

## **BIGHORN SHEEP**

**Bighorn sheep** are an iconic symbol of the Mountain West, but unfortunately they face an uncertain future. There are fewer than 1,600 bighorn sheep left in Idaho today.

Idaho's bighorn sheep face many challenges: migration routes blocked by roads, fragmentation into ever smaller populations, suitable habitats shrinking and susceptibility to disease from domestic sheep. Idaho Fish and Game does what it can to stop bighorn sheep declines, but the agency lacks sufficient funding to address the problem at scale.

Right now, there is a bipartisan bill that would provide sustained funding to species in trouble nationwide: the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. If passed, Idaho Fish and Game would receive \$17 million annually to help bighorn sheep and 200 additional species of concern.

This bill will allow the states to step in and help species at risk before they need the more extensive and expensive protections of the Endangered Species Act. This common sense, cost-effective approach has attracted more than 155 cosponsors from both parties. Rep. Russ Fulcher, who sits on the House Natural Resources Committee, should join them in championing this idea so bighorn sheep will continue to scramble up Idaho's mountains for generations to come.

Molly Lipps, of Meridian, is a hunter and angler from Idaho and serves on the Idaho Wildlife Federation board of directors

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