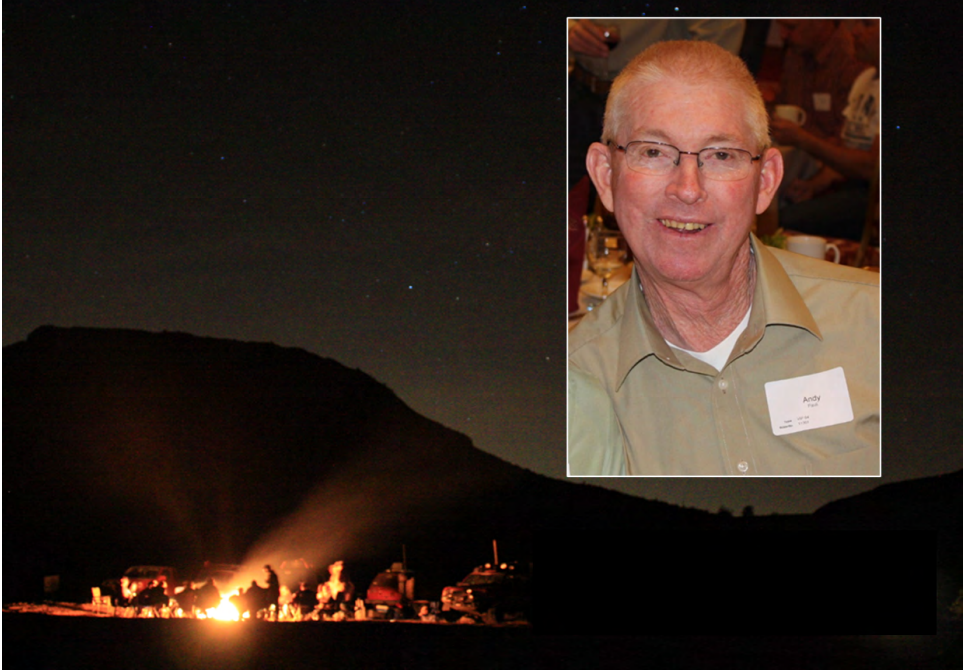


In Memoriam: Andrew M. Pauli (1953–2021)



Hunters and other conservationists familiar with the eastern Mojave Desert lost one of their strongest supporters on 8 April 2021 with the unexpected passing of California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Wildlife Biologist Andrew Pauli. Andy was born on 18 May 1953 in Palo Alto, California, and attended Los Altos High School where he was an outstanding athlete, and starred in track and field and basketball. He held several scholastic records in the high jump, and was proud to have been among the last of the classic ‘western roll’ jumpers. Following high school, Andy attended Chico State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology.

Andy was employed by CDFG for 33 years, and served in a variety of capacities in the eastern Sierra Nevada and the deserts of southeastern California prior to his retirement in 2010. He began his career as a Seasonal Aid with the Inland Fisheries Branch in 1977 working out of the Bishop Office, and continued as a Seasonal Aid in the Blythe Office, where he had been recruited both as an employee and to play for the office basketball team. Following his work in fisheries management, Andy continued as a Seasonal Aid with Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project W-26-D (Wildlife Habitat Development), and shortly thereafter was hired as a Fish and Wildlife Assistant on that project, a position he occupied until 1986. He then promoted to Assistant Wildlife Manager-Biologist and filled the position of Colorado River Unit Wildlife Manager at Blythe.

In 1989, Andy promoted to Associate Wildlife Biologist in the Desert Wildlife Management Unit (DWMU) in San Bernardino County, where he established an office at his

home in Apple Valley. As part of his duties, Andy oversaw management of the Camp Cady Wildlife Area, and he remained an important contributor to the Department's efforts to ensure water was available for all species of wildlife inhabiting the eastern Mojave Desert. Andy performed inspections and helped to maintain the many dozens of desert springs and water developments located in the DWMU on which mule deer and bighorn sheep especially were dependent. He very much enjoyed conducting annual brood counts to evaluate quail and chukar production, dove surveys, and being responsible for oversight of the mule deer hunt in Zone D-17, where he continued the long-standing tradition of conducting aerial hunter surveys on opening weekends; those data formed part of his important paper that described the distribution and societal value of recreational hunting in the eastern Mojave Desert. During his assignments as a member of the habitat development crew, as the Colorado River Unit Manager, and as the Desert Unit Manager, Andy was a regular participant in aerial surveys to assess bighorn sheep populations. Additionally, he participated in more than 200 telemetry flights while keeping track of the dozens of bighorn sheep that had been collared for research or for translocations.

