

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting

May 2, 2019, DNR Auditorium

1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

The Board Meeting will stream live at <https://youtu.be/0aZnaT68GLs>

AGENDA

Thursday, May 2, 2019, 9:00 A.M.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Approval of Agenda
– Kirk Woodward, Chairman | ACTION |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
– Kirk Woodward, Chairman | ACTION |
| 3. Old Business/Action Log
– Byron Bateman, Vice-Chair
Bighorn Sheep MOU Report – Jace Taylor
Primitive Weapon Definition – included in recommendations
Barney Top LE Archery Only Elk Proposal Update – Covy Jones
Elk Season Structure – Calendar View – Covy Jones
Book Cliffs Committee update – Dax Mangus | CONTINGENT |
| 4. DWR Update
– Mike Fowlks, DWR Director | INFORMATIONAL |
| 5. R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 6. Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 7. Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 8. R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments
- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |
| 9. 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations
- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |
| 10. R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments
- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |
| 11. R657-41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments
- Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief | ACTION |
| 12. Other Business
– Kirk Woodward, Chairman | CONTINGENT |

Details of the specific recommendations can be found at www.wildlife.utah.gov

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act - Persons needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) for this meeting, should contact Staci Coons at 801-538-4718, giving her at least five working days notice.

Wildlife Board Motions

Following is a summary of Wildlife Board motions directing the Division to take action and the response to date:

Each Board Meeting until completed – Target Date – Bighorn Sheep MOU Report

MOTION: I move that we add to the action log that the Division give a progress report on the management plan's lethal removal process and MOU at every board meeting until it is completed.

Motion made by: Karl Hirst
Assigned to: Jace Taylor
Action: Under Study
Status: To be presented at every board meeting until completed
Placed on Action Log: November 29, 2018

Spring 2019 – Target Date – Primitive Weapon Definition

MOTION: I move that we add to the action log that the Division attempt to define a primitive weapon hunt and have the Board review it at the April 2019 meeting.

Motion made by: Calvin Crandall
Assigned to: Covy Jones
Action: Under Study
Status: To be presented during the April/May meetings
Placed on Action Log: November 29, 2018

Fall 2019 – Target Date – Multi-year Furbearer License

MOTION: I move that the Division research the possibility of a multi-year furbearer license and report back to the Board June 2019.

Motion made by: Byron Batemen
Assigned to: Darren DeBloois and Kenny Johnson
Action: Under Study
Status: Pending
Placed on Action Log: This motion was placed on the Action Log per a request from Byron Bateman on Sept. 22, 2018.

Fall 2019 – Target Date – GPS Requirement

MOTION: I move that the Division present a recommendation to the Wildlife Board next year on the inclusion of GPS data in the check-in process that requires the submission of location/time of kill site and photograph of cougar's sex.

Motion made by: Byron Batemen
Assigned to: Darren DeBloois
Action: Under Study
Status: Pending
Placed on Action Log: This motion was placed on the Action Log per a request from Byron Bateman on Sept. 22, 2018.

Fall 2019 – Target Date – Barney Top LE Archery Only Elk Proposal

MOTION: I move that we add to the action log that the Division review the Barney Top limited entry archery only elk hunt proposal and the primitive weapon hunt and provide the pros and cons of each, either as one or two separate reports, to the Board.

Motion made by: Kevin Albrecht
Assigned to: Covy Jones
Action: Under Study
Status: Pending
Placed on Action Log: November 29, 2018

Spring 2020 – Target Date – Bear Issues

MOTION: I move that we add to the action log that the Division reconvene the working group to explore better solutions on the spring hunt, number of hounds in the field, and non-resident permit challenges.

Motion made by: Kevin Albrecht
Assigned to: Darren DeBloois
Action: Under Study
Status: Pending
Placed on Action Log: January 10, 2019

Fall 2020 – Target Date – Premium Fishing Areas

MOTION: To have the division look into the possibility of designating premium fishing areas - that allow artificial flies and lures only- to have increased license requirements and fees and to bring the information back during the next recommendation cycle.

Motion made by: Byron Batemen
Assigned to: Randy Oplinger
Action: Under Study
Status: Pending
Placed on Action Log: September 27, 2018

Wildlife Board Assignments

November 29, 2018 - Chairman Woodward requested a calendar view of the elk season structure and how that affects other hunts and for it to come back to the board at the April/May meeting.

November 29, 2018 - Chairman Woodward asked Dax Mangus to convene the necessary agencies and players to review the issues facing the Book Cliffs, namely habitat issues, and update the board during the April 2019 meeting.

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting

January 10, 2019, DNR Auditorium

1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

The Board Meeting will stream live at <https://youtu.be/timPcAldDZ4>

REVISED January 8, 2019

Thursday, January 10, 2019

1. Approval of Agenda ACTION
– Kirk Woodward, Chairman
2. Approval of Minutes ACTION
– Kirk Woodward, Chairman
3. Old Business/Action Log CONTINGENT
– Byron Bateman, Vice-Chair
4. DWR Update INFORMATION
– Mike Fowlks, DWR Director
5. 2019 Black Bear Recommendations and Rule Amendments ACTION
– Darren Debloois, Mammals Coordinator
6. Pronghorn Unit Plans ACTION
– Kent Hersey, Big Game Projects Coordinator
7. Moose Unit Plans ACTION
– Kent Hersey, Big Game Projects Coordinator
8. CHA Rule Amendments ACTION
– Avery Cook, Upland Game Projects Leader
9. Sage-Grouse Translocation Proposal ACTION
– Avery Cook, Upland Game Projects Leader
10. North Peaks CWMU Variance Request ACTION
– Michael Wardle, Private Lands, Public Wildlife Coordinator
11. CWMU Advisory Committee Appointments ACTION
– Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief
12. Prohibited Species Variance Request ACTION
– Staci Coons, Wildlife Board Coordinator
13. Wildlife Board Stipulations ACTION
– Greg Hansen, Asst. Attorney General
14. Antelope Island Bighorn Sheep Hunt Closure ACTION
– Jace Taylor, Statewide Bighorn Sheep Biologist
15. Other Business CONTINGENT
– Kirk Woodward, Chairman

Details of the specific recommendations can be found at www.wildlife.utah.gov

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act - Persons needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) for this meeting, should contact Staci Coons at 801-538-4718, giving her at least five working days' notice.

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
January 10, 2019, DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

Summary of Motions

1) Approval of Agenda (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Karl Hirst and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda as presented.

2) Approval of Minutes (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Kevin Albrecht and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the November 29, 2018 Wildlife Board Meeting.

3) 2019 Black Bear Recommendations and Rule Amendments (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we reject the Division's proposal for a written rigging rule and request the committee revisit the rule and provide a revision the following year.

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Byron Bateman and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we add to the action log that the Division reconvene the working group to explore better solutions on the spring hunt, number of hounds in the field, and non-resident permit challenge.

Book Cliffs discussion.

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Karl Hirst and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendation to increase the permit numbers on the Book Cliffs.

Chairman Woodward commented that the motion on the Book Cliffs might not be necessary.

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed 5 to 1. Kevin Albrecht opposed.

MOTION: I move that we maintain the same permit numbers on the Beaver unit as last year.

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed

unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the 2019 Black Bear Recommendations and Rule Amendments as presented by the Division.

In the final motion to accept the remainder of the recommendations, Chairman Woodward noted that the motion on the Book Cliffs is void.

4) Pronghorn Unit Plans

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed 5 to 1. Karl Hirst opposed.

MOTION: I move that we keep the objective for the La Sal/South Cisco unit at 375.

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the balance of the Pronghorn Unit Plans as presented by the Division.

5) Moose Unit Plans (Action)

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Kevin Albrecht and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Moose Unit Plans as presented.

6) CHA Rule Amendments (Action)

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the CHA Rule Amendments as presented by the Division.

7) Sage-Grouse Translocation Proposal (Action)

The following motion was made by Steve Dalton, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously. Kevin Albrecht left prior to the vote and was excused for the rest of the meeting.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Sage-Grouse Translocation Proposal as presented by the Division.

8) North Peaks CWMU Variance Request (Action)

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the change request for North Peaks CWMU for one extra bull tag.

9) CWMU Advisory Committee Appointments

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the appointment of Eric Thacker for the term through 2021.

10) Prohibited Species Variance Request

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Karl Hirst and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the variance request for Cliff Sackett to possess tilapia.

11) Wildlife Board Stipulations

The following motion was made by Steve Dalton, seconded by Karl Hirst and passed 4 to 1. Donnie Hunter dissented.

MOTION: I move that we approve the license suspension reduction for Michael L. Musselman as presented by counsel.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve counsel's recommendation for suspension reduction for both Curg Belcher and Allan Belcher.

12) Antelope Island Bighorn Sheep Hunt Closure

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the cancellation of the two allotted tags for Antelope Island Bighorn Sheep as presented by the Division.

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
January 10, 2019, DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah
Attendance

Wildlife Board

Kirk Woodward – Chair	Kevin Albrecht
Byron Bateman – Vice-Chair	Calvin Crandall
Mike Fowlks – Exec Secretary	Steve Dalton
	Karl Hirst
	Donnie Hunter

RAC Chairs

Central – Kris Marble
Southern – Dave Black
Southeastern – Trisha Hedin
Northeastern – Randy Dearth
Northern – Bryce Thurgood

Division Personnel

Rory Reynolds	Mike Christensen	Teresa Griffin	Kent Hersey
Ashley Green	Paul Gedge	Dax Mangus	Avery Cook
Mike Canning	Staci Coons	Riley Peck	Mike Wardle
Kevin Bunnell	Thu Vo-Wood	Guy Wallace	Darren Debloois
Boyde Blackwell	Greg Hansen	Randy Wood	Jace Taylor
Jason Vernon	Marty Bushman	Matt Briggs	Adam Wallerstein
Chris Wood	Mark Hadley	Wyatt Bubak	
Justin Dolling	Lindy Varney	Scott Dalebout	
Robin Cahoon	Brad Crompton	Dave Beveridge	
Rick Olson	Jason Robinson	Bruce Johnson	
Justin Shannon		Paul Washburn	
Drew Cushing		Ben Wolford	
		Torrey Christophersen	

Public Present

Bryce Pilling	Jason Binder	DC Dew
Bret Selman	Ken Strong	Gary Webb – North Peaks CWMU
Guy Webster – UHA	Jeff Christensen	Ben Lowder – UT Archery Association
Aaron Johnson – UHA	Kathleen Dalton	Troy Justensen – SFW
Kevin Kelerman	Dee Young	Troy Forrest – UT Dept. of Agriculture
	Sierra Nelson	Brian Bitner – UT Woolgrowers Association

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
January 10, 2019, DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah
<https://youtu.be/timPcAldDZ4>

- 00:00:35** Chairman Woodward called the meeting to order, welcomed the audience, and reviewed the meeting process. Board members introduced themselves.
- 00:02:53** **1) Approval of Agenda (Action)**
The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Karl Hirt and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda as presented.
- 00:03:15** **2) Approval of Minutes (Action)**
The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Kevin Albrecht and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the November 29, 2018 Wildlife Board Meeting.
- 00:03:50** **3) Old Business/Action Log (Contingent)**
Jace Taylor updated the Board on the progress of the Bighorn Sheep MOU and protocol for lethal removal of wild sheep.
- 00:08:24** **4) DWR Update (Informational)**
Kevin Albrecht summarized his attendance at the winter Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies conference in Tucson, Arizona.
Mike Fowlks updated the board about sheep disease on Antelope Island, big game capture, bison permit issues, fall hunt investigations, Pelican Lake treatment, stripe bass transfer from Lake Powell to Springville, board member application timelines, RAC nominations, and endangered species brochure.
- 00:17:47** **5) 2019 Black Bear Recommendations and Rule Amendments (Action)**
Darren DeBloois presented the recommendations and rule amendments.
- 00:49:17** **Board/RAC Questions**
The board asked for clarification on changes made by the working group, permit reduction on the Beaver unit, and the three-year harvest plan.
- 00:57:04** **Public Questions**
Chairman Woodward explained the meeting procedure for public questions and comments.
- 00:58:21** Public questions were accepted at this time.

01:17:34 RAC Recommendations

All RACs passed the recommendations and rule amendments with varying dissent and provisions, namely excluding the rigging rule and adjusting permit numbers for the Book Cliffs.

01:26:53 Public Comments

Public comments were accepted at this time.

01:41:23 Board Discussion

Chairman Woodward summarized the RAC motions and opened the discussion on the three-year rule and Bitter Creek/South permit increase.

01:56:05

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we reject the Division's proposal for a written rigging rule and request the committee revisit the rule and provide a revision the following year.

02:00:11

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Byron Bateman and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we add to the action log that the Division reconvene the working group to explore better solutions on the spring hunt, number of hounds in the field, and non-resident permit challenge.

02:01:58

Book Cliffs discussion.

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Karl Hirst and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendation to increase the permit numbers on the Book Cliffs.

Chairman Woodward commented that the motion on the Book Cliffs might not be necessary.

02:12:10

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed 5 to 1. Kevin Albrecht opposed.

MOTION: I move that we maintain the same permit numbers on the Beaver unit as last year.

02:13:28

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the 2019 Black Bear Recommendations and Rule Amendments as presented by the Division.

In the final motion to accept the remainder of the recommendations, Chairman Woodward noted that the motion on the Book Cliffs is void.

02:22:06 6) Pronghorn Unit Plans (Action)

Kent Hersey presented the unit plans.

02:28:15 Board/RAC Questions

The board asked about the Cisco unit population, depredation, and water sources.

02:34:28 Public Questions

Public questions were accepted at this time.

02:35:52 RAC Recommendations

Northern and Central RACs unanimously passed the pronghorn unit plans. Southern RAC passed with two opposed. Southeast and Northeast also passed the unit plans with adjustments to the La Sal/South Cisco unit.

02:38:06 Public Comments

Public comments were accepted at this time.

02:47:08 Board Discussion

Chairman Woodward summarized the RAC recommendations and discussed the La Sal/South Cisco unit.

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed 5 to 1. Karl Hirst opposed.

MOTION: I move that we keep the objective for the La Sal/South Cisco unit at 375.

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the balance of the Pronghorn Unit Plans as presented by the Division.

02:55:18 7) Moose Unit Plans (Action)

Kent Hersey presented the unit plans.

02:59:10 Board/RAC Questions

The board asked about the number of moose transplanted and frequency of aerial flights.

03:06:30 RAC Recommendations

All RACs unanimously passed the moose unit plans.

03:06:42 Public Comments

Public comments were accepted at this time.

03:07:26 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Kevin Albrecht and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Moose Unit Plans as presented.

03:09:00 LUNCH BREAK

03:59:39 8) CHA Rule Amendments (Action)

Avery Cook presented the rule amendments.

04:10:50 RAC Recommendations

All RACs, except Southern, unanimously passed the rule amendments. They had one dissent.

04:11:25 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the CHA Rule Amendments as presented by the Division.

04:11:52 9) Sage-Grouse Translocation Proposal (Action)

Avery Cook presented the translocation proposal.

04:17:15 Board/RAC Questions

The board asked for clarification on habitat work and predation.

04:19:50 RAC Recommendations

All RACs unanimously approved the proposal.

04:20:01 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Steve Dalton, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously. Kevin Albrecht left prior to the vote and was excused for the rest of the meeting.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Sage-Grouse Translocation Proposal as presented by the Division.

04:20:34 10) North Peaks CWMU Variance Request (Action)

Mike Wardle presented the change application request for one extra bull tag.

04:23:00 Board Discussion

The board asked for clarification on the missed deadline and reasoning behind the action.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the change request for North Peaks CWMU for one extra bull tag.

04:32:11 11) CWMU Advisory Committee Appointments (Action)

Justin Shannon presented the appointments.

04:33:48 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Steve Dalton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the appointment of Eric Thacker for the term through 2021.

04:34:27 12) Prohibited Species Variance Request (Action)

Staci Coons presented the request.

04:36:21 Board Discussion

The board asked about stock vendor/location, facility location and setup.

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Karl Hirst and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the variance request for Cliff Sackett to possess tilapia.

04:38:12 13) Wildlife Board Stipulations (Action)

Greg Hansen presented the stipulation for Michael L. Musselman.

04:40:58 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Steve Dalton, seconded by Karl Hirst and passed 4 to 1. Donnie Hunter dissented.

MOTION: I move that we approve the license suspension reduction for Michael L. Musselman as presented by counsel.

04:48:42 Counsel presented the stipulations for two individual cases: Curg Belcher and Allan Belcher.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve counsel's recommendation for suspension reduction for both Curg Belcher and Allan Belcher.

04:53:05 14) Antelope Island Bighorn Sheep Hunt Closure (Action)

Jace Taylor presented the hunt closure.

04:57:52 Board/RAC Questions

The board asked about the origin of the pathogen, sheep permits, next steps, quarantine period.

05:05:28 Public Comments

Public comments were accepted at this time.

05:05:42 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Byron Bateman, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the cancellation of the two allotted tags for Antelope Island Bighorn Sheep as presented by the Division.

05:06:24 The Board asked about and discussed preventative measures.

05:11:36 **15) Other Business** (Contingent)

None.

05:11:40 Meeting adjourned.

DRAFT

Regional Advisory Council Meeting

April 2019

Summary of Motions

R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments

CRO: **Motion:** To accept the Division's recommendations as presented with one exception – to add shotguns to the list.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

NRO: **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-5 Big Game and R657-62 Draw Application Rule Amendments as presented.
Motion Passes: For: 10 Against: 1

SRO: **Motion:** To accept the primitive weapons rule, but require muzzleloaders to be a side-lock.
Motion Passes: 9 to 4

Motion: To accept the remaining balance of R657-5 Big Game and R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments as presented.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

SERO: **No Quorum Present**

NERO: **Motion:** To accept as presented.
Motion Passes: 8 to 2

Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019

CRO: **Motion:** To increase general season Pine Valley and Zion deer tags to 500 tags from 2018
Motion Passes: 6 to 4

Motion: To increase general season Thousand Lakes tags by 15% (45 tags).
Motion Passes: 9 to 2

Motion: To maintain the Zion sheep permit numbers the same as 2018 with the recommended addition of the archery permits.
Motion Passes: 10 in favor with one Absent

Motion: To ask the Wildlife Board to direct the DWR to open the elk plan to address chronically low elk average ages vs. objectives (e.g. Nebo)
Motion Passes: 9 to 2

Motion: To accept the balance of the Division's recommendations as presented.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

NRO: **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019 with the addition of keeping the early and late Zion sheep rifle tag numbers the same as 2018 with the addition of 3 archery tags.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

SRO: **Motion:** Recommend that the Pine Valley deer permits remain the same as last year and not be increased.
Motion Passes: 8 to 5

Motion: To decrease the number of buck tags on the Beaver unit by 500 instead of 350 as proposed.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

Motion: To keep the Zion Bighorn sheep rifle permits at 10, with no decrease
Motion Passes: 12 to 1

Motion: To ask the Wildlife Board to consider creating an action log to make the application deadline after the number of permits have been established.
Motion Passes: 11-2

Motion: To accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

SERO: **No Quorum Present**

NERO: **Motion:** To adjust the increase from 150 to 50 for a total of 1700 tags for the South Slope Yellowstone unit general season deer tags.
Motion Passes: 9 to 1

Motion: To approve the balance of the Division's proposal.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019

CRO, NRO: **Motion:** - Recommend the Wildlife Board accept Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019 as presented.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

SRO: **Motion:** To remove the unit wide antlerless elk hunt on the Beaver unit and instead make this a new hunt on the North end of the unit only, using the existing hunt boundaries. Scheduled hunt dates August 1-August 11, using the same permit numbers that are proposed for the unit wide hunt.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

Motion: To accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented.
Motion Passes: Unanimous

SERO: **No Quorum Present**

NERO: **Motion:** To increase permits by 70 to 200 on the Nine Mile/Anthro unit
Motion Passes: 6 to 5

Motion: To reallocate the 150 permits that were statewide to the North Beaver with new season dates of August 1-11th.

Motion Passes: Unanimous

Motion: To approve the balance of the recommendations

Motion Passes: Unanimous

R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments

CRO: **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments as presented.

Motion Passes: 9 to 2

NRO, SRO

NERO: **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments as presented.

Motion Passes: Unanimous

SERO: **No Quorum Present**

2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations

CRO, NRO,

NERO: **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations as presented.

Motion Passes: Unanimous

SRO: **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations as presented.

Motion Passes: 12 in favor with one abstention

SERO: **No Quorum Present**

R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments

CRO, NRO,

SRO, NERO: **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments as presented.

Motion Passes: Unanimous

SERO: **No Quorum Present**

R657- 41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments

- CRO:** **Motion:** To accept the Division’s recommendations as presented.
Motion Passes: 10 in favor with one abstention
- NRO:** **Motion:** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-41 Conservation and Sportsman’s Permit Rule Amendments as presented with the exception if someone from the organization buys the tag at a live public banquet auction, then the purchaser does not have to purchase the tag at the 3-year average price.
Motion Passes: Unanimous
- SRO:** **Motion:** to accept the R657-41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments as presented, but add “unless purchased at a live auction held at a conservation banquet administered by an auctioneer”.
Motion Passes: Unanimous
- SERO:** **No Quorum Present**
- NERO:** **Motion:** to accept the recommendation as presented.
Motion Passes: 7 to 3

RAC AGENDA – April 2019



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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome, RAC Introductions and RAC Procedure
- RAC Chair 2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes
- RAC Chair 3. Wildlife Board Meeting Update
- RAC Chair 4. Regional Update
- DWR Regional Supervisor 5. R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator 6. Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator and
- Regional Wildlife Manager 7. Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator and
- Regional Wildlife Manager 8. R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments
- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator 9. 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations
- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator 10. R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments
- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator 11. R657- 41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments
- Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief | <p>INFORMATIONAL</p> <p>INFORMATIONAL</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> |
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Meeting Locations

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>CR RAC – April 9th, 6:00 PM
Public Library
45 S. Main St. Springville</p> <p>NR RAC – April 10th, 6:00 PM
Weber County Commission
2380 Washington Blvd. #240,
Ogden</p> <p>SR RAC – April 16th, 5:00 PM
Beaver High School
195 E. Center Street, Beaver</p> | <p>SER RAC – April 17th, 6:30 PM
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main St., Green River</p> <p>NER RAC – April 18th, 5:30 PM
Wildlife Resources NER Office
318 North Vernal Ave, Vernal</p> <p>Board Meeting – May 2nd, 9:00 AM
DNR, Boardroom
1594 W. North Temple, SLC</p> |
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Motion Summary

1) Approval of Agenda

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by Steve and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To accept the agenda as written

2) Approval of Minutes

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by Steve and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To accept the minutes as written

3) R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Danny and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented with one exception - to add shotguns to the list.

4) Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019

The following motion was made by Brock, seconded by Ben and passed 6 to 4.

(Opposed: Danny, Paul, Ken, Christine) (Abstained: Steve)

MOTION: To increase general season Pine Valley and Zion deer tags to 500 tags from 2018.

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Mike and passed 9 to 2 (Opposed: Paul, Christine)

MOTION: To increase general season Thousand Lakes tags by 15% (45 tags).

The following motion was made by Josh, seconded by Ben and passed 10 in favor (Absent: Steve)

MOTION: To maintain the Zion sheep permit numbers the same as 2018 with the recommended addition of the archery permits.

The following motion was made by Mike, seconded by Josh and passed 9 to 2 (Opposed: Ben, Ken)

MOTION: To ask the Wildlife Board to direct the DWR to open the elk plan to address chronically low elk average ages vs. objectives (e.g. Nebo).

The following motion was made by Brock, seconded by Christine and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To accept the balance of the Division's recommendations as presented.

5) Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Alan and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

Motion Summary

6) R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments

The following motion was made by Alan, seconded by Steve and failed 8 to 3.

(Opposed: Christine, Danny, Paul, Ben, Brock, Ken, Josh, A J)

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented with the exception of signing the waiver releasing depredation assistance claim on their property.

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Ken and passed 9 to 2.

(Opposed: Alan, Steve)

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

7) 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations

The following motion was made by Mike, seconded by Ken and passed unanimously

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

8) R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by Christine and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

9) R657-41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by AJ and passed 10 in favor.

(Abstained: Ben-due to a conflict of interest)

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Public Library
45 South Main Street, Springville
April 9, 2019 ~ 6:00 p.m.

Members Present

Alan White, Agriculture
Christine Schmitz, Non-consumptive
Danny Potts, Non-consumptive
*Paul Gauchay, USFS rep (for George)
Ben Lowder, Co-Chair
Brock McMillian, Sportsmen
Kristofer Marble, Chair
Jason Vernon, Central Region Supervisor
Mike Christensen, At-Large
Ken Strong, Sportsmen
Steve Lund, Elected Official
Joshua Lenart, Sportsmen
A J Mower, Agriculture

Members Absent

Jacob Steele, Native American
Michael Gates, BLM (excused)
George Garcia, USFS (excused)

Others Present

1) Approval of the Agenda and Minutes (Action)
Ben Lowder, Co-Chair

Ben Lowder:

Welcome, I will be leading the meeting until Kris gets here. Thank you for coming, we have a good-sized audience tonight. That is good to see. Let's go ahead and run through some RAC introductions. I see some familiar faces and some new faces so I'm going to go over the procedures of how the RAC meeting will go forward tonight.

Each agenda item will have a presentation from someone with the Division of Wildlife Resources. After which, we will take questions from the RAC first and then we will take questions from the audience. During that time, it is a period of questions only, not comments. After we have fielded all of the questions, we will move on to the public comment portion. If you want to make a comment, there are yellow comment cards on the table over there. Fill one out with your name and information and the agenda item that you would like to address the RAC for and submit that to us and we will go through public comments at that time. You'll be limited to three minutes. After we receive public comments, we'll hear RAC comments and discussion and entertain motions and votes.

Let's start off with approval of agenda and minutes. Has everyone had a chance to look over the agenda and seen the minutes from the previous meeting? If there is no discussion on comments, I'd entertain a motion.

VOTING

Motion was made by Ken to accept the agenda and minutes as written
Seconded by Steve
Motion passed unanimously

2) **Wildlife Board Meeting Update (Informational)**
Kristofer Marble, RAC Chair

3) **Regional Update (Informational)**
Jason Vernon, Central Regional Supervisor

I'll be brief on our regional update. The only thing I really want to mention is from the wildlife side. As far as the winter that we have had this year, and deer survival throughout the state, basically from the Central Region South has been good survival. The top third of the state has not been so good so we're fortunate in the Central Region to have good survival this year.

One of the things that our biologists are working on now are spring lek counts for sage grouse. They will be out doing that and some spring range rides and classifications as well. Mr. Chair, I think I will just leave it right there in the interest of time. Thank You.

4) **R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments**
Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Ken – The youth that can apply in a group is only for antlerless?

Covy – So, the youth could always apply in a group for bucks, and bulls and the other hunts but they couldn't apply as a group in antlerless and be considered as a youth only group. This change just makes it so that the percentage of permits that we allocate when they apply as a group in youth, they remain eligible for that percentage of permits.

Mike – The change on the desert bighorn and rocky bighorn, being able to obtain more than one permit per year, who is that going to affect? Is that just going to affect auction tags?

Covy – Mostly, conservation permit holders. It could affect out of state residents. Mostly auction tags.

Steve – As far as being able to take a desert bighorn or rocky mountain bighorn, as a producer, what is the timeline in there for approval for that certificate? If someone goes out on the desert or on the Mineral Mountain and sees one...

Covy – The way that I see this implanted is that they would know... I'm headed to my winter allotment or summer allotment and they would apply for that before they even went. So, when they went out on their allotment or on their private property, they would have the certificate of registration in hand.

Steve – So, they don't have to have a visual before they apply for it?

Covy – No. We would evaluate and the division would reserve the right to evaluate each individual circumstance and say, is it warranted here or not and they would work with that producer to make sure we have the best possible outcome. They would have it before. I should

mention, we did send this back out to the committee which included wool growers, sportsmen, Department of Agriculture, and we had a lot of support with doing it this way. Everything we do is complicated, we're government but we hope this is navigable.

Questions from the Public

None

Comments from the Public

Ridley Griggs – My comment is on the handgun/archery/muzzleloader hunts. I'd like to request that the RAC consider a couple possible additions or modifications. One being, shotguns. There are already archery/shotgun/muzzleloader hunts used in the antlerless draw and they seem to work well. I've enjoyed the opportunity to use a shotgun on one of those tags. I think that could be reasonably added to the rule while still preserving its intent. Another thing I'd like you to consider is potentially allowing a one power scope on these firearms. Some of us have a hard time focusing on a target and a front site and back site all at once. Once again, I think the integrity and intent of the rule could be preserved while using a one power scope. Thank you.

RAC Discussion

Kris Marble – Thank you, my apologies for being late. I'm Kris Marble, I'm the RAC chair.

Ben – Can Covy speak to the idea of using an open site shotgun?

Covy – You are putting me on the spot, Ben. I can't think of a reason why that wouldn't meet the spirit of what we're trying to accomplish here.

Ben – Who was on the committee that put together this proposal?

Covy – We formed a committee with sportsmen, a board member and some division employees. It was a very small committee that looked at this and completely trashed everything we came up with because it was complicated and we're always swinging the pendulum towards opportunity and complication. We brought it back and we looked at what other states had. Arizona already has a hunt like this. I took that idea back to the committee and said, does this accomplish what we are trying to accomplish? They said, yeah that will work.

Brock – What are you trying to accomplish, Covy? I'm not clear on what this adds to what is already available.

Covy – I think what it's trying to accomplish is provide an opportunity for folks that want to hunt a... this is hard to say... it is to provide more opportunity with lower success. You take scopes off guns and its harder hit. It takes your range way down. So, to provide more opportunity, that was the thought process.

Danny – I think the last comment you made really gets at it. It's to reduce the capable range. That's kind of the intent from what SFW brought last fall and I think we're trying to accomplish it with this.

Covy – At the end of the day, we want hunters to be successful. That's why it's hard to say that the intent is to possibly reduce success and in doing so provide more opportunity.

Ben – So, you're talking slug? Ok, I'm good with it.

Joshua – Covy, when this was first proposed last fall, I think I remember something to the effect of the muzzleloader being not just scopeless but a sort of stripped down, no inline primer. Some of the language fell out and I wonder why scope was the only reduction. I think they were advocating for more traditional percussion cap or flint lock.

Covy – They were and the reason why it fell out is because when we took it back and evaluated it, we wanted to reach the most hunters that we could. So, a lot of hunters have a muzzleloader already and they just pull it out of the closet and pull the scope off. I know a lot of hunters have gotten rid of their old side locks or flint locks or just don't use them anymore. We didn't want to create a hunt designed around a specific constituency that was small. We wanted it to be as broad as it could. A lot of hunters have a pistol that would qualify under this, a lot of hunters have a shotgun that would qualify. So, they don't need to go buy new weapons, they can just go hunt. It's not targeted specifically to archery. That's one of the accusations we get a lot is that the division caters to archers. Well, we don't try to cater to archers, we just know we can provide more opportunity in archery because it's less effective.

Ben – Just a follow up on the comment that was made. It seems like a rifled slug with open sites would satisfy this...

Covy – I don't see a reason why it wouldn't.

Mike – The other comment was on 1x scopes. I'm a little torn on that but I think I like the rule written as is with no scopes at all. The reason for that is a 1x scope is still easier to shoot than iron sites and you can get a 1x scope with a turret. I think that goes against the intent of what this rule is trying to do. We're not creating a hunt. We're just creating an avenue to possibly bring that forth to us next fall?

Covy – Yeah, I think the next step would be, this is a strategy to be used to hunt. It would be to get it into a management plan. But we didn't have it in rule so we felt like in order to do that, we need it in rule,

Kris – Ben?

Ben – I'd be willing to make a motion; I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented with one exception. That is that we add slug shotguns to the rule as well.

Danny – I second that.

Mike – I'm not comfortable defining what the shotgun would be because I've shot a lot of deer with buck shot and it is legal. I don't know that we need to use the word slug because there's already a definition for that.

