

UTAH WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING
April 9, 2008, 9:00 a.m., DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah
April 10, 2008, 8:00 a.m., DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah
Revised 04/03/2008
AGENDA

Wednesday, April 9, 2008
Board Appeals

1. Board Appeal Hearing – Corey Hopkins (9:00 am)
-Martin Bushman, Attorney Generals’ Office ACTION
2. New Zealand Mudsail Management Plan for Loa Hatchery INFORMATION
-Tim Miles, Aquatic Culture Supervisor
3. Boreal Toad Variance Request – Board Action Only ACTION
-Krissey Wilson, Native Aquatics Program Coordinator
4. Board Appeal Hearing – Kevin Richens (1:00 pm)
-Martin Bushman, Attorney General’s Office ACTION

Thursday, April 10, 2008 – 8:00 am

1. Approval of Agenda ACTION
-Paul Niemeyer, Chairman
2. Approval of Minutes ACTION
-Paul Niemeyer
3. Old Business/Action Log CONTINGENT
-Rick Woodard, Vice-Chair
4. DWR Update INFORMATION
-Jim Karpowitz, DWR Director
- 5. Board Appeal Hearing – Matt Jennings – Time Certain 1:00 p.m.**
6. Upland Game INFORMATION
-Dave Olsen, Wildlife Coordinator
7. Least Chub Experiment – NRO & CRO Only ACTION
-Krissey Wilson, Native Aquatics Program Coordinator
8. Bucks, Bulls & OIAL Permit Numbers for 2008 ACTION
-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

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| 9. Elk Unit Management Plans
-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 10. Bighorn Sheep Statewide Management Plan
-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 11. CWMU Rule R657-37 (5-yr review)
-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 12. Procedures for Confirmation of Ordinances
on hunting closures R657-34 (5-yr review)
-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 13. Approval of Mule Deer Planning Committee Membership
-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 14. Wolf Management
-Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator | INFORMATION |
| 15. Other Business
-Paul Niemeyer | CONTINGENT |

UTAH WILDLIFE BOARD MOTIONS

April 9, 2008, 9:00 a.m., DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

April 10, 2008, 8:00 a.m., DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

1. Approval of Agenda for Wednesday, April 9, 2008

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda.
Passed unanimously

2. Boreal Toad Variance Request – Board Action Only

MOTION: I move that we approve the variance request for the use of Boreal Toads as presented by the Division.
Passed unanimously

3. Approval of Agenda for Thursday, April 10, 2008

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda.
Passed unanimously

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: I move that we accept the minutes of the March 5-6, 2008 Wildlife Board meeting with the corrections.
Passed unanimously

5. Least Chub Experiment – NRO & CRO Only

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations on the Least Chub experiment as presented.
Passed unanimously

6. Bucks, Bulls & OIAL Permit Numbers for 2008

MOTION: I move that when we look at the statewide deer management plan, we look specifically at creating a Paunsaugunt sub-working group and make recommendations accordingly.
Passed unanimously

MOTION: I move that we keep the Paunsaugunt permit numbers the same as in 2007.
Passed unanimously

MOTION: I move that we accept the deer permit numbers for Central Region as proposed by the Division.

Passed unanimously

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the deer numbers as presented by the Division.

Passed unanimously

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations on the San Juan limited entry elk unit.

Passed 4 to 2

MOTION: I move that we approve the DWR's recommendation on sheep statewide, as presented.

Passed 4 to 2

MOTION: I move that we approve the remainder of the DWR's recommendations on the Bucks, Bulls & OIAL Permit numbers for 2008.

Passed unanimously

7. Elk Unit Management Plans

MOTION: I move that we amend the Nine Mile Anthro sub-unit management plan as proposed by the Northeast RAC.

Passed unanimously

MOTION: I move that we approve the elk plan through March 31, 2010.

Passed unanimously

MOTION: I move that the Northern Region do a clean sheet review of the Box Elder Elk unit and this be placed on the action log.

Passed unanimously

8. Bighorn Sheep Statewide Management Plan

MOTION: I move that we approve the Division's recommendations on the Bighorn Sheep Statewide Management Plan as presented.

Passed unanimously

9. CWMU Rule R657-37 (5-yr review)

MOTION: I move that we approve the CWMU Rule R657-37 (5-yr review)

Passed unanimously

10. Procedures for Confirmation of Ordinances on hunting closures R657-34 (5-yr review)

MOTION: I move that we approve the Procedures for Confirmation of Ordinances on hunting closures R657-34 (5-yr review).

