



NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION®

People and Nature: Our Future Is in the Balance

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Sheep Allotments Near Yellowstone Park Retired

Conservation interests, an Idaho sheep producer, and the US Forest Service yesterday reached an agreement to retire three sheep grazing allotments about 20 miles west of Yellowstone Park in the Centennial Mountains. The allotments have experienced chronic problems with black and grizzly bears.

According to National Wildlife Federation (NWF) spokesman Hank Fischer, “This is a common sense solution to a protracted problem. We’re pleased to resolve the conflict because these allotments are part of an extremely important wildlife corridor that links Yellowstone Park with the Centennial Mountains.”

Sheep producer Todd Mickelson characterized the agreement as “a fair deal that allows me to secure better grazing in a location that doesn’t have all the predator problems. These groups understood my needs and did their best to meet them.”

The Carrot Canyon/Taylor Creek, Snyder Creek and West Lake allotments are three adjacent grazing areas on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest that total about 12,000 acres. The allotments are located west and south of Henry’s Lake on the Continental Divide overlooking the Centennial Valley.

NWF provided Mickelson with an incentive payment to retire the three allotments. In turn, Mickelson waived his grazing permit back to the Forest Service without preference. In accordance with existing forest plan direction encouraging closure of domestic sheep allotments in important bear habitat, Forest Supervisor Jerry Reese signed a letter closing the allotment.

“We appreciate this practical approach that benefits all parties involved,” said Jerry Reese, Forest Supervisor for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. “This agreement will continue to promote grizzly bear and wildlife conservation while allowing producers to continue to use natural resources from the National Forest.”

Major partners in this allotment retirement include Vital Ground, Predator Conservation Alliance, Defenders of Wildlife and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

The nation’s largest member-supported conservation education and advocacy group, the National Wildlife Federation unites people from all walks of life to protect nature, wildlife, and the world we all share. The National Wildlife Federation has educated and inspired families to uphold America’s conservation tradition since 1936.