Ben – I'll amend my motion to accept the Division's recommendations as presented with one exception that we add shotguns to the list.

VOTING

Motion was made by Ben, seconded by Danny to accept the Division's recommendations as presented with one exception - to add shotguns to the list.

In Favor: Alan, Christine, Danny, Paul, Ben, Brock, Kristopher, Mike, Ken, Steve, Joshua, A J

Opposed:

Motion passed unanimously

5) **Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019 (Action)**
Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator
Riley Peck, Regional Wildlife Manager

Questions from the RAC

Mike – On Nebo unit, can you go back to that limited entry slide on the Elk? So, that's a 6 ½-7-year-old unit. Since 2008 it's been the highest average age objective is 6.2. So, that's 11 years of data. Is that a unit that should be at such a high age objective? I think we went from 150 tags ten years ago and now we're at 40 tags on the unit.

Covy – If we were to reopen the plan tomorrow, that's one of the discussions we would have. Does this unit really fit in the 6 ½- 7? I mean we're managing the largest elk unit in the state right next to it. Its neighbor at 5 ½-6. So, is it really possible? What you're stating is absolutely accurate... to even manage this at 6 ½-7 or is there too much interchange? It seems like it would probably fit better in a 5 ½-6 and be right alongside the Manti. But it's not right now.

Danny – With the catastrophic loss this year, especially fawns and especially in Northern Utah, there's deer laying dead everywhere. Either hit by cars or they are in the bottom to draw it just looks sad. So, how far out are we looking at compensating for that loss? How many years out do you look? Two?

Covy – So, with general season units, you pick it up that next year a lot of times because our general season units are primarily harvest yearling or two-year-old bucks. We often pick it back up that next classification year. We can readjust from there. But we did know that post season we had enough bucks on the landscape to provide a good hunt. That's wildlife management. I heard someone say once, "It's science but it's not rocket science, right?"

Brock – I don't get the Pine Valley and Zion. You said in your introduction here, "we want to provide as much opportunity as we can and still meet the management objectives". I think those were your exact words. Both of those units are 4000 deer over objective. Both units are chronically way over buck to doe ratios and we recommend none or 100 or this year 300, which is awesome on the Pine Valley. I think that's a great movement if that happens. I don't know that it'll happen. I don't get why we aren't using that resource.

Covy – We have recommended increases on the Pine Valley, time and time again. We know we have more opportunity to offer there. A lot of wildlife management is social and there's a pretty strong constituency in southern Utah that likes it the way that it is. I think Kevin Albrecht said it best last time when he was talking about everybody wanted unit by unit hunting and he said, if unit by unit hunting is going to work in the state of Utah all of the units have to play ball. This is one that you can look back through the data and clearly see that they haven't wanted to play ball. I get it. We all have our backyard. I'm pretty protective of where I hunt too. Not my recommendations though.

Brock – Covy, don't we have a lot of private property on the Zion?

Covy – There's a lot of private but there's also a lot of access on the Zion. It's a good mix. It's not like the Chalk Creek or one of these units that are all private but there is more private on the Zion. Some of the other southern Utah units are all public.

Brock – Success rate is still 43% so it's not a big problem.

Joshua – On the Book Cliffs you mentioned you could probably take more hunting pressure but you're not recommending it based on drought due to doe mortality but if you removed more bucks doesn't that help alleviate some of that pressure on the does? So, why aren't you making a recommendation for an increase on the Book Cliffs as well?

Covy – We made a healthy recommendation for an increase on the Book Cliffs last year and that's part of it. I understand what you are saying. Biologically, it's a hard line to walk. Was there really a reduced carrying capacity or was last year just really, really bad, if that makes sense.

Mike – The Thousand Lakes unit... 300 tags, how many lifetime licensees are choosing that now?

Covy – I don't have that with me.

Mike – It was like 80-100, historically.

Covy – Yeah, it's a lot proportionally.

Mike – So, those people are essentially having a limited entry hunt experience every year? Because our limited entry units are managed 25-35 and that buck to doe ratio is hovered in the mid 20's. Is that correct?

Covy – Mike, I think what you are saying is accurate. I don't know if all those bucks are coming off of that unit or if some are coming off the Fish Lake. The unit is probably too small to be managed by itself. It's another one of those that probably needs to be looked at and we're rewriting the statewide mule deer management plan right now.

Mike – That was kind of my point for this question.

Ben – I have a follow-up question on the Thousand Lakes. You're recommending no change and I noticed that it has the early rifle season now. Did it have the early rifle season last year?

Covy – It did last year.

Ben – Was there an increase last year in permits?

Covy – I don't remember that, Kent, do you? I don't think we recommended an increase on that unit.

Ben – So, we added that season but we haven't increased permits? With the addition of that season, would it be reasonable to maybe increase some permits since there's an additional season to help spread hunters out there?

Covy – That additional season would remove... we set the early season at 20% of the permits. So, instead of going 20 to archery, 20 to muzzleloader, 60 to rifle, we did 20 to archery, 20 to muzzleloader, 20 to early rifle and 40 to late rifle. There's some logic there, Ben.

Kris – I have one question Will you go to the slide for the Wasatch elk unit? I get asked about the Wasatch a lot. I've got to ask you, we're trending down and we have a fairly steep increase, what is the reason for that?

Covy – I think that between 6.4 and 6.3 is so hard to see if that's really a trend or a blip. I think that it's just sustaining the harvest. This last year when I talked to hunters that hunted the Wasatch, it was interesting to hear that the quality was the highest they had seen in years. I'm personally aware of three 400-inch bulls that were taken off of the Wasatch. I hear both sides on the Wasatch. One side is, what are we doing, we're hunting this unit so hard. The other side is, we've got one awesome success story in the state and that is the Wasatch. I don't know where all the bulls are coming from but they seem to just keep coming. The information we've shown is there's probably a net immigration from the tribe.

Questions from the Public

Jeremy Anderson/Mule Deer Foundation – Covy, on the Southern deer, can you go to that slide? Obviously, I'm more educated now in the last couple meetings we've been to and the data we have with these collars is insane. What I am wondering is what it's going to take... what's the trigger to say, we need collars on the Plateau Boulder/Kaparawitz because look at that trend right there. I think we have it on the Monroe and we know why they're not living and what's going on there. If that's a funding thing, certainly that's something we'd love to jump in.

Covy – I think there are plans to put some out there. I think talking with Daniel on migration issue, we've got plans to put some out this year. So, just keep doing what you are doing and I think we'll put some out this year and start to see what's going on.

Jeremy Anderson – With the decreases, we've got the yellows, we've dropped 100 tags, 300 tags, and it looks like 600 tags on the Panguitch Lake. Is that sufficient?

Covy – It really is. If it's not we pull back and readjust next year. We're not going to do anything that is detrimental to that population with this recommendation.

Comments from the Public

Jeremy Anderson/Mule Deer Foundation – If we had these trending areas for mule deer and we're all for opportunity. Like Covy said, are we managing for this 30-inch buck that Brock kills or the buck Covy and I shoot? That's obviously a thing we've got to look at but we have this data and we know that in the Southeastern Manti, Covy, that these deer die mostly of lion kill, right? So, let's attack that. If we can collar these deer on the Boulder or in Panguitch Lake, if we're not collared there, let's find out why and attack it.

Troy Justensen/SFW – Couple of things... we support the divisions recommendation with a couple of exceptions on of which is when you go through OIAL and big game, is there any reason why you don't break that unit by unit? It would be extremely helpful to have that broken out like we do on some of those others.

Covy – I think part of it is just length of the presentation, Troy. That's why we try to put it in the RAC packet and not break it out. It's something we could entertain but...

Troy Justensen – Our two areas of concern are pertaining to the sheep production up there. The first of which is that of the Zion unit. Those of you that looked through your RAC packet, you should have received a letter from Travis Jensen of the Wild Sheep Foundation. For the last three years you hear us come by and push this archery only for bighorns and one of the selling points was that it would not affect the rifle hunters or any weapon hunters. Obviously, they cut... the recommendation is too shy. We're not in favor of that. If there's a unit that would support an increase in ram harvest, it is the Zion. You're going to hear some say that the quality slipped but that's kind of okay for the simple fact that we have a factor there that not a lot of these other sheep units have, that being Zions National Park that we have no control over. We have a ton of sheep in there. One thing that speeds up the crash of sheep units is your population gets too high and all of the sudden we have nothing. We would ask the RAC that the division would add

back those two permits and support the archery as well. That is supported by SFW and the Wild Sheep Foundation.

The other thing is right here on the Wasatch. Last year we came and spoke to it too. Our concern is where the Wasatch, Nebo and Avintaquin are all together the hunter draws those permits and I think the recommendation is 4. All of those could end up right here on the base. We have the potential to over harvest the unit. We believe it would be better managing these units on an individual basis and I think we could jump up to six tags. Sitting on the statewide sheep committee for the sheep plan, one of our main focus was in changing the way we allocate permits was to create subunits and target where we want the harvest. We believe the Wasatch is one of those that we can break these units up and say we have two on the Wasatch, we have two on the Nebo and American Fork. Make those hunters harvest those sheep where they are at. We'd also recommend the Avintaquin be closed. There are very few sheep, most of them have died off. I think it's time to close that unit. That's the changes, otherwise we support the Division's recommendations.

RAC Discussion

Brock – I would like to hear from the Division on the proposals from SFW

Riley Peck – Quite honestly, I think we could break the Avintaquin off of the unit very simply. We did add that together in years past in hopes of allowing more space and allowing for the opportunity to increase tags and increase opportunity. I think that if we would have thought about it in a different way this year, we might have separated it out as we've talked about in the past. I think what Troy says is probably a pretty reasonable conversation. We do believe that the permit recommendation as the way it stands right now is the right recommendation. We feel like we have the sheep to harvest there. We feel like it is sustainable for years to come that way. As far as breaking it out and putting the subunits, that's something we could do next fall. It's a reasonable conversation. It's not something we're opposed to but it's not something that was brought up this year.

Brock – What about Zions, Covy?

Covy – The Zion is a little tougher. I want to let everybody know that I've had extensive conversations with the biologist, Jason who made this recommendation. His intent was never to cut any weapon permits to add the archery hunt.

Brock – That's what's happened, right?

Covy – So, on paper, yes, you can see there's an archery hunt added with three permits and then two any weapon permits were cut. Jason would have cut any weapon permits regardless of the archery hunt this year. The flight came in with fewer class three, class four rams and he's within the recommendation to err within the guidelines of the plan to do that. Also, within the guidelines of the plan is to have those permits back in there with the archery permits. So, there's enough flexibility there that it could go either way. We've talked about the Zion and there was some intent or thought process there to manage it for a bit more quality— one of the units we manage in desert bighorn sheep for more trophy quality. That's the rationale behind the recommendation. That's what I can give you.

Mike – Along those same lines, I keep hearing that we don't want to take away from the any weapon hunt. All these archery tags are just falling out of the sky, they're not impacting anything. They're just magic, they are just appearing. What is the anticipated success rate for the archery hunt that you base these permits off of?

Covy – We had to start with a number, with something because we haven't ever done this before. Colorado has some of these hunts and they are pretty low. Different sheep and different populations act differently. In the Uintah's they stand off the side of the road. On the Zion and the times we assume it's going to be a bit tougher. We estimated 50% but I don't know what it'll be.

Mike – So you estimated 50%. On the Newfoundland Mountains where we have four tags, you're ok that we kill two sheep, right? With the possibility of killing two rams.

Covy – Sure.

Mike – So, what would your recommendation have been for the Newfoundland Mountains if we didn't have an archery hunt on that?

Covy – That's a hard question. I don't know if the biologist would have recommended anymore any weapon tags. He's right at the top of what he could recommend and that is an area where we have seen a decrease in quality.

Mike – So, I don't understand that because you're going to kill two rams, that's what you anticipate.

Covy – At 100% success there's a possibility of adding two more any weapon permits.

Mike – That's what I'm kind of getting at. I'll be supportive of the archery hunt but I don't want to hear the talk that this doesn't take away from other people. I mean these tags are so special and when we start separating them out and we start to say we're not taking away from one and the other. I think it makes it really hard for people that aren't putting in for archery tags to swallow that.

Kris – Mike, for whatever it's worth I think the discussion around that is, the idea that it might help point creep.

Mike – I understand the reasoning but the way you help point creep is you're only helping one segment of the application.

Kris – But the idea is that part of that segment would go with that tag segment as well.

Mike – Yeah, part of them will. Overall, you're going to increase the other side of it.

Ben – Refresh my memory Covy, during the writing of the sheep plan last year, didn't we have a survey about this exact topic about feeling out the public's willingness to utilize archery as a tool for OIAL permits?

Covy – The public over all was supportive. They are supportive of anything that could possibly offer more opportunity in bighorn sheep. Mike makes a good point. It's a hard line to walk. We are trying a lot of different avenues. A lot of hunters want a chance at hunting bighorn sheep.

Ben – I was a member of that sheep committee and there are multiple things that ran strong throughout every meeting of that committee. One of them was we have to figure out how to issue more tags. Hunters want an opportunity to hunt and that was a very heavy and strong thing as I recall.

Brock – One more comment, back to the Zion and Pine Valley. I spent a couple of hours doing math today to try and figure out how many deer are on these units and how many bucks are on

these units and how many bucks we can harvest. Looking at the survival data both of those units have 95% adult survival this winter and they both have 65% fawn survival. I calculated the total number of bucks on each of them and it turns out that the Zion could take another 1300 tags and still be in objective. The Pine Valley could take another 550-600 tags and still be in objective. So, I make a motion that we push back a little bit and take advantage of this opportunity and change those from a 300 and 200 tag increase to a 500 tag increase on each unit.

Kris – To be clear, Brock you are making a motion to increase general deer tags on Pine Valley and Zion by 500 tags.

Brock – The recommendation from the state is 300 and 200 I believe.

Mike – Brock, just so I'm aware, you know how to count deer?

Brock – Both of these units are 4000 animals over objective.

Mike – Wow.

Brock – I want to be conservative. I don't want to crash these two, buck to doe ratios but when we get to antlerless, I'm going to recommend that we increase the number of antlerless animals take off of these to move it back toward... they're asking for 80 tags on the Zion and it's 4000 animals over objective.

Kris – To be clear, we've got a motion on the board to increase the Pine Valley and Zion general deer units by 500 tags from 2018. Seconded by Ben. Any other discussion on that before we vote. Motion passes 6-4. One abstention.

Ben – I don't want to go as drastic as that but part of me wants to discuss the Thousand Lakes. As of last year, we've got a new early weapon hunt but we didn't increase tags. We spread some hunters out which is good, I suppose. I'd like to see more tags there. I'll make a motion that on the Thousand Lakes we increase tags. I don't know what number I want to go with. I'm open to suggestions.

Mike – Even 10% or 20% that's 30-60 tags, I think that would be...

Ben – Covy, what are your thoughts on that?

Covy – I understand the rationale. It's outside of the management parameters.

Ben – Does the division have a recommendation on what potential increase might be?

Covy – I think percentage-wise, not jump too drastically. A percentage is the best way to do an increase.

Ben – Covy doesn't want to give a number so maybe 15%? 45 tags?

Mike – And those would be spread across archery, muzzleloader, early rifle and regular rifle. That's just a handful of tags.

Kris – So, Ben to be clear the motion is to increase the Thousand Lake general season deer unit by 15% from 2018.

Mike – I'll second that.

Kris – Any other discussion on that before we vote?

Dan – Only one comment. The difference between some of these areas is that some of them can support a lot more camping and hunters. I think the Thousand Lake can support that kind of 15% increase.

Kris – Motion passes. Moving on any other amendments?

Josh – Covy, can you pull up the Zion sheep?

Covy – I don't have it here. It's in the RAC packet but we can go through it. It's not broken out in the presentation. It's a reduction in two permits. One from the early hunt and one from the late hunt and the addition of three archery permits. It's an overall increase on one permit.

Josh – That reduction was based on the idea of keeping it a trophy quality hunt and then a flight that showed less but the sentiment from the committee and the public was to increase that. They have sort of

had this home base in Zion. I would make a motion to see that either maintain last years level without the reduction.

Mike – The any weapon without the reduction? Is that what you're saying?

Kris – Let's clarify that motion, Josh. I think to simplify that motion it is to essentially increase by two over the DWR's recommendation on the rifle hunt.

Josh – Yeah, that would be correct.

Ben – I'll second that.

Brock – Covy, you said that would fall within the guidelines, correct?

Covy – Yes.

Brock – Just further comment on that, going back on the sheep committee, we changed some of the management plans to be able to increase permits and provide more opportunity and again that's what our constituents are looking for. That's why I support that.

?? – What about the non-resident permits? I think that's important.

Covy – They are all just percentage based. What you could say is the same number of any weapon permits as last year with the additional archery permits if that is a motion you'd like to make.

Kris – To be clear, the motion is to maintain the 2018 Zion bighorn sheep permits.

Covy – With the addition of the archery permits.

Kris – Right, with the addition of the archery permits. Any other discussion before we vote? Motion passes. Any other amendments?

Ben – The only other thing I've got on my notes is what Troy had mentioned about the Sheep on the Wasatch. I don't know if I know enough about the situation to make a motion. I'd like to discuss that if others are willing. I don't think I have enough information about it to do anything with it.

Mike – I think there's a couple management issues outside of the permit area that I would like to discuss after we pass this. To give direction to the division or would you rather do it before we pass the balance?

Kris – Does it have to do anything with...

Mike – Not with permits.

Kris – We'll tackle that after, Mike if that works? So, Ben you wanted to discuss.

Ben – Covy, help me understand what the concern is, whether that's you or Troy? Explain it to me like I'm five.

Covy – I think that there are basically two schools of thought. One, we understand the Avintaquin should have been split out this last fall and Troy makes a good point on that we could probably offer more opportunity right now with the way these sheep populations are today by breaking them up.

Ben – How many units are we talking about here?

Covy – It could be either broken up into two or three.

Ben – What is it currently?

Covy – It's currently one unit so it's the Wasatch Nebo and Avintaquin. The reason why is because not long ago we didn't have enough sheep to have a hunt.

Ben – They used to be separate units and then we combined them into one unit for that reason, correct?

Covy – Yeah, we didn't have enough sheep to hunt and one of the concerns as always is again there are two schools of thought— One is, if we can direct pressure and harvest, we can probably manage these better and that is accurate. The other school of thought is that sheep die sometimes and if the units are smaller you call a hunt and call hunters and tell them to stay home. So, if it's bigger and you lose the Rock Canyon herd or you lose the Timp herd, a hunter can still hunt Nebo.

Ben – So the concern, Troy, I think what I'm hearing is that all the tags kill the sheep out of the same herd and rather than across the unit.

Covy – Exactly. So, Troy's concern is that there would be point of pressure and I would just echo that you can only harvest a sheep once. After its dead, its dead.

Ben – It seems like a valid concern and a discussion worth having it just feels to me a little late in the game for this year.

Covy – Even with the way that it's set up, the recommendation of four is appropriate. The unit can handle it. One thing I'm not bringing up is this last year, we reduced by a permit and this last spring I'm aware of three dead heads that have come off the face. We picked up a 182-inch ram and now we're going to give that to somebody instead of giving them a permit. We picked up another dead seven-year-old on the Avintaquin. We now have another dead ram instead of a permit. So, I think we're willing to have a discussion next fall about this and break these up and do it a little differently. We're open to that but I'm comfortable with the recommendation.

Mike – I'm a little concerned about some of these elk units and their objective is so high it's unattainable. Such as the Nebo which in 11 years has been over 1 ½ years below it's objective. We've cut tags on that unit for example, from 150 tags down to like 48 now. The Wasatch and the Manti both have 5 ½ year old objectives the Nebo has a 6 ½ and those bulls are sponging off there. Kevin is probably shaking his head because they did the same thing on the Monroe for years and that kind of unit. So, I look at the West Desert Deep Creeks, that age objective is so high and we're at the lowest threshold we can be with. The way to address this would be to offer some kind of motion to ask the wildlife board to direct the division to reopen the elk committee. I'd make the motion that we ask the wildlife board to look into reconvene the elk committee to address chronically low age objective units.

Kris – So, we have a motion to ask the wildlife board to open the elk plan specifically for the purpose of looking at units with chronically low average age against the objective. Do I have a second for that? Josh will second. Any discussion before we vote?

Ben – Mike, you pointed out the Nebo specifically, are there other units you're concerned with as well or just the Nebo?

Mike – Well, there's the Deep Creeks. Notice that he's recommending 20 permits because he needs to kill some elk but it's almost two years below the... and it's been chronically down there.

Ben – Didn't we raise the objective on the Deep Creeks?

Covy – Yeah, the Deep Creeks is probably a little bit different because we're trying to be good partners with the tribe and manage for an older age class bull. It's a valid point and if it won't sustain a harvest of 20 bulls in the age objective, does it really fit that?

Ben – My other question for Covy... This isn't a topic really for the elk management plan, right? Refresh my memory, when is the plan up?

Covy – It's a seven-year plan... 2022, 2023? We've got a ways to go. Sometimes it is appropriate to open a plan and look at things mid-way if we're not meeting objectives.

Brock – I have one other question for you. What's happened to elk population on the Nebo when we've gone from 140 tags to 40 tags? Is it 30% the size or is it the same population and we're just squandering a resource?

Covy – It's been over objective for several years then it came back down under this last year. Brock, that's a hard question. I haven't seen drastic changes in the population we're again back under objective. We're probably not offering as much opportunity as we could.

Kris – I think you mentioned earlier that the Nebo would be a prime unit to look at.

Covy – It would be.

Kris – All in favor?

Ben – Just to clarify, I'm not opposed to addressing the age objective, I just don't know if it's worth reconvening the elk committee for discussing just the Nebo.

Kris – The motion I believe was to ask the wildlife board to open the elk plan to address that.

Mike – And maybe not reconvene, it's to open the elk plan, right? That way they can look at the Deep Creeks and assess a few of those and maybe they will come back and say no they are good.

Danny – Seven years is a pretty long time. Five might be more appropriate.

Kris – Any amendments or do I have a motion to approve the balance?

Brock – I move to approve the remainder.

Kris – All in favor? Passes unanimously.

VOTING

Motion was made by Brock, seconded by Ben to increase general season Pine Valley and Zion deer tags to 500 tags from 2018.

In Favor: Alan, Ben, Mike, Brock, Josh, A J

Opposed: Danny, Paul, Ken, Christine

Abstain: Steve

Motion passed 6 to 4

Motion was made by Ben to increase general season Thousand Lakes tags by 15% (45 tags), seconded by Mike (Covy to answer kind of) (Danny commented)

In Favor: Kris, Ben, Danny, Mike, Brock, Josh, Ken, Alan, A J

Opposed: Paul, Christine

Motion passes 9 to 2

Motion made by Joshua, seconded by Ben to maintain the Zion sheep permit numbers the same as 2018 with the recommended addition of the archery permits.

In Favor: Kris, Ben, A J, Mike, Josh, Danny, Christine, Ken, Alan, Brock

Opposed:

Absent: Steve

Motion passed unanimously

Motion made by Mike, seconded by Josh to ask the Wildlife Board to direct the DWR to open the elk plan to address chronically low elk average ages vs. objectives (e.g. Nebo)

In Favor: Kris, A J, Mike, Josh, Brock, Steve, Danny, Christine, Alan

Opposed: Ben, Ken

Motion passes 9 to 2

Motion made by Brock, seconded by Christine to accept the balance of the Division's recommendations as presented.

In Favor: Alan, Christine, Danny, Paul, Ben, Kris, Mike, Ken, Josh, Steve, A J

Opposed:

Motion passes unanimously

6) **Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019**
Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator
Riley Peck, Regional Wildlife Manager

Questions from the RAC

Kris – Thank you, Covy. I have a question. I know it's not a big problem to solve but we've got a couple units in the state, particularly the Henrys where we really don't want elk there at all. Have you ever thought about sending everyone that draws a buck tag, a cow elk tag?

Covy – It's an interesting strategy. We've thought of a lot of things on the Henrys. Do we know what percentage of hunters that draw a buck tag down there that buy one of the antlerless control permits? Somebody text Lindy. We can find out how many buy them. You're right, we don't want elk there. It's an interesting strategy of walking that line of balancing the resource and the resource has value. I think it's hard to give it away and that's why we offer it for sell. Maybe we can do a better job of communicating that if you have a permit on the Henrys, you can buy an antlerless elk permit. They are at a reduced rate. I think they are \$35. We could market it better I think, Kris.

Kris – Any questions?

Danny – So, the one that struck me in the face especially after bringing up the issue of snow mortality, the East Canyon going to 1000. That was a huge leap. It just seems to me that East Canyon area with private property interests, it tends to be a boom and bust thing. So, what are we going to do? Are we going to increase the permits big time and then a year out we decrease them because they may all be dead in the bottom of draws?

Covy – I understand that. I think to be fair 500 of those permits, the biologist really wanted to distribute pressure so 500 are for private lands only. You can only hunt private lands. So, he understood that when looking in to it. If you want to harvest a doe on your private land, here's a chance to do it without going through the depredation program. Put in, draw a permit, you've got access, go hunt.

Danny – Yeah, but you go knock on David's door.

Covy – And I would say, this is one of the things we stress, get permission before you put in for the permit.

Brock – I'm trying to understand why we decrease doe tags on the Zion. They've cut it in half even though they've grown 5000 deer on the unit and they are 4000 over objective and we're cutting doe tags. That doesn't make any sense to me.

Covy – I think that's a fair point, Brock. The reason I can give is that a lot of the doe hunts are probably more to target specific depredation or urban issues and left to manage to the population objective. Right or wrong, doe harvest in Utah for a long time has been socially, a hard pill to swallow. I think we're moving that direction, Brock. I think we're getting better.

Brock – I was going to say we sent an email to Lindy and she said the demand for doe tags is greater than the demand for the buck tags. Is that true?

Covy – That is accurate. It is. There is a demand for these permits. Healthy, active wildlife management means that you harvest does. We're working really hard right now and I think that in the statewide plan we'll probably get more tools to address this in managing deer a little more proactively.

Ben – If the Zion and Pine Valley are 4000 over objective, is it fair to reason based on that that maybe those objectives need to be adjusted?

Brock – That is the alternative for sure.

Covy – That's the alternative.

Ben – Then if they are that far over objective and they're not recommending an increase in tags, I assume that range conditions are reasonably decent, we don't have carrying capacity issues. I'm just trying to feel out this situation.

Covy – Ben, what I would say is that I think those plans were rewritten two years ago. They come up every five years and we saw a significant spike in those populations and probably the reason they weren't adjusted is because they wanted to wait and see if that was a spike then go back down or if habitat has changed or conditions have changed to where that is the new normal. If that's the new normal, I'm certain that we would address it in the next plan.

Ken – Didn't they just do a capture and study collaring issue on the Zion this last winter?

Covy – On the Zion we caught 80 deer last year.

Ken – And you collared those?

Covy – Yep.

Questions from the Public

Val Anderson – The very 1st slide on deer... with the statewide objective in terms of population? It looked like, for a long time we... if the population objectives 453,000 and we haven't reached that in two-three decades. Why should we have any depredation doe tags if we can't ever get to our population objective? Is that a bad number? Is it unit by unit where we have some that are doing really good and others are going really bad? Under active management why can't we reach population objectives or even come close to it?

Covy – That's a good question. So, population objectives, the way they are set, there are some of the unit objectives. We don't set those in the statewide plan. It's more detailed. We dive in deeper and look at habitat and other conditions and say, how many deer can we have here? Really, the data that we are getting now over the last five years is starting to help answer this. We've asked those same questions. Why don't we have possibly the number of deer we had here before? By the data we're getting now, some

of these collaring studies, we're getting really heavy into cause specific mortality of does and cause specific mortality of fawns as well. So, we're able to start addressing why these populations aren't growing and then ask the question, do we have the right number? Do we need to look at this again? Do we need to readjust? Are we at a carrying capacity? But the truth is we haven't been able to manage at that level until probably last couple of years. We just didn't have the data. Now that we have it, as we go through rewriting the unit management plans and every year we rewrite a region unit management plan, so this year we're on Southern region. So, this year she'll rewrite her management plans and at that point, they would probably look at that and possibly adjust upwards some of those population objectives. Which again, adds to this overall sum. It makes it higher, whereas other units where it's probably too high. We need to really take a look at it and see, is this possible? Our constituents associate that with a lot of loss. When we tell them the population objective on the Manti is 38,000. We've had 25,000 deer there for several years. We're probably never going to hit 38,000 again in the foreseeable future unless something drastically changes. It's a really hard pill to swallow. They say, no we want to leave it, that's the goal, we want to hit that. But maybe some of them are really unrealistic and we need to look at that harder.

Kris – I'd add to that, when the mule deer committee got together last time, we had input on the population objective number. The idea was that there was no way to sit down and calculate statewide what the carrying capacity is. So, we wanted to hang a number on the board that was aggressive enough that we didn't feel like we could hit it the next year or two because we wanted to keep working. We didn't want the plan to stop being aggressive at growing deer in Utah. So, the way I recall it was we wanted it aggressive enough that we would continue to do habitat projects and continue to manage to grow deer in Utah. That was part of the rationale behind that.

Mike – Along those lines there was 280,000 deer when we met as a mule deer committee in 2014 and we set a goal to have 350,000 because we as committee members could impact that. Then, boom, we've got great weather, great conditions, great fawning. We surpassed that. It seemed like they never really reduce those population objectives unless they are way below.

Covy – A lot of loss associated with reductions and that's hard for the public.

Larry Fitzgerald – Thank you for your service. Covy, on this private land tags and stuff, you need to educate people a little bit better. People don't understand these tags. I talk to people all the time about the tags and they don't understand they can buy the bull/buck tag and the private lands tag. How many elk are harvested on the Vernon private lands antlerless control? Was it successful?

Covy – It was successful. Kent do you have those numbers? We harvested 75 elk on the Vernon with antlerless control. If somebody had a Vernon buck tag, they could have gone and bought one of these over the counter. We sold quite a few.

Larry – It's a very good opportunity. Is there more opportunity to even increase it more? Where you're including the Tintic Valley does that include the Dog Valley? Will they overlap so you can hunt both sides of Hwy. 6?

Covy – Rusty do you want to speak about unit boundary?

Larry – I know there were some issues you guys were trying to figure out here.

Rusty – Antlerless control permits have no cap. Anyone that has a buck or bull tag can purchase that and they are unit specific so those hunting the Vernon can purchase an antlerless control permit.

Larry – What about the private lands tags? Do you put a limit on those? Have they sold out?

Rusty – We increased those this year and we combined the Tintic with the Vernon. Now it is called the West Desert/Tintic Valley and it's the total West Desert Tintic boundary combined with the West Desert Vernon boundary. I believe we did 150 permits on those.

Larry - Do you think that is enough tags in that area? The reason I'm getting to this is because I know down around Nephi the division has to go in and take elk and the public doesn't have an opportunity to take those elk. With these tags, the public has the opportunity to harvest an elk where they normally wouldn't.

Rusty – Correct. So, in addition to the private land only permits and the antlerless control permits which the Tintic side has never had before, we also did a 75 permit draw hunt for antlerless elk on the Tintic. The Vernon already had one and that will continue.

Larry – Does that tag go from August to January?

Rusty – I'm not sure about the Vernon but the Tintic does go from August 1- January 31. So, from August 1- January 31 you can get a private land only permit. Draw that permit or if you have any buck or bull hunts in the time frame, you can purchase an antlerless control permit. We basically threw every tool we have at the Tintic unit.

Larry – Does the Division use the same tools if they are not harvested?

Rusty – Yes. That's what we're trying to eliminate with this by resolving depredation problems. Where there's an opportunity for hunters to take them, we'd rather not. We'd rather let hunters take that opportunity.

Larry - Is this a zero-objective area?

Rusty – Technically it's not. I think the unit as a whole, the West Desert, it names 200 elk on the Deep Creeks that aren't on the tribe land and it also names 150 elk in Dog Valley. Dog Valley and Sage Valley combined.

Larry – There was a little bit of talk of going north with these tags.

Rusty – It'll encompass that Cedar Valley area. Yes

Larry – I encourage you. Let's let the public take these out instead of the division taking them out. The pronghorn in Rush (?) Valley and Cedar Valley... Is this our new biologist?