Passed unanimously

11. Approval of Mule Deer Planning Committee Membership

MOTION: I move that we approve the recommended participants for the Deer Planning Advisory Committee as presented by the Division, adding a nonconsumptive member and that after the appointments are made, it will be brought back to the Wildlife Board.

Passed unanimously

UTAH WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING
April 9, 2008, 9:00 a.m., DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

Board Members Present

Paul Niemeyer – Chair
Rick Woodard – Vice Chair
Ernie Perkins
Tom Hatch
Del Brady
Jim Karpowitz- Exec Sec
Lee Howard
Keele Johnson

Division of Wildlife Resources

Staci Coons
Cindee Jensen
Hollie Morrill
Chris Schultz
Martin Bushman
Julie Valdes

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

Chairman Niemeyer welcomed the audience and introduced the Wildlife Board.

The following motion was made by Rick Woodard, seconded by Keele Johnson and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda.

Board Appeal for Cory Hopkins

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

The following motion was made by Rick Woodard, seconded by Lee Howard and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the minutes of the March 5-6, 2008 Wildlife Board meeting with the corrections.

3) Old Business/Action Log (**Contingent**)

Rick Woodard, Vice-Chair presented this item. He asked if the November 30, 2007 Upland game information presentation motion has been completed.

Director Karpowitz said it has been completed.

Mr. Woodard asked about the November 30, 2007 management bull elk motion, should it still be addressed?

Chairman Niemeyer said it will most likely be presented tomorrow at the meeting.

Mr. Woodard said those were the only two he had questions on. He asked if anyone has anything to be added to the action log and no one did.

4) DWR Update (**Information**)

Director Karpowitz said since we last met, we have discovered some winter loss across the state, but especially in the northern region, where feeding was done. The winter came late and stayed too long. More will be discussed on winter loss tomorrow. The Division has asked the biologists to put together a summary on the winter feeding program with what worked and what did not, and it will be brought to the Board as an informational item. There is increased pressure on the Division to feed more often and more regularly. Feeding only works to a certain degree and only when it is done right with deer. Elk are much easier to feed.

The legislature gave the Division two million dollars for sage grouse. A committee has been put together to allocate the funds. The majority of the funds will go to conservation projects. Utah should be proud, because they did things right when it comes to sage grouse. The biologists have been very progressive in their approach and sage grouse have improved within the last five years.

The legislature also gave us \$68,000 for a bison count. The intended use of the funds is for independent research on the sightability of bison. The Division will work with a university on the sightability of bison on the Henry Mountains.

Quagga Mussel was given 1.1 million in FY 08 and 1.4 million ongoing. We have a massive effort under way, with 50 plus billboards going up around the state. All will be in place by the upcoming boating season. Larry Dalton has done a really good job in getting this done.

Tomorrow we will discuss the wolf delisting. Wolves were delisted on March 28, and only three have been killed in Wyoming so far. The Board will hear the management plan tomorrow as an informational item. There are things in the plan to protect wildlife and livestock. It is informational because it is in effect and does not require Board action at this point. Everyone expected a court injunction, but that has not happened yet. April 28 is the first time some one can legally file.

The burning, relative to phragmites, is in full force again this year. A lot of burning has happened at Farmington Bay, and next week they will burn Ogden Bay. It really is a great project in revitalizing the marshes.

In response to Mr. Howard's request on mountain lions, there are two sub units that divide Provo Canyon. The one south of Provo Canyon closed and the one north is still open. The sheep experts had no indication of lions preying on sheep, so we decided we would not take action on that now, but deal with it with next year's permits. If we need to raise the objective, we will. On the Provo Peak portion, we have had a substantial die off of bighorns. We may have lost most or all of that population. There were some stray domestic sheep and domestic goats in that area this winter and the bighorns must have come in contact with them. We do not think that has happened north of Provo Canyon.

Mr. Howard said he talked with some biologists at the Central RAC meeting and they said they found some goats and sheep with ear tags on them and they are trying to contact the owners.

Director Karpowitz said on personnel and budget issues, we had an increased revenue on the drawing this year. The number of residents did not decrease by many, and it resulted in some additional revenue. The money will be used to replace equipment around the state that is outdated and broken. We have also been able to address some compensation issues with our personnel and inequities in salaries. Employees are feeling better about how the inequities are addressed and progress is being made. The legislature was very generous this year with the 5% package.

Wyoming is hunting for a new director right now. This will make Director Karpowitz the senior director in the western states. He received a letter asking for applicants from the Wyoming Commission. The Arizona Commission has not gotten back with the Division on setting up the meeting with the Utah Board.

Mr. Woodard asked if we could also address some other issues with Arizona.

