

The RAMPAGE



“The Last Mooney Ram, (For Now).....”

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Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation
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GRANT IN AID UPDATES

“RECORD AFTERNOON AT SCHOOL”

By Jordan Seitz

The first “Sheep Hike” of the year for my Encampment classes is always a special one. We’ve been at it long enough now that many incoming students just expect to go, and others look forward to this for years because they hear about it from an older sibling. For some students, this is their first glassing experience, their first bighorn sheep sighting, or even their first real hike. In late September we met up with G&F biologist Teal Cufaude, had a quick lesson about interstate game tags while she tagged a deadhead moose, and then headed up into the hills above our school. Blue skies, temporarily clear of smoke, gave us excellent glassing conditions. Thanks to a CCSD#2 Recreation Board grant, and a generous discount from Maven Outdoor Equipment Company, my students are now fully outfitted with quality optics. This is a serious game changer for long distance viewing. With good binoculars, everyone could clearly pick apart distant hillsides and tell the difference between a pronghorn and a bighorn. Then our premium spotting scopes helped us determine age and gender, which Teal recorded. By the end of the trip we’d spotted four different groups of sheep, a class record! While one group was glimpsed with a mix of unknowns, we confirmed the other three groups contained 8 young rams, 17 ewes, and 9 lambs. Of the ewes, 8 were wearing GPS collars, and it was interesting to see the sun reflect off them just like a distant signal mirror. Hiking around, we looked for travel corridors and frequently visited areas, and started to discuss where we could place trail cameras to help monitor the bighorn sheep population in the future. What a great way to spend the afternoon at school!

