

Species: Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep

Unit Group: 114

Hunt Geometry ID: 56

Hunt ID: [459]

Access: Fair, with varying conditions based on weather. The Fourmile Road from the west base of the mountain is a main access point, but it is steep and rocky. Early winter storms can close this road. Most hunters refrain from pulling camp/horse trailers up this road. The Silver Creek Road starting from the southeast side of the mountain is another road that bighorn hunters use, but it is only accessible by ATV. There is good road access in the Cove. Wilderness access can be found at the Big Canyon, Hendrys Creek, Hampton Creek, Horse Canyon, and Smith Creek trailheads, as well as in Silver Creek which has no trail. Trail conditions are poor in Hampton Creek, Horse Canyon, and Smith Creek due to lack of maintenance and major erosion.

Recommended Hunting Areas: In the early season, bighorn can be found on The Table, Mount Moriah, and the two unnamed peaks south of Mount Moriah proper. Bighorn can also be in Deep Canyon. Bighorn are often seen above timberline, but there is a limited amount of area above timberline on this mountain. Bighorn, especially rams, in this area will spend time in timbered areas. Later in the fall, bighorn will start moving to lower elevations. Bighorn winter in the Cove, lower Hendrys Creek, Deep Canyon, Smith Creek and Central Peak. On dry winters, some bighorn will stay at higher elevations. Hampton Creek and Horse Canyon have limited bighorn use. Bighorn used to winter in the Red Ledge to Rock Canyon area, but this use seems to have decreased. There is potential to find scattered bighorn in the Silver Creek and Negro Creek drainages.

Biologist Comments: This unit is physically and mentally challenging. The early part of this hunt is almost entirely a backpack or horseback type of hunt. Bighorn are in remote areas and can spend a lot of time in timber, making it difficult to locate them. There is very little water available for hunters in the higher elevations. Hunters camping at higher elevations should stay aware of thunderstorms and potential early winter storms.

Bighorn can become more accessible in the Cove during the late hunt, but rough country can still be expected in lower Hendry's Creek, Smith Creek, and Central Peak. Hunters should stay aware of changing weather conditions as winter storms can drastically alter road conditions and safety. Vehicles and mechanized equipment, including wheeled game carriers are prohibited in Wilderness. Contact the USFS office in Ely for more information.