Director Karpowitz said that would be fine and it would have to be set up as a public meeting.

Mr. Howard would like to include California on that meeting.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that we do not have a common border with them and maybe it is not the best idea.

Mr. Perkins mentioned that a sage grouse biologist has been hired to augment the program, and he would like to commend the Division on such a good move.

Director Karpowitz said they know the sage grouse will be a huge issue in the future with a lot of demand on our personnel. The new biologist is Jason Robinson. We are still experiencing a lot of turnover in the Division. It is getting harder and harder to keep people for a career. Two of the employees receiving awards tonight have already quit.

Mr. Johnson said we need to keep our eyes on the sage grouse as far as the CRP program goes. We do not know what is going to happen with the federal government and our corn crop in the country. This is critical on the sage grouse.

Director Karpowitz said every wildlife agency in the country is supportive of the Farm Bill and the CRP Program. There are people from the association working actively to lobby Congress to get this program reinstated.

Mr. Hatch said he saw a report on the Intention to Plant Report and corn is down 20%, because of fertilizer costs.

Mr. Johnson said probably after the next five years corn will not be the product in demand, but cellulose. Also, relative to personnel, the gen x generation has no loyalty to

employers and this might be some of what the Division is experiencing. They will bounce between employers.

Director Karpowitz said it might not be so much loyalty, but they want to do a lot of different things.

Chairman Niemeyer said there is a lot of research on cars relative to this generation and it reflects the same thing. They are not loyal to one type or situation.

5) New Zealand Mudsail Management Plan for Loa Hatchery (**Information**)

Tim Miles, Aquatic Culture Supervisor presented this agenda item. They found mud snails in the Loa Hatchery in late November 2007. Springs providing water for the hatchery building and truck loading system have remained free of NZMS. They have developed this management plan to address this infestation. (See handout in Board packet) The strategies were to address decontamination of existing trout stocks, containment and removal of the snails from the lower hatchery and in the long-term strategy, a solution on how to handle those permanently.

Out of 600 fish on site in a recent examination of their digestive tracts, we found one mud snail. We feel quite confident that the fish are not picking up a lot of them. Mr. Miles then went through the protocols. The first thing they do is thoroughly clean one of the race ways and then use a hot water pressure washer to clean, paying particular attention to cracks, seams and stream channels, head boards and tail boards. After that, they spray the entire raceway with a 5% quaternary ammonium solution. After that time, the race way is filled and rinsed with filtered water. Next, they allow the facility to air dry at least two weeks.

Mr. Miles then went over recommendations for a long-term solution to the NZMS problem at the hatchery. It is the Division's intent to pursue the water collection and containment alternative. The long-term development addresses the presence of NZMS in the adjacent watershed and provides a water supply and facility that will prevent reintroduction and protect native snails in the spring complex.

Mr. Johnson asked if these snails have gone down the river system to the Fremont.

Mr. Miles said they are not in the Fremont. They have inventoried Spring Creek and they are down about one mile below the hatchery. This indicates that they have been in the system for quite a while.

Mr. Johnson asked what if they get into the Colorado drainage and into Lake Powell.

Mr. Miles said they are already in the tail waters below Lake Powell. They are like all invasive species and they will work their way through our state. We will just try to do as much as we can.

Mr. Perkins asked how the snails came into the hatchery.

Mr. Miles indicated the hatcheries were not being checked prior to accepting fish. They are since checking the waters that were stocked for the past four years to see if we have moved snails into water. All other hatcheries are reported as clean.

Mr. Johnson said the immediate action is to put the filter in place, then follow up with the springs.

Mr. Miles indicated the snails can move 39 inches an hour and can be found up to 30 feet from the water.

Mr. Johnson asked if the snails can get into the channels.

Mr. Miles said no. They are tritus feeders and have to be out in the open.

Director Karpowitz explained why this was brought to the Board. These mud snails do not kill fish and cannot be compared to whirling disease. There are big differences between prohibited pathogens and prohibited species. These snails have been identified as a prohibited species. Also, as mud snails expand and start showing up in private hatcheries, it is important that the DWR shows that we have demonstrated what you need to do before you start moving fish, if you have mud snails in your hatchery.

Mr. Hatch asked if we are setting up to close down private hatcheries, because of the expense.

Director Karpowitz said no, but we are telling them this is what they should be doing and by law they cannot move mud snails. Most hatcheries can take the same steps as the Division to make sure mud snails and such are not moved around.

Mr. Hatch said we are setting a model for how this should be dealt with, but in the private sector they cannot go to the legislature and get five million dollars. It comes out of their own pocket and we might be setting them up to fail.

