

## R2 Individual Species Recommendations

<b>TAXON</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>			<b>Common Name</b>		
PD	<i>Ovis canadensis canadensis</i>			Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep		
<b>FWS</b>	<b>FS</b>		<b>BLM</b>			
	R6 Sensitive					
<b>Grank</b>	<b>CO S Rank</b>	<b>WY S Rank</b>	<b>SD S Rank</b>	<b>NE S Rank</b>	<b>KS S Rank</b>	
G4T4	S4	S3S4	S4	SX		
	<b>CO Status</b>	<b>WY Status</b>	<b>SD Status</b>	<b>NE Status</b>	<b>KS Status</b>	
<b>IUCN</b>	<b>PIF – Area Importance</b>		<b>PIF – Population Trend</b>			
<b>FS Experts assigned Species Evaluation</b>			<b>Non-NFS Experts assigned Species Evaluations</b>			
Tom Holland, GMUG						
<b>Sensitive Species Recommendation</b>			(Please check 1 box below)			
<b>X</b>	<b>R2 Sensitive Species (SS)</b>		<b>Not R2 SS, but should be considered for other Emphasis Species Lists</b>			
	<b>Not R2 SS and Not of Concern Now</b>		<b>Insufficient Information Available to make a recommendation</b>			
<b>Recommendation Rationale</b>						
<p>Populations of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep have been drastically diminished rangewide. Numbers across the range of the species declined from approx. 500,000 animals pre-1800 to about 15-20,000 by 1960. Numbers have increased since 1960 due to transplants and conservation efforts, with the current population size at about 10% of its historical size. The distribution of bighorn sheep is naturally fragmented due to the patchy nature of their preferred habitat, which resulted in a metapopulation structure. Presently, bighorn sheep occur on all National Forests in Region 2, but most herds are at risk due to small size (&lt;100 animals) and geographic isolation, and periodically experience catastrophic die-offs due to introduced diseases. Two “strongholds” that function as small metapopulations are in northwestern WY (Shoshone NF) and southcentral CO (Pike-San Isabel and Rio Grande NFs). Although habitat degradation from fire suppression, highways, livestock grazing, and human disturbance is of concern, the susceptibility of herds to extirpation as a result of diseases transmitted by domestic sheep or goats appears to be the greatest threat. The long history and continued substantial risk of disease epizootics, combined with the small size and high degree of isolation of most herds, leads to a conclusion that sensitive status is warranted.</p>						
<b>Name/Title</b>	<b>Nancy Warren, Regional TES Species Program Leader</b>			<b>Date</b>	<b>12 March 2007</b>	