



Victoria BC- October 22, 2020

Good Morning,

I write to you as past-president of the Wild Sheep Society of British Columbia, a volunteer based organization of 1,000 members, each one a passionate advocate and supporter of wild sheep not only in British Columbia, but throughout the world. It has come to our attention that not unlike us in B.C, Alaska is now on the cusp of a *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (M.ovi) epidemic.

We implore you to take preventative action before it is too late. We have watched M.ovi decimate our bighorn sheep herds here in British Columbia for years. A scary parallel to the worldwide pandemic, however unlike COVID-19, this one has an easy solution.

Multiple peer-reviewed studies have shown that keeping domestic sheep and goats separated from wild sheep is the most effective way to prevent this horrible disease from spreading and furthermore, mandating testing for all domestic sheep and goats will ensure this does not reach beyond controllable parameters and can eventually be wiped out from the landscape.

Adding M.ovi to the Reportable Disease List while requiring same-day reporting will be critically important to the testing and prevention phase. This will ensure immediate action on any positive cases found and allow officials to enforce quarantine and removal of infected animals before they can spread this disease.

As we share a border, we believe that it is so important to reach out to you, so you can learn from our science and experience, and hopefully begin to enact change before it is too late to control.

The actions we take today, will have impacts long after we cease to live.

In Conservation, and support of all wild sheep.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle Stelter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kyle Stelter
Past President
Wild Sheep Society of British Columbia