Director Karpowitz said no, what they can do is follow the same procedure we are doing before they move fish. They can get a large tank, put the fish in there, starve them for a couple of days, flush the water through, and test the fish for snails, all this without doing anything to their hatchery. The Division had a meeting with the Department of Agriculture to discuss this and their feeling was that almost any private hatchery, regardless of its size could have a holding facility for the fish before transporting. They will not be required to clean up their hatchery like when there is whirling disease, but they will be required to not move a prohibited species. The Division is going to extreme measures and we will learn a lot more about this over time.

Mr. Miles said we have already found that literature says about 50% of these snails will make their way through a fishes' digestive track once. At the Loa Hatchery we are finding about 5% of them make it alive and they are really sick when they come through. We put that same snail into a fish stomach a second time and it kills the snail. We will continue to learn things that will help manage this. We have also found that hydrogen peroxide kills these snails within ten minutes and that will keep our Egan Hatchery open.

Mr. Miles continued to review the condition of many of the Division's hatcheries. He also mentioned that they are drilling a well at the Springville Hatchery and they are at 555 feet and at 480 they hit an aquifer that pushed sand and gravel 40 feet up into the pipe. Presently we can isolate close to 5 CFS of flow out of this test well and we need between 6 and 9 CFS. Once we get that we can start production again.

6) Boreal Toad Variance Request – **(Action)**

Krissy Wilson, Native Aquatics Program Coordinator presented this request. (See handout in Board packet) Boreal toads are a tier two species on our Wildlife Action Plan. We have a Boreal toad conservation plan and also have participants from other federal and state agencies who have formed a team to look at conservation actions for this species.

The Wildlife Board is being asked about some action to be taken on the Paunsaugunt Plateau population. They have some recent information that indicates that the population there is very distinct from any other boreal toad population in the state of Utah. We need to conserve the genetic variation that is present in that population. There is a high probability that this population could be extirpated in the near future due to chytrid fungus infection and other threats. It is recommended that a captive refuge be established for this population. In addition to reducing the risk of extirpation, a refuge population will also provide broodstock for reintroduction into the wild once conditions allow. The Division is asking for a variance, because this is a prohibited species, to allow collection of eggs that will be sent to a facility in Colorado where they will rear them and send them back to Utah. The DWR has an arrangement with the Hogle Zoo Living Planet Aquarium and also a facility in Mississippi where these boreal toads would be raised.

Chairman Niemeyer asked if they are looking to return these toads to the wild, or will they be kept in captivity?

Ms. Wilson said they will be kept in captivity and studied relative to reproduction in captivity. When there are sufficient numbers in captivity, they will reintroduce them into their original location.

Mr. Hatch asked about the fungus that is killing these toads.

Ms. Wilson said chytrid fungus is an infection that has been present in the environment for millennia, but over the last ten to fifteen years, it has been decimating toad populations. There are different theories on why. Chytrid fungus is very crucial to the environment to break down hard materials, but over the last fifteen to twenty years, toads have been infected. It keeps them from respiring through their skin and affects their motor sensory abilities. Degredation of habitat and increased UV penetration are reasons this is occurring.

Mr. Bushman asked if this variance is for the facilities that are going to be holding these toads.

Ms. Wilson said yes. Central region employees are looking to collect egg strands this year to move forward on this process.

Mr. Perkins asked if the Division pays these facilities.

Ms. Wilson said no.

The following motion was made by Tom Hatch, seconded by Rick Woodard and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the variance request for the use of Boreal Toads as presented by the Division.

Board Appeal for Kevin Richens

UTAH WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING
April 10, 2008, 9:00 a.m., DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

Board Members Present

Paul Niemeyer – Chair
Rick Woodard – Vice Chair
Ernie Perkins
Tom Hatch
Del Brady
Jim Karpowitz- Exec Sec
Lee Howard
Keele Johnson

Division of Wildlife Resources

Staci Coons
Judi Tutorow
Doug Messerly
Dana Dolsen
LuAnn Petrovich
Justin Dolling
Dave Olsen
Greg Sheehan

RAC Chairs Present

Bob Christensen – Northeastern
Jake Albrecht – Southern
Bill Fenimore – Northern
Fred Oswald – Central
Jim Gilson – Southeastern

Public Present

Mike Linnell
Jim Bell
Jack R. Bean
JoAnne Bean
Pam Donoviel
Dennis Donoviel

John Fairchild
Martin Bushman
Craig McLaughlin
Cindee Jensen
Anis Aoude
Krissy Wilson
Daniel Nelson
Kevin Christopherson
Kevin Bunnell
Kent Hersey
Teresa Bonzo
Keith Fullencamp
Heather Bernales
Scott Jensen
Lindy Varney

Chairman Niemeyer welcomed the audience and introduced the Wildlife Board members and RAC Chairs.

