

Hello everyone, I would like to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation. I could not be more excited to work for and with all of you to continue the amazing work you all do to support youth and wild sheep in Wyoming!

I've been familiar with WY-WSF, having worked in the natural resource and wildlife realm in Wyoming for many years. However, as I have become more familiar with this Chapter and its achievements, it's become clear to me what a truly exceptional and effective group this is and how fortunate I am to have been selected for this position. I had the opportunity to work with the Board and many members at the Seminoe Guzzler project this summer and I was overwhelmed with not only the level of participation, but also the passion you all have for wild sheep and this organization. I know that I will be trying to fill the shoes of the very accomplished Executive Directors who have served the Foundation before me and I hope I can continue with their excellent work, leaning on their expertise and knowledge to ensure our continued success. I am very grateful to Steve Kilpatrick for his guidance thus far and I hope, in between his bucket list adventures, that he will continue to share his time and wisdom with me and the Foundation as his skills and contributions have been invaluable to WY-WSF.

Without getting too far into the weeds, I'd like to share a little of my background to provide you an idea of who I am and what I might bring to this position. I have had the great fortune to grow up and recreate in Wyoming most of my life. Growing up in Laramie, I developed a love for the outdoors and a passion for wildlife that shaped my career. After receiving a bachelor's degree in Minnesota, I returned to Wyoming to pursue a Master's in Zoology & Physiology. I have a diverse work history with the U.S. Forest Service, non-profit organizations, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. This work has included Polar Bear research in Alaska, American Marten research in the Sierra Nevada, rangeland monitoring in the Wyoming Range, wildlife work on the Thunder Basin National Grassland and Laramie Peak, Habitat work from the Red Desert to Pole Mountain, as well as mule deer and bighorn work in the Platte and Little Snake River Valleys. Most recently I spent almost seven years as a Habitat Biologist with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in the Platte Valley.

My love for bighorn sheep stems from my time monitoring tall forb communities high up in the Wyoming Range where I developed a deep appreciation for the incredible places bighorn sheep live and inspire us to go. More recently, I've had the opportunity to help develop a bighorn sheep education program alongside other very dedicated Game and Fish Biologists and Jordan Seitz at the Encampment Schools and hope we can bring some of the ideas developed there to other schools around the state.

As a mom and someone who was inspired to work for wildlife at an early age, I have a huge interest in getting youth excited about the outdoors, hunting, and wildlife. The partnership the WY-WSF has developed with the National Bighorn Sheep center and your continued work with Camp Bighorn is so wonderful. Ensuring that the Foundation continues to sponsor youth activities and events is a huge priority for me. Additionally, as an outdoorswoman, I'd love to help promote the continued involvement of our women members in WY-WSF and work with them to develop some programs and events that would help bring new women members to the Foundation.

No doubt that these are trying times for everyone, but certainly, the pandemic has created some significant challenges for fundraising. I am hoping that we can increase our Chapter's online presence through social media and come up with some creative ways to engage new members and raise funds outside of banquets. I hope that it will not be too long before we can all get back to enjoying each other's company and have more frequent informal events around the state as well. Given how tight things are economically for many of us, please know that contributions come in many forms and one thing we can use as a Foundation are the talents, time, and ideas of our diverse and passionate membership.

With all of that said, I'm looking forward to learning more about all of you and eager to know how I can best serve you as Executive Director. Please, don't hesitate to contact me, introduce yourselves and let me know if you have any thoughts on where you'd like to see the Foundation put their efforts, how you can help serve our mission, or just to chat about wild sheep. You can reach me at [katie@wyomingwildsheep.org](mailto:katie@wyomingwildsheep.org) or give me a call at 307-399-4383.