Covy – Yeah, and I'd just say for unit specific questions these guys are here and they love to answer them. They didn't dress up for nothing.

Larry – Hi Jason

Jason Robinson – Over the years, I know the history of the pronghorn. I lived out there and was a livestock operator when we first put pronghorn out there and I know where they were supposed to stay and where they are not now and where they are now.

Larry – Are you doing any antlerless tags for Cedar Valley, Rush Valley, Cedar Valley? Trying to keep them out of the urban areas. The old biologist kind of refused to think there was a problem there but it's a huge problem from what I understand.

Jason – We're not recommending any pronghorn permits this year for doe. We just completed the flight so we're still in the process of analyzing that data. We were able to do a full flight of that area to get us a better idea of where we are in relation to the population objective.

Larry – So, you don't have all the data back so you don't know but do you think it could stand an antlerless hunt in those areas?

Jason – There're maybe some areas that are near some of the ag fields that we could look at for sure.

Larry – I think that some of the private landowners would encourage it. I hope the RAC would think about that in the future when you get your data back.

Jason – I think one of the main reasons we haven't is we've been chronically under our population objective in that unit. We'll be able to look at that here with this new data.

Larry – I know that the population objective is keeping animals in areas where they are supposed to be, not become urban animals. Right now, there are antelope going in to Camp Williams and over into Herriman, Bluffdale and even in to Eagle Mountain. They are out of the hunting population. I would hope the DWR and you guys would consider trying to keep them out of the city limits and where people could hunt them. That's all I have, Thank You.

Jeremy Anderson – Covy, can you go to the mule deer doe San Juan area slide?

Covy – The boundary is actually the town of Monticello.

Jeremy – That's what I was hoping it was with the mortality we had there.

Comments from the Public

Larry Fitzgerald – I actually admire the division for making these efforts and trying to control these elk in a zero-population area. The Vernon unit— we're trying to maintain a deer unit and I think they are trying. Years ago, guys like me and the division didn't get along too well but now we get along because, in my opinion there are a better class of people in the division. Other than Covy. (haha) Rusty is a good dude and he's welcome at my place anytime. Thank you for your time.

Troy Justensen/SFW – SFW supports the divisions recommendations with the following exception and that would be the Beaver. We acknowledge that the elk numbers are going up. It goes along the lines of what you talked about earlier. Sometimes more is less. The local committee feels that with the number of permits there, the harvest going down on antlerless and could actually be more effective in harvesting those cows if there weren't so many people. It also talked about getting with the local producers to target. In the past they have targeted specific areas where there is a problem and found that to be effective. We'd like to see that happen again. To address one thing that Brock brought up. You are asking Covy a lot of questions on how and what not but you really control his answers and we put up on the board that this is our objective, that's just a figure. Really, we need to manage based upon the health of the herd and that lies in your realm. I agree, because quite frankly, that number, if it's too high and our deer are unhealthy, we need to adjust that. So, as we go into the Pine Valley and we go into the Zion, based upon the health of the herd maybe the does and bucks are healthy, we can raise that objective but if they're not, we need to harvest those animals. So, it's very exciting the work you're doing with BYU and the division so hats off to you guys. I think the future is looking bright. Thank you.

RAC Discussion

Danny – Covy, this is trivial I'm sure. Some antelope waded across from Antelope Island to Salt Lake I'm assuming. Swam or whatever to the Northwest quadrant and it's a pretty good herd there but now

with the inland port and the prison issues, that herd is going to be history. It's not a big herd. I counted 55 animals the other day. Are you guys interested in moving those critters?

Covy – Do you mean the ones by Herriman and Bluffdale areas?

Danny – No, I mean the ones just west of downtown Salt Lake City. Are we going to try and move those things or are we going to try and use antlerless permits or what? What are we going to do with them?

Covy – I'm not familiar with that group to speak right now. We've tried to capture pronghorn in these residential areas a lot. It's tough. The best way to capture pronghorn is a funnel trap. At times we've got them to come into bait. We've got to have the right conditions. In that area if it allowed for a hunt, we would probably offer that.

Danny – It's inside Salt Lake City.

Covy – And that's the problem. I'm not saying that we wouldn't try to catch them but pronghorn are really picky and hard to get under a drop net. Flying a helicopter at low levels in those areas is also unacceptable.

Kris – Covy, I have a couple of questions on the private lands tags on the Vernon. I'm wondering how many tags we sold last year? Did we sell them all?

Covy – We sold 43 and we harvested 3.

Kris – Didn't we raise that last year?

Covy – We initiated that hunt last year. We didn't have it before.

Kris – That's right.

Covy – So, this year we expanded the boundary to cover both the Vernon and the Tintic Valley.

Kris – So, we had 100 tags for sale, we sold 43?

Covy – I have it right here. Last year we had 100 permits for sale, we sold 43 and we had 3 harvests.

Kris – Ok, so it probably doesn't do us much good to look at...

Covy – We didn't hit the cap last year. If we start hitting it and having higher success, obviously, we would address that.

Kris – do we have a motion?

Ben – I move to accept the division recommendations as presented.

Alan – I second.

Kris – All in favor? Passes unanimously

VOTING

Motion was made by Ben, seconded by Alan to accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

In Favor: Alan, Christine, Danny, Paul, Ben, Brock, Mike, A J, Steve, Chris, Ken

Opposed:

Motion passed/unanimously

7) R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments

Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Steve – I have a question on the depredation process. Can you go back to that slide? Can you explain that to me?

Mike W – This is something that would be included in the CWMU application. Really, in practice, this is the way it is. If a landowner is enrolled in the CWMU program, calls the division and says I've got too many deer on my property and we say let's handle that through the CWMU program. If you as a landowner are not receiving enough funds from the CWMU to compensate you for that damage that's something that needs to be worked out in a lease agreement between you and the CWMU operator.

Steve – So, they would still be able to negotiate those compensations?

Mike W – Yeah, this is just saying, that we expect that to be handled through the CWMU program and not coming to the division requesting monetary payment through our depredation program.

Mike – Does the CWMU have to get authorization from surrounding landowners for hazing? How do they gain that and how is the division going to work that within the rule?

Mike W - I don't know that we have a standardized process for ensuring they've got permission. In most of these scenarios, the landowner wants somebody there hazing. If it's gotten to the point where we're asking a CWMU to haze it's because that adjacent landowner has complained enough that they need help. So, our rule is more connecting the two. I don't know that we would require a written standard form of permission to trespass. I think we could leave that up to them.

Mike – I dealt with this a little bit last year on a hunt where a CWMU which was authorized through a COR to haze animals during our hunt. It was not enjoyable. I worry that when we give the general public a certificate of registration, formal permission to haze these animals, how is it going to infringe on surrounding land owners? You might have a landowner that wants the animals hazed off of their property but the guy next door doesn't. When you go to hazing elk, they don't just stop and start where you want them to.

Mike W – The one you're talking to is pretty complex because it dealt with another state, right? The hunt that was going on wasn't a Utah hunt. So, there was definitely some complexities in that one. I think for the most part 95% of the time and really anytime if a landowner doesn't want CWMU hazing them off of their property, I don't think we're going to ask the CWMU to do that. In that scenario there were other landowners that didn't want those elk to make it there which is why that authorization was given.

Alan – How big of a problem is depredation claims on CWMUs right now?

Mike W – Not very big. Since I've had this job, in the last year and a half we've only had one CWMU where this became an issue.

Alan – What I am afraid of, during the winter or early spring CWMUs have no ability to do anything about the number of animals on their CWMU that might come from where ever. I don't like that idea of making them sign a waiver especially if it's not a big problem. If there's a problem that needs to be addressed on that, I think the landowner and the CWMU operators need to have the right to appeal for some help.

Steve – You know I am uncomfortable with that also for the same reason that I think our timing is a little bit different. We may be in the early spring or late winter and the landowner is going to need some help. I don't understand a CWMU well enough to see how it could reach out for help. The other question I had was, if the ownership changes by 33%, have any landowners been concerned about that? It seems to me like that could in some way hamstring a landowner from selling a piece of his property for it reduces its marketability. Or market value. Has any of them made any comments on that?

Mike W – Part of the reason that this was in the rule was that we didn't want CWMUs to inflate the market prices of land. We didn't want anybody selling a piece of property saying, it's worth this much because of the CWMU. Because a CWMU is not a guaranteed thing. It's not a property right. The reality is, it's not come up so we just felt like it was extra.

Questions from the Public

None

Comments from the Public

Larry Fitzgerald – It's over and done now, but I was asking for was more public draw tags. Anyway, on the CWMU, they had this regulation 5,000 for deer and 10,000 for elk. I hope at some point in the future, I tried bringing it up years ago, that each acre is not created equal. You could have 20,000 acres in Box Elder county and 5,000 in Current Creek and the Current Creek property has more habitat on it than the 20,000 acres does. I hope that at some point in the future that is considered for the CWMUs because it should be habitat, not acreage.

RAC Discussion

None

VOTING

Motion was made by Alan, seconded by Steve to accept the Division's recommendations as presented with the exception of signing the waiver releasing depredation assistance claim on their property.

Kris – Alan, let me make sure I understand your motion. So, accept all of the recommendations with the exception of signing a waiver for depredation damages.

Mike – So, is the reason for the waiver to not be viewed as double dipping? They want to hold so many animals on their property to sell hunts but then you don't want them to come back later and say, we've got so many animals on this so you need to pay us.

Mike W – Right, that is the other perspective of this. In these cases, if we have a landowner who is profiting from wildlife through the CWMU program, we don't want them to be able to come and also receive a profit from wildlife with taxpayer money. When those funds from the depredation program are paid out for mitigation payments, half sportsman dollars/half taxpayer dollars and that's a really hard pill for the public to swallow when they say, you're already giving these landowners to make money off of a public resource then when they have too many, you're also paying them. It does create a situation where a landowner can be incentivized to have a lot of deer, make money through the CWMU program as well as put complaints through our depredation program.

Mike – When they sign their waiver, does that automatically go into effect or was this going to be on a case by case basis?

Mike W – This would go into effect on their COR. It would be in their CWMU application. I don't know but I think it is in rule.

Ben – Mike, you said exactly how I feel. With the comment of the double dipping. I like the waiver portion of this rule. I think that if we were to remove that portion of this rule, it goes exactly against what they are trying to accomplish. I can't say that I've ever given this much thought before seeing this but I would agree with the DWR that if landowners involved with CWMU program that's pretty significant compensation for most CWMUs and I agree that they shouldn't be able to double dip on the other side of that.

Mike – I agree with that and at the same time I agree with what Alan is saying. If a lot of animals are migrating onto CWMUs...that's why I asked if it was going to be on every CWMU that signs their COR, they're going to be held to this. I don't know if I am comfortable with holding every CWMU to this because I think there are many cases where animals that they are not profiting from that come on to their land to create issues.

Mike W – I agree. In those scenarios, that can typically be worked out in a hunting lease. Even if it's a year later. A lot of these CWMUs are made up of, there's a landowner and there's a hunting lease on the property and if that lease agreement isn't compensating them fully, that is a method for getting their compensation. Maybe they have a weird year where they get a lot of damage, more so than typical that is something that could be addressed.

Steve – One of the concerns I have is, I understand the CWMU and the revenue generation to the landowner and that is a good thing. However, when you start getting neighbors, for example if you happen to be near a reservation, that reservation is very active in promoting their wildlife population and yet they are not controlling their wildlife population. You have only a couple alternatives and one is to fence them out completely with a large enough and strong enough fence to get them out or you may end up having a real problem with those animals on your property. Being a case by case basis might not be a bad idea on this.

Alan – Well, I think if there are depredation problems, I think when you make an application for depredation damages those things can be looked at. Another thing, having been a previous CWMU operator, I can see a lot, we never had any claims for damages but I can see the potential could come especially early springtime when you get inundated by thousands of deer coming into an alfalfa crop or something like that. I think its unfair to make them sign a waiver like that. I think those things, if there's a problem can be addressed. The numbers, it isn't like this CWMU manager can set his numbers, that's all set in conjunction with the biologist and the DWR. So, they are all working together.

Kris – We've got a motion on the board that has been seconded. Is everyone clear on the motion?

Danny - Let me see if this is a possibility. Isn't it possible for any weird situation like that to be presented to the wildlife board itself in request of a variance?

Mike W – There currently is no direction in the rule. Yeah, the wildlife board is a public meeting so they could make that request. I think it becomes difficult when we get into a position to saying yes to someone and no to someone else. That can put us in a weird spot especially when we're dealing with money and damage. It can be a hard thing.

Kris – Any other discussion on this? Let's vote. All in favor? Opposed? Motion fails.

In Favor: Alan, Steve, Mike

Opposed: Christine, Danny, Paul, Ben, Brock, Ken, Joshua, A J

Motion fails 8 to 3

Motion was made by Ben, seconded by Ken to accept the Division's recommendations as presented.
In Favor: Christine, Danny, Paul, Ben, Mike, Brock, Ken, Joshua, A J
Opposed: Alan, Steve
Motion passes 9 to 2

8) 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations
Mike Wardle, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Brock – There are rules on how many they should be getting, right? How do they come up with those?

Mike – It's not like the landowner association program where we have a guideline based off of acreage. It's more conversation between operator and biologist sitting down and saying, what do you have on your unit? What are our management objectives for the areas? For the surrounding area? And what type of quality do we want to manage for on the CWMU? I think it's good that way. I don't think we'd want to get into having a standardized way of recommending these permits because every CWMU is so different. And every CWMU landowners are different. There are some that want to manage for extreme quality and there are some that want to manage for extreme opportunity. I think, in order for this program to be successful we have to take that into consideration.

Questions from the Public

None

Comments from the Public

None

RAC Discussion

None

VOTING

Motion was made by Mike, seconded by Ken to accept the Division's recommendations as presented.
In Favor: Alan, Christine, Danny, Paul, Ben, Brock, Mike, Ken, Steve, Josh, A J
Opposed:
Motion passed unanimously

9) R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments
Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Josh – So by increasing to a two-doe pronghorn permit, essentially does that take opportunity out of the public pool, correct?

Mike W –Yes and no. There are times when we haven't been able to do a depredation hunter pool hunt because the landowner wasn't willing to allow that amount of access. This gives us the opportunity to have a depredation hunt because we can put more public members out there. When we have a depredation hunter pool hunt, we can't force the landowner to allow access. So, a lot of those scenarios when they're not willing to have people on their land, we are limited on our tools. Especially for allowing the public the opportunity, we end up having to solve the issue through mitigation permits or removals or other methods. Yeah, you're correct in that if we need 20 pronghorn removed and we want to do two-doe

permits instead of a single doe, we'd be talking ten people instead of 20. We currently do this with deer and it's been really helpful. The big thing is depredation hunts gives us more of an ability to do that.

Questions from the Public

None

Comments from the Public

None

RAC Discussion

None

VOTING

Motion was made by Ken, seconded by Christine to accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

In Favor: Alan, Christine, Danny, Paul, Brock, Ben, Mike, Ken, Steve, Josh, A J

Opposed:

Motion passes unanimously

**10) R657-41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments
Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief**

Questions from the RAC

Danny – As far as undersubscribed permits, turkey's rule, right? That's probably where we're not using all of that opportunity. Is that correct?

Justin – Yeah, because those permits by rule are set aside and then if a one-year group doesn't come along, they're just not used for the conservation permit program. We felt like it just made more sense, if we have conservation permits let's use them and account for them once every three years instead of leaving them available and hoping a group comes along.

Mike – How many groups participate in the current program?

Justin – I believe now we have seven, maybe six.

Mike – How often do you get a new group that comes in?

Justin – It's been a while. I've been in Salt Lake for five or six years and I haven't had one come in. So, it's pretty rare.

Questions from the Public

NONE

Comments from the Public

Jerry /MDF – We certainly accept as you've explained it. One thing I would love to see. I don't know if it's possible but I'd love to see the division back up that 30-day payment again with our possible tag buyers and things like that. We are using that as our...we draw the line and say, 30-day payment but it would be nice to have the muscle of the division behind us as well. I don't know if there's any recourse the division could come with... say anybody that purchases a tag for \$X amount and then bails out of it

and doesn't pay that so we have to remarket, resell, it would be nice to see if we could do something with that person that did that. Is there something in place already that I don't know about?

Justin – So what you're getting at is, say someone bids on a permit and you're at an auction so that permit is spoken for and then down the road they say, well I can't come up with those funds... You're looking for the division to take some type of action towards them.

Jerry – Maybe I'm asking the wrong thing. Maybe that's not what your part is. We're certainly going to blackball them from us. It would be nice to know that there was some kind of recourse. Something for future thought no to be decided or discussed.

Justin – Let me marinate on that. I'm not prepared on what the responsibility is...

RAC Discussion

Kris – Any reason we are backing off of the 30-day payment issue?

Justin – It was simply to try to get this information summarized sooner than later. So, we figured if a conservation permit organization has a banquet on a Friday night, it gives them the entire next week to get the information of the person that was going to obtain that voucher for the permit. We felt like we could do that in a shorter window and if the RAC feels otherwise, we can certainly move back to 30 days.

VOTING

Motion was made by Ken, seconded by A J to accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

In Favor: Alan, Christine, Danny, Paul, Brock, Mike, Ken, Steve, Josh, A J

Opposed:

Abstained: Ben (conflict of interest)

Motion passed 10 in favor

Meeting adjourned: 9:10 pm

In attendance: 30 public, 13 DWR employees, 12 RAC members

Next board meeting: May 2, 9:00 am, DNR boardroom, Salt Lake City

Next RAC meeting: May 14, 6:30 pm, Springville Library multipurpose room

COMMENT FROM RAC MEETING

Date Apr 9, 2019

Name Ridley Griggs Phone Number 801-809-7921

Address 1850 N University Ave Provo, UT

Who are you representing? self group _____

Would you like to address the RAC today? yes no

Which agenda topic? Rule amendments to taking big game

COMMENTS I request:

- 1) 1 power scopes allowed for Handgun-archery-muzzleloader hunts
- 2) The addition of shotguns to the Handgun-archery-muzzleloader hunts

**Note – You will have a maximum of three minutes per individual and five minutes per group to address the RAC.

2

COMMENT FROM RAC MEETING

Date 4-9-19

Name JEREMY ANDERSON Phone Number 801-471-8254

Address 1334 OWL LANE Eagle Mountain, UT 84005

Who are you representing? self group MULE DEER FOUNDATION

Would you like to address the RAC today? yes no

Which agenda topic? # 5

COMMENTS Approve as recommended by The Division.

Would like to ask for more investigation on ^{MULE} DEER
the Southern Unit. More collars needed. Sportsmans Groups
Can help w/Funding

**Note – You will have a maximum of three minutes per individual and five minutes per group to address the RAC.

3

COMMENT FROM RAC MEETING

Date 4-9-11

Name Troy Justensen Phone Number 801-557-3362

Address 2494 Remuda Drive

Who are you representing? self group SFW & UTWSS

Would you like to address the RAC today? yes no

Which agenda topic? 5

COMMENTS _____

**Note – You will have a maximum of three minutes per individual and five minutes per group to address the RAC.

4

COMMENT FROM RAC MEETING

Date 4-9-19

Name Troy Justwasser Phone Number 801-557-3362

Address 2494 Reseda Dr

Who are you representing? self group SFW

Would you like to address the RAC today? yes no

Which agenda topic? 7

COMMENTS _____

**Note – You will have a maximum of three minutes per individual and five minutes per group to address the RAC.

5

COMMENT FROM RAC MEETING

Date 4-9-14

Name Larry Fitzgerald Phone Number 801361-1963

Address _____

Who are you representing? self group _____

Would you like to address the RAC today? yes no

Which agenda topic? Antlerless Elk

COMMENTS _____

**Note – You will have a maximum of three minutes per individual and five minutes per group to address the RAC.

6

COMMENT FROM RAC MEETING

Date 4-9-19

Name Larry Fitzgerald Phone Number 801-361-1963

Address _____

Who are you representing? self group _____

Would you like to address the RAC today? yes no

Which agenda topic? Customer Rate Amendment

COMMENTS _____

**Note – You will have a maximum of three minutes per individual and five minutes per group to address the RAC.

7

COMMENT FROM RAC MEETING

Date 4-9-19

Name Jeremy Anderson Phone Number 801-471-8254

Address 1334 Owl Lane Eagle Mountain, UT 84005

Who are you representing? self group Mule Deer Foundation

Would you like to address the RAC today? yes no

Which agenda topic? 11

COMMENTS Accept as presented. Would love to see
DWR stand by payment in 30 days.

**Note – You will have a maximum of three minutes per individual and five minutes per group to address the RAC.

**Northern Regional Advisory Council
April 10, 2019
Weber County Commission Chambers
Ogden, Utah**

Draft Meeting Minutes

Meeting Begins: 6:02 p.m.

RAC Present

John Blazzard- Agric.
David Earl- Agric.
Randy Hutchison-At Large
Christopher Hoagstrom- Noncon.
Aaron Johnson- Sportsman
Matt Klar- At Large
Mike Laughter- Sportsman
Kevin McLeod- At Large
Justin Oliver- At Large
Kristin Purdy- Noncon.
Bryce Thurgood- Chair
Mellissa Wood- BLM

DWR Present

Jodie Anderson
Justin Dolling
Jim Christensen
Dave Rich
Chad Wilson
Kent Hersey
Mike Wardle
Mark Hadley
Covy Jones
Justin Dolling
Randy Wood
Devin Christensen
Scott Walker
David Beveridge
Trevor Doman
Justin Shannon

Wildlife Board

Byron Bateman

RAC Excused

Paul Chase- Forest Service
Chad Jensen- Elected

RAC Unexcused

Darren Parry- Shoshone Nation

Agenda:

Welcome, RAC Introductions and RAC Procedure
Approval of Agenda and December 5, 2018 Minutes
Wildlife Board Update
Regional Update
R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments
Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019
Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019
R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments
2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations
R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments
R657- 41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments

Item 1. Approval of Agenda

Bryce Thurgood- Chair

Agenda Approved

Item 2. Approval of December 5, 2018 Minutes

-Bryce Thurgood- Chair

Minutes approved as circulated.

Item 3. Wildlife Board Update

-Bryce Thurgood- Chair

January 10th Meeting:

Black Bear- was one of the main topics in that meeting. There was a motion to not accept the divisions recommendation as presented and that the committee meet again and discuss it. That passed 6-0. There was an action log item to look at the spring pursuit and number of hounds with the bear committee. There was a motion to accept the divisions proposal on the Bookcliffs as presented that passed 6-0. There was a motion to keep the Beaver bear tags the same which passed 5-1. There was a motion to accept the balance as presented which passed 6-0.

Antelope- Motion to keep the Cisco south unit at 375 on the population objective and that passed 5-1. Motion on the balance which passed 6-0.

Moose- Motion to accept the presentation as presented which passed 6-0. The CHA rule amendment passed 6-0.

Sage Grouse- passed as presented 5-0 with 1 excused.

North Peak CMU variance- passed 5-0.

CWMU advisory committee- passed as presented 5-0.

Tilapia farmer variance- passed as presented 5-0.

Wildlife Board stipulation license penalty- passed 4-1 and 5-0.

Antelope Island closure-Disease affecting sheep. Motion to close and cancel the 2 tags passed 5-0.

Item 4. Regional Update

- Justin Dolling, Regional Supervisor

Aquatics- Spawning Walleye out at Willard. The goal is to spawn 28 million eggs.

Great Salt Lake Project- Bill to establish the Willard Spur Waterfowl Management Area. In the process of making a committee for that management plan.

Waterfowl- Crew is mowing phragmites with the new marsh masters. Cooperative project with SFW and our federal aid program.

Habitat-Funding opportunities for water shed restoration projects. Assisting mule deer foundation in planting on middle fork WMA.

Law Enforcement- K9 unit in our Cache unit. Specialized in tracking people and finding evidence.

Wildlife- Wildlife conducting lek counts on sage grouse and sharptail. Completing spring deer classifications. Tough winter for big game with this long winter. Zero survival for fawns on the Cache unit this year.

Mike Laughter- The fawns that did not survive were just the collared fawns right?

Justin Dolling-Yes, just collared fawns. Hopefully there are a few that survived.

Bryce Thurgood- It doesn't look good when all the collared ones died.

Item 5. R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments

- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

See RAC Packet

RAC Questions

Matt Klar- On the antlerless permits, those are just depredation permits?

Covy Jones- Yes.

John Blazzard- Where are you going to fit in this new muzzleloader, pistol, archery in the scheme of time?

Covy Jones- That is a really good question. This is the first step, getting into rule. Before we get it into practice, we would want to get it into a management plan and take that back through the public process and make sure we are doing what the public wants. This is social not biological.

Bryce Thurgood- Realistically, it could be a couple of years away?

Covy Jones- It could be. We are re-writing the deer management plan right now. Maybe it will make it as a strategy in there.

Kristin Purdy- Where are landowners experiencing deprecation from pronghorns?

Covy Jones- They love alfa alfa. Anywhere there is alfa alfa and pronghorn, they are experiencing deprecation.

Kristin Purdy- What counties?

Covy Jones- It would be every county there are pronghorn. Northern Region would be Box Elder and Rich primarily.

Kristin Purdy- Do you have any stats on how many landowners are reporting deprecation?

Covy Jones- Yes, we have all those stats. We have an app that tracks every deprecation instance across the state.

Kristin Purdy- Will you give us an idea of deprecation incidents. Are we talking dozens?

Covy Jones- We can pull that up and come back to that.

Randy Hutchison- I am a little concerned about the potential for the new primitive weapon hunt. We already have a bow and muzzle hunt. The pistols are addressed under any weapon. Isn't this just opening the door? Are we just going to find another week or two weeks to fit it in where there is already non-stock?

Covy Jones- Maybe we would use it on a unit where we don't have a lot of pressure or a lot of hunters. Maybe it would be more fitting at the end of the current structure but fitting it into an area where hunters are not using other weapon types. We do have areas where we have archery only so it would allow another possibility other than always going to archery.

Randy Hutchison- If this were approved, is it just a slippery slope. The fall is full.

Covy Jones- I don't have a good answer but it would be better to go through the public process and into a management plan.

Mike Wardle- For the northern region, we have had just over 30 complaints on pronghorn. Other regions are more. Statewide, we have issued 740 deprecation permits and over a thousand vouchers this year.

Kristin Purdy- Thank You.

Covy Jones- That was Mike Wardle, public lands wildlife coordinator.

Kevin McLeod- On the primitive hunt, you said that it needs to go through the process and that you would want to determine whether the public wants it or not. What precipitated this hunt being considered?

Covy Jones- The public said they wanted it.

Kevin McLeod- Ok, so there has been a public input. That was confusing to me.

Covy Jones- This is on its way but not quite there yet. The only way we could try it is to get it in rule and see if it works.

Christopher Hoagstrom- Can you give us more detail on the amount of public wanted it? What is enough to make you want to move on it?

Covy Jones- When we write a plan, we do survey questions and do a random sample of hunters for a specific species. If people show up to the meetings and mention it, it is weighed heavily for us. Its not always a number.

Public Comment

Troy Justensen- Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife- Support of the removal of big horn sheep. Support the primitive weapon.

RAC Comment

Bryce Thurgood- For the record, I voted against scopes a couple of years ago. I like the primitive weapon thing too.

Motion

Motion- Matt Klar- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-5 Big Game and R657-62 Draw Application Rule Amendments as presented.

Second- John Blazzard

Motion Passes- For: 10 Against: 1

Randy Hutchison- The primitive weapon hunt we have it. Removing the scopes from muzzleloaders will create another season and constant non-stop pressure. The muzzleloaders were a huge mistake to put scopes on them. We already have primitive weapon hunts, we don't need to create another special one.

Item 6. Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019

- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator and Regional Wildlife Manager

See RAC Packet

RAC Questions

Mike Laughter- Does private land play into any factor when you are determining age? Specifically, the Meadowville where it is a largely private land unit. When you are adding tags, you are adding to private landowners right?

Covy Jones- It can affect it sometimes.

Bryce Thurgood- On the Morgan south Rich there is a lot of private land. You guys would take that into consideration. In your graphs, you try and go with the public land and not private land. That unit has so much private land. We will never put enough tags on the state WMA.

Jim Christensen- For the Meadowville, the elk over there do spend the majority of time on private land. There is a little bit of public ground they will use. We have some collar data showing where that is. We do know that they will get on public ground during hunts. It is increasing the amount of requests for public hunters to hunt on private land. The majority of the northern region are private land units. In the Morgan South Rich, East Canyon, and Chalk Creek, we just go with the open any bull strategy. The private landowners can go buy a tag. We have pitched that idea to the landowners in the Meadowville unit and they are not receptive to changing.

Mellissa Wood- When you are talking about the new guidelines, you talked about counted. Is that census or statistical analysis?

Covy Jones- It is a helicopter census. It has physically counted them.

Randy Hutchison- On the Henry premium, we are managing to an average of 5 years?

Covy Jones- Yes.

Randy Hutchison- The last 2 years, there have been a steep drop in age there but have increased or kept those permits the same. Is there a concern with that?

Covy Jones- As we see them decrease, you are right, and the biologist brought up this concern. But we are still within the average buck being over 5 years old. We were still at 46% last year. On the Henry Mountains, we are not at the target to say that we would recommend a reduction.

Randy Hutchison- The 25% is not that scary then?

Covy Jones- No, there has been some declines in quality on the Henry's. It is probably more correlated to habitat and nutrition than it is to average age. They had a big fire about 15 years ago and produced an increase in population and antler size.

Bryce Thurgood- On the Cache, there was 2 years on the lower end of the spectrum. There is one year with a bump and this year we are seeing some mortality.

Jim Christensen- With the bad winter 2 years ago and poor survival, we cut permits at that point. We were able to stabilize within objective our buck to doe ratios and showed an increase of 20 bucks per 100 does. We feel like if we stay where we are at, we should still fall within objective post 2019.

Bryce Thurgood- On the Zion, we added the archery hunt. In the recommendations, you took one from the early rifle and one from the late rifle and added 3 on the archery. Do you think we could leave numbers where they are at on the rifle and still add the 3 archery and still be alright?

Covy Jones- It would be within the guidelines to do that, yes.

Public Comment

Troy Justensen- Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife- On the Zion desert sheep, it was our recommendation to stay with last years permit numbers. We agreed that it would not cut down on opportunity on the any weapon. This unit can support it. We recommend leaving permit numbers at 10 and also include the archery. The other concern we have is dealing with sheep on the Wasatch and Vanaquin Nebo. In the past it was separate unit and we bunched them together. We can't fix it this year but supports the divisions recommendations for this year but would like to see those split out. We are not

opposed to the numbers. If we broke those out individually, we could probably have 6 permits, 2 on each. Other than that, we support the divisions recommendations.

Ben Lowder- Utah Archery Association- Tag difference on the Zion. We don't want to see those permits impacted on the rifle hunt. We would like to see those permits stay the same as last year. Aside from that, we support the divisions recommendations as presented.

RAC Comment

Covy Jones- The Zion has an early any weapon hunt and a late any weapon hunt. Those were reduced by one permit each, with the addition of 3 archery permits in another season.

Randy Hutchison- What did the additional permits impact?

Covy Jones- You mean last year?

Randy Hutchison-Yes.

Covy Jones- You can assume, with sheep, that your harvest success with any weapon is almost 100%.

Randy Hutchison- We don't know on the archery?

Covy Jones- No, when we did the archery, we had to make some assumptions. The season dates are tough. We estimated it would be about 50%.

Mike Laughter- Is there not mandatory reporting on sheep?

Covy Jones- Yes, there is. You have to check them in, but we won't know until next year on archery.

John Blazzard- (inaudible comment on cutting down on numbers)

Covy Jones- It is a good recommendation but there is some leeway in the plan. The biologists thought process was not to cut these permits, to add them to archery. He would have cut these 2 permits regardless because when he flew the Zion, he did not see the number of rams he had seen in the past, it had dropped. The Zion has traditionally been managed for quality. Some units we manage for opportunity and some for quality. The recommendation he made was not because of the archery permits, it was just because he had seen fewer rams. Recommendations fall within the guideline of the plan.