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

Chairman Niemeyer said that yesterday, on the Thursday agenda, they approved the minutes, went through the old business/action log and the DWR Update. Does anyone have any questions or comments on these? At this point we will approve today's revised agenda.

The following motion was made by Tom Hatch, seconded by Rick Woodard and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the agenda as revised.

2) Upland Game (**Information**)

Dave Olsen, Wildlife Coordinator presented this agenda item. He will do an Upland game proclamation review since we are at the end of the three-year proclamation. At the November 2007 Board meeting there was a request for an informational presentation prior to RAC and Board action. This is to inform and invite participation in the process. The information is a summary of suggestions that have been received outside the Division towards the upland game program. He will also review the upland game proclamation recommendation process. DWR recommendations are not developed until late March.

Mr. Olsen went on to go over the proclamation objectives which are to maintain biological integrity, provide continuity, consistency and fairness, strive for simple, straightforward rules and regulations, consider and try to meet public and landowner desires and recruit hunters (youth).

He then reviewed suggestions received from public, which came from the Upland Game Advisory Committee meeting in December 2007 and the general public/sportsmen.

On Chukar, the Upland Game Committee wanted them to strive to unify season dates statewide, move season opening to October (1st Saturday), and extend and unify season closing to mid February. The rationale behind this is that activity around the guzzlers in the West Desert through vehicle parking is a problem and research has shown that the more vegetation we have right up to the water source improves it for wildlife use. We also wanted to mirror with the Hungarian partridge season whatever we would do with chukars.

On sage grouse, they want to move the season from September to October and hunting would continue under limited permits. On sharp tailed grouse, they would like to initiate a Cache County hunt and the hunting would mirror the program for Box Elder county sharp tailed grouse hunt by permit only with a two-bird permit.

On forest grouse, blue and ruffed, they want to move the season opening to the 1st Saturday in September and extend the season closing from November 30 to December 31. This might be controversial. The rationale is to provide more opportunity, but archery hunters do not want more hunters on the mountain. This could be a conflict, especially on limited entry hunts where someone has waited a long time for a permit.

On pheasant, they want to unify with a statewide season date with traditional 1st November Saturday opening with an extended December 31 closing. We currently have three zones for season. The public had comments both ways. The Southern RAC public was supportive of these recommendations. Utah County did not support the recommendations and other parts of the state could go either way. There are no proposed changes to other species with one exception, of the California quail to be added in Sanpete County for open hunting.

Another committee suggestion, going back to chukars, is to develop a rule prohibiting hunting/parking at or near guzzlers. This has been an issue for several years. The Division does not have authority over land management and if we did develop something it might be an unenforceable rule. There was also a discussion to extend the proclamation from a three to a five-year duration. They also want to look at dropping the nonresident youth upland hunting license requirement and make it just a youth hunting license. This follows a pattern with surrounding states. This would allow people who are nonresidents, who come to hunt with family in the state, to not be so financially impacted. There would be one license for resident and nonresident youth. They also want to expand youth hunts wherever possible, and require adult companions to complete hunter education. As a side note, the only conflict would be that those born before 1965 are not required to have a Hunter Education card, so this would have to be addressed. One other suggestion they had was for the Division to consider a put and take pheasant program on our WMAs where those who participate in them would be required to buy an additional license or punch card for their participation and the Division would then release birds occasionally throughout the season for these people.

Mr. Olsen then went over the upland game recommendation schedule. The DWR biologists develop recommendations in March. Formal recommendations will be presented at RAC meetings during May and June, and then they go to the Wildlife Board for action at the June 19 meeting. He then went over the recommendation development.

Mr. Howard said the statewide pheasant season is awfully long for as few pheasants as there are.

Mr. Olsen said there were comments like this, but these recommendations are biologically sound. There are lots of other social issues relative to pheasants, including access.

Mr. Niemeyer said there are a lot of guys in the Sevier Valley who raise pheasants and then turn them loose. Is there a problem with that?

Mr. Olsen said, technically, no, but to allow this, it could cause problems with disease with the pheasants and in the poultry business. We have to be cognizant of this issue.

Chairman Niemeyer said we need to look into that.

Mr. Olsen said it could be reviewed.

Mr. Johnson asked about the forest grouse season, would that be too long?

Mr. Olsen said no. Across the spectrum with upland game, usually the take is less than 10% of the population. The rule of diminishing returns and the onset of winter makes it okay.