Andy developed a close working relationship with wildlife protection personnel and his pleasing personality paved the way for increased hunter interest in, and an enhanced appreciation for, the eastern Mojave Desert, which included the first areas to be opened to the hunting of bighorn sheep in California since 1878: Old Dad Peak and the Marble Mountains. Thus far, 7 of the 11 zones that have been opened to bighorn sheep hunting are within what once was the DWMU and that—to the dismay of Andy and many others—remains an administrative area to which no one, as yet, has been assigned individual responsibility.

Throughout his career, Andy worked closely with members of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS) on numerous water development projects, all of which involved volunteers and provided hundreds of interested individuals with opportunities to enhance habitat for bighorn sheep and likely resulted in many life-long commitments to conservation. In all probability, many of those commitments would not have occurred were it not for Andy's enthusiastic work ethic and his get-it-done approach. Following development of several of those wildlife water sources, bighorn sheep in the eastern Mojave Desert received increased interest among CDFG administrators, and Andy participated in numerous helicopter surveys while collecting data that resulted in the reintroduction of bighorn sheep to the Eagle Crags, Whipple Mountains, Argus Range, Sheephole Mountains, Bullion Mountains, and the northern Bristol Mountains, as well augmentations of bighorn sheep populations in the Avawatz Range and Chuckwalla Mountains.

Andy helped plan and implement the annual Bighorn Sheep Hunter Clinics that hunters are required to attend, and participated in the first such clinic in 1987, which was held at Camp Cady. He participated in every such event until 2012, at which point the number of hunters fortunate enough to draw a bighorn sheep tag had outgrown the facilities available at Camp Cady. By that time, however, that venture had evolved into an annual event sponsored by the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep and the California Wild Sheep Foundation, and had become a tradition that lasted 25 years. During those Hunter Clinics Andy and many other individuals—most of whom volunteered their time—generously shared detailed information on bighorn sheep occupying the hunt zones, access, geography, hunting techniques, equipment, desert safety, taxidermy, photography, and regulations; each of the clinics exceeded, by far, the minimum requirements dictated by the state legislature. In addition, Andy ensured the bunkhouse and associated facilities were in top condition for

each clinic and that, following a generous social hour and hosted supper, extended well into the evening and frequently involved hunt zone ‘show-me’ trips the following day.

Andy Pauli was a dedicated sportsman, a true friend of hunters and other outdoorsmen, and he fulfilled his role as a wildlife biologist very capably. He did not have a penchant for notoriety, but his efforts on behalf of conservation were recognized widely. His work ethic, combined with his tremendous athletic ability and the outstanding eye-hand coordination developed during his athletic career, led to his being among the initial CDFG employees approved as aerial net-gunners. In 1989, he was honored for his service on behalf of desert wildlife by the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep with the Bicket-Landells Award, which was established in honor of BLM Wildlife Biologist Jim Bicket and Helicopter Pilot Don Landells who died while conducting a bighorn sheep survey at Clark Mountain on 6 October 1986. In 1996, he served as Chair of the 40th meeting of the Desert Bighorn Council in Holtville, California. Upon retirement, Andy received the Society’s Service-Above-Self Award, and the California Wild Sheep Foundation recognized his contributions with its Above-and-Beyond Award.

Following retirement, Andy worked as a retired annuitant for several additional years, and he remained the “go-to” guy for successful bighorn sheep hunters needing their tags to be validated. During his career, Andy likely validated and scored the majority of bighorn sheep that as yet have been harvested in California. He also became the most popular CDFG representative at the annual conventions of the Wild Sheep Foundation—now known as Sheep Week®—where prospective hunters consistently sought his advice on hunting conditions and opportunities to harvest desert bighorn sheep in California. Andy also had the privilege of validating at least 20 auction tags that, as of his retirement, had generated more than \$2.6 million specifically for the conservation of bighorn sheep. True to his desire to recognize all of those playing important roles in the conservation of bighorn sheep, his first action following each auction was to seek out and thank the runner-up before locating and congratulating the winning bidder.

Desert wildlife and bighorn sheep in particular—along with California’s sportsmen and the public in general—have been the beneficiaries of Andy Pauli’s many contributions to conservation. He was a kind and generous person, a dedicated employee, a fine naturalist and avid sportsman, and he was widely respected by his peers. He was humble and unassuming, he readily and willingly accepted the sometimes less-than-glamorous tasks to which he was assigned, and he loved his family dearly. His positive attitude, pleasing personality, and many contributions to the conservation of desert wildlife should not be forgotten. Andy will be missed by all that worked with him, knew him, or loved him. In his absence the desert will be less than what it had become, but it will remain far more than it would have been had he not landed there.

—FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES OF ANDREW M. PAULI