Christopher Hoagstrom- With regard to public comments, especially on Zion National Park, do you have any thoughts on that?

Covy Jones- It is accurate. You can't hunt inside the park, so you end up with a lot inside the park.

Aaron Johnson- I like the recommendations on the archery season. I'm glad we finally got them. Thanks for the clarification on the thought of the biologist that he would have increased it anyway. It is right next to a large National Park. I think they could sustain it and give someone the chance to hunt. I like the public recommendation.

Justin Oliver- I agree with what Aaron said.

Motion

Motion- Kevin McLeod- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019 with the addition of keeping the early and late Zion sheep rifle tag numbers the same as 2018 with the addition of 3 archery tags.

Second- Justin Oliver

Motion Passes- Unanimous

Item 7. Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019

- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator and Regional Wildlife Manager

See RAC Packet

Public Questions

Brandon Anderson- I have been hunting on the Cache elk unit for most of my life and it seems like the elk numbers are not at the point to which the population estimate was at. Every year, for the past 2 years, it seems like there is less and less elk. I have to go farther and hunt longer. I am trying to figure out where the increase and population estimates are coming from?

Jim Christensen- We were able to fly that unit this year to be able to find those elk. The Cache unit is a big unit. It goes from I-15 in Box Elder County to the Idaho state line and over to the Wyoming state line. Those elk are spread out across that entire unit. We had excellent survey conditions and were able to find elk across the unit. We felt very comfortable with our population estimates based off our known counts and recommended increases accordingly.

Bryce Thurgood- How many of those elk are back and forth from Idaho on the North Cache?

Jim Christensen- It is hard to say. There are 300-500 elk that could bounce back and forth. Other than the flight this year, we have been putting on GPS collars the last 2 winters. It has been interesting this year, the majority of elk that can jump back and forth between Idaho and Utah, stayed in Utah. There are in there, they are just hiding.

Covy Jones- When you tell me you don't see as many elk, I believe you. One of the things we learned in managing elk is that they change due to pressure and their habits change. They go further or in a different location.

RAC Questions

Mike Laughter- Back to your San Juan increase in doe permits targeting deer in Monticello. Is there a defined boundary that keeps them from hunting deer anywhere other than where they are a problem?

Covy Jones- It is the city limit boundary.

Mike Laughter- They are hunting within city limits?

Covy Jones- Yes, that is the boundary.

Mike Laughter- Thanks for the clarification.

Mellissa Wood- You talked about survey conditions when you went out to fly for elk. Wouldn't you find more if you have better survey conditions? Do you take that into account when you are doing your calculations of what you think the population estimate is?

Jim Christensen- Yes, with the better snow conditions and survey condition, our site ability goes up. We don't have to estimate as many extra on to there. With snow, elk stand out better.

Mellissa Wood- That is factored in to that calculation?

Randy Hutchison- In the Central Unit West Desert, you put that in because you were not managing for elk. So, these are elk that have moved into that area on their own. Is there a conflict with landowners?

Covy Jones- Limited resources and not a population objective. We are not managing for it. A lot of this overlaps the Vernon deer unit and a lot of the state, we have resources for elk and deer. The desert units that are drought and then stack elk on top of deer, it can really hurt the deer.

John Blazzard- When you were talking about the studies of the deer and why you set the doe numbers, do you ever use any genetic analysis in that?

Covy Jones- We haven't looked at that.

John Blazzard- I have a herd of 200-300 on private ground above Kamas and they are getting a little worse looking every year. I wondered if genetics had anything to do with it.

Covy Jones- I'm sure there are areas where that is a possibility.

Public Comment

Troy Justensen- Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife- Support the divisions recommendations with the following exceptions: On the Beaver, stay with 2018 permit numbers on cow.

Greg Pyne- Mountain Top CWMU- Received a text from Ken Clegg stating he attended the Central RAC meeting and was made aware of a concerning issue. DWR is proposing an increase in private doe hunts from 200 to 1,000 in that area. The collared study in Kamas, 8 of 10 collared deer have died this winter. With the winter this year and the drought before it, according to Ken, we will probably see less than a 50% survival rate on adult deer. It is a 400% increase in the amount of does. Ken did a count on my CWMU last year and counted 354 deer or about 20 per section. He predicts this year's count, which we will do in the spring and summer, to be about 10-15 deer per section. They are asking for 2,720 doe permits, and 765 statewide. 800 of those are coming for my area. We are concerned and don't understand the dramatic increase where other areas of the state are a 5-10% increase. We hope we make this decision based on science, not on societies input.

Jim Christensen- This was a recommendation made by Eric Anderson who is not here tonight. I will try and explain his recommendation. Prior to this winter, we did make these recommendations. We were 2,000 deer over objective on that unit. It is a private lands unit and is extremely difficult to get the harvest we need. One of the best ways to have healthy deer herds is to harvest does. We should have been doing it long before now. The high mortality just shows the need for doe harvest. We can either let hunters harvest them or let winter kill them. The other reason for the increase, is that 500 of these permits are private lands only. Therefore, the private landowner can allow someone to access and harvest those deer or he can allow not to. The actual permits going to the public to hunt on public ground is only like 200 permits. The rest are either archery only or archery only and private lands only and the majority are on private lands only.

John Blazzard- Where do these deer on that unit winter? How far do they go?

Jim Christensen- I don't know how to answer that other than I know we get some moving to the Wasatch Front face. As far as the rest of the unit, I am not sure on that.

Randy Wood- He has an archery only permits on the Davis County side. We experience a lot of deer going into the cities. Not only are we 3,000 deer over objective, we do experience quite a bit of depredation. It is some social stuff too that tied in when we made these recommendations. We are over objective. The other social part is that the deer dropping into the cities on the Davis County side.

Bryce Thurgood- A lot of it, similar to when you issued the antlerless elk tags on the private lands only, the landowners control them. You could have 30 killed or you could have 20 killed. The landowners might not let them in.

Justin Oliver- As you talked about the deer on the Wasatch front on the bench, I know there was a lot happening with urban deer transplant and the numbers dropped considerably. Is that for price or a cost purpose. If we increased the doe permits, wouldn't that have helped augment that number to not have so many doe permits. I may have just answered my own question.

Covy Jones- This was something I was hoping not to address tonight but I will. In everything we do, there is risk/reward associated. When we do transplants, the goal is to introduce a new population, augment a struggling population or reestablish a population. There are definitely risks every time you transplant wildlife. As an agency, urban deer transplants are something we are going to move away from in the future. We would still keep the option to transplant deer open if there is a real need to reestablish a population. But to move deer just to move deer, it is pretty dangerous.

RAC Comment

Aaron Johnson- I spend a lot of time in the woods in the winter. I was concerned this year with the deer and elk. Some things like snow are out of our control. I looked at the East Canyon and want to thank the biologist for clearing some questions up. I trust that the biologists are doing the best they can and have made these recommendations within the plan. I am for all of them.

Motion

Motion- John Blazzard- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019 as presented.

Second- Aaron Johnson

Motion Passes- Unanimous

Item 8. R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments

- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

See RAC Packet

Motion

Motion- Mike Laughter- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments as presented.

Second- Justin Oliver

Motion Passes- Unanimous

Item 9. 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations

- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

See RAC Packet

RAC Questions

Justin Oliver- When people apply for these, are the dates on the proclamation set already as they put in for them?

Mike Wardle- Sometimes on the hunt planner, we will have that public hunts are typically held at a certain time. An operator cannot specify. Dates are posted when each hunt is available. The public hunter has the ability to choose in the specified timeframe. We don't specifically state their dates because we want communication between the operator and the public hunter on that.

Justin Oliver- How has that been received as far as comments from public hunters as far as dates?

Mike Wardle- For those who communicate with operators, it works well. For the guy who gets a tag and doesn't think to call the operator until the day before he wants to hunt, it doesn't work as well.

Justin Oliver- Those are the ones we hear about.

Motion

Motion- Mike Laughter- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations as presented.

Second- Kevin McLeod

Motion Passes- Unanimous

Bryce Thurgood- The division is doing a good job and I applaud them.

Item 10. R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments

- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

See RAC Packet

RAC Questions

John Blazzard- The permits I have been getting, I can only allow 2 different names for my permits. Is that still in effect?

Mike Wardle- Are you talking for elk?

John Blazzard- I guess both.

Mike Wardle- You could have 5 different people on those 5 permits in our current rule and that will still be the same.

Motion

Motion- Mike Laughter- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments as presented.

Second- John Blazzard

Motion Passes-Unanimous

Kevin McLeod- I don't know if we can go back on an issue but I made a note here on the bull permits. SFW recommended to stay at a certain number on the Monroe due to some issues with landowner relationships they were working on. I think we skipped over that. I was wanting a little more information on that. Is it proper to go back and clarify or do we have to leave it?

Bryce Thurgood- On the Beaver, that is probably the one you are talking about. I don't see why we can't.

Aaron Johnson- Wildlife Board re-voted after they have voted, several times.

Bryce Thurgood- Just have a separate motion back to item 6. Troy, could you clarify what you are asking for on the Beaver?

Troy Justensen- Basically, on the cow permits on the Beaver, we would like you to keep them at 2018 numbers for the simple fact without more permits, our success rate went down. We are working on a relationship to designate where the cows are harvested. We are fine either way but appreciate you going back to it or address it down the line. I want to say it was 900 permits and last year was 800.

Bryce Thurgood- If you want, we can revisit it, or I can make a note and pass that along to the Wildlife Board letting them know we did not make a motion but had concerns and skipped through it. I can make that note on the side to the Wildlife Board.

Kevin McLeod- We have a lot of information and I made a note and was going to mention it and I didn't.

Mellissa Wood- Couldn't we make a motion that is friendly to our previous motion. I think we could do another motion. Because it does not negate what we already agreed to.

Bryce Thurgood- We have 2 options.

Kevin McLeod- I am satisfied with the option of a note to the board from you as a chair.

Bryce Thurgood- I will do that.

Item 11. R657- 41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments

- Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief

See RAC Packet

Public Questions

Troy Justensen- Sportsman's for Fish and Wildlife- I'm not real comfortable with the paragraph added about employees. The goal of our group is to raise as much money as we possibly can. I don't fully understand what you are trying to accomplish there, and I don't think it is fair.

Justin Shannon- The idea behind that and what we are trying to accomplish is to emphasize that the purpose of the conservation permit program is to generate as much revenue as possible. It is not to find a good deal on a cheap permit. We are just trying to avoid the appearance of any type of wrong doing by having officers get these permits that were intended to raise revenue.

RAC Questions

Kevin McLeod- It does say "unless" the purchased on the 3-year average. It still does allow them to purchase but has to be at that level. Is that what I am reading?

Justin Shannon- Yes, they can purchase a conservation permit. That is not the issue. We are looking at if you had a San Juan bull elk tag that typically goes for \$15,000 hypothetically. If an officer of a conservation organization is going to purchase it, they should purchase it at \$15,000 or above is what we are saying. Troy brings up some good points though. It could be difficult; how do you know what each permit goes for.

Bryce Thurgood- Say they bought it for \$10,000 and the 3-year average is \$15,000. They don't know that during the auction. You either say you pay the \$15,000 or we will re-auction it. It only hurts their group and their rating.

Justin Shannon- The consequence is that it hurts their market share. But, it's more of a perception issue. What we are trying to avoid is an officer in a conservation organization getting these permits are supposed to raise as much revenue as we can. If it turns out they got an awesome deal, people won't like that.

Justin Oliver- He just bought it at the highest bid so that means if he doesn't buy it, it is going for cheaper.

Mike Laughter- You lost your 3-year average.

Justin Oliver- Yes, so he is the highest bidder and doesn't get it, it doesn't make sense if we go ahead and sell it for cheaper. Has that even happened?

Randy Hutchison- No. Every year you hear people complain about this.

Justin Oliver- Define.

Randy Hutchison- This is about perception. If you have an organization in charge of raising money and someone in that organization gets a killer deal on something.

Mike Laughter- It doesn't have to be a killer deal. What he is saying is if it's not the 3-year average. If you do it in front of 400 people and you have witnesses saying you participated in purchasing this tag and it is still not adequate, it questions the integrity of the groups. With the amount of money that has gone through the state through the groups, I have a question about that myself.

Bryce Thurgood- I would agree. How many times has this happened?

Justin Shannon- We didn't go back and quantify it. It is not because it has been a problem. It is just the optics of it.

Bryce Thurgood- There are people that are always going to complain. I would like to see if this has ever happened. If it has never happened, they are complaining about nothing.

Justin Shannon- It has happened, but I could not tell you how many times.

Mike Laughter- Is the perception when someone is bidding for someone else because that happens every week. It is not always the officer of the company that is buying the tag. They could be bidding for someone else.

Justin Shannon- So, you're saying if you have a bidder on the phone?

Mike Laughter- This guy gives you a number, he is not there. You are not officially buying the tag, it is for Joe Blow down the street. Turns out there are only 150 people as opposed to the 250 from last year and gets a better deal. That maybe be the area that you should focus your attention.

Bryce Thurgood- I have seen Troy at a banquet bidding on a tag and I know dang well he is not spending \$70,000 of his own money buying a tag. He is bidding on that tag for someone out of state. I see the perception, but it is still not him. I think this needs a lot of re-working.

Kevin McLeod- Working for government my career, I see exactly why the transparency is important. But what happens to the permit. If they are the highest bidder and it is a smoking deal, if we don't sell it to that high bid, what happens to the permit?

Justin Shannon- It would probably show up in an audit. We audit all these permits. Everyone in the program knows how much we look at this. We don't put provisions in the rule that it would be re-auctioned. In some cases, we would not know until we look at the audit and they may have already hunted by the time we found it.

Mike Laughter- What happens if someone backs out on the permit and you roll it 2 banquets down the road?

Justin Shannon- You can do that.

Mike Laughter- That is what I am saying. There is perception that is not always actually true.

Justin Shannon- This is why we bring these things through public process. If the RAC feels strongly that this is not the route we should go, vote accordingly.

Justin Oliver- It says officer, agent, directors or employees. Is that volunteers or agent or how do you determine?

Justin Shannon- No, it is not a volunteer. It is an officer, like a CEO or agent where their duties are to oversee the conservation permit program. If you are getting paid by that organization. Volunteers, certainly not.

Bryce Thurgood- Last week, I had a friend from Richfield call me that was buying tags for outfitters. He asked if I knew anyone who was going to be at the MDF banquet in Tremonton. I told him to call Mike Laughter. They call these guys to have them bid on these tags. I don't love the idea of that because it is perception that these guys are bidding on tags for themselves but in reality, 99% of the time, they are not.

Justin Shannon- Can you appreciate what we are trying to do.

Bryce Thurgood- I do.

Justin Shannon- We are trying to protect the integrity of the conservation permit program. If we went about it the wrong way, we can put the brakes on it and have discussions down the road on how to do both. How to not put people in a bind. Everything we do has consequences and sometimes they are unintended. We don't want an appearance of wrongdoing. We audit this and look at these things closely. The vibe I am getting is that we missed the mark and that is good feedback.

Bryce Thurgood- I appreciate what you are doing but the unintended consequence is what I am after. I don't think it is fair to some of these organizations.

John Blazzard- In that list of officers, agents, directors and employees, how many are there at a mule deer banquet or SFW banquet? How many are there?

Mike Laughter- Generally, one or two in our case. In a lot of cases the regional director goes to the event. I may attend an even that needs a little extra help or set of hands.

John Blazzard- To avoid the appearance of evil, you only have to talk to two different guys to get someone else to bid those tags, right?

Justin Shannon- This is one of the things we may not have thought through well. I have been to several of the banquets where these permits are being sold and it is true. I don't think the point of this was to tell Mike and Troy and others that they can't bid for someone on the phone. It was more of they can't personally obtain a permit for themselves unless they are willing to pay full market value for it.

Mike Laughter- I get the 3-year average but Troy and I watch the tags go up and down from year to year. It is consistent with what the public in the room that night says but may not be consistent with the 3-year average.

Justin Shannon- You're right. A unit may decrease in quality. It might have been good in 2015-2017 and now it is not as good.

Kristin Purdy- I understand and appreciate the need for transparency on this issue because sometimes there is a lot of discontent once these auctions have happened. The concern I have, as we try to get our arms around it, we really don't have any data. We really can't say that we know this has happened a certain amount of times. Therefore, we are trying to resolve a significant problem that we have our arms around.

Justin Shannon- Sure.

Kristin Purdy- It is different than gathering data on a wildlife population and making a management plan. The intent is good, but extent knowledge of the problem is not there to support the proposal yet.

Randy Hutchison- When we are talking this kind of money, these tags go for a lot of money, there has to be some type of procedure in place. No one in this room works for an organization or company that does not have guidelines in place when it comes to exchanging money or gifts. I'm not saying these are gifts but there has to be something to give the public confidence.

Justin Shannon- This is audited every year. It takes a lot of our time. We have a fiscal section and I see the time they put in to looking through all this. We publish those reports and go through that pretty thoroughly. It has not been a major problem, but the program has been under a lot of scrutiny and we are trying to make sure the optics look right.

Mike Laughter- Where they are a state tag, we have to allow access to that permit. If you are in Wisconsin and can't make it to where the event happens, there is contact information and we encourage that. We have to provide access to the permit. In doing so, you take phone calls.

Justin Shannon- Correct.

Christopher Hoagstrom- I'm not that familiar with these processes but it seems like if the issue is the officer, is there somebody else they could hand the phone to or put them on speaker phone so it is clear that it is not the officer bidding. It seems like there should be a way to do it.

Ben Lowder- Utah Archery Association- Finding volunteers is hard. When we are talking about raising revenue for conservation and our organizations, we want to put these potential bidders in the best hands possible. A lot of times, that is myself or other officers and directors of the organization. I don't want to hand that off to someone I don't trust. I would hate to eliminate the possibility to allow myself or other officers to handle these bids. Also, I don't think the intent here is to not allow an officer to do a phone bid for someone else. As an officer, if I'm helping a phone bidder, I am not the one making the purchase.

Aaron Johnson- That was my point. I think this rule still allows Troy or whoever to bid for somebody. What I think this rule is trying to prohibit is the officers trying to purchase for themselves. That is what we need to decide on. Correct me if I am wrong.

Justin Shannon- That is correct.

Mike Laughter- It's the perception.

Aaron Johnson- I understand that but at these banquets, you don't have a lot of people that end up complaining. It's the perception that maybe this comes out in the report if they see this president or officer got 2 or 3 tags, it may cause some concern. That is my take on it.

Justin Oliver- Would Troy be able to purchase at an MDF banquet or vice versa?

Justin Shannon- They can certainly purchase one but would have to be at 100% of the 3-year average.

Bryce Thurgood- If Mike went to the SFW banquet and purchased it and it was less than the 3-year average, how is that fair?

Justin Shannon- It's not but what we are talking about is the purpose of this is not to find great deals on conservation permits for your own benefit. It is to raise as much money as you can for conservation. If Mike went to Troy's banquet and wanted to bid on this, as an officer of a conservation organization, he would have to pay full market share for it.

Mike Laughter- Doesn't the audit reflect that? It is looked at by everyone and we have to stay compliant to participate in the program. If there are not red flags, if it is just public perception then that is what we need to call it.

Justin Oliver- If we are trying to make as much money as possible and Troy out bids, we are going to sell it for what he paid because of perception. If we are trying to get as much money as possible, we are selling it for cheaper.

Justin Shannon- I understand the argument.

Randy Hutchison- How many conservation organizations are we talking about?

Justin Shannon- There are 6 or 7.

Aaron Johnson- If we accept this, does it go in for 3 years?

Justin Shannon- This rule?

Aaron Johnson- You mentioned a 3-year cycle. If we accept this, do we lock ourselves in for 3 years.

Justin Shannon- The rule would be in place until we decide to revisit the rule. The 3-year cycle is something completely different.

John Blazzard- I agree with your concept and the idea that we need to make things look right. If we come up with a process that makes it look like everything is right and we have the data, they have no complaint. If we have facts, we shouldn't feel bad about that.

Matt Klar- Would it satisfy your desire if this was worded that they had to pay market price unless it was at an auction?

Justin Shannon- That is actually a pretty fair compromise because there could be online auctions. I think if the RAC wanted to make a motion that said, "unless it is presented at a public auction or banquet", I think we would be more comfortable with that.

Mike Laughter- I would too. I think that solves the whole discussion. If it is at a public setting and there are 350 witnesses and that is what it goes for, I think that solves it for me.

Justin Shannon- That is something we could live with as well.

Public Comment

Ben Lowder- Utah Archery Association- Doesn't the current rule require that all these tags are sold at public auction. I thought we made that change recently? Is that not in rule?

Justin Shannon- It's not. We say that they have to be through an online or public auction. It does not all tie it to a public auction.

Ben Lowder- Wouldn't an online auction still be a public auction?

Justin Shannon- I think an online auction is different.

Ben Lowder- Utah Archery Association- Supports the recommendations as presented. If an officer or organization is bidding on a tag and ends up purchasing it for less than the 3-year average, you have made several comments about the point of the program being to get as much money as possible out of these tags. If an officer or employee of an organization is required to meet that 3-year average, it is possible it eliminates them from some of these. If they are bidding on it, they are driving the bid up. If the new rule prevents them from bidding on it, then we are not getting as much as we can on that tag.

Troy Justensen- Sportsman's for Fish and Wildlife- I bought 2 conservation permits in my life. One was a swan tag 15 years ago for \$250 and a bonanza antelope for \$950. I am not in the realm you guys are talking about. I support the divisions recommendations. I have been involved with this program since day 1. To keep it around and make sure we meet public scrutiny, I will give up my opportunity. I know who the perpetrators are so let's punish them and not the individual that work hard. If we can't find a way to satisfy with the divisions after, we would support it.

Kevin Norman- A perfect example of why this would not work is the Henry tag for instance. The 3-year average is \$99,000. This year, at the expo, it went for \$65,000. I was in the meeting when this topic came up. The whole reason this topic is where its at is because of the online auction option. Some groups may not have as many chapters and banquets. If that tag is not advertised properly and sold, it could potentially no sell. The online option presents the issue, it is not the live banquet option. Maybe the wording needs to be rewritten that has to do with the online stuff.

RAC Comment

Matt Klar- I really think it will work if we limit this to say that they have to purchase it for 100% of the average unless it is at a live auction. That means witnesses and it is not something that is deliberately advertised.

Bryce Thurgood- Live public auction. I like that.

Kevin McLeod- Matt, did you say add 100%?

Matt Klar-No, if it is at a live auction, it is the highest bid.

Kevin McLeod- I like that but I don't like the online auction. It is not well advertised. People are notified about public auctions and the banquets but online is just not well enough advertised and available.

Bryce Thurgood- That is a rule we can't do. That is a whole different story for a different day. We are just talking about this.

Justin Shannon-The rule is open now though.

Melissa Wood- Its been about 12 years since I've been at one of these live auctions, so I am not familiar with the issues. Randy, you had some questions and concerns you were addressing. The discussion we are having around the proposal that Matt had, would that address the concerns you have?

Randy Hutchison- I think having something written in place and with Matt's option, I think it is a great option. I agree that something has to be written. I'm not saying anything has been abused but put something down so everyone knows. I think that is a great fix.

Melissa Wood- Perception is an important thing. Sounds like it is a good way to solve that and still allow for highest bidders to provide funding for conservation.

Motion

Motion- Matt Klar- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept R657-41 Conservation and Sportsman's Permit Rule Amendments as presented with the exception if someone from the organization buys the tag at a live public banquet auction, then the purchaser does not have to purchase the tag at the 3-year average price.

Second-Mike Laughter

Discussion on the motion

Randy Hutchison- If it passes, I would recommend this same addendum be brought up. I'm assuming you are making the same presentations.

Justin Shannon- Yes.

Randy Hutchison- I suggest you bring this up to the other groups, so they are aware. It doesn't mean they are going to agree but so they are aware of a potential solution that will make everyone happy.

Justin Shannon- Yes, if it went this way, it is something the division would be fine with.

Kristin Purdy- Was there any discussion at the Central RAC?

Justin Shannon- There were a few questions but not on this topic.

Motion Passes- Unanimous

Motion to adjourn

Meeting Ends-9:00 p.m.

DRAFT

Southeast Regional Advisory Council
John Wesley Powell River History Museum
1765 E. Main
Green River, Utah

April 17, 2019

Motion Summary

No motions were made due to too few members present to make a quorum.

Members Present

Members Absent

Kent Johnson, Vice Chairman · Public at large
Sue Bellagamba · Non-consumptive

Jace Guymon · Public at large
Eric Luke · Sportsmen

Kirk Player · Public at large
Lynn Sitterud · Elected official

Todd Thorne · Public at large

Chris Wood, DWR Regional Supervisor

Trisha Hedin, Chairwoman · Sportsmen

Jeff Christensen · Agriculture

Darrel Mecham · Sportsmen
Darren Olsen · USFS

Helene Taylor · Agriculture

Dana Truman · BLM
Gerrish Willis · Non-consumptive

Total Public in Attendance

9

Others in Attendance

DWR personnel: 14

1) Welcome, RAC Introductions and RAC Procedure

- Kent Johnson, Vice Chairman · Public at large

We're going to get this meeting going. I'd like to welcome everybody out to our Southeast RAC meeting. We have a pretty full agenda so we'll try to move it along as quick as possible. Again, if you wish to make a comment, make sure you fill out one of the cards back there and bring it up to us before the comment period so we can get that and move along as quick as possible. Any questions that you have, please keep them brief. When you come to the microphone, state your name and who you represent. When asking a question, make sure it's just a question, leave comments for the comment period.

The first thing we have is approval of the agenda and the minutes. We don't have a quorum right now so we can't really vote on that. Are there any members of the RAC that had any questions on the agenda or the minutes from the previous meeting?

We can't do a wildlife board update because Trish isn't here and I didn't go. Apologies. Are you ready Chris? We'll now have a regional update from Chris Wood.

2) Approval of Agenda and Minutes

VOTING

No motion was made, because there weren't enough people to make a quorum.

3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update

- Kent Johnson, Vice Chairman · Public at large

No update. Trish was absent and Kent did not attend the board meeting.

4) Regional Update

- Chris Wood, Regional Supervisor

Good evening, I was hoping there was going to be a quorum tonight. I heard back from five RAC members and it is Carbon and Emery spring break so the whole week of school is out and it's Jeep week in Moab. We still might have a quorum if two more people squeeze in. We can't vote on motions and have a formal meeting. If not, we'll just go through the presentations and we'll take general comments or concerns from the RAC to the board meeting without having formal motions. The meeting tonight will still be worthwhile and valuable.

We've had a busy last few months. We last met in December. Thanks for being here tonight. We'll start out with our aquatics section. This time of year, they are doing our spring gill nets. That allows the biologists to go out and put nets out, they come back the next day, pull the nets and it's a good indicator of how that water is doing. Whether we are meeting management goals

or not. So, we pull the nets and take measurements and count the different species that we have so we get a good idea of what kind of fish are in the reservoir, how big they are, what their growth rates are and we can see if we need to make adjustments to stocking rates or to management. So, we invite you to those two events. Scofield will be May 9, 2019 and Joe's Valley will be May 14, 2019. We meet on the boat ramp at about 9:00 A.M. and we pull nets and spend a few hours getting some hands on fish experience. If you're interested in either of those, let me know and I'll get you some more information on that. We've also been helping statewide on different fisheries projects. One has been at Willard Bay with the Walleye spawn.

Our habitat section has been busy as well. We will be doing some burning on our fields at Gordon Creek later in May. We also have a planting day set in April and May. We have a community planting event also. If you are interested in that, let me know and I'll get you Nicole's contact information. The Miller Creek riparian planting project is a really great project. We are working on the uplands with pinion and juniper removal and on the riparian areas with putting in beaver dam analogs or devices that stop the sediment flow and improve the riparian corridor. We're going to keep doing that project with some plantings in that area. That's in Carbon County. On April 27, 2019 we'll have a community shrub planting day. It's on a Saturday. We'll team up with some sportsmen and some dedicated hunters and community volunteers to plant shrubs at our Gordon Creek property in Carbon County. On May 11, 2019 is migratory bird day. We team up with The Nature Conservancy and on the Scott Mathison Preserve in Moab we have a bird day. It's always been a good event and we get a bunch of people there. If you want to attend that event, we do ask that you go on to the event bright website, you type in Moab May 11. The day will pull up and you can sign up for free. Habitat is also working with our wildlife section. This time of year, we do spring utilization surveys and we go out with the wildlife biologist and assess the winter ranges and look at shrub use over the winter and take some measurements.

Our law enforcement section has been going to trainings last week in St. George. They are also preparing for the upcoming boating season at Lake Powell. Our law enforcement section is in charge of Lake Powell and keeping the quagga muscles at Lake Powell and trying to prevent the spread of that. So, we have several full-time personnel dedicated to that project. Each summer we hire 15-20 seasonal's in the region to help prevent the spread of that. So, that requires working with National Parks and the rafting companies and the public, making sure everyone is understanding what AIS compliance looks like and what that entails. Currently, we don't have an officer at the Bullfrog station. We had one last year but he transferred up to the Northern part of the state. We have one in POST training. That officer graduates from POST tomorrow and he'll be at Bullfrog in August. Between now and August, he'll be going around the state getting training from different areas. We're excited to have officer Shirley. If you remember J. Shirley, it is his nephew, I believe. Officer Shirley will be at Bullfrog in August.

Outreach- Morgan Jacobsen left our agency. He went to Boseman, Montana. We are saddened by his departure. He will be doing the same job up there. We've had that position vacant for a few months. We hired his replacement; his name is Aaron Bott. He'll start in about 3-4 weeks from now. He's currently working for the World Wildlife Fund as an adventure guide. He's

really good. We're excited for him to come on board in a few weeks. We had a predator clinic earlier this winter. We had a turkey clinic a few weeks ago and I think our outreach section is gearing up for some more clinics in upcoming weeks and months.

Our wildlife section— We did the bear denning surveys in February. Only one of five females had cubs. There was a set of twins. It was a low recruitment, low birth year, probably due to the drought. Something to note, right now we are currently doing pronghorn classifications on the Nine Mile, San Rafael and Hatch Point areas. We are also doing spring classifications for deer and we're currently doing sage grouse lek counts. Scott, our conservation biologist is doing pinion jay, thrasher and bald eagle surveys. Something else to note in the wildlife section is, we're continuing to work on the Range Creek bison issue. We're going to meet again on April 30 as a committee. With that, I'll take any questions you may have. If you noticed, we have a new uniform. These white shirts are the new RAC and board uniform. If you don't like them, let our director know.

Eric Luke – I have a question, how many people do we need to have to have a quorum?

Kent Johnson – We need seven voting.

Chris Wood – We need eight. There are 14 RAC members so we need at least 50%. We have seven so we need one more.

5) **R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments ACTION**

-Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

Kent Johnson – Questions from the RAC?

Eric Luke – Clarification, Covy— on the last one, if you have a family that puts in and one of the hunters is youth, all of them are considered youth?

Covy – No. All of the group has to be youth. So, if there is one adult, it kicks them out of that.

Eric – One other question If you sham (?) hunt... I believe one of the other RAC's made the proposal to add shotguns and slugs to that. Is that something that...

Covy – We're completely open to that as long as we get to name it and it's not called the sham hunt. I feel like in the spirit of it, adding shotguns to it is not going to change what we're trying to accomplish. In fact, it might add to it. I would ask that you wouldn't define it as just a slug. Let's define it as a shotgun that is capable of taking big game because buckshot is appropriate too.

Todd Thorne – On the youth hunt, is there a number that limits the amount of youth that can be in a group?

Covy – Yes. I think it's four.

Kent Johnson – That's what it says in the rule. I just read it a couple of hours ago.