Mr. Johnson asked about the chukars and not being able to hunt near the guzzlers. Also it might be considered a safety zone. Idaho, Alaska and Arizona do have laws relative to this issue.

Mr. Olsen said the Board does have authority to pass these laws, but they would not be enforceable.

Mr. Johnson said that might be so, but most hunters would obey the rule. We need to look into these types of rules. He gave an example about hunting in Alaska. We need to look at this so we do not get overly impacted.

Mr. Olsen said we will review this internally.

Director Karpowitz said we can regulate hunting, but not parking.

Mr. Perkins thanked Mr. Olsen for an outstanding presentation. The sage grouse recommendation is also based on biological input, in that there are local and Idaho study indications that reflect if you have a season prior to brood dispersal, hen mortality can be excessive and significant. Moving the season back would help protect adult hens and would be a good conservation effort that would assist in building populations in the state.

Mr. Olsen commented along these lines on the sage grouse. In the early broods the hens are still attending, and when hunted she becomes more vulnerable to harvest.

3) Least Chub Experiment – NRO & CRO Only (**Action**)

Krissy Wilson, Native Aquatics Program Coordinator presented this information on an experimental use of least chub in ornamental ponds, to control mosquitoes. Least chub are endemic to the Bonneville Basin, mature within one year and can live up to seven years. (See Powerpoint Presentation) It is a conservation species with a conservation agreement and strategy 1998, 2005. It was recently petitioned to list by the Center for Biological Diversity. She went on to give background on the least chub populations and their locations. There are captive and wild populations and we are moving forward for our conservation of wild least chub. We have identified, that for each wild population, we would like to have two additional populations in captivity, representing each one of those populations. She went on to give some examples.

Ms. Wilson went on to say that it is well know within our least chub conservation team that there are problems with interactions between least chub and gambusia (mosquito fish). Gambusia will out compete, prey upon and eventually eliminate least chub in the habitat. They have been conducting research on what direction we can go with the least chub and the gambusia. She then gave background on the mosquitofish. It is used to control mosquitoes in the county program and is one of several methods. We have documented that it has a negative effect on native fish and amphibians, specifically on least chub.

Today, we are looking at the experimental use of least chub in ornamental ponds to control mosquitoes. This is a cooperative effort between several different agencies. The Mosquito Abatement District is doing this experiment, not the Division. We will supply them with fish. She then went over the details of the experiment. The project will begin in June 2008 and run through the fall of the same year. If least chub become listed under ESA, those used in MAD programs would be exempt from protection under ESA.

Today the Division is seeking approval from the Board to allow MAD to use least chub for this experimental project and also in a long-term program if the experimental project is successful. They also need the Board to approve the variance request for them to use least chub since it is a prohibited species. This concluded the presentation.

RAC Recommendations

Northern and Central RACs approved this recommendation unanimously.

There was no public comment.

The following motion was made by Lee Howard, seconded by Del Brady and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations on the Least Chub experiment as presented.

4) Bucks, Bulls & OIAL Permit Numbers for 2008 (**Action**)

Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator presented these permit numbers. All recommendations are made in order to get us to objectives that are set in plans that have been through the RAC and Wildlife Board process.

The 2007 general season deer harvest numbers were presented. (See Powerpoint Presentation for charts, graphs and further detail) Basically, statewide the archers had about a 16% success rate, the muzzleloader hunters had a 28% success rate, rifle hunters' 34.7% success rate and total of all weapon types had a 32% success rate. He then compared them to historic rates. He then went over general season harvest trends since 1997, post season buck: doe ratios on general season public land units 2005-07 by region, buck:doe ratio trends 1998-2007, post-season buck:doe ratios on general season private land units 2005-07, and fawn production trends 1998-2007 that came up from 2002 through 2006 and then dropped the last couple of years because of drought conditions.

Mr. Aoude then went over the Statewide Deer Management plan that was approved November 13, 2003. The population objective is to achieve post-season buck:doe ratio of 15 bucks per 100 does. For the past couple of years the Northeastern and Central regions had 1,000 fewer permits each because they were below the 15 bucks per 100 doe objective. Both regions have since reached that objective, but given the winter conditions that those regions have had, we may have more than usual fawn mortality. Those male fawns that would have been yearling bucks in the fall may be some of those in the mortality. Since 50-60% of general season harvest is usually yearlings, the DWR recommends that we remain at the current numbers in those regions.

Similarly, the Northern region buck to doe ratio is 18. Based on the Statewide Deer Plan, no reduction in permit numbers is warranted, but given the winter conditions; we are recommending a decrease for the same reasons as the other two regions.

