of “YOUR” Church: even though Jesus taught us to “Love our enemies.”

⁹ **Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.**

Matt 5:9 (KJV)

Because God “dwells with the humble and contrite,” if you want to understand His “Word” The Bible, you and yours must first be able to be wrong. To see with “New” eyes that see, you are invited to read, read, read for yourself from “The Book of Answers.”

George Bailey

Since the days of Moses, the Wise Men and the Learned men have been reaching to the void of “Space” with their towers and pointing to it with their steeples and their domes and calling it “Heaven,” when not one of God’s living creations can exist there. At the same time, they failed to understand that the “Firmament” referred to our atmosphere. It is livable only at elevations well below the peak of Mt. Everest, which is less than six miles high on a shimmering planet 29,000 miles around. This thin ribbon of “Heaven” is the only place in all the known universe in which life can exist and God explained it plainly 3,500 years ago (a time, times and a half time): yet no Temple Priest, no Rabbi of Judaism, no Priest of Catholicism, no Imam of Islam, nor Protestant Clergy; but only Jesus, has had their eyes opened to this truth. “They were destined for this.” God also instructed that the atmosphere is, indeed, “Firm,” as verified by space travel, which confirms that an object entering the atmosphere at too shallow a trajectory will be deflected, and an object entering at too direct an angle will burn up. The “Heavens” fortell of The New World, Australia and all the Islands; and “The stars in Heaven” reveals that light travels in what Einstein called “Photons.” Yet ALL religions have denied God’s own proof of His Omnipotent Knowledge in order to protect their “Doctrines.” Leaving only the question: “If none of these knows the location of ‘Heaven,’ how can they hope to lead you there?” Come, let us reason together.

When asked which of the Ten Commandments was the first, Jesus replied: **The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: ³⁰ And though shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. ³¹ And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.** Mark 12:28-31 (KJV)

From this statement we get the “One Law” to rule Men and Women: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” It is for this reason that Jesus taught in parable. Parable and metaphor is the on “True” measure of true equality in “The Law.” It would be far better to have a nation of Lawyers who were versed in equivalency of the “Balanced Scales” of parable and metaphor, than what we have in the twisted wreckage of what is today called “Law.” The Magna Carta, The Declaration of Independence and

The Constitution of The United States of America are all simply attempts to codify this concept of “Balance” as articulated in Jesus’ “Second Law.” Just as all Law is subjugated under The Constitution in these United States by The Law, so is all Constitutional Law subjugated under the balanced scale of equivalency as an expression of any given circumstance in metaphor by order of God Almighty, as articulated by His Christ Jesus.

As to the first Law: the Bible speaks of the breaking of God’s Laws as harlotry and infidelity, which is also metaphor. It is the most hurtful of all betrayals to have one to whom you have committed your SELF, to turn away from you and take up with another. So surely THE GOD; who has created EVERYTHING for YOU and is Love, for God Is Love, who offers you life in Heaven, and life everlasting to follow, if only you will return His by following His holy ordinances; feels the pain of your infidelity. So, **Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.**

It would be wrong to characterize this announcement as an indictment against all clergy. To the contrary, it is clergy who have kept the “Faith” in the “Age of Faith,” which has now ended with the beginning of the Age of Reason. It is their misgivings that stand as testimony to the omnipotent nature of God The Father as foretold by Isaiah 29, made manifest in this announcement. It is those clergy who have remained true to God’s WORD The Holy Bible (King James and Revised Standard Edition 1952), who are best prepared to show you what Isaiah 29 says, as well as other references you will need to know to find your way to “Heaven.”

Limited copies of “Fight Club 2.0” available at the Grant County Library free book section.

Paid for by Russ Denton