Questions from the audience

None

Comments from the audience

Troy Justensen, SFW – I'll just comment on a few things. We support the divisions recommendations on this. Speaking to that of the primitive weapon, originally, we are the ones that pushed it through and the idea was to go back to a muzzleloader that's a side lock, type deal to allow some of these hunts in these different areas that aren't being hunted. Such as, the Mancos Mesa. We looked at this possibly here, having a late hunt with a muzzleloader, a primitive weapon to hunt some of these deer that come out of the Book Cliffs and off of the tribe. I sat on this committee, participated in it. I wasn't really fond of what came out from the division but as I've thought about it a little more it grows on me and actually extends the opportunity to more people. So, we support that. Covy, can you go back to the sheep one? This is a very important aspect, I feel. When I had the opportunity to set on committee that put together the statewide sheep plan, this one thing is really what brought agriculture, livestock producers and sportsmen together and agreeing that this not only benefits them and gives them some protection but also gives us as sportsman protection. We wholeheartedly support this. I guess my question to you, Covy, when you showed this slide during the committee, you were having a hard time identifying the bighorn have you done any better at telling which one that is? Ha ha.

Covy Jones – Thanks Troy. I didn't mention that when we came up with this rule, this was difficult to craft. We did send this back out to the committee members again to say, did we capture what you intended as committee members? It was supported by both agriculture producers, sportsmen and the other members of the committee. We appreciate that Troy.

Comments from the RAC

Kent – Are there any comments from the RAC?

Eric Luke – Chris you said we have to have a minimum of 50% but seven is 50% of 14. Do we not count Kent because he's the chair?

Chris – I think you need eight. I did send a text to our rule's person to double check that but she hasn't texted me back yet. I'm hoping to get 100% clarification on that. I think we need eight. We can capture ideas and thoughts and convey that to the board. We've done really well at having a quorum the last three or four years. Five years ago, we had trouble getting a quorum and we had to do a similar thing tonight. Tonight's just a bad week to have a RAC meeting.

Kent – It happens. I do have one comment on the new hunt going back. I think it's a good idea. When I read about it, I thought it was a really good idea. There's a number of other states that do it, not just Arizona. As you get into the mid-west and other states, they do it a lot. A few years back, I hunted Southwest Minnesota and it's not heavily populated but there's a quarter square mile grids all over the mid-west and they hunt that way there. Their hunts are with shotgun, muzzleloader and handguns. It's all traditional, you can't use an AR handgun or stuff like that.

You can't use a Thompson center encore contender and that is for population reasons. I think I like the idea. The reason I wanted to comment and Troy brought it up too, is shotguns. A shotgun with a slug would be a good addition to that. It's not going to give you any advantage per se over someone with a muzzleloader or a high-powered revolver.

Covy – Honestly, Kent I think it's just something we missed. I don't think that change is something that we would... I think it would reach more people and be a good modification.

Todd – This is more of a rule question for Chris. Could a RAC member participate electronically?

Chris – We haven't gone that far yet but it's a suggestion for the future but we can't do it tonight.

Todd – Ok.

Eric Luke – I guess for what good it does, whether we show a motion of whether we support it. Obviously, we can't really vote but does it do any good to let the board know that those who are here how we feel about things?

Chris – Yeah.

Kent – I think so. Should we just take an informal vote?

Chris – Yeah, that's fine.

Kent – Ok. Let's do that without really having a motion. Let's take an informal vote of how many of us here support the divisions recommendations. It appears to be unanimous with everyone here. Should we write that down?

Chris – I think that's good. Summarize that comment and suggestion that was made.

Kent – Basically, in favor of the primitive type weapon season buy adding shotgun with a slug to it.

Kirk – Back to that though. It could be buckshot too. Not just a slug.

Kent – Let's let Chris go through the motion summary from the last wildlife board meeting. He dug that up for us.

3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update INFORMATIONAL – Chris Wood

We had a lot of discussions at the last RAC meeting in December, I thought I'd just summarize what the board did in January because a lot of it came from this region. If you remember it was about bears and the antelope plan here in this region. There was a new rigging rule that the division proposed. It generated a lot of questions and whether it was enforceable or not. I can't remember how the RAC voted, most of the RAC's rejected the divisions proposed new rigging rule and the board did as well. That rigging rule did not go into effect. However, Kevin Albrecht, our Southeastern Region board member did make a motion that passed unanimously. He asked that an action log item be created that would ask that the working group reconvene and explore better solutions for the spring hunt, the number of hounds in the field and the non-resident permit

issues that were brought up at our RAC and other RAC's. That'll happen between now and next December. It's still a hot topic and it will be something we'll try to find some solutions on and some proposals on for upcoming years. I think the discussion that happened in this RAC about the number of hounds and rigging and non-resident issues in the spring hunts, I think that was very valuable.

They accepted the divisions recommendation to increase the permit numbers on the Book Cliffs. The remainder of the black bear recommendations were passed as presented. If you remember we had quite a bit of discussion on the La Sal, South Cisco antelope unit plan. The agency wanted to increase the objective for that number. There was concern that we were increasing it too much. Some of the livestock representatives expressed that concern and they came to the board meeting as well. The board ended up passing five to one, the motion that kept the objective at 375. It didn't increase but it didn't decrease either. It kept it at what it's been historically. That's all I have.

6) Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019 ACTION

- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

RAC Discussion

Kent Johnson – Are there any questions from the RAC?

Eric Luke – I've got a couple of questions. At the first you talked about social versus biological decisions, clarify for me, some of the decisions and the recommendations are made based on social things, is that correct? Or are they all based on biological?

Covy – No, a lot of buck and bull management is social. Here is an example. I think this brings home mostly to ranchers that run cattle, the sportsmen can grasp it as well. If you want to optimize the deer population, you'd probably manage it with the lowest number of bucks you could and still fertilize every doe. If you had room to grow, you would remove as many bucks as you could, still fertilize every doe and grow deer. So, you would run your buck/doe ratio at seven or eight. But what our public has said is that they want more quality on the landscape so that biological threshold is five to seven bucks per 100 does. If you have at least five to seven bucks per 100 does, you fertilize every doe on the landscape. Every doe on the landscape has the ability to throw a fawn then if conditions permit. As you increase the number of bucks on the landscape, you don't contribute to that population. So, that's the biology behind it. Those are the things that we watch. Our public has said, that's ok but we want more quality on our general season units, we want 15-17 bucks post season or 18-20 bucks post season. So, we said, OK. That's where we put that in a management plan and then brought it back through and make recommendations towards that. So, yes, buck and bull recommendations a lot of times are social but they are also in a plan that we are mandated to make recommendations towards.

Eric – OK. In the elk recommendations on the Manti multi season hunts, last year there were 13 resident permits and one non-resident permit for a total of 14. This year there's 13 resident and

two non-resident, increased one non-resident tag. Why does that increase go to a non-resident rather than a resident? I would think that if you had 15 non-resident, then it triggers a change to a non-resident tag but it doesn't make sense to me.

Covy – I understand what you are saying Eric. I'd have to look at that closer. That's a hard one. What I can say is that we increased the overall number of permits and that might have triggered that increase and that's just where it fell as it went down the line. Kent, do you want to explain that?

Kent Hersey – Kent Hersey, big game projects coordinator. What we have is, we give 10% to non-residents. So, when we get 15 that 10% becomes 1.5 when we have that we round up towards the non-residents. Therefore, it goes to two of them to non-resident and 13 to residents. Make sense?

Covy – So, you're at 15 total permits, so it was the next permit that went to non-residents.

Kent Hersey – Any increase after that would be resident until we hit 25 where 10% of that would be 2.5 and that would trigger 22 and 3.

Eric – To me, I was looking at it as it wouldn't trigger until the resident hit 15 but you're taking overall permits.

Covy – The difference is we're looking at overall permits and you were just looking at resident permits.

Kent Hersey – Yeah, we do a percentage of overall. So, we do a 90% to resident, 10% to non-resident. So, if we're at 10 permits it works out perfectly at 9 and 1. After that, it has to be rounding. If we're at 14, that would be 1.4 to non resident but we would round that down to the one and residents get the 13 at that point. Then, once we hit that 15 threshold, anything between 15 and 24 is two non-resident.

Covy – The simple answer is, Eric, yeah, you're right. We were looking at 15 and you were looking at 13. I would mention though that Utah is one of the stingiest states with our non-resident permits. We try to hold that line at 10% and try to take care of our residents.

Kent Johnson – I have a question about Henrys. Your permit recommendations on the Henry's... I had a question of clarification. So, the age classification has to hit 40% before any permit decrease happens.

Covy – Absolutely.

Kent – Ok. That's just in the plan. I just wanted to make sure of that. I was looking at it earlier and noticed that. Age class of the bucks is going down fast there.

Covy – It's gone down and when we hit that trigger, we would make those adjustments.

Kent – Ok. Another question I had was kind of that same thing on the Vernon. The buck to doe ratio is in a steep decline there even though your three-year average still is within speck, we're in a steep decline there.

Covy – Yeah, on the Vernon, I would put more weight in the three-year average than this last year. We had a change in biologist and time and that unit can be a really hard unit to classify. You've got to hit it just right or you buck/doe ratios change quite a bit. A week, it can change.

Kent – So, they are moving off of the adjacent units and stuff. Ok.

Covy – So, as we ended up with changes in biologist and things were going on there, that three-year average I would weight that a lot more.

Eric – On your elk... go to the elk recommendations. I believe it was... maybe it was the deer. It seems like it was the northern region, there were some units that were right at the top. I think it was the age classifications of elk, I think.

Covy – These aren't by region. They are by age class so 4 ½-5.

Eric – Some of them were right at the top and there were increases recommended and others were at the same number but there were no decreases. What triggers that because there seemed to be several that had the same information and variances to whether there were increases or not.

Covy – So, some of that, if they are within... Cache Meadowville for example, if you look at just the last, they are not exceeding. But you could say, well they are right there at the top but then if you look at 2018, it was exceeding. So, the biologist looks at that and says, I've trended 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, I've got the ability of offer some opportunity there even though I'm still at 4.9. So, there is as you saw when I presented that there are guidelines and room for a biologist to also look at what is going on, on the ground and make those recommendations.

Kirk Player – Just out of curiosity why do we have that nanny hunt on Ogden female only goat?

Covy – We recommend hunts in the fall before flights a lot of times and recommend hunt structure then. It's also always nice to have that hunt there and all goat permits are either sex but you're right.

Kirk – Yeah, it just has it listed as Ogden Willard Peak female goat only.

Covy – The hunts are set before the flights so we reevaluate that next year in the fall and make a decision whether or not that's necessary. That's a good question. That's the reason why.

Kirk – You see that and you think, we need to encourage them to take billies not nannies, you know.

Covy – But remember, with goats it's one of those hard things. We use nanny hunts to grow population and recommend those where necessary. The other hunts are either sex and often times... One more thing I should point out is that on the Willard and these other units, there's information that shows that if you manage a mountain goat population below carrying capacity or well below carrying capacity, they tend to have a lot more offspring. They tend to be a lot more productive and Willard is one where we've been able to really issue a lot of permits, keep the population younger, well below carrying capacity, a lot of reproduction, a lot of kids. We've been able to recommend a lot of permits over the years. So, pulling back, maybe letting it grow a bit and then hitting it hard again, that's good with mountain goats. If you let it hit carrying

capacity, the nannies will be older before they start to reproduce and reproduction rates can go way down and populations can be very susceptible to hunting at that point.

Kirk – So, you could actually increase opportunity by cycling it?

Covy – Yeah, or a lot of times if you hit a mountain goat population a little harder with hunters they do better.

Kent – Any other questions from the RAC?

Questions from the public

Troy Justensen, SFW – Covy, there's a lot of concern in the room about the deer on the Manti. Could you get Wade to come up and give us an overview of what he is seeing on the unit and any concerns?

Wade Paskett – So, there is concern with the number of deer on the Southeast Manti. It's not just perception. Eric Luke and I have talked a lot about what we are seeing. We visited, Justin Covy and I and Guy have been up there with Eric and Shane and are aware of the decline in the number of deer on the Southeast Manti, more so than on the West side or the Northeast Manti. We're aware of that and agree that there's something going on there. We have GPS collars on about 40 deer on the Southeast and we have a high mortality from predation and that's something that could possibly be keeping numbers of deer down on the Southeast side. The condition of does when we've captured them and brought them in, and looked at body condition, it's been fair. It doesn't show an indication that habitat is what is limiting it. It's probably a number of factors including predation.

Troy – What is the objective on that unit?

Wade – It's 15-17 bucks/100 does.

Troy – Overall herd objective?

Wade – Herd objective is 38,000.

Troy – We're sitting where?

Wade – 25,000

Kent – Any more questions from the audience?

Comments from the Audience

Troy Justensen, SFW – We support the divisions recommendations with a few exceptions. One of which I want to touch on first, Covy kind of eluded to it and it's dealing with desert bighorns. You guys received it in your RAC packet. Pertaining to the Zion, we're introducing the new archery OIAL hunt there. There are three permits. There's actually a reduction in two any weapon permits. Our recommendation is we believe the unit will sustain it and one of the reasons

why is Zion National Park is right there and has a very high population of sheep. Because of that, I think we need to manage that unit a little differently. We believe it will sustain the number of any weapon permits which last year was 10, and the three archery. We could recommend that the division switch to that and add back those two permits, one on the early rifle and one on the late rifle. Then, pertaining to the Manti, I came from Southern region's RAC last night and we're on a different end of the spectrum. We're talking about the Pine Valley. They are to the point where they have so many bucks down there and that herd is growing that they want to create another tier just to try and protect quality. So, the division actually recommended that we add 300 permits there's a group of sportsmen that got together and came about and recommended to keep it the same. We don't want that increase. Even though what the division was recommending fit within the plan, and the can support it biologically but the interesting thing is the RAC went with public opinion. They said, we've got 15-20 people here, we're going to go and keep that last year's number. My whole point of that is this dealing with the Manti. We know we have a problem there. We're all trying to figure it out but a lot of this is socially. As I talked to my membership that live and hunt here, there's a lot of concern on the Manti. Even though a reduction in buck permits may not matter one way or the other scientifically, it does matter to the public. In just the perception that we're actually trying to do something, we're aware of it, we're concerned with it. So, our recommendation would be that we cut the buck tags by 500 permits from what the division is recommending but also to put together a committee and really try to figure out what is going on, on the South Manti. We have a lot of new technology available to us. We're learning things, like Covy pointed out earlier, we thought all the deer in the Hoop Lake area went into Wyoming, not. They headed towards Brown Park. We're starting to learn things and we're better able to identify what the limiting factors are. Quite honestly, we're going to learn things that sportsmen aren't going to like, houndsmen aren't going to like, producers aren't going to like. But at the end of the day we're going to have to make some tough decisions. So, our recommendation would be to cut those permits and then put together a committee to see what we can do to turn around that South Manti. Thank You.

Brett Behling, Utah Farm Bureau – Farm Bureau supports the recommendations especially on the pronghorn. We just want to thank you for the relief that will offer to some of our farmers and ranchers who are being overrun by a lot of those pronghorn populations that are increasing. All of the permits that you've issued, we respect all the time and dedication that our wildlife biologist put in to these. We want to support them and thank you for taking into account all of our concerns as farmers and ranchers. Thank you, folks.

Shane Thompson, SFW Carbon/Emery Chapter – My big concern is my backyard is the Manti and the deer herd. I know a lot of people get to hear me complain a lot but I really want to go even a little bit farther. I want to challenge everyone in this room, everybody in this community, everybody in this state. It's going to take a combination of everybody to get our deer herd back. It's not one thing. It's not predators doing it, we've got to get our overall population objective up somehow. If we've got to put extra conservation in habitat, guzzlers, studies... I enjoy working with these guys. They are working their butts off. I've got very fortunate to work with them and do their studies and we're learning a lot. But it's everybody, right down to the non-hunters. If we want our deer herd back, we've all got to contribute a little bit of something

and a little bit more extra. Getting that objective back up and that population up, everybody talks about opportunity, everybody's opportunity is expanded by getting it there. Both youth, trophy hunters, whatever you want to call us, that population getting it up there expands our opportunity. So, it's more of a commitment from everybody and sacrifices from everyone. I'm talking, houndsmen- we've got to start taking some more predators. We've got to cut tags and that's part of our contribution as sportsmen. Grazers, you guys kick butt doing the grazing and back in the old days, there was a whole lot more water and people building ponds and doing whatever. We have technology and conservation, make it rain. Let's trap some of this water. I walked through tons of areas that used to carry tons of deer and not see a deer track anymore. We've got to focus on some of these different areas and really contribute more effort to bring our deer herd back. With that, that's kind a challenge or a goal of mine. It's been a goal from 30 years ago... I became a member of this committee and the deer herd back then was better than it is now. For some reason we've got a lot of obstacles and it contributes from everybody. I think working together we can get this done. I really want to see my kids enjoy what I saw as a kid and bring our deer herd back. It's not just the Manti. I'm talking statewide. There are areas that are doing better than others but the Manti, the La Sals, everywhere. The San Rafael Desert is suffering bad. Everywhere we go, we can try to do a little something extra. That's a challenge from me. With that, the rest of the recommendations I agree with Troy Justensen. I appreciate your time, thank you.

Guy Webster – My concern is specifically the Book Cliffs. Somebody that's lived here for 30 years, I spend probably 100 days a year on the Book Cliffs, both the road and roadless watching the elk herd take a substantial tumble. The age objective is only part of that. We've got to look at hunter success and a lot of other things. I'm spending time out there year-round. Shed hunting is way down, that tells you that there's not as many big bulls. Riding, hunting with dogs, we should be bear hunting right now but unfortunately the snow is still to my waist. The spike elk hunt was allowed out there seven years ago. We, for 30 years killed about 250 big bulls. That seems to be what the units, both the road and roadless combined could handle. The latest numbers, we're killing about 400 spikes a year on the unit. 400 spiked, seven years later, what does that do? You can't continue to kill the big bulls at the numbers we're killing. The numbers don't match. It doesn't work. I'd ask you to look at these things and say, you know he talked about if the spike elk gets over 20% success statewide that there's a decrease. The Book Cliffs is 35% success on spike elk hunt. There's no decrease. There're unlimited tags going out there. That 15,000 tags, 14,000 are going to be out there. We're seeing a substantial decrease in big bull tags. Opportunity is gone. When was the last time... you know we brag about a picture of a spike elk only. People are wanting to see big bulls. That's part of the opportunity to experience and stuff. What are we going to tell these people that have been putting in for 20 years and now can't draw a tag? We're seeing a perfect example, that person with max points on a roadless unit this year means nothing if you're a non-resident. The two tags have gone to one. That maximum permit number means nothing. What is our explanation to that guy that's waited 22 years to draw that tag? I have a hunter right now that's in that ballpark. He has no more of a chance than someone putting in for their first year. That's an opportunity that is taken away. We talk about opportunity but that opportunity is gone. I've asked the wildlife board, are there any areas that are under overall herd objective or of the age that we don't allow the spike elk hunt to happen on those

units? Book Cliffs is under herd objective so, why don't we either eliminate the spike hunt or start limiting how many spike hunters go there. I've been told by a person in this room if it means shutting down all the Book Cliffs elk hunt, or 1000 spike elk hunters that's what he intends to do. I have serious heartache with that. Thank You.

Chad Larsen, Representing self and SFW – I'm here mostly for myself but also SFW. I grew up in Emery County hunting the San Rafael Desert for mule deer and the Manti for deer and when I started hunting, I fell in the end of the, "everybody that wanted to hunt could hunt". I got to start hunting all three weapons, not at 12 but at 14 and to this day, I don't know anyone who puts more miles on foot on the San Rafael Desert in deer country and I can tell you it's disgraceful what I've seen in my lifetime. In my desert, it's my desert. It's bad. My recommendation, I ditto what Troy recommended for permit decrease. I know there's a lot of factors but I can tell you that when I'm getting bears on my game cameras on the desert it's... and two to three on every camera on the mountain, I think we have more just an environmental problem. Thank you.

Comments from the RAC

Kent – Do we have comments from the RAC?

Eric – The sheep tags, Troy mentioned those. I know that the intent when that was set up was to add the archery tags and not take away from the rifle tags. I think that's important that we do that because, if we take those tags away from the rifle hunts, we're basically telling those guys that have been putting in for 20 some years that the older guys don't matter anymore. We're saying, we're going to give these other guys that are younger and can hunt with a bow, the opportunity and not you guys. I support that recommendation and Covy talked about the social aspect. I have heard from residents in our community, just a small community. I know of six youth hunters who will not hunt again because of their terrible experience hunting on the Manti unit. One of the six did go to the southern unit, had a good hunt and he told his dad, if I can hunt down South I want to hunt but if I have to hunt the Manti, I have not desire to hunt. Five others will probably never put back in again. They are done hunting. They had such a bad experience that they have given up. To me, that's alarming. We don't want to lose our youth hunters. So, I really... like Troy mentioned maybe cutting 500 tags really does nothing biological but we have heard from the public so strongly this last several years. What are we doing to try to fix our deer herd? We're getting hammered. I have stood up for the division, for the biologists because they do a great job but the general public out there doesn't all see it that way. I really think that cutting the tags is a small sacrifice for all of us. It may not make a huge difference biologically but I know it will make a difference socially. I support that 100%.

Kirk Player – I say ditto to what Eric said. I think that even if it doesn't make a big difference, it shows that something is being done. I also like the idea of a committee to look at it. There is new technology coming out to try and figure out what is going on. It is a multi-factorial thing trying to figure out where we can make a difference and the most bang for the buck as fall as getting them back. It would be a good idea.

Lynn Sitterud – I'll just add one more voice to cutting permits numbers.

Kent – With regard to the sheep, I am in agreement for the same reason that Eric is. It is something that I looked at when I was reading it and that was kind of the way it was sold to the RAC's and the public when we were talking about going to archery hunts for the OIAL, that we were not going to take that out of the already existing pool of tags. It was going to have to be something that was over and above. That is the way it was sold to us in the Southeast RAC and that's the way I understood it was across the board. I think that the division probably ought to stay with that. If we're going to reduce the number of tags in the general pool, if it's a situation where we have to do that in order to have an archery hunt, then we maybe ought to start rethinking whether we want to have an archery hunt yet on that unit. I think SFW does a lot of research and I think their recommendation might be pretty good where the Zion national park can back fill the ones that are taken off of that Zion unit. I agree with them. As far as youth hunting and whether or not opportunity, I've heard an even mix out of kids around here. There's probably more of them frustrated and quit by not getting a tag at all than those that are frustrated and quit by not killing a deer their first year. I think if the kids don't get to go at all, is probably going to be a worse problem than if they go and don't get to kill a deer. That's probably on their dad or whomever is mentoring them to make sure they understand that this is not a video game, you're not going to score every time. Even back when we were kids when there was deer everywhere and you bought your hunting license for \$10 and it had a deer tag attached to it and everybody went and killed a deer. Hunter success was still only around 20%. They need to understand it's not a... I think that's something we need to do as adults and mentors that are helping these youth hunters, maybe help them understand it's not something you're going to score every time. It's not about killing either. That's hard for kids to understand. It's hard to teach them that. I've talked to several kids around here; my oldest son is one of them. He just quit, he said I don't draw a tag and I'm not going anyway; I'm spending my money on other stuff. He fishes and rides his 4-wheeler.

Eric Luke – For clarification from what I said, I agree with you. I have seen kids devastated. You build up their hopes and then they don't draw a tag and that's devastating to them. These kids, it wasn't because they didn't kill a deer, it was because they hunted their butts off and didn't even see a deer or bucks or anything.

Todd Thorne – I will echo what Kent said. As far as cutting it by 500, I think that's a little too much. Last year we reduced it by 200. I think it does need to be reduced but I think 500 is a little too much balancing that opportunity. My thought is, do the same as we did last year, reducing it by 200 still provides some opportunity but then reduces the tags for the unit to help some.

Chris – This will be Trish that reports this to the board, I'm trying to give her an outline of some bullets maybe to say at the board meeting. Help me understand. Add some bullets for this. I've heard for sheep tags that you like the additional archery tags but they shouldn't take away from the rifle allocation. I've heard that this RAC likes to have a committee that would look at the Southeastern Manti and see what we can do to increase deer in that unit. Maybe we agree that there could be some cuts but maybe 500 is too much but maybe similar to last year, maybe cut 200 this year.

Eric – I think the bigger consensus of what the public here is in more favor of 500 permits.

Kent – Maybe in there talk with regard to the sheep permits. Remind the wildlife board and the division in the board meeting of how that was sold to us in the first place.

Chris – That it wouldn't take away from rifle hunters?

Kent – Yeah, that's how the archery hunts for the OIAL were sold to begin with.

Chris – Was there something specific to youth hunters too? I heard preserving opportunities for youth hunters.

Kent – There was some discussion in there back and forth about, mostly dealt with reduction of numbers on the South Manti which was part of that discussion. Whether or not you get to kill deer, see very many, or even get to go at all.

Eric – We are losing youth hunters.

Jace Guymon – This is another bullet point that I think might be good to have is what Guy Webster said about, I don't know of the actual statistical numbers on that but for spike elk on the Book Cliffs, if they are at 35% harvest, and everywhere else if they go above 20% they reduce the tags, look in to some way of maybe narrowing the number that are hunting the Book Cliffs. If it is that high, if they are killing that many spikes it would be good to look into limiting that. It's definitely a problem. I don't know how to summarize that to a bullet point. Look in to statistical data on the number of spikes being harvested on the Book Cliffs, specifically.

Covy – Before you ask us to do that, I just want to let the RAC know that we ran some numbers on the Book Cliffs percent success rate that's going on and the percent of hunters as compared to the population and if we were to do that and allocate permits by unit, it would be quite an increase of spike hunters on the Book Cliffs. Yes, the percent success is higher, overall numbers are lower and if we distributed those statewide, we would put more permits... if we did Book Cliff spike permits by unit it would be a net increase on the Book Cliffs.

Eric – If you did that Covy and they have that much success rate, within a few years you have no elk. Your management plan for the big bulls is completely wiped out.

Covy – There are concerns on the Book Cliffs. The spike elk hunt is probably the least of those. There are more population concerns on the Book Cliffs and things are not status quo on the Book Cliffs. When we talk about the good old days on the Book Cliffs and how it was and what was going on, we've got a committee working on this right now. We've got one of the largest studies we've ever done as an agency and in the West, looking at mule deer, elk, cougar and bear interactions and we're going to get to the bottom of this but we need some time. The issues on the Book Cliffs are probably more related to overall numbers of total animals, including elk, wild horses, wild cows, deer, cattle that are out there. It's bigger than just elk. We've got an increase coming on the buffalo, as we come into that population objective to help manage that.

Eric – When are we going to increase the number of tags on horses?

Covy – Great idea. I guess what I want to make sure the RAC understands and Guy understands too, is that we have concerns on the Book Cliffs. When we went out and caught this last year, pregnancy rates on cow elk was the lowest we've ever seen.

Guy Webster – It's because you're not breeding them. There're not enough bulls to take care of it.

Covy – No, Guy, I'm not going to argue but biologically that's not...

Guy Webster – They're not getting bred.

Covy – I appreciate the...

Guy Webster – I'm out there 100 days a year, I see it, I've done it for 30 years.

Covy – Again, we have concerns on the Book Cliffs too. We're looking into it and we want to work hard to get some good answers out there. But there are a lot of issues on the Book Cliffs. There are a lot of issues on the Manti, Eric and I... that's my backyard too. I agree, I want to work on the Manti. I don't have the hat that says, make the Manti great again but if I did, I'd wear it.

Kent – I don't know if there's a point in taking an informal vote.

Chris – We were told not to do that. I got some notes down, it's great. We are taking detailed minutes like we always do and Trish will read those and convey what's been discussed and from the public too.

Eric – One last comment... It's frustrating for everyone here that we can't even vote and make a difference. Do the job we signed up to do. I know things come up for people but in my mind, this is one of the most important RAC meetings of the year. Here we sit and can't do anything. It's frustrating for me.

Chris – I agree. I've been corresponding with Stacy Coons who schedules these RAC's and board meetings and she said next year they'll make it a point not to do this RAC during this week. We'll switch weeks. We'll do it the previous week. It's just a combination of events. I don't know when we usually have the RAC but Carbon spring break is never a week long. It's the first time ever that it's been a week long. We got caught into that. I don't know if Emery is the same. We usually have Thursday, Friday and Monday off and this year it's Monday-Friday so I think that plays a role.

Kent – The week of Easter is bad time to schedule this meeting, really. Anywhere, not just Southeast.

Chris – Yeah. I would say, talk to Kevin Albrecht, he'll be reading these minutes as well. There are four other RAC's and hopefully some of these issues got addressed as well. Although, this is our backyard. These are our units. I appreciate your concern though.

7) **Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019 ACTION**

- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

RAC Discussion

Kent – Any questions from the RAC?

Eric Luke – That ten permit hunt, that's specifically for the West side of Hwy 10, is that correct?

Covy – Yes, that's correct, specifically the West side.

Eric – But in the buck part of that it's just all one unit?

Covy – Yes.

Eric – I have a question I guess it would have to do with the antlerless but it's a little bit off of the path here. I know Ferron city has opted to do a rural in town doe hunt. Can Wade share a little more information on that? How is it going to happen and play out? Has there been any decisions made?

Wade Paskett – So, Ferron is going through the process but there are certain requirements that the city has to have to be able to enter into the program. They have to have \$100,000 or is it one million dollars worth of insurance. They have to pass an ordinance of no feeding in town. Somebody has to be appointed to run the program and a COR. So, they are going through that process to do that now. We'll set season dates if everything goes through. I know the city wants to do that rather than a public draw hunt in town. They don't want that. So, we would be looking at season lengths somewhere between August 1- October 15 focusing on the town deer that are living there year-round so that the migrating deer aren't taken.

Eric – Will that happen this year?

Wade – It's possible it could happen this year if the city is ready. It's kind of up to the city how fast they move along and they are ready so Casey is working with them.

Jace Guymon – I have a question specifically on the Henry's elk. I go down there every year for 15 years now and the most elk I've ever seen is probably 40. At least 20-25, this year I've seen I think 37 when I counted them. There were five bulls. In a herd like that where it's consistently so small, is there risk of inbreeding affecting the elk and is there any purpose in maintaining them? I hate to ever see a herd slaughtered but what is the point there?

Wade – So, three decades ago or so, there was an agreement made with the BLM and the division to reduce that herd to zero. It's an objective of zero elk on that mountain. The only way to really do that is to have a division removal on there. We've chosen not to do that, to use hunters to maintain those numbers so we use the elk control permits for cows and just the any bull. So, inbreeding yeah, but we're not trying to grow a herd of elk there. Does that answer that?

Jace – Yeah, I've been tempted to go hunt them but I think I'd feel a little weird carrying my bow onto the Henry's.

Wade – You know, we've tried to put 20 cow elk permits in there but it's such a low success it's not fair for hunters to think that they can have a chance at those elk. The guys that harvest are the guys that spend a lot of time out there and know where they are.

Kent – Any other questions? I have a couple. One is still pertaining to elk in general. Is there any studies or data that's been collected on what a bull to cow ratio would look like to keep the herds sustained or growing?

Covy – What I can say is managing elk to bull to cow ratios is almost impossible. They don't lend themselves to that like deer do. Deer come down on winter range and we can see them and count them easily. We know that when we fly elk that the bull/cow ratios that we get aren't great. We know that we miss a lot more bulls than we do cows just because of the terrain that they winter in. Every state that manages on a bull to cow ratio doesn't have a lot of confidence in it. That said, minimum numbers of bulls to breed cows... Justin are you aware of a study that addresses that?

Justin Shannon – Not a specific study.

Covy – Not a specific study but I would love to look into that Kent and get back to you.

Kent – If you would that would be helpful information.

Covy – We know there's always a minimum. I would be shocked if there's any place in the state where we were even close to that because it takes so few males to breed females. It would have to be really low.

Kent – OK, I was curious about that. I have a question about deer. We have conflicts with urban deer, we have conflicts where deer thrive really on private land where they have a ready supply of water and continually cut and mowed alfalfa and corn that's cultivated every year. They get a lot of nutrition and they thrive there. Has the division explored large number transplants of these deer to places where the herds are struggling? And if so, is that something that's going to be looked at rather than killing those deer?