The 2008 permit numbers were then presented with a total of 94,000 permits statewide which is 3,000 permits below the cap.

The post-season deer classification limited entry deer units 2005-07 were then discussed. On the premium entry units we manage for 25-35 bucks per 100 does. On both of those units we are clearly above that and there is room for increasing permits. On the limited entry units, we manage between 25-35 bucks per 100 does, and all but two units are within that range with some in the higher end. There is room for increasing permits on a lot of those units. The Fillmore/Oakcreek and the Plateau Thousand Lakes are struggling to get the buck:doe ratio where it should be.

The 2008 limited entry deer permit recommendations were presented. 211 permits are recommended on the premium limited entry units, which reflects a slight increase. On a lot of our hunts we had some inconsistencies on weapon types, so this year we made them all consistent. We went to all units having a split of 60%-any weapon, 20%-archery

and 20%-muzzleloader. There are some changes where you will see an additional number of permits, but the number of bucks that will actually be taken will be fewer, because we have moved those tags into either archery or muzzleloader permits. The 2008 limited entry permits recommendation is 891.

Mr. Aoude then went on to the 2008 limited entry elk permit recommendations. We manage these units by the age of harvested bull elk, then they average the age of all the harvested bull elk. If those ages are above the objective, we increase permits to bring it down. If the ages are below, we decrease permits. All but two units in the state are above age objectives, some 1 ½ to 2 yrs. He went over all of the units according to their age objective to show where the unit is relative to objective. On the 3-4 age objective units, we are about 2 ½ years above objective. On the 4-5 objective units, we are 1 ½ years above, but there is a trend that it is moving toward objective. Similarly on the 5-6 year old objective, we are 1 ½ years above, but starting to move toward objective. On the 7-8 year old objective, it still shows a climbing trend, so there is opportunity for more permits.

He then talked about the average age on the harvested management bull elk hunts. This was the first year we have had this hunt to try to lower bull:cow ratios on some units that were limited entry only and had no other bull harvest. The San Juan average harvest age was 7.3 years, Southwest Desert 4.2 years, Fillmore/Pahvant 2.3 years and the Monroe 3.7 years. The management bull elk permits intended to reduce bull:cow ratios through removal of smaller-antlered bulls on these four units. On archery hunt, the San Juan has a recommended 10 permits, for rifle hunts on the Monroe, 15 permits, Southwest Desert, 24 permits and Fillmore, Pahvant 10 permits.

He then presented the 2008 limited entry elk permit recommendations at 2,447 at a 17% increase, which is the same increase as last year. With that increase we continued to see ages above objective, so we are slowly moving toward getting those ages down without digging into the quality. Including the management bull permits we are recommending 2,506 permits, which is a 16% increase overall for limited entry.

Mr. Aoude went on to present the 2008 pronghorn permit recommendations with a fairly substantial increase, 945 total permits with the redistribution in weapon type. The 2008 OIAL permit recommendations has an increase on moose from 151 to 184, bison 145 to 172, desert bighorn 39 to 36, Rocky Mountain bighorn 18 to 23, and Rocky Mountain goat 90 to 91. This concluded the presentation.

Mr. Gilson said the fawn:doe ratios are done in the fall with no accountability in the spring. How do you determine fawn loss?

Mr. Aoude said there is not a good answer. The best way is in the fall. That's why we recommend decreasing permits ahead of time, just in case.

Mr. Gilson said they are expecting 100% fawn loss in northern, is that a Division statistic?

Mr. Aoude said no. He cannot predict the fawn loss.

Mr. Gilson said the bull to cow ratios are way high for the management objectives with some concern for bull dying of old age, but this does not seem to be a concern if the buck to doe ratios are high, why is that?

Mr. Aoude said we are recommending more permits on both of those units that are above objective and all units that are high.

Mr. Gilson asked if we should be considering late hunts when deer come off of private property.

Mr. Aoude said 27 bucks per 100 does is not excessive.

Mr. Gilson said the management hunt was to reduce bull numbers, but it is also for opportunity. Has opportunity been omitted from the Elk Committee recommendation?

Mr. Aoude said no, the opportunity was given on the big bull tags. The management bull tags ended up taking a lot of younger bulls and that was what the Southern region was conveying to the Division on what they wanted. Southern recommendation was with public input in mind.

Mr. Gilson read from the Northern RAC minutes and a comment Mr. Aoude made about the fact that the deer population doesn't matter. "The way we are harvesting is "bucks only" and we are maintaining the buck:doe ratio at a certain rate . . ." (See Northern RAC Minutes) He asked Mr. Aoude to clarify his remarks.