Covy – We have. We've looked at this extensively. We've done it a lot on the Manti, we've done it a lot around the state and the more we've done it the more we realized we've really... as a biologist one of your concerns is you don't want to pick an immediate fix to a problem and pick an eternal problem that's much, much greater. So, whenever you move deer, for example on a lot of the deer that we've moved along the Wasatch Front, we started to find exotic chewing lice. You find it there, it's from a pet or something, then you moved them into rural or urban population somewhere else, that's not good. Another big one is anytime you move, especially, deer you have to take into account other disease concerns. Are you spreading diseases and making things worse? You might be hitting that immediate fix and there are times when I would definitely say that transplanting is important and worth it but there are other times when the disease risk is so much greater that it's not worth it. That immediate fix ends up in long term problems that our kids and grandkids will pay for. CWD is a real concern. So, when we specifically talk about moving deer, we're moving away from that. Justin, do you have anything to add to that?

Justin S. – I'm part of some organizations through the Association of Fish and Wildlife agencies and at our committee meeting that we attend annually, CWD is a topic that comes up quite regularly. What we find is, states are fairly confident that they don't have chronic wasting disease and then they go do a big monitoring effort and it pops up everywhere. It is showing up in counties all over the nation, so one thing that we've looked at is in making our decision to move away from translocation of deer is we don't want to move deer with CDW to a naïve area. We don't want to have long term population impacts while we're trying to solve a short term problem in an urban area. So, we've been open to it as Covy said. We've been aggressive, we've studied it and we've had some successes. We've seen some good things from it. It's just the long term risks don't outweigh the short term benefits you would get by moving it. That's the why behind our decision to move away from it.

Covy – In addition to that, in areas where CWD prevalence is really high, portions on Colorado and Wyoming, they are seeing population level impacts. What I mean by that is, they are getting to the point where they can't grow deer anymore. The populations are declining. CWD is probably responsible. So, they are seeing those impacts and we just don't want to get there. It's hard.

Kent – That leads into my last question. Is CDW responsible for the decline on the deer in the La Sal Mountains? When I look at the map that shows where most deer have been tested positive, it's been in the La Sal Mountains.

Covy – Yeah, it's definitely a hotspot. Our prevalence rates on the La Sals, I believe the last time I look at this, we are estimating between 2%-5%. Higher prevalence than anywhere else in the state, at the same time we are still really low in Utah and have been really fortunate. 2%-5% is not good. You're hitting that point where we probably want to look at some management strategies, some of them have been employed by Colorado that have helped mitigate those factors. But, we're also not 50% which is what some of Wyoming is. Every other deer has it at 50%. So, the answer is I don't think so, yet but it could be moving forward if we don't take some action that would help reduce and maintain the prevalence at a low rate.

Kent – Any other questions from the RAC?

Eric – Covy, in line with that, he mentioned and I've seen these percentages before but I can't remember what they are. I know there's a certain percentage of adult survival where you can not grow deer. There's a range there where you're maintaining and if you're below a certain percentage, you're losing. Do you know what those numbers are?

Covy – So, really rough math. We'll go over it really quick if you want me to. Adult doe survival West wide, it averages 85% and that's what you like to see an adult doe survival at 85%. If you're adult doe survival is at 85% and you come in in the fall at 60 fawns per 100 does, you can lose half of those fawns over that next year and still maintain. If you lose 1%, every 1% you lose an adult doe survival so going from 85% to 84%, 84 to 83. You have to increase three fawns per 100 does on average to then hit that zero. Does that make sense? So, if you come in at 79 or 80, you've got to have 15 more fawns on the ground. So, you can't come in at 60, you've got to come in at 75 fawns per 100 does to hit that. To really grow deer.

Eric – That’s just to maintain?

Covy – To maintain or have the possibility of some growth. You’re right there. So, adult doe survival is really important. We were at 79% statewide. That’s looking at the units we have survival on across the state. So, the drought had more impacts in some areas than others but some areas it was pretty severe.

Questions from the Audience

Kent – Questions from audience?

Troy Justensen, SFW – We support the divisions recommendation. I just wanted to touch one quick thing and I’m preaching to the choir on what Eric said about the importance of having a quorum here. You guys know that. The same things talked about throughout the state, presented everywhere but you guys really lose your voice on pushing issues in your backyard by not having the quorum here. If I present stuff on the Manti in the South, it really had no meaning to most people. It’s absolutely critical. I commend those of you that are here and hope you reach out to your constituents and get them here. Thank You.

Comments from the RAC

Kent – I had one, you might put it in there as a bullet to talk about and maybe even have Kevin or someone bring it up as an action log item with the wildlife board. Look at studying, what the studies were doing with regards of deer, elk, bear, cougar, everything right now to throw in part of that to see what a minimum threshold would be for bulls to cows to maintain or grow the population. With that data, we could find out if we are headed for a cliff with some of our elk populations in the state or not. I think it’s important that we find that out.

8) R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments ACTION

-Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

None

Questions from the Audience

None

Comments from the Audience

None

Comments from the RAC

Kent - I do have one comment. With regard to the change where you would require the operator/landowners within the CWMU to sign a waiver that they won't seek damages from the state for depredation, I kind of like that because the landowners benefit a lot financially from the CWMU. Also, something that's starting to pop up a little bit in Utah is really prevalent in other states, especially in the East and the South, is guides and outfitters leasing private land and exclusive hunting rights on that land. In that rule, I think it would be a good idea to extend that to that situation as well. Where if a landowner has leased out his property for exclusive hunting lease for a guide or an outfitter or even an individual, in order to profit from that arrangement, they shouldn't be seeking redress from the state for depredation as well.

Mike – So, currently our big game depredation code from the legislature directs us to consider that. If any landowners, regardless of a CWMU or not, if they are generating revenue on wildlife that is something that we have to consider when we are giving them mitigation payment or something like that.

Kent – At least we've got a step in the right direction. I like the idea of the waiver just like the CWMU has too. If that's what they want to do, that's their land and they are more than welcome to do that but the wildlife belongs to the state of Utah and the people of the state.

Kirk Player – I agree.

9) 2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations ACTION

- Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

None

Questions from the Audience

None

Comments from the Audience

None

Comments from the RAC

None

10) R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments ACTION

-Mike Wardle, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

RAC Discussion

Kent – Any questions from the RAC?

Todd Thorne – What value do you place on the animals? Is there a chart for that?

Mike – No, I wish there was. A lot of times we are looking at market value which can change. So, we're trying to figure it out we might ask a CWMU what they sold their permits for that is close by. We might look at expo permits. There's a lot of different avenues we use to try and determine that value.

Todd – So, is it the value of permit or value of animal?

Eric – They are one in the same.

Mike – Yeah. It would be the value of the permit. Say a landowner is shooting bulls, the value is obviously going to be much high than if it's cows. In all honesty, 72 hour notices, historically have been an area of conflict but we've really tried to change that narrative into a tool where there are times where it can be very useful. There are times when our staff spend a lot of time trying to go out and remove deer that aren't available to the public that are on private land and when they get to an orchard, the deer is not there. But the landowner saw it yesterday and so there are times when they can be a useful tool.

Questions from the Audience

None

Comments from the Audience

None

Comments from the RAC

None

Kent – Moving on.

11) R657- 41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule Amendments ACTION

-Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief

Kent – Any questions from the RAC?

Kirk Player – Can you go back to the bit about a new group and the market share and explain what that means?

Justin – Sorry, I should have done that. I refer to market share quite often and I... essentially what it means if all the conservation permits hypothetically are worth one million dollars in value and a conservation organization has \$100,000 worth of conservation permits, then their market share is 10%. The way that market share is calculated is you take a conservation permit

say a San Juan elk tag and you look at what it sold for over the previous three-year cycle and you take that average and that's what the value is. So, that's how you get the total value of all the conservation permits and what each organization has, how big their piece of that pie is. Is that helpful?

Kirk – Yeah. So, at first, they get a small amount of the tags and they need to sell them for at least 75% of what they normally sell for?

Justin – Yeah. So, hypothetically right now if a new group came in, and they got .5% was \$20,000 worth of value, then they would select a set amount of conservation permits and when they sell them, the goal is to sell them for more than the three year average that they sold them for in the previous term. If they can't sell them for 75% of what their value was previously, then that's a challenge for us because the goal of the program is to generate as much revenue for conservation that we can with these limited number of tags.

Kirk – I just saw .5% of market share and then maintain 75% of market share. I thought, how are they going to make up 45.5%? But that makes sense.

Justin – I see what you're saying. That's not written very well. It's just once they get their permits... That's actually good feedback. Thank you.

Questions from the Audience

None

Comments from the Audience

None

Comments from the RAC

None

Kent – With that, thanks Justin, we are adjourned.

Chris – Thank you everyone. Our next RAC meeting is in May and it will be our last RAC meeting for Sue and for Darrell so we'll have thank you gifts for them. I should bring cake. Cake next time.

Adjournment

9:18 pm

The next Wildlife Board meeting will take place on May 2, 2019 at 9 a.m. in the Department of Natural Resources Board Room, 1594 W. North Temple, in Salt Lake City.

The next Southeast RAC meeting will take place on May 22, 2019, at 6:30 p.m. at the John Wesley Powell River History Museum, 1765 E. Main, in Green River.

NORTHEASTERN RAC MEETING SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

Utah Wildlife Resources Office

318 N Vernal Avenue, Vernal

April 19, 2019

Welcome and Intro Appreciation

- **WELCOME, RAC INTRODUCTIONS AND RAC PROCEDURES- Randy Dearth**

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

MOTION to approve agenda as presented

Brad Horrocks

Tim Ignacio, second

Passed unanimously

MOTION to approve the minutes from the last RAC meeting.

Brad Horrocks

Natasha Hadden, second

Passed unanimously

- **WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING UPDATE- Randy Dearth**

Mike Fowlkes talked about the respiratory of the sheep on Antelope Island, and it's pretty bad news. For those in the WMA that's a terrible thing that happened there but it'll come back there's no doubt in my mind. I believe there has already been some transplants, is that not the case? (No, not yet..... We're hoping this fall.) They talked about some bison permits that were issued. Some folks didn't want to burn their points for some additional bison permits. Then Pelican Lake was treated and restocking has begun. We talked about that. Then there was the bear recommendations, there was a motion not to accept the Divisions proposal, similar to what Idaho had with no dogs out of the box 30 minutes before daylight or after dark, and that passed unanimous 6-0. There was a motion to accept the Divisions proposal to increase the Bitter Creek unit to an additional nine tags and that passed 6-0. Then there was a motion to keep the Beaver unit tags as is, not the two tag increase that was presented and that passed 5-1. Then there was a motion to accept the rest of the Divisions plan as presented and it passed 6-0. On the antelope recommendation to reduce the proposal for the La Sals/South Cisco went from 700 to 375 tags and that passed 5-1. Then there was a motion to accept the balance of the plan and that passed 6-0. Then they talked a little bit about the bighorn sheep MOU report, as you recall there has to be an update to that every board meeting and the update was they were taking around the different entities for review that had been drafted and approved by some. No signatures as of yet, until pretty much everybody had seen it. There was a very interesting question I thought was very interesting; Stacy Coons our Wildlife Board Coordinator talked about and it was raising some

tilapia which is some type of fish, I thought that was kind of interesting. Any questions or concerns about that update?

- **REGIONAL UPDATE - Boyde Blackwell**

Before I get into that I wanted to give kind of a presentation here. Many of you in the room may know Andrea Merrill. I know everyone along here does. We should know Andrea, she's been one of our most dedicated for eight years she's represented the non-consumptive. That's hard in this region. It's really hard to find somebody that will come and represent the non-consumptive user. And Andrea has been very, very dedicated and we want to present her with this print. I thought she'd like this. She had been real tireless in her work and what she's done for people in the Basin. I could have waited until next time but I wanted to make sure. Totally deserved and she deserves a big hand as well.

I also wanted to touch on a few things today. Last December the Wildlife Board asked the region to take a look at some things that may be going on in the Book Cliffs and asked us to get together with some of the resource users out there. We put together a committee to address this or take a look at it. This committees meetings will be facilitated. We've asked Brett Prevedel down here on our RAC to facilitate these meetings. We're going to have our BLM, Forest Service represented there. We've got a couple of the ranchers out there to be represented, the Ute Tribe, the Mule Deer Foundation, Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife have been invited, RMEF, Sitla will be a part of it. We've also asked a member of our RAC to sit in on what's going on. As I said we'll have a facilitator to make sure that we direct things to that everybody has a say. This isn't going to be a root working group that will have the decision making authority but we're hoping to be able to build a strategic management plan for 5-10 years down the road, see what we can do and what we need to do down there in the Book Cliffs. The landscape has really changed down there over the past 20 years out there. We've got a lot of different species down there now, a lot more than what we had and we need to take a look at it. So that will be done and I will report to the Wildlife Board that we started that the next Board meeting here the 2nd or 3rd of May I believe. Also, our Old Fort Pond, I've talked to you from time to time on that it's going to be opening on June 1st. They've got a lot of landscaping done around there the paths the trails. Natalie has done an excellent job, she's a little upset at the osprey. They seem to be moved a little bit from Steinaker where there's not fish, to a place that we've put fish. Figure that. We're starting to look at that. Our sage grouse lek counts are starting now access has been a problem as you can imagine. So Brian has been working really hard. We may have a big sudden flush of looking for people through the office here that can go up and count legs. Just recently Tonya here held a very successful mountain goat viewing up Rock Creek. We had over 200 people come. It's really exciting to see the interest that these people have in these mountain goats. That's about everything Mr. Chairman. I'll turn the time back to you, unless there are questions.

JC Brewer: That group that is going to be looking at the management of the Book Cliff area, public at large, how do we get input in on that. Do we go through Brett? Or who is our contact person?

Boyde Blackwell: Well, no I wouldn't go through Brett. We're using him as a facilitator. I would come and go through Miles. Miles Hanberg is the committee chair, so get with Miles if you have something. Also if you're wanting updates on the meetings, I'm not sure when the meetings exactly are, our first one is coming up this next week, and it's just to set ground rules and to set the charter and things like that. Miles will be the one you want to get a hold of and he'll keep you updated if you ask him.

JC Brewer: Ok thank you.

Tim Ignacio: I've got a question for you Boyde. Who from the Tribe do you have going?

Boyde Blackwell: I believe they probably went from someone from the Wildlife Department. Our wildlife folks will be there, there will be two from our wildlife, a couple from BLM that are wildlife, and also one of their grazing managers, and I'm not sure from the Forest Service.

Tim Ignacio: You guys might want to get a hold of the council and let them know.

Boyde Blackwell: We could do that. I'll see what the wildlife department wants us to do and we'll go from there.

Tim Ignacio: I'd highly recommend that.

Randy Dearth: Thank you Tim. Let's get kicked off here and talk a little bit about our procedure here. First off we have a proposal by the Division presentation, then we have some questions by the RAC members, then we have questions by the public. At that time if you have any questions please step up to the mic and ask your question and state your name. That is just for questions, if you have any comments please hold those until the comment period. If you'd like to make a comment on it there are some cards that look just like this out on the table out here, please fill one out and get it to the table over here and the sweet ladies will get it over to us. That would be if you want to make any comments on the different action items we are going to talk about tonight. We'll give folks with comments three minutes, and my secretary right here is going to make sure we stay on time tonight. I've been known to let the meetings go on a little too long. So we're going to stay on track tonight. Three minutes to anybody who has a comment. You'll get three minutes to get up and give your comments. Then after the comment period it comes back to the RAC and we discuss it and talk about it and make a motion and vote on it. That is our

procedure. If you don't have one of these and would like one please step out and grab one of those.

- **R657-5 Big Game & R657-62 Draw Applications Rule Amendments-** Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

See slideshow

Questions from the RAC:

Dan Abeyta: Covy did you say that a COR would be issued to a domestic sheep operator prior to going on range?

Covy Jones: Yes absolutely. So it would be prior because the timeliness of these events are most important. So before they go out we would hopefully see an application from them and be able to issue a COR that way when they are out on their allotment it's not after the fact, then there's risk of contact. They could remove the animal then they would let the Division know, hey we took this action. And from our perspective that protects both bighorn sheep and the producer and that's what we wanted to accomplish.

Dan Abeya: Thank you.

Brad Horrocks: Now I've probably heard this answer before, but I don't remember. Now I don't have a problem with that but I'd sure like to see us get a system in place that in some way the sportsman had the opportunity to go out there and shoot that big horn sheep. We've probably discussed it before and I forgot so forgive me if we have. I know it's critical on time and it's hard how you issue these tags out but I want one of those bighorn sheeps as bad as the next guy but I'd sure rather see a sportsman, even if it wasn't me, get this tag and eliminate him out of the draw. And worst case scenario maybe I'm beating this to death but the producer out there maybe have the opportunity for some financial gain. Probably not for him but I would like to see us create some value. There are some opportunities here with those and I had the same kind of comment on the pronghorn. I know its hard but in this day in age with emails and stuff like that I know I would not have heartburn at all if they picked me to get the tag. Getting these into sportsmans hands, youths hands, whatever it may be in this process. Just a comment.

Covy Jones: And I appreciate that Commissioner Horrocks, honestly, the Division is always thinking about that. However, the risk that we've seen both to the producer and the sheep herd, it only takes one. Depending on the strain of the diseases, you don't just lose one animal; on the Stansbury's it was 95% of the herd. On Antelope Island it was the same. So providing the opportunity for one sometimes squashes the opportunity for hundreds. That's what we weigh when we make these decisions.

Tim Ignacio: You take that Willow Creek area. You've got 30 sheep coming in there. What are you going to do, kill them all?

Covy Jones: I think we would evaluate each situation independently, and if we were protecting the majority of the sheep we would have to make a decision on that. It's not all cut and dry, it's not this is how you do it this way, this is how you do it that way. I guess what we're trying to do is protect the majority of bighorn sheep and protect producers. So at that time we'd make that decision.

Dan Abeyta: So the prior part, going back to my original question, I didn't get that from reading the, I guess there's, eight different conditions if/thens plus several sub parts. I didn't get the fact that you guys would be front loading so to speak a COR to an operator.

Covy Jones: That's just more how we administer CORs.

Dan Abeyta: I see, thank you.

Questions by the Public:

Tyrel Abeglean: On your hound hunts you're not going to end up excluding in line muzzleloaders?

Covy Jones: No, we talked about that a lot. We just wanted to reach as many people as we could.

Tyrel Abeglean: I know, what was it, a year and a half ago we implemented, we let the public start putting the magnification on the muzzleloaders. We had a lot of people taking shots that were out of their comfort range that they shouldn't have been taking and wounding animals. That's why we decided to go with the magnification. So what's the difference between having this with the no scopes and having a rifle hunt with no scopes? It's the same thing.

Covy Jones: Yeah. It would definitely limit the effectiveness of the weapon.

Tyrel Abeglean: I mean a lot of people that shoot with the old cap and balls whether it's the flint lock or the caps, in my experience, they are a little more ethical they know their limit. I think it would be in the states best interest to exclude the inlines.

Tony Jenny: I just want to add on to what this man said about the inlines. We like the cap and ball, sidelocks, not the inlines for this hunt.

Comments by the RAC:

Brett Prevedel: I have a comment regarding Dans topic with the pre-approved CORs. If its case by case, I think it's pretty tough to pre-authorize a COR and I would think it would be a much better situation to rush one through in 24 hours or whatever it may be or have some type of procedure in place rather than, I mean I'm not saying they'll do anything but you're basically sending out a land owner with a sheep tag if they have a herd of sheep.

Randy Dearth: Yeah I guess Covy just follow up on that. When the sheep committee looked at this and followed up with this and approached the Wildlife Board in January with it, was the COR discussed at that time?

Covy Jones: What was discussed was we got a strategy and a plan and we needed a legal method to allow for it. Just because something is in a plan it has to be legal. We worked through this with the attorneys with the producers and tried to find a spot where everyone felt comfortable. In 24 hours, maybe I can go back to the slide, 24 hours is after they remove an animal, not before. A lot of these producers are in areas where there is no cell phone service, no way to communicate. If the sheep is in there today we, the Division, get a call within 24 hours, and then we spend two weeks chasing sheep across the west desert and never see the sheep again. So the timeliness of the removal is the most important. Personally I was the wildlife manager in the central region and this happened several times. I spent weeks riding across the west desert talking to every sheep producer asking them if they'd seen him again and they'd say "Yeah he was here two nights ago, haven't seen him since" so this is something that they can really help us.

Randy Dearth: So if I understand right the producers that have a potential, when they are in an area where there is a potential conflict then they will do the COR.

Covy Jones: We as well are concerned about the risk, so that's where we can evaluate it and say ok you're allotment is here, we're concerned, you're concerned, we'll issue the COR.

Randy Dearth: So this rule amendment tonight it just kinda makes it legal what was already discussed.

Covy Jones: Yes.

Comments from the Public:

Chris Carling: I'm supporting SFW. SFW supports the Divisions recommendations on this subject as presented. We strongly support allowing livestock producers the ability to remove

these bighorn sheep immediately as been presented. We understand and recognize how sensitive the species is and what a huge difference one animal can make for, as its been mentioned, all those sheep hunters that might be interested so again we want to emphasize how strongly we support that movement. Also do also support the ham hunts that increase opportunity for hunters, we appreciate the Division for their work on that. Thank you.

Randy Dearth: The sheep committee was made up of different sportsmans groups and producers and agricultural folks and they all came together and it's one of the few times that they've come together, everyone shook hands and they said this is the best we can do and they were proud of it.

Everybody made that. I think it was a big deal for everybody to work together as well as they did. I appreciate that.

Tim Ignacio: Mr Chair can I ask Chris a question? We're talking about sheep that are, I totally see where you guys are coming from. But when you've got a situation like in the Willow Creek area where you've got 30 sheep staying there, you're ok with going in and wiping them all out?

Chris Carling: We would first of all default to the biologist in the region. We support them in their efforts. We know those decisions are hard to make and we said we know they need to be evaluated on a one by one situation. We will default to the biologist everytime in a pinch when that occurs. So yes is the short answer.

Comments from the RAC:

Andrea Merrill: So it just looks like to me too with this thing with the bighorn sheep that a producer kills a sheep they don't get to keep the head so it's not really a hunting opportunity, their main concern there is they are removing the threat of a wild sheep getting in with their domestic sheep.

Randy Dearth: And if I understand right the wild sheep isn't a threat at all to their sheep, it's the other way around their livelihood being kicked out of their grazing allotments and what not because of the interaction that might occur there.

Covy Jones: That's correct Randy it's not a threat to their sheep, it's a threat to their livelihood and it's a threat to our wild bighorn. So that's why it's mutually beneficial.

Rebekah Jones: Did you say that you had to document it in some way? So do they take a picture or what's the best way to go about documenting it, that the bighorn sheep are mingling with the domestic sheep?

Covy Jones: So we have this with mountain lions already and every time this happens we conduct an investigation. We send law enforcement out and see where the domestic sheep are where the bighorn was. It's pretty stringent. Everytime this happens as an event, and I assume it will be rare, but everytime it has happened we conduct a full investigation making sure they are within the rule. When they apply for the COR we'll send them the criteria under which it will qualify. Just like when you go and hunt, they will be responsible to make sure they are within that criteria.

Ritchie Anderson: I did have a little input, very little, in the sheep management plan. I believe it's the best plan, I think it's a good plan for the protection of the producer as well as the bighorn sheep. I really think it's one of the best worded management plans in the nation that accomplishes both goals. There's no profit for the producer in taking the sheep, but really the producer can become a management arm of the Division in helping protect those bighorns sheep from disease.

Daniel Davis: So at the beginning of the slide vs. what we've seen at the beginning about the weapons. It says no scopes does that apply to every method?

Covy Jones: Yes, so no scopes on handguns, no scopes on muzzleloaders, and if you have a scope on your bow, pull it off.

Daniel Davis: Which violates the rule anyway.

Covy Jones: Yeah, so no scopes. That's the main difference. It's iron sights.

Daniel Davis: So with that said I'd like to support what's been brought up today. With the handgun method and the archery method you're limited range is about 100 yards vs. reaching several hundred with a muzzleloader. So I think with the opportunity that is provided with this hand hunts, back to the what we looked at last fall, the smooth bore, the patch and ball would keep that range of mobility limited to the ability of the firearm used. And keep it more consistent across all weapon class. So I support what's been brought up by the public tonight.

On the ham hunts are you looking at specific seasons where it would make it better range?

Covy Jones: Yeah this is just the very first step getting something in a rule, after this we are rewriting the mule deer management plan right now. It might make it as a strategy in there but we haven't come that far yet.

MOTION to accept the rule amendment changes as presented.

Dan Abeyta

**Ritchie Anderson, second
Passed 8-2**

- **Bucks, Bulls, and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2019-** Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

See Slideshow

Randy Dearth: Could you go back to your slide on the southeast region deer limited entry?

Covy Jones: I don't break that one down by region, I do on general season.

Randy Dearth: Maybe it's the general season. You raised it, yeah that one the nine mile. You raised that one 100 tags but it looks to me a 26.7 year average on that.

Covy Jones: That's another one that we could throw a thousand more permits at that, three thousand more permits at that and it's one of the areas in the state where all the deer habitat is private. So the number of permits doesn't help us manage; it won't change that number, it won't go down. So we are trying to provide as much opportunity as possible. We're hoping in this next statewide deer plan we can address some of the private property issues a little more. This current deer plan was great, the one written in 2013, the one thing we don't address is how we manage our buck/doe ratios when it involves private property.

Randy Dearth: Thank you, that's the question I had.

Questions from the Public:

Tyrel Abeglean: I'm going to touch on your comment with the increase. What would happen if the Division were to divide that unit right down nine mile canyon? That way we have the anthro side of it that's the private where your buck/doe ratio is, you're overall population is way low, a lot lower than it is on the south side of the river, the creek. The elk are managed that way and you allow 5 times the...

Derek Ewell: I guess part of the reason we haven't discussed splitting it is because the buck/doe ratio even on the public side is super high too.

Tyrel Abeglean: It's a lot easier to get to your buck/doe ratio when your population is low. There ain't the bucks out there there used to be, there ain't. So there's not the quality or the quantity.

Derek Ewell: When he went over how we managed these populations it's based on the ratio. So the ratio is high there. There may not be a ton of deer, but the ratio is high. Actually on the anthro the population is increasing. We've been seeing it through our modeling and surveys we do that it is increasing. As far as splitting it, it is a possibility but the anthro would be such a small unit if you did split it off.

Tyrel Abeglean: The people that are out there we've talked it over and talked it over and right down the canyon would even it out north to south.

Derek Ewell: We'll talk it out when we make the statewide plan.

Blake Bess: I've got a question on the San Juan Elk Ridge deer unit, their objective is 5,600 and in 17 their population was down to 800, it went down 50 more in 18 to 750 and you guys are adding on an additional four permits, what's the reasoning why?

Covy Jones: Well I can give you the rationale behind additional buck permits and that is, Derek touched on this, buck permits and populations are completely separate. You're managing to a buck/doe ratio, yeah, if we're not at our population objective we'll work to get there. Having more bucks on the landscape doesn't get you closer to a population objective. In fact it can hinder you in growth. So rationale behind the recommendation is we are exceeding our buck/doe ratio, we have the ability to provide that opportunity and not impact that pollution negatively, so we're making the recommendation.

Blake Bess: And also we need some clarification on the bison additional permits on the Book Cliffs. They are adding like 53 or something additional permits. Some reasoning why?

Clint Sampson: Bison, great question, great time to ask that question right now. We actually just got off the helicopter about an hour ago and wrapping our counts in the Book Cliffs for bison and we're finding some strong, strong population numbers. I'm sure Tim can account to this too. We are having great success with the bison in the Book Cliffs. Our population objective is 450 adults and we just counted 420 adults on our flight. Majority of those are in the roadless area, but there are several herds scattered out through the Bitter Creek area as well. Last year we increased cow tags well before we even came close to our objective, and basically some of the reasoning behind that is we have an extremely high bull/cow ratio out in the Book Cliffs as well. We're getting anywhere from around 70-80 bulls per 100 cows so our bull count is always very high so there is great opportunity to move people through and create opportunity there. We do have high production compared to the Henry Mountain herd. We're finding that we have around close to 50 calves to 100 cows so were right around 43-45 calves to 100 cows, so we're having good production. So we're basically just trying to stay on top of it so we don't have this monster get away from us. The big challenge ahead of us is going to be how to harvest those bison in the

roadless area without pushing them back to the tribe or completely off the unit like we already have issues with that now.

Tim Ignacio: Push them back to us, we'll take them back.

Dan Abeyta: Clint what is the objective for bull/cow ratio?

Clint Sampson: Usually on these once in a lifetime units were around 50, I think that's what's in the plan. It's about 50 bulls to 100 cows.

Dan Abeyta: You're saying it's at about 70?

Clint Sampson: Yeah 70-80 and a lot of that is pre season, before we start harvesting the bulls. After words we're a lot closer to 60 somewhere in there.

Randy Dearth: You didn't even mention the amount of feed out there for all the mouths we have to feed.

Clint Sampson: And that's a thing too, staying on top of all these bison will hopefully help put everything else in balance. It's kind of like wrestling an octopus. You get a couple arms you think you're doing well and all of a sudden he takes a shot.

Questions from the RAC:

Daniel Davis: Covy how many units in the state have a higher spike bull harvest than limited entry harvest.

Clint Sampson: In the Book Cliffs?

Daniel Davis: No state wide.

Covy Jones: We could get that information. I ran some rough numbers this past year in the Book Cliffs hunt success was 16%...

Randall Thacker: When we combine all the hunts across it was 16 for the any weapon hunt but the muzzleloader was a little higher for some reason so it brought it up to 19 almost last year.

Covy Jones: It's proportioned to the population though. One of the ideas that floated around was let's allocate spike permits along with population, made a pretty good increase on the Book Cliffs. Lot of spike hunters out there and compared to the Wasatch and Manti and some of these

other big units and their populations there's a lot more. The more hunters we put on elk, the less successful you usually are. Do you want the exact number Daniel? We can give those to you. We can give them to you after or do you want them now?

Daniel Davis: No, after is fine.

Tony Jenny: You mentioned you're fighting between quality of hunt and the opportunity. My question is we have limited entry hunt, why don't we have a management hunt with the limited entry, keep the number of tags the same, but a portion of those tags go to a management hunt so we can get rid of the runts in the group. We manage, biologist manage for the best of the best so why don't we do that with our deer herds? I don't understand that.

Covy Jones: I think that in theory that actually sounds like a really good idea. It doesn't shake out that way in reality and you'll notice that when I talked about management buck hunts on our premium limited entry units it's not to change genetics because we're only getting the bucks at that point we don't have anything controlling the genes, the does or anything like that. It just doesn't work that way. The other problem with that, and there's a couple, whenever you have a management hunt you've got to draw a line in the sand. We've drawn it at one inch. If a horn has a sticker off its horn of one inch or more, you've got to take it away and write them a ticket. If it's one inch or less let them go. Our COs have to walk that line pretty hard. And I'll tell you that the officers that have done it on the Henry's and some other units it's pretty hard. You're taking away a little girls deer that has a sticker that's an inch and a quarter. She's bawling, you're writing a ticket. If you let it go, if you let that go, pretty soon an inch and quarter is ok and everybody is shooting an inch and a quarter. Then an inch and a half ok, and everybody is shooting an inch and a half, then two is ok then three is ok. So when you draw the line you have to walk it. The other reason we don't is because we are able to meet our management objective on bucks with all the permits that we issue. On the Henry's and the Paunsaugunt we can't do that. On our other regular limited entry we can meet that so what we would be doing essentially is issuing the same number of permits but dictating to half of those people the buck they have to shoot. It wouldn't increase permits. If it would increase permits and opportunity, I think it would be something we would really look into. But since we are meeting our management objectives currently just doesn't add.

Randy Dearth: On the Paunsaugunt and the Henry's are the only premium areas and they are the only ones that the deer management plan allows the management bucks in.

Covy Jones: That is correct and the reason why is that it's so few permits that it's manageable. But when you expand that, and again it happens every year, a high percentage of management bucks are given to youth and elderly they get 20% on both ends, and when we give those permits

to those groups that have the hardest time distinguishing between an antler we end up taking away deer. And it's heartbreaking.

Randy Dearth: Right now the deer plan is being revised. Now would be the time to change that if you wanted to, but previous to that you couldn't do that because the plan doesn't allow you to anyway.