Mr. Aoude said it really does not matter what the population is; we are only harvesting bucks. The objective is to manage to a buck:doe ratio, regardless of population. It is best to harvest more bucks if you want to increase population. Population numbers do not matter when harvesting buck only.

Mr. Gilson suggests in light of the statewide decline of deer populations, populations do matter.

Mr. Aoude said if we want to increase populations, then we should harvest more bucks.

Mr. Howard asked about the decline on the North San Rafael.

Mr. Bill Bates said we have not taken any sheep off the North since 2002, but we have been taking them off the South San Rafael. The last two counts on the north have shown fewer sheep with the drop in the number of rams and lambs. Six of the eight hunters indicated they were unsatisfied with the hunt. Young rams were taken and quality appears to be down. They also found a six-year-old prime ram dead with no obvious predation. There were no broken bones or signs that it had been wounded. They are concerned that there might be some disease.

Mr. Woodard asked about the management bull tags on the San Juan. Did they have broken points?

Mr. Aoude said there was one with a broken point, and it is hard to draw conclusions with only four bulls taken.

Mr. Woodard asked about the bison hunt on the Henry Mountains, we are getting the tags up, but are we diminishing the quality of the OIAL hunts?

Mr. Aoude said most additional permits are on cows to try to bring the population down. This will not diminish the bull quality.

Mr. Perkins said, relative to Mr. Gilson's comment about the high buck:doe ratio in the Northern region and the late hunts, some of the answer is the deer do not move into public lands like they do in the Southern region in the winter. They are in huge blocks of private land and are there year round.

Mr. Aoude said those that do are in areas where we will not know which ones are harvested. They could come off the Cache or the Ogden Units. We do not want to deplete one population in order to reduce buck:doe ratios on another.

RAC Recommendations

Southern – Mr. Albrecht said they had 106 people at the Beaver meeting and the majority was there for the mule deer numbers. Several people got up and opposed the increase on the Paunsaugunt. The Southern RAC made a motion for a slight increase on the Paunsaugunt and it died for lack of a second. Next there was a motion to accept numbers with exception that Paunsaugunt numbers stay the same as it was last year. It passed 7 to 3. The elk permit numbers passed unanimously with some discussion. Pronghorn and OIAL passed unanimously.

Southeastern – Mr. Gilson said they discussed all the recommendations. San Juan took most of the time. This place has become very popular and is overcrowded, even though the permits are not that numerous. There are people taking videos on every ridge and tree. The motion is to help alleviate the overcrowding. MOTION: To approve bucks, bulls and OIAL permit numbers as presented, except that 10 management bull permits added to San Juan bull hunt, 5 permits be subtracted from the San Juan early hunt; and 15 permits be added to San Juan late hunt. This passed 5 to 4.

Central – Mr. Oswald said they had a full house at their meeting. They had three motions. MOTION: Accept bighorn sheep and it passed unanimously. MOTION: Accept the elk management plan and it passed unanimously. MOTION: To reduce the Central region general season deer permits by an additional 1,000 and this passed 4 to 2. A motion to accept the balance as presented and it passed 5 to 1.

Northeastern – Mr. Christensen said there was a discussion on the South Slope Diamond Mountain elk unit. There was some discussion and the issues were resolved. There was also discussion on anticipated winter loss of fawns, the 1,000 permit reduction, and adding another 700 to reduction. MOTION: Accepted DWR recommendations as presented and it passed 7 to 1.

Northern – Mr. Fenimore said Mr. Aoude did a very good job presenting the DWR's recommendation and fielding the questions at the meeting. He suggested that the Division could write an explanation/essay to be put into the proclamation so the public could understand the big game management philosophy. This would better inform the public and it might reduce the aggressive questions and defensive posturing at the RAC meetings. There were some questions about highway mortality and the fact that it needs to be figured into recommendations. They would like the bighorn presentation before the permit numbers are presented. They would also like to reconvene the Elk Management Committee, because the management hunts are not working as intended. Mr. Aoude expressed some concern on reconvening the committee every year and the need to let the program work. They want the numbers for the Crawford Mountain muzzleloader hunt to remain the same as last year. The deer numbers passed unanimously with the exception of Crawford Mountain and it passed 7 to 2. The elk numbers passed unanimously. The sheep numbers passed unanimously with one recusal and the pronghorn & OIAL passed unanimously.

Mr. Albrecht said they had some public comments on bison. They want to get numbers back to where counts should be, but are concerned with putting so much pressure on them, that they would be scattered everywhere.