Covy Jones: That's correct it's not in the plan.

Jamie Arrive: I have a question on your south slope yellowstone permits you're increasing. Deer permits you're increasing by 150. What hunts are those going to be increased on, or is it just going to be throughout or?

Randall Thacker: Good question Jamie. There is a formula already set out, a percentage of how many will go to each hunt. Basically how those are broken out. I'll get that for you tonight, I'll send that over to you so you can figure out everything. You're trying to figure out permits, right? The majority of those are 60, I'm just going off the top of my head, 60/20/20 correct? So 60 will go to the any weapon hunt, 20% are going to go to the muzzleloader hunt, 20% will go to the archery hunt. That's how all of our general season hunts are pretty much worked out unless there is an exception like the SS Vernal has a different percentage, but all the others work that way.

Comments from the Public:

The comment I have is you said there would be no difference if we had the management hunt. I beg to differ with you. Any of you have cattle? You try to breed for a certain animal and if you just allow everybody to just shoot anything, they are just going to go for the biggest buck. You get all the four points, now they are three points. The little bucks the yearling bucks out in the Book Cliffs right now, a lot of them are little spikes, you didn't see spikes out there 20-30 years ago. You only saw a bunch of two points. And by us shooting, us hunters, shooting the biggest bucks, the biggest bucks are the three points. And if we don't try the management hunt I think we are shooting ourselves in the foot. We're making a smaller and lesser quality animal out there to hunt. I think we need to try a management hunt. As far as a one inch sticker, I say have some heart, let the little girl go for crying out loud. If I shoot it, nail me, but if a little girl shoots it, or an old man that can't see, I'm getting there but not quite, the same there. Have some heart.

Kent Olsen: I'm kind of a concerned citizen, sportsman, but I'm also with the farm bureau of Duchesne County. I would like to ask what is the purpose of the extended archery deer season? On the farm ground in the fall?

Randall Thacker: When it was originally created the extended archery hunt was designed to create an opportunity to remove some of those agricultural deer and elk that were in that zone. It's morphed over the years and it's basically a sportsmans opportunity that removing any of those low elevation animals. Few antlerless animals are being removed in that hunt, very few. So it's turned more into a sportsmans opportunity more, there's been pushes before to do away with it and change it but we've had a lot of push back from sportsman that love that hunt. There's some history there too.

Kent Olsen: My concern is hunting bucks after the first of November in that extended archery. I want to report that last fall when I put my cows in my field, my bottom field after I took my hay, I had three dead does in my field. I believe the archery hunters got away, compounds go right through them and they don't find them. I would like, they used to have a muzzleloader hunt two days after rifle season, and the Utah archer president showed up to all the meetings and they got rid of that because they were killing trophy deer with their muzzleloaders. If they are going to hunt bucks after the first of November, even the Ute Tribe doesn't, I don't know if they've changed that the past couple of years or not, but they have the first of November the last day to hunt buck deer. If they are going to hunt bucks after the first of November, I'd like to help them with my muzzleloader. That's kind of my recommendation tonight.

Randy Dearth: Thank you Kent.

Blake Bess: Concerned sportsman, I'd like to address the RAC tonight about a few different items. Back a few months ago in the RAC we talked about the spike elk hunt in the Book Cliffs. Well this is the RAC where we need to stand up and put some limitations on that spike hunt. We all know that the herd isn't doing good out there, it's time something gets done. Also on the SS Yellowstone, I don't believe we need to add permits up there, we had a hard winter here in the Basin as we all know, there's deer laying everywhere from winter kill. Also on that San Juan/Elk Ridge I disagree with the Division adding four additional permits. The herd is down to 750 a decrease of 50 from '17 of 800. Their objective is 5,600 they ain't ever going to get to that objective increasing permits, I don't believe so. Another item, the Book Cliffs deer herd. We aren't doing anything to help it. 2017 we were at 7,100 deer, '18 we're down to 5,500 deer. Bout time somethin gets done. Add an additional 22 permits on the Book Cliffs if I recall. Also on the Book Cliffs bison herd on the Divisions website to get statistics of kill rates in '18 there was, this is hunters choice, there was 25 permits 100% kill rate. '17 12 permits 91% kill rate. '16 12 100%. '15 6 100%. '14 3 100%. They are taking those animals, if we issue 53 additional permits they are most likely going to take 50 of them out of the herd. We need to do some serious thinkin tonight and set things straight. Thank you.

Randy Dearth: Thank you Blake.

Chris Carling: SFW once again. We support the Divisions recommendations as presented tonight with a few exceptions. Number one the Zion desert sheep unit we would like those permit numbers the same as last year which I believe is ten. The reason being is we think that the unit can handle that, that borders the Zion National Park where there's a lot of sheep, healthy population and as that population continues to grow those sheep will naturally migrate onto public land where they can be accessed and hunted. We do support the new additional three archery permits, it's exciting for sportsmen in our membership. Also on the Manti general season deer we'd like to see those permits numbers reduced by 500. We've got some pretty serious members that are very active in the field, they live in that unit they've grown up on it they see the situation with the deer and the problems that they've been facing. They are relentless on their recommendations and we would like to see the deer numbers on that unit reduced. I'm sorry the deer permit numbers reduced by about 500. It would do a lot for us socially as an organization and interested parties. It may or may not make biological sense but that's our recommendation. For social reasons if nothing else. Also on the Avintaquin Sheep unit in 2020 we'd like to recommend that the Division close that unit due to very low sheep numbers caused by a recent die off and that's been discussed at other RACs I do believe. Thank you.

Randy Dearth: Thank you Chris. That's all the cards I have on this topic. We'll turn it back to the RAC for discussion. Let's talk about the extended archery hunt first, with a possible muzzleloader hunt here in the Basin. Any comments?

Brad Horrocks: You're kind of meaning on Kents recommendations or thoughts on having a muzzleloader.. If we're going to go ahead and have the archery hunt I think it ends right now the end of November and go ahead and extend that up to the muzzleloaders? Is that correct Ken?

Randy Dearth: The topic tonight is actually tag numbers, it's not actually strategies

Kent Olsen: My recommendation is not to hunt deer after the first of November. My field is not full of buck deer, it's full of does. It's the does what there cussing about, not the bucks, the bucks show up months of rut season. The reservation is three miles north of my place, I'm west of the sundance grounds that's where they're coming from. That's where the does come from and that's where the bucks. I had a four point in my field in the rut and I had another one, they aren't there all summer. They go out when the does are in the rut. I would like to just see them stop hunting buck deer after the first of November. There are some good bucks that show up. If you go two miles north of Neola store and two miles west you can look at them on both sides of the road. Down in there chasing those does. I'd just like to see them, I'm not really after muzzleloader season, I'd just like to see.. If they're going to hunt them I hunt with a muzzleloader. I went to the muzzleloader when everything got so congested and there's so many hunters on the forest and so many archery hunters, my wife was hunting and my kids where hunting and they show up on every hunt; I waited until the muzzleloader and here they show up again that's back when the

muzzleloader was the last hunt of the year two days after. I just recommended that you quit hunting buck deer after the 1st of November.

Boyde Blackwell: Ken can you come back and do that again in November for that RAC meeting? That's when we talk about hunt strategies, dates, and those types of things. This one here we discuss permits.

Kent Olsen: I'm assigned to this meeting from the Farm Bureau. I apologize for being late, I wrote it down on my calendar for 6:30, and I guess it got changed, I didn't know it was at 5:30 tonight. I would love to come back. I feel pretty strong about this, probably because the muzzleloader season before was in the rut. Well it wasn't in the rut, it was 9-10 days after rifle deer season. This goes clear until January 31st. I think it's the main reason why they are buying these archery deer tags. They are waiting for November 1st.

Daniel Davis: Also if you get with your biologist and talk with him about this they will keep track of it so when it comes up in the fall they will keep those considerations in mind. That's also why we asked the Division to establish a primitive weapon style opportunity is to provide a cooperative hunt where everybody can do that. Just a little insight.

Brett Prevedel: What usually happens, the extended archery was meant to protect agricultural land and to harvest does and it's now a trophy hunt opportunity and people line up in the fall trying to get it extended further north of your house. Because that's the argument that we hear so it's important that you be here. They'd not only like it, they want it moved north so when the forest deer start moving they have more of an opportunity.

Boyde Blackwell: It puts a lot of pressure on our law enforcement.

Brett Prevedel: It was never intended to be but it's a huge issue on the Wasatch Front above SLC.

Randy Dearth: Actually Boyde asked this about Blakes comment on the spike hunt on the Book Cliffs. Is that a similar topic of strategies?

Boyde Blackwell: Yes.

Randy Dearth: Cause we're not actually, the question isn't about the amount of numbers... to reduce the numbers?

Boyde Blackwell: To reduce permit numbers?

Randy Dearth: You're talking about reducing permit numbers, not eliminating it, just reducing permit numbers?

Right.

Randy Dearth: Randall, is that an option?

Daniel Davis: No that would come from a management perspective that happens in November. We'd have to reduce numbers by unit. If we reduce numbers now it would be a statewide reduction that wouldn't discourage anybody from going to the Book Cliffs.

Randy Dearth: You might be right, but I think November is the meeting you want to be at to talk about that particular thing.

Brett Prevedel: I think we talked about whether to hold the spike hunt in the Book Cliffs or not there was the motion to remove the Book Cliffs from the spike hunting area. We voted on that issue and the Wildlife Board addressed it further and we weren't discussing numbers we were discussing permits because it is a statewide hunt whether to have it or not in certain areas so that was addressed and so the numbers issue is statewide so you can't very well manage the Book Cliff numbers, it's either we have a spike hunt or we don't because it's a statewide hunt.

Daniel Davis: And for a little more clarification the Monroe used to be exempted from the rifle spike elk and that's also the same time they brought that back into the rifle any weapon spike hunt. So to remove a unit from that or manage a unit specifically that's the time we have to do it.

Randy Dearth: How about the topic of the additional tags in the Book Cliffs. Let's talk about that.

Brett Prevedel: I'll make a general comment. The reason we have the Book Cliffs planning initiative going on the population objective is going down in deer, it's probably never going to get there in elk of what the objective is because they aren't producing at the level to reach that and something's going on and the assumption is maybe there are too many mouths to feed, the consumption of the resources. So the bison, wild horses, everything might just be stacked on top of each other, you're concern is very accurate and valid but limiting permits might just be adding to the problem by leaving more mouths out there. We don't know but that's what we are trying to look into. Because it's not just the deer that are suffering in the Book Cliffs.

Randy Dearth: There is a real problem out there and that's why the Wildlife Board said we want to look at it to figure out what's going on so we can get it resolved. It's going to take some years to do it.

Covy Jones: Mr. Chair, can I mention, we know there is a problem out there we care. We want to fix this too. When we talk about the adult doe survival out there. That's a problem. When we talk about cow elk. We went and caught cow elk out there this winter. We expect the cow pregnancy rate to be in the low 90's high 80's. When it came in at 50% that was alarming. We're not hiding our heads in the sand, we know there are problems in the Book Cliffs. We also know that the one thing that is probably contributing to the problem is too many mouths on the mountain. Not too few. So it's this interesting concept of loving wildlife to death. You love it so you don't want to see more permits issued cause you really care. But at times you have to step back reevaluate and say do we have the appropriate number under these current conditions? What can we change and what do we need to change and how do we make habitat better to increase the number of animals we can carry but also how do we get the appropriate number of animals for healthy populations. It's really really hard, we know that it's difficult. We know that we have a lot of issues out there. But we're working on it. We're going to make progress.

Tim Ignacio: Mr. Chair, can I comment on some of this that's going on? I know we have a wild horse problem, that's probably one of the biggest. But what I never hear other than the buffalo are getting a black eye, the elk and deer are dying, but yet we go out there. How many, I know Ritchie is probably going to argue with me on this. How many rancher's cows are out there? I was out there last fall looking for buffalo and I seen a hell of a lot of cows. So where do we draw the line of saying this is how many cows you can take. To me the wild animals there were here before...

Randy Dearth: I think this committee that is being put together to discuss the Book Cliffs initiative group, that's one of the topics that's being put on the table too is the grazing out there too, is that right?

Brett Prevedel: That needs to be accounted for, that's a major resource.

Randy Dearth: That group is looking at the entire resource out there and I think that's one that needs to be apart of it.

Daniel Davis: I think that everybody has those same concerns but it comes to the range management and unfortunately the states not the one that does that. So those concerns need to be brought up to the BLM and address at some of their public forums for concerns of that nature.

Boyde Blackwell: And they are invited to the table.

Natasha Hadden: Yeah we have been invited to the group and we are looking at putting out some grazing plans that haven't been enforced in many years so that is some of the things that will be

addressed through this group and also our range management specialist and our range management people, our supervisors, so those issues will be addressed.

Ritchie Anderson: There are things being done on the grazing side. There are some non permitted grazing happening. There has been a substantial number maybe not that far south. We're working on a plan to eliminate some of the unauthorized grazing. But there has been a great deal in the south Ouray area on BLM/Sitla land there has been a large number of unauthorized animals removed in the past year, year and a half. So we're probably up to somewhere around about 250 head of cattle that's been removed since December 2nd. There's been 178 horses removed. As far as the cattle and the horses there is some unauthorized grazing so we're working on removing the unauthorized grazing first then see where that leaves us on numbers.

Randy Dearth: Back to the bison discussion, does anyone want to make a motion to modify the tag numbers out there different than what the Division has proposed?

Tim Ignacio: I'd like to make a motion to keep it the same as last year.

MOTION to keep the bison tags the same as last year.

Tim Ignacio

Randy Dearth: I think that there are an additional 53 tags on the Book Cliffs this year, but there are additional hunts that were already approved.

Brad Horrocks: And the comment was we had about 70 bulls to cows ratio out there? That is tremendously high.

Daniel Davis: The overall total this year I calculate 112 and last year was just under 60.

Randy Dearth: I have a motion on the table, do I have a second?

Brett Prevedel: Let me ask Tim. Tim if we reduced it to last year and I don't know what that number is, what do you feel like that would do for the bison herd that is out there and also the topic is there's a lot of mouths to feed and there is a committee that's going to be formed so if we motion to slow that progression down, what do we hope to benefit?

Tim Ignacio: The reason why I'm saying that is because my wife had a permit. We didn't kill one. If you wasn't there on the first weekend, you didn't have a choice. And I'm not shooting no four year old bull. I'm not. I've seen some things that went on out there and it was pretty sad to

me. There was animals left out there just the quarters taken, backstraps taken, ribs, hide, more or less it was just a trophy hunt and that's sad to me. Those animals mean something to us, that's disrespectful to me. It's not a trophy.

Ritchie Anderson: Can I make one comment on the increase on the bison permit numbers? There are a few areas where I believe that the bison need to be distributed a little better, maybe in the Rock Springs area. The increase in hunting permits will apply pressure and if I understand the biologist correct that's one of the main ways to manage distribution of the bison is hunting pressure. So by increasing the hunting pressure you're going to get a healthier animal long term. If you try to run to the max number and don't get to the distribution you're going to have more range problems and you're going to have a less healthy animal. So if we can get those animals distributed I think it's going to be a win win.

Randy Dearth: We have a motion on the table, am I hearing a second? Not hearing a second so that motion will die. Let's go on to the topic of the desert sheep in the Zion, keep the numbers the same as last year. That was a concern brought up.

Daniel Davis: So the desert sheep in the Zion is just one additional permit in the early and the late. We have 10 total last year, they added 3 archery. They took 2 out of those rifle any weapon seasons and basically added one hunt so it went from 10 to 11. Just for some clarification since they didn't break it down up here.

Covy Jones: So I can give some rationale to that recommendation. Some clarification. Either recommendation falls within the plan. Either leave it as it is or add them back in falls with in the plan. Manage a few units within the state for additional quality and I understand and we committed before the flight to keep those numbers the same last year. We didn't have as many rams there, the number was declining. So the biologist when he made this recommendation to decrease permits, it wasn't a recommendation to take away from a weapon and give to archery. He would have made that recommendation regardless of the archery hunt. I just wanted to make that clarification. And for him it was a good recommendation. However there are enough rams on the landscape that if the RAC chooses to put those back in, that's also acceptable. So either way we understand.

Dan Abeyta: Can I comment? Wasn't that hunt created based on a recommendation from SFW?

Covy Jones: It was supported by them. The hunt was proposed by not only SFW but Utah Archery Association as well and some of the other groups.

Dan Abeyta: So that was a hunt we approved new and at the time we didn't know where the tags were coming from. And now it's recommended that we add additional permits?

Covy Jones: And I will say at the Board we were asked if we would pull of out any legal weapon, and we said we would not pull out of any weapon to add to this archery hunt. I just want to make sure that the RAC understands that is not what we did. It looks that way on paper, and it's ok either way, but it's not what we did.

Randy Dearth: Covy what did the other RACs, did they discuss this? And if so what did they do?

Covy Jones: I don't remember. Just kidding. I believe that all of the RACs were presented with the opportunity to increase permits on the Zion cause it was still within the guidelines of the plan they felt that was what they wanted to do.

Daniel Davis: I'll make a motion Mr. Chairman to add those two additional permits back into that Zion unit for the bighorn.

Randy Dearth: To go with the Divisions proposal?

Daniel Davis: Negative, to add the two permits back into the weapon seasons on the Zion bighorn.

Randy Dearth: Do we have a second?

I still missed the motion, to increase the total number by two?

Daniel Davis: Correct.

MOTION to add the two permits to the rifle hunt for the Zion bighorn sheep hunt.

Daniel Davis

Ritchie Anderson, second

Failed 2-8

Randy Dearth: Ok the next one was the Manti deer tags to reduce by about 500 tags. Proposed as a social more that a biological reason. Let's talk about that one, how do we feel about that.

Dan Abeyta: Just to clarify that Mr. Chair that was SFW alternative to the Divisions proposal?

Randy Dearth: Yes.

Brett Prevedel: Do we have a biologist here from that region?

Covy Jones: This one is, let's go back to the data and look at the data. Everybody has a backyard, right? So I'll show my colors here. Manti is mine. I grew up in Castle Dale. I hunt the Manti, I love the Manti. My whole life I'm still a dedicated hunter on the Manti, it's a special place to me. The Manti is one of the biggest deer herds in the state, it's an interesting place. We kind of divide the Manti, it's unit 16 but in my mind we divide the Manti north to south between A and B and that's the road that goes through Huntington Canyon over to Fairview. On our around that road there deer are doing really well. As we go south there are fewer deer. Overall that population is growing and that's something to keep in mind. I understand the recommendation from SFW, but it's absolutely not biological, it is completely social. Cutting these permits will not fix that south end of the Manti. It won't make it better or worse, but it will make it so 500 people sit at home. So from the Divisions perspective 8,600 permits are appropriate and that's our recommendation. Again, I understand and sympathize there are pockets of Manti that don't have the deer it used to have. I spend a day a year hunting East Mountain because I love to chase big bucks on East Mountain. Every year that day I spend out there I find myself asking why did I do this again? It's because I love the area, there is not a deer one left there. Again one of those units in the state where the overall unit is doing very well, increasing in deer, there's pockets we don't have the numbers that we used to, and we are working to address some of that. We've got some collars out there as well looking at cause specific mortality. It doesn't appear to be habitat issue, they are fat deer. So there are some other concerns that we're looking at.

Randy Dearth: Thank you Covy, I appreciate that explanation.

Dan Abeyta: If you look back at the number of permits issued say between 2015-17, how does that number compare to 8,600?

Covy Jones: I think it was 9,300 for the high, is that correct? 9,200-9,300. We're down from what we were. So as we saw that buck/doe ratio drop in 2017 we reduced permits. We knew this last year was a better year and it shot right back up. It could even increase this year, buck/doe ratio with that recommendation.

Randy Dearth: Thank you. How do we feel do we want to change the Division proposal on this one or are we comfortable? Ok let's move onto the next issue Avintiquin sheep.

Covy Jones: Derek is probably better to discuss this, but right now we've lumped the Avintiquin unit in with the Wasatch unit just to provide a bigger huntable area. So right now there are two populations that are kind of lumped together. Two on the Wasatch, the Canyon herd and the Timp herd, one on the Nebo and then Avintiquin. The reason or rationale was that several years ago Wasatch population was so small, the Nebo population was so small they really weren't large enough to handle a hunt on their own. We lumped them together to be able to issue some permits. The Wasatch and Nebo are doing well now, the Avintiquin not so much. But the time to

address that would be next fall. As far as splitting that back out or how we want to do that, we'll work with Derek next fall.

Dan Abeyta: Derek what is the population estimate on the Avintiquin right now?

Derek Ewell: So right now the estimate is on the high side probably about 30, low side about 20. There are not that many sheep left. It was at one point up at about 150 sheep.

Randy Dearth: Are we comfortable leaving it as it's been proposed? Sounds like we are. Ok there was some discussion on the SS Yellowstone.

Boyde Blackwell: Somebody said do not add permits to SS Yellowstone.

Randy Dearth: So not adding tags on the SS Yellowstone as far as the deer goes.

Randall Thacker: As you can see here the buck/doe ratio is what we make recommendations on. So the objective is 18-20, but we were at 22 this last year, 18 the year before, 23 the year before. We look at a three year average, and that's the mean right there the 21.1 is based upon. Looking strictly at these numbers even a bigger increase could be recommended and we decided not to do that because of the winter that we've had this year. Blake is correct we've had a hard winter on the Yellowstone and Current Creek and those others over there. We have had a higher than normal fawn mortality this year, right now we are at 50% survival rate of our fawns. And that does happen on the Yellowstone. It's gone as low as a survival rate of 35% fawns on that last hard winter we had. Right now they are still at 50%. Chance that could still go down. Our adult does are what's comforting I guess and why I'm so comfortable with this recommendation. The adult does right now we're still over 80% survival on those and that's really what's going to be what drives your population for multiple years. I understand Blakes concern completely. I think it's a legitimate concern with the winter we've had. Still our mortality rate hasn't been as bad as two years ago our last hard winter, the adults survival was only 67% so it can get a lot worse than what we've had this year. But we have lost additional animals this year, I'm not arguing that point at all. But we've actually got pretty good survival at this point with our adults so it's not a catastrophic loss at this point yet. I guess if snow comes back next week and we put down another eight inches of snow, we will probably have more loss. Because the next two weeks are really critical. Usually it's the last two weeks where the fawns especially have to kick back over to green feed, start eating green feed, their body they just don't have the body fat for their guts to kick back over to eating green feed so it can be really hard on them, but we've had that now for the past couple of weeks and we've only had one additional fawn that we've lost in the last little bit, so we're pretty optimistic we're hoping that they are going to be ok on Yellowstone.

Brett Prevedel: My perception of that is we are a year late because we had all them good years and when we classified last year post season there were lots of bucks and really nice bucks in that unit and we talked about it that one of these days we were going to get some winners and you said it last year. And we're probably a year late on the discussion.

Randall Thacker: And we did increase it last year, we did put a little increase in there last year. But you're right. We're always managing for what we get on a postseason.

Dan Abeyta: Randall are there any red flags on this unit from a hunter's success rate or?

Randall Thacker: Hunters success rates, and we're running last years data, last fall. We had good success rates actually, over 50% which is on a general season unit, that's great.

Dan Abeyta: What about the hunters satisfaction survey? Does that weigh into general season too, or is that limited entry only?

Randall Thacker: It does, we do a general season, and it's really been about where it's been the past two years. Very consistent where it's been the past few years. On general units it doesn't bounce around as much. On limited entry you have a drought year like last year and it can really change. The general season ones seem to be a little more consistent, we don't see bounces and jumps.

Daniel Davis: I think we were at about 80% success last year, so even with this permit increase you're looking at another 130 head harvested is all.

Randall Thacker: The Yellowstone did go through a very hard drought last year. I think that's why we did lose some of the deer we lost this year. It's too bad they weren't in better shape going in.

Daniel Davis: Primarily in a bad winter like this is it historically the does that take the biggest brunt of this? Is the buck survival a little bit higher?

Randall Thacker: Fawns take it the worst by far. You already get that, right? The fawns take it the worst then the does and bucks it depends on the unit. Like you mentioned on the Book Cliffs we're seeing a real differential, the bucks seem to be surviving at a higher rate than the does are. So that is different, normally they are pretty consistent. I mean we're talking about research projects in other states even, there are some units where buck survival is lower than does which is quite common because they exert so much energy during the rut. They are in way worse shape. A lot of it depends on the timing on when the moisture comes or what else comes and if they

have time to recover and put weight back on before a real hard winter comes. So it varies but it's normally pretty similar if anything the buck survival is usually a little bit lower than the does.

Brett Prevedel: I guess my concern would be if we lost half of the fawns, we lost half of our two points for the general season.

Randall Thacker: Yeah, we're going to lose. Even on a good mild winter we don't keep 100% of them. There's always at least 10-15% mortality all the time. Maybe once this conversion to green goes we might be talking about half.

Brett Prevedel: Because fawns that have died are a big part of our general season opportunity.

Randy Dearth: So how do we feel? Do we want to make a recommendation on this other than what the Division..

Brett Prevedel: I support going conservative on this after hearing of the fawn survival. Some number a little more conservative.

Dan Abeyta: Could you say that again Brett?

Brett Prevedel: Where a general season unit we are looking for opportunity a two point is a big part of that, you know shoot a little buck for meat and if we took a big hit on the winter kill on that segment I'd prefer to go a little more conservative on these permits.

Brad Horrocks: What numbers are you thinking?

Brett Prevedel: I guess I'd say go up slightly to 1,700 if I had to pick a number.

Brad Horrocks: I'd second that if that's a motion.

MOTION to adjust the increase from 150 to 50 for a total of 1,700 tags for the South Slope Yellowstone unit general season deer tags.

Brett Prevedel

Brad Horrocks, second

Passed 9-1

Dan Abeyta: Covy have you or the Division considered trying to pick up another premium limited entry deer unit in the state? And if so, what might that unit be?

Covy Jones: Blue Mountain. I could answer this one and we're going to ask about this one again, but I'd prefer probably, I'm going to pick on Justin because he wrote the last plan in 2013 and we can talk about the considerations that went on then, is that ok?

Dan Abeyta: I don't want to take a lot of time just a curiosity question more than anything Justin.

Justin Shannon: I'll be brief. Last time we wrote the statewide deer plan we talked about adding a premium limited entry unit and we did a survey with the public and it wasn't well supported so we decided having one on the Henry's and one on the Paunsaugunt was fine.

Dan Abeyta: And that was 2010 or?

Justin Shannon: 2014 is when we passed the last statewide deer plan and Covys in the process of having a committee put together to redo the current one.

Dan Abeyta: Ok thanks.

MOTION to approve the balance of the Divisions proposal.

Andrea Merrill

Rebekah Jones, second

Passed unanimously

- **Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2019-** Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator
See Slideshow

Randy Dearth: Thank you Covy.

Questions from the RAC:

Daniel Davis: I've got a couple of questions. There are a handful of units here that are exceeding their deer population objective quite substantially. Is that in a hope to maybe change the population objective for that or maybe missing out on some opportunity there?

Covy Jones: I think the answer to that is yes to both probably. We adjust and reevaluate unit deer plans every five years and some of these five years ago they were at or under and now they are exceeding and biologist were hesitant to change sometimes because was it just a blip and they grew or was it really sustainable. We start to get more and more body conditions scores we can tell did we really exceed carrying capacity or was that a blip, should we manage lower or did we just increase habitat and do we have more potential to grow? So in the southern region especially

Daniel some of these exist and they are rewriting their unit plans this year and they will be addressing that and either saying no it wasn't just a blip and we need to increase the objective, or it was and we have deer that are in poor body condition and we probably need to remove some does. I think another part of this is everybody in this room knows that doe harvest is socially less acceptable than cow harvest. Utahns don't like to shoot does. I always hear be more like Colorado, Colorado shoots a lot of does. Nobody likes it when I bring that up. The truth is that in a lot of areas across the state we could have healthier deer populations if we managed a little bit below carrying capacity and I think in this new deer plan that's going to be one of the major topics that we tackle this year.

Daniel Davis: What population objective would you consider transplanting deer from those over populated areas? And I know the Book Cliffs is one off because we know too many mouths, but in some of these other areas with the range and habitat and maybe something else going on.

Covy Jones: I'm just going to hit this one head on, we've done some transplants in the Division starting in 2014 was our first. And there are definitely reason to transplant deer. But we've learned survival rates, we learned it can be successful about half of them survive. We've also started to really reflect and look at the risk that comes along with that. We've started to look at communities along the Wasatch front and the exotic chewing lice. As you catch those deer and transplant those deer and move exotic chewing lice into other locations. Chronic wasting disease. No biologist wants to be responsible or the person that moved CWD to a new unit. So as we move forward and I'm not saying that we will never transplant deer, but as an agency we decided to be a lot more conservative that we have been in the past and if we do transplant deer it will be under dire circumstances and probably not very often. Just where this is coming from partially too Daniel is, look at Wyoming, they've started to have effects from CWD. Even if they have good body condition, even if they have, they can't grow deer anymore. They are 50% prevalence, the populations are struggling. Colorado is right on their coat tails, they have a few strategies that appear to be working and Utah is saying ok we've maintained most of our units at about 1% prevalence and one of our units is probably 2-5% prevalence but we don't want to get there. We don't want to spread it.

Brett Prevedel: So on the deer objective it looks like for 28 years it's 70,000 roughly under and around 370,000 something like that. At what point do you change the objective, the target to you know if you haven't been able to hit it for that many years when do you look at and say we're trying to manage for a population that is not achievable because on the elk side you're right on target, so I'm just curious about that.

Covy Jones: That's a really good question. The truth is when we rewrote the statewide deer plan last time the sentiment was we've grown 100,000 deer and we have since 2013, 286,000 up to 384,000 thats a lot of deer. The idea was let's leave it, let's keep working towards it see where

we get. As we rewrite individual unit plans biologist will seriously consider this. The heartache comes from, everybody has a backyard, you know, and I think again about the population on the Manti we're aiming for 38,000 deer on the Manti we're at about 25,000 and if we told the constituents there that we've given up on 38,000 just 25,000 is where it's going to be, that would be really hard for them. So we keep working on it in areas where we can. The truth is we rewrite unit plans we're going to ask biologists to get with the constituents and make some really real hard decisions and recommendations on what is achievable.

Daniel Davis: I've got a couple more Mr. Chairman. On Monroe and Boulder we have doe hunts prescribed for those two units. One of those units is just over 50% its objective. Would you highlight why you would have a hunt at that time. If I'm not mistaken the agriculturally counted is not added into these numbers correct?

Covy Jones: Well permits issued directly to land owners are not. Public draw permits that address depredation issues are counted. Some of it's that, or range conditions. And that again the unit is 50% of what the objective is, there's probably a hard discussion that needs to happen there and we have body condition scores on the Monroe, we can look at it and say Monroe is probably the only place in the state we can look at and say we've probably pointed out a carrying capacity. Got enough data now to say this is the appropriate number of deer and if we over shoot this body condition goes down, production goes down.

Daniel Davis: And we're not too far off there but the Boulder is the alarming one.

Covy Jones: And again it's to address some of those conflicts on the Boulder. So you're right Daniel there could be additional permits that come through the depredation program that aren't part of this, but this is saying if we've got a conflict, let's allow a public hunter to be a part of this.

Questions from the Public:

Blake Bess: On that SS Yellowstone antlerless elk what's your explanation on the decrease even though I agree with it.

Randall Thacker: Actually what it is, is it's a decrease on public draw permits is what it is. We've been trying for years on the Yellowstone to find ways to work to get the antlerless elk harvest that we need on that unit. And yet to not keep hounding all the few elk that stay out on the forest on different times of year. What we've done there is we've seen a real increase on the number of antlerless control permits 17,000 antlerless control permit hunters hunting that unit. That's up every year, last year it was 14,000 it's going up significantly and those are people that already have a tag on the unit is what those permits are, just so everybody understands, that's for

people that already have an elk permit or deer permit for that unit already they can then buy this tag over the counter and hunt during the hunt they already have. Without putting a single more hunter on the mountain, those people are going to be there anyway we're letting them have the opportunity to take antlerless elk while they are up there hunting already with the same weapon and everything while they are doing it and last year we harvested 320 cows basically with that last year. We've also were able to, with the private lands only tags that are going on the Yellowstone too, we do have to have a cap, there is a 2,000 cap limit. We've never come close. We are increasing on those, last year we sold 430 I guess last year, the year before it was about 350 so those are increasing too. Those allow people to buy those, because there is a 2,000 cap they can basically just buy those over the counter, they can go pick them up from the office. Folks can go and hunt on any of the private land within the unit, within the entire Yellowstone unit. They can go and hunt elk there and take antlerless animals off of private lands, it's only good for private lands but it's good for all the private lands within the unit which is where we have our problem elk on that unit. That unit has a lot of low elevation agricultural river bottom elk that move down and are staying there. We're getting good harvest down there. 40% success on those tags last year. Basically what it comes down to is we're able to get some really good harvest and target the problem animals on that unit with these other hunting methods in addition to removing enough off the forest too but not anymore people out there. And we're hoping by increasing our late season hunts which is what all these others are that we're reducing we'll be able to leave some of those animals alone that do learn to stay on the forest and are good elk as far as problems go for us. We want to keep the pressure where it belongs not hitting them where they're out of trouble. So that's kind of the answer to that one. Good question.

Brett Prevedel: Randall are control tags valid on private land?

Randall Thacker: Control tags are good for anywhere, if they have a hunt, anywhere where that hunt is legal. So if they have a general season anywhere the deer tag is legal even if they are on private land if they are within the unit.

Brett Prevedel: On that unit you can go clear down to Roosevelt.

Randall Thacker: That's right. So anybody who has an elk tag or deer tag would be able to. We're really just trying to harvest these elk that are giving us a lot of problems on that unit.

Brett Prevedel: I'm sure you're not harvesting forest elk with that control tag.

Randall Thacker: There are absolutely some taken on the forest with the control tag. Because they are hunting up there too. But they do have the opportunity to take some down below. You're very familiar with how the tribal land sits in the SS Yellowstone and the winter range

zone and then those elk we're training them every year to go stay on the tribe and never come off until they go cause problems so we're trying to come up with some different strategies there.

Kent Olsen: What is the philosophy or biological reason or whatever you'd call it that you'd shoot a cow moose?

Covy Jones: Oh yeah, that's a great question. Moose. You know what I think Kent Hersey would be the right person to answer this question. He's done a lot of research on moose and he's here tonight. Let's give him a chance to talk.

Kent Hersey: We've actually seen in Utah that moose are habitat limited. We've had two instances one in the 90's and one in the mid 2000's where we've grown to a certain level maybe 3,500-4,000 moose and then we've dramatically crashed and gotten down to 2,500 and we've done that twice so far. So moose do hit this peak of high populations and we want to harvest and try to keep those populations at low enough densities that we don't have these crashes. We want to manage them at a level where we can provide as much opportunity as we can for hunting. There is a lot of demand for cow moose permits as well as bull permits so we want to keep those populations as healthy as possible and in proportion to the habitat so you don't look at those moose habitats like you do some other ones and say it's just been over browsed. We've definitely seen these crashes and through some of the research we've been doing on North Slope in particular you can see their body condition is not where we'd like it. The Wasatch actually comes in really fat, NS tends to be a lot less but there are issues we just can't see them as easily.

Covy Jones: As a reminder too on that bull moose permits and cow moose, the point systems are managed separately so you wouldn't shoot a cow moose with your bull moose permit. It's not a once in a lifetime, there's a cooling off period just like there is for LE elk. So it's separate systems so I think when people see that recommendation they think why waste your OIL bull permit on that? The answer is, they're not. It's a different point system. Justin once got that question and he did admit that if he ever shoots a cow moose he'll mount it and put it on his wall. You need to hold him to that.

Tyrel Abaeglean: I going to put you on the spot kind of like I did Justin here a few years ago. On the nine mile unit as far as your antlerless elk you've got the Anthro and the Range Creek. You're objective calls for a little over 1,000 more on the south side of the creek than it does the north side of the creek. Why is that?

Derek Ewell: The reason for the difference in the population objectives is there's a big process that we go through in order to get those objectives to where they're at. We go through committees and we meet with all the sportsmans groups and the local elected officials and there's this huge long list of who we meet with. We meet and we decide on what we can deal

with as far as an objective. We've tried to increase the one on the anthro side and through the committee process we weren't able to come up with enough support to increase that objective. That's why it's separate. On the southern part of the unit on the range creek they were able to get to that number.

Tyrel Abeaglean: I guess you're almost doubling the permit numbers. I kind of understand it on the south side there's more range for deer than there is on the north side. But for elk the elk stay down on the plains and eat sagebrush anyway in the winter. A lot of them used to stay down there year round. I have video back in the late 90's to early 2000's that you could see elk all day long every day and now it's been a month out there and maybe seen 20 head.

Derek Ewell: With those permits you're talking about doubling, so we added a new hunt and it shows up only on the anthro side and it actually included the Avintiquin unit, so a lot of those people are going to be hunting on the Avintiquin unit anyway so it's not all on the anthro. Still on the anthro we don't have any cow hunts east of Wells Draw Rd.. And it's shown on our flights that we're growing elk out on the desert.

Tyrel Abeaglean: You're not as bad as you were there a few years ago, but it still ain't like it used to be.

Derek Ewell: It may not get to where it used to be with the objective the way it is. We've tried to increase that objective and failed.

Comments from the Public:

Blake Bess: Concerned about adding them permits on the Anthro. Anthro ain't in as good of shape as it once was as we all know. I encourage the RAC to take a look at that and maybe as he said about the Avintiquin, course then we do a boundary change force them onto the Avintiquin instead of maybe not hunting the Anthro. Thank you.

Chris Carling: SFW once again. We support the Divisions antlerless permit recommendations with one exception and that is on the Beaver unit our concern is that the increased number of permits which would go from 880-980 with these current recommendations will only continue driving down the success of those antlerless hunts on that unit. We ask that the permits be allocated to other areas maybe where the problem with the elk actually exist on the north end particularly. In the southern RAC this was discussed that these permits be issued for the north end specifically, north end of that unit, and the hunts be moved to August in order to increase the success. I don't know the outcome of that discussion, I wasn't there, I don't have report but I know it was discussed and SFW supports the idea, as do the livestock grazing permit holders in that area. Thank you.

Comments from the RAC:

Randy Dearth: Let's talk about both of those topics there. First off Blake's concern about adding permits on the Anthro unit.

Brett Prevedel: Blake was that elk or deer?

Blake Bess: That was cow elk.

Dan Abeyta: So Covy were those permits moved from that Avintiquin area in the past? In that new unit did it have tags before?

Derek Ewell: So for the past two years no there haven't been any tags on the Avintiquin. There used to be this hunt that we're proposing was there in the past. And the reason for it, just to explain why both units are included on it, is the West Anthro unit is relatively small and also it's a January hunt and elk are all the same elk there and we were having problems with Indian Canyon being the boundary and that's where a lot of these elk are being harvested. We wanted to allow people to be able to hunt both sides of the road, same elk. We were having a lot of law enforcement issues with them shooting them on one side of the road then they cross and they're shooting them over there and all of a sudden it's an illegal issue across the road. So this made for a better hunt boundary and most of the harvest typically occurs on the Avintiquin.

Brett Prevedel: But it is an increase this year because it did not exist last year?

Correct.

And the boundaries have already gone through so this is just a...

Right.

Daniel Davis: I've got one for you before you leave. Can that habitat support that many elk?

Derek Ewell: How many elk are there now, or?

Daniel Davis: Correct.

Derek Ewell: Yeah they are there so it's obviously supporting.

Daniel Davis: Well like Covy related, body conditions and..

Derek Ewell: Body conditions are well for the elk we know a lot about the elk on the Anthro, Avintiquin and Wasatch area and if they are all moving back and forth. A lot of the elk that winter on Anthro come from Strawberry Reservoir. It's big area. So they are in good shape when they get there and most of the cows are pregnant when we catch them, so yeah it's probably a social carrying capacity of 750.

Daniel Davis: So how many of these permits, or how big was the impact of the habitat with the fire last year?

Derek Ewell: On the Avintiquin unit? I hope it was great. It burned a lot of ground and it's going to increase and do a good thing in the future.

Daniel Davis: Is it going to pose a problem this immediate year?

Derek Ewell: I don't think so. I think it's actually going to rebound quickly. It showed last year that we're seeing new growth coming up quick. As soon as the fire was out it was growing. I'm not worried about it causing impact.

Daniel Davis: Thank you.

Randy Dearth: On the adding permits on the Anthro, do we want to make a recommendation to not do that, or do we want to go with the Divisions recommendation to do that?

Brett Prevedel: What was the increase?

Daniel Davis: From 230 on the Anthro to 450.

Covy Jones: Just as a reminder when the Divisions biologist make these recommendations as we set population objectives, we have to manage to those. So when we're over the time to address that is when we write a new plan and set a new population objective. So if you look at Nine Mile/Anthro the population objective is 700, the estimate is 1,200. I can only think of one elk objective in the state of Utah that is possibly biological or not obtainable because of biology, but elk objectives in Utah are all social and that's because these animals are relatively new to our state and I guess there was a long time that we didn't have a lot of elk. When the pioneers got here we had elk. They were quickly shot out and then brought back in the early 1900's we grew them up several years in the 80's we started to see more and more, in the 90's to now where we are with elk they can cause a lot of problems and a lot of damage socially. Social is a big part of how and where we set elk objectives. Across the state, it's not just unique to this unit. And the truth is it's as valid as biological.

Daniel Davis: I do though for reasons feel that if the habitats there we could initially set the objective a little low for the capacity and everything else. If we can handle them that's a change that could come up with the elk management plan just like we do with the deer units.

Ritchie Anderson: Randy do we want to talk about the Beaver unit yet, or stay on..

Randy Dearth: Yeah let's stay on this one and see if we want to make any kind of recommendation on this one.

Daniel Davis: I'll make a motion that we increase the permits to 300 on the Nine Mile/Anthro

Randy Dearth: So increase it by 70 tags is what you're saying? I have a motion to raise the tags to 300.

MOTION to increase permit by 70 to 300 in the Nine Mile/Anthro unit.

Daniel Davis

Tim Ignacio, second

Passed 6-5

Randy Dearth: Ok on to the Beaver. Increase 100 tags and actually focus those towards the allocated problem areas instead of just 100 tags everywhere across the unit. How can you do that Covy, how can you allocate them just to the problem areas?

Covy Jones: Most of those the problem elk are on the north end of the mountain so if those permits were reallocated instead of being wide permits they are reallocated to the north. From that unit to the North end. That would be a way that we could possibly address concerns about the population objective and the concerns to not be that way but reallocate those to a northern boundary is a possibility.

Daniel Davis: Is there a boundary that already exists? Would we be able to do that?

Covy Jones: Yeah there is. Beaver North is the name of the boundary, is that correct, Beaver North? Yes so there is a unit boundary that does exist.

Daniel Davis: So with the 100 additional permits with the private lands on the Beaver is that primarily down in the southern part? Would that help with that northern area?

Covy Jones: It does help with the northern part. But we're still having a hard time managing to the population objective even with those private lands tags.

Daniel Davis: So now comes the tough question, so we did see an increase in the permits all in all it wouldn't drive down the success rate private lands only essentially. If I'm looking at that correctly.

Covy Jones: Some of those are unit wide.

Daniel Davis: It says private land permits are 100. So the 100 increase from last year would be the private lands only addition.

Covy Jones: No this would only be public draw. There's both Daniel. So that's a good point to also bring out. Private lands only has also increased but public draw permits the recommendation is to go from 880-980.

Daniel Davis: Then add 100 additional so it would actually be 1,080 on that unit?

Covy Jones: If you look at it that way, so then you go to private lands only.

Daniel Davis: Just in the data that we have here it puts it all on the same table so that's where the confusion came from.

Covy Jones: That's the clarification. So a new private lands only permit only on the east portion, the boundary that is Beaver East, it doesn't go west of the freeway then. It's the whole mountain but not the west because that unit goes west of the freeway. In addition to that it's this recommended increase too.

Daniel Davis: What's our ratio of that elk population then on that Beaver over all north to south?

Covy Jones: Most of what I can say is that most of the problem elk, most of the elk that get into trouble are on that north end. Where the conflict is.

Daniel Davis: So to figure out a logical way to split that and redirect the pressure, how would you, I mean what's the magic number I guess is what I'm getting at.

Covy Jones: If you recommended the new hunt, the new permits then I'm trying to remember exactly. That new hunt we recommended the permits unit wide, if the recommendation were to put those on the Beaver North instead that would accomplish probably what the private landowners want and what SFW recommended.

Daniel Davis: But would it be enough, or does there need to be more?

Covy Jones: It would be enough.

Chris Carling: SFW. Because I personally wasn't there at the first RAC if any of you with the Division were there for the benefit of these RAC members, did they shed any light on the subject that would help them understand the issue that maybe won't come up here?

Covy Jones: I think the most critical is the southern region, that's exactly what they did. They recommended that we put these additional permits on that Beaver North. That we keep them, that we've agreed to this population objective and until we.. Beaver will hold more elk but this is what we've agreed to manage to so we're above it. So we're going to work hard to get to it and address the conflict at the same time. I think it was a fine recommendation for the RAC to change that one.

Ken: Just to add some clarification, I think it was the 150 permits, but they also made August hunt dates. August 1-11. They used the north boundary but didn't allocate them to the existing north hunts. They added a new north hunt that was August 1-11. That's what everybody agreed on and it seemed our biologist Dave Smedley was fine with that.

Covy Jones: I'm sorry that was a clarification, it was 150 permits reallocated because it was the new hunt. 150 permits reallocated to the August 1-11th so it's the beginning of the season when we have some conflicts that we need to address.

MOTION to reallocate the 150 permits that were statewide to the North Beaver new season dates August 1-11th.

Daniel Davis

Ritchie Anderson, second

Passed unanimously

MOTION to approve the balance of the Divisions proposal.

Brad Horrocks

Brett Prevedel, second

Passed unanimously

- **R657-37 CWMU Rule Amendments-** Mike Wardell, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator

See Slideshow

Daniel Davis: On a CWMU if the COR doesn't come up for renewal then that whole process that we go through each year won't list each one?

Mike Wardell: So what that's referring to is if a CWMU, a minimum acreage requirement for an elk CWMU is 10,000 acres, but we do at times give a COR to a CWMU that has 9,000 acres. In order to do that we require them to get a variance from the CWMU committee. What we're saying is if you did that three years ago and you're not decreasing you're acreage we're not going to make you go back before the committee again.

Daniel Davis: Ok thank you.

Questions by the Public:

Tyrel Abaeglean: This isn't a question about the CWMU rule, just a CWMU in general. I haven't had this problem personally, but I know a few friends of mine that have. Since this new OnX map has come out a lot of people have realized you have public land inside these CWMU units and apparently they've gotten tickets for killing deer on that public land, because it's public land but it's inside that unit.

Mike Wardell: Alright so we can't include public land inside our CWMU with the current rule, and there has to be a pretty good justification for it. I think our current justifications are if it's necessary to achieve wildlife management of the unit or if it's necessary to establish an enforceable boundary which is the majority of these. So a scenario might look like the landowners property actually comes to right here this imaginary line, but there's a road that goes right here and there's 300 yards of public land. It's much easier to just extend that boundary to the road, it's easier for the public to understand.

Tyrel Abaeglean: So is it just kind of a situation to situation basis or is it just the fact that you better not be hunting on public land at all if it's in a CWMU?

Mike Wardell: Yeah, if it's inside a CWMU then you would have to have a CWMU permit for that land.

Chris Carling: One quick question. SFW one more time. On that reciprocal agreement is that new addition or a modification of an existing?

Mike Wardell: Modification of an existing.

Comments from the Public:

David Gurr: You didn't touch on the August 1st date. Can you touch a little bit on that and what that means?

Mike Wardell: So the August 1st deadline is if we're having non profit hunts which we're quite involved in. what this means is a CWMU operator can enter into these reciprocal agreements and we have the ability to take an unused voucher from the previous year and make it valid for the current year as long as it's being filtered through a non profit organization and no money is being made for it. That is typically being done through Hunts For The Brave or the David Gurr Foundation.

David Gurr: So it's my understanding on this new date on your agreement, correct me if I'm wrong, but if we have a reciprocal tag and we put a name on it prior to August 1st once August 2nd comes out we cannot change that name? Is that correct?

Mike Wardell: So we can change it if it's still in voucher format, though John L actually called me about this exact thing.

David Gurr: Ok so if it's still in voucher form, we can change the name. And once..

Mike Wardell: Right, and once it goes from voucher to permit we can't do that. If it's still in voucher format, so what John and I talked about was when the request comes in for the individuals that we're going to have on these hunts we could potentially have 3-4 back ups in case something changes.

David Gurr: So you're recommending having 3-4 back ups on that?

Mike Wardell: Right, yeah.

David Gurr: So it really hasn't changed then, that part of it.

Mike Wardell: No it's not a big change we just put that August 1st deadline in rule because that's currently Ken Clay is the one that works through those requests with me and we usually do it around then. We wanted to put that direction in rule so that in the future Ken knows when that is.

David Gurr: Cause that would make a really big impact on the 501C3's if we could not change the name on the voucher. I know a lot of us have unpredictable situations that come up.

Mike Wardell: Especially if you're not hunting a cow until November, we realize that sometimes those things change.

Randy Dearth: Thank you David. That was the only comment card we had on this topic so we'll come back to the RAC. How do we feel? Any comments or concerns?

MOTION to approve the rule amendments as presented.

Brad Horrocks

Natasha Hadden, second

Passed unanimously

- **2019 CWMU Antlerless Permit Recommendations-** Mike Wardell, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator

See Slideshow

Questions from the RAC:

Brett Prevedel: So what drives the increases and decreases? Is that their request? Or is that something biological?

Mike Wardell: Both. So sometimes CWMUs have more harvest than they can handle socially they have too many people on their CWMU private land. Other times it's biological. So like for the Deseret example it's trying to meet those management objectives.

Brett Prevedell: Mutually agreed between the CWMU and the DWR.

Mike Wardell: Yes. There are times when we do split recommendations or when an operator would request a permit but none of these are that case.

Daniel Davis: I've got a question maybe for myself to be a little more educated. There are a good majority of those units that have zero to the private and all allocated to public, but then there are some that do have those allocated to private, why the difference?

Mike Wardell: That's a great question. It's because of this. Those lines are all different options. CWMU could choose the 90/10 option which is that top line. If they choose that option they get antlerless permits which is all that we're talking about recommending here 100% of those are public. Say they are a 75/25% split like down here on the bottom then the antlerless permits are 50/50 half private half public.

Daniel Davis: So it's based off the negotiation on what they accept?

MOTION to accept the antlerless CWMU proposal as presented.

Natasha Hadden
Brad Horrocks, second
Passed unanimously

- **R657-44 Big Game Depredation Rule Amendments-** Mike Wardell, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator

See Slideshow

Daniel Davis: Clarification on the permits. Now is that only for the public hunter that obtains a permit or does that fall back to the landowner immediate family as well?

Mike Wardell: It could potentially. We do this with deer and it's not a tool we use very often for mitigation and vouchers but it could potentially.

Ritchie Anderson: Mike this really doesn't change a whole lot that I can see does it? It more or less just adds clarification? Or what's the actual change I guess?

Mike Wardell: So the appeal process or? It's not changing a lot in practice but it's providing more guidance in the rule specifies matches current practice. One of the bigger changes is the two doe pronghorn permits. That's currently not allowed in the depredation program. The appeal process and the stop kill orders is something that we currently do in practice.

MOTION to accept the Big Game Depredation rule amendments as presented.

Rebekah Jones
Daniel Davis, second
Passed Unanimously

- **R657- 41 Conservation and Sportsman Permit Rule-** Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief

See Slideshow

Daniel Davis: Officers can not be purchased, redeemed by agents, officers, directors. So if you're a volunteer to one of these organizations and you're holding one of their banquets are you not allowed to purchase one of those permits through the auction process?

Justin Shannon: No, if you're a volunteer certainly go ahead and bid.

Daniel Davis: So if you're on the payroll so to speak then that's where it's...

Justin Shannon: Yeah and the the why behind this, what we're trying to do is the point of the conservation permit program is to generate as much revenue as possible for conservation so we're trying to avoid the perception that if you're an offer an agent an employee that you're getting a sweetheart deal on a conservation permit so that was our intent with adding this language here. And this has been brought up in a couple of the other RACs and one of the things one of the other RACs has mentioned is what do you do in the event that you're at a conservation permit banquet and permits are being auctioned and there's an auctioneer and there's 400 people in the room does the Division really have any issues if they purchase one? So we've had some of those discussions at the other RACs and our answer would be no, we don't have issues with that as long as it's at a conservation permit banquet administered in a live auction by an auctioneer. What I really want is to understand the intent behind it, not just the why we were trying to accomplish when we wrote this originally.

Daniel Davis: You bet. I've got one more question. So the three year issue, if I understand this correctly, say an organization that's been around for a while had issues with 501C3 exemption and meeting that requirement, spends thousands of dollars to get there, they can't come and apply until that three year open window? Or does that mean they can apply and it's good for three years?

Justin Shannon: Can you repeat that one more time? I'm trying to make sure I understand that.

Daniel Davis: Ok so is this process for applying into the program only an open window every third year?

Justin Shannon: Ok I get it now. So what we do is you would receive... the only time you could apply into as a conservation organization would be once every three years. So whether you're a new group coming in for the first time that would be the same window as if you were a current group and you wanted to reapply. Every year groups, every three years have to send in an application. And the reason for doing that is, who's the contact information, did anything change? It allows us to review all that type of information. And an organization that might have left the program and came back they could apply at that same time as well.

Daniel Davis: No the question is an organization getting to that criteria the fall in the rule being eligible and the issue of it only being an opportunity every three years, would that year start this year, or the following year?

Justin Shannon: Oh got it. So the Wildlife Board approved these permits and distributed to the groups I believe it was last fall so we would have a two, two and a half year window to do that. So it would be 2021 before a new organization could get involved. The reason that is is conservation permits would be allocated the existing organizations at that point. So if they

submitted an application those conservation permits would already be allocated to the correct conservation permit groups so they wouldn't be able to be any permits to give them. That's why everything needs to be on the same three year cycle. If that makes sense.

Comments from the Public:

Chris Carling: SFW. I think Justin did a good job bringing up the point that we wanted to, and that is in relationship to the officers representing conservation groups. As long as they still have the ability to bid on and purchase a tag in an open live auction it sounds like the Division would be open to discussing that language being incorporated possibly, but we can have discussions offline separate. We like and agree with everything that they've presented that point included.

Comments from the RAC:

Daniel Davis: So I see a little bit of an issue with the three year rule. To me it makes sense that once a group gets in there that for the next three years it would be set in stone for them. I don't like the fact that nobody else could join the program until the next open window. I'm very well knowledgeable on a group specifically that has spent tens of thousands of dollars to get an alignment from prior management if you will that caused issues and the progress they've made to get to that point they could turn around and say, you've put all that money and work into it and now you have to wait three years before you're eligible again. You know once they met that criteria. So I have a little apprehension to that once an organization becomes eligible for the first time, it's only a cyclical window that they can get into the program. Now on a re-up where somebody dropped out or comes back in, I see that being a valid point. But upon new entry, that's where I kind of see a bit of an issue.

Randy Dearth: Justin, aren't those tags allocated? Didn't the Wildlife Board already approve them being allocated for a three year period?

Justin Shannon: Yes so for the three year permits those are all allocated. There are some permits that are set aside for a one year conservations. They are very few. I think we have seven or eight and that's one of the purposes of meshing these two things together so those one year permits can be allocated every year. Sometimes we set them aside and they don't get used. I understand what Daniel is saying, I actually think it's a fair point. The challenge and weakness that we have is we're not just going to come up with more conservation permits to give to that group if they came in year one or year two into the three year program. The conservation permits according to the rule are allocated to the groups based on what the public is. If public hunting opportunity increases conservation permits increase and we have to look at that on a three year cycle is how we do it. So I understand it, it's just administratively I'm not sure if a group came in year one or two what permits we could offer them. That's the only challenge that I see.

Randy Dearth: I understand the issue.

Daniel Davis: Other than not changing it at all, correct?

Yeah, correct.

Andrea Merrill: So if you didn't change it at all then you would still have those seven or eight permits set aside, they just may or may not be used?

Justin Shannon: Yeah, correct. If a conservation organization applies and they either don't meet the criteria of a conservation organization or an organization doesn't apply at all then those permits wouldn't be used, correct.

Randy Dearth: So basically you're balancing seven or eight permits being allocated out, or not being allocated out against the possibility of a new organization or an organization coming back in and having to wait one or two years for it.

Justin Shannon: Yes, correct. And then the nice thing is then there's trade offs because an organization may have to wait a year two to get in because they didn't meet the requirements of their probationary status they are into the new program just like every other conservation organization and have the same rules apply to them collectively as there's not a one year criteria vs three years.

Daniel Davis: Just for clarification on their market share period starts even though they don't get any permits to auction? I mean what would they have to provide in that manner then?

Justin Shannon: Are you talking about a new organization that comes in?

Daniel Davis: Out of cycle, correct.

Justin Shannon: If we go this new route they couldn't come in out of cycle because there is nothing to offer, the permits would all be allocated.

MOTION to allow the annual application for a first time applicant but maintain the three year even for renewal.

Randy Dearth: How would you get the permits, if they had already been allocated? I like the idea, but if they come in out of cycle there are no permits to allocate them. Except for those seven or eight which is possible changing because the others are going to three years.

Daniel Davis: So essentially we put the cart before the horse there are no permits available now.

Justin Shannon: No, so right now the way it works is there are about seven or eight permits that are available for one year groups if a one year group were able to apply. So the way it currently sits is there would be seven or eight permits. I think what you're getting at Daniel is for this portion here, just don't combine it to a three year program, continue as we are one year program and a three year program. Is that kind of what you were asking for?

Daniel Davis: I like the long term commitment for these organizations to stay for three years and if they fall out to come in on these cycles so it's easier to manage that aspect. But I don't like the door being closed on somebody coming new into it. Say they meet the criteria six months after your one starts and then here we go down the road three years before they are allowed into the program as a first time applicant.

Justin Shannon: I see that. Another why behind going to this is I've been in our SLC office since 2013 so about 5-6 years and in that time we haven't had a one year group apply. So it's just not very often so those one year permits have just been sitting there year after year so we've just been trying cause if we're getting so few applicants coming in then we can plan we can help them, we can help them through the application process all those things ahead of time, but we're not getting gobs of one year applicants every year.

Daniel Davis: But then potentially in three years we could and then the only two groups being allowed do you take the guy who was there that left on good terms or the new people who's maybe up and coming and has great opportunities.

Justin Shannon: The group that left on good terms, they're not apart of this. They can come back if they apply within the next three year cycle.

Daniel Davis: So they can fall back in on year three if they dropped out on year two?

Justin Shannon: No, so if you're in a three year group right now, and you take a cycle off you can only come back once the next three year term is up. That has nothing to do with the new applicants that are new organizations that might come in.

Randy Dearth: I do have a motion on the table, do you want to restate that motion Daniel?

Brett Prevedel: I think I want a little more clarification before I understand it. So are there groups right now on the three year plan giving September 1st 2018. So is there conservation groups that have already been awarded this or is this a new application? Or a new proposal?

Justin Shannon: So we have several conservation organization committees, I think we have six or seven right now. They are all on the three year cycle. We met with them and they are comfortable moving that deadline from September 1st to August 15th. We don't have any groups in the one year conservation permit program right now.

Brett Prevedel: Are all of them on the same expiration year? As far as is that 2021-22?

Justin Shannon: Yeah, so in spring of 2018 we did an analysis and took it to the Wildlife Board and said here are all the eligible conservation permits that are available. Then in the fall we worked through a process according to rule matched those conservation permits with the organization and the Wildlife Board approved that so everybody is on the same cycle for the three year term.

Brett Prevedel: Are they awarded that based on what they'll give back towards conservation?

Justin Shannon: Yes, how that works in short is, the groups that generate the most revenue from those conservation permits exceed their market share they were able to obtain more permits of more value than groups that didn't.

Daniel Davis: So essentially a group that's trying to get in having to wait three more years and generates and stays established with conservation permits to help draw those crowds, marketing, helps generate more funding, more of those organizations to also keep growing, right?

Justin Shannon: Yes, that is one of the draw back of doing this is that if a group wanted to come in this year they would have to wait two more years until that cycle is up, so it's just one of the trade offs that we have if approved.

Daniel Davis: I think this has just created a deadline before we even got to this point. I mean we approve this now, the deadline happened August 15th of last year. I have a hard time with it.

Ritchie Anderson: Am I correct in saying in my belief in saying that most states do not offer, or a lot of states do not offer a conservation permit program?

Justin Shannon: A lot of states will have what they call a Governor's tags where they'll sale like a statewide bighorn sheep tag or a statewide elk tag or something along those lines. A lot of those states also have lotteries and those types of things that help their wildlife programs and Utah doesn't have anything like that so we're probably on more of the liberal side of conservation permits compared to other states but our funding revenues are just so different for wildlife management in Utah.

Daniel Davis: Mr. Chairman I'll restate my motion.

MOTION to not accept the Divisions recommendations, to leave it as it is now.

Brett Prevedel: If the three year is already in place then what are we voting against?

Daniel Davis: The ability to get in. So the three year did was lock the groups in that were currently in the program, but now we just created a block that if they weren't in the program August 15th then they just can't get in at all.

Brett Prevedel: Where are the tags though, where do the allocated tags come from if the new group wanted to come in right now and they had x amount of dollars or you know are there five permits that are out there for the Vernon West Desert? I saw something this year that I've never seen before for Vernon West Desert I think it was ten tags for that area and I don't remember if it was mule deer foundation it was a different organization so where would those tags come from if what Daniels saying, if we block this are the tags already allocated so there's really no chance that a new comer could even come in.

Justin Shannon: The permits are set aside so if a one year conservation organization did want to apply those permits would be available for them. They are just set aside they are not allocated to any conservation group right now. The permits you're talking about on the Vernon I believe those are LOA permits so they are not conservation permits.

Daniel Davis: They were privately purchased and that gentleman is now raffling them off to create...

Brett Prevedel: Ten tags for \$100 or something like that.

Daniel Davis: Yeah so those permits are already there.

Brett Prevedel: They were apart of LOAs.

Andrea Merrill: Mr. Chair I'll second his motion just because I do think that it is unfair to the groups that the deadline was established and it wasn't made public right? Then it will be published and everybody will know it but that is true that the conservation groups, were they aware that this was happening like this?

Justin Shannon: We just haven't had any new conservation groups...

Andrea Merrill: It sounds like there is at least one that's in the process and they were not aware that this was going to happen.

Justin Shannon: Let's just talk very candidly, are you talking about Utah Archery Association?

Daniel Davis: Utah Houndsmen. We've been working, we'd worked with Leslie for quite a while before she left and got everything in progress and we've been working with the accountants and everything and we're right there I mean in the next six months we will be eligible with the criteria.

Justin Shannon: Ok I see.

Daniel Davis: Not that it's just fair for them but to establish a deadline that's already lapsed.

Justin Shannon: The one thing I will say though is the way the rule currently reads, if you're in the one year program it takes years and years to transition from the one year program to the three year program. So what this new rule change does is the trade off is a group like Houndsmen Association will have to wait two more years but once they get in and they pass their probationary status they're at a three year conservation status with the ones that are currently there. The last one Utah Archery Association it took them years and years and years to transition and build up enough market share to transition from the one year program to the three year program. So it's just trade offs and pros and cons. What we'd like to do is just simplify this and just have a process that is just clear for people to understand and have those one year not have to struggle to get enough market share to join the three year.

Daniel Davis: And I agree 100% with what you just said I just feel the timing is off.

MOTION to not accept the Divisions recommendations, to leave it as it is now.

Daniel Davis

Andrea Merrill, second

Failed 4-6

MOTION to accept the presentation as presented.

Natasha Hadden

Brad Horrocks, second

Passed 7-3

MOTION to adjourn

Brad Horrocks

Natasha Hadden, second

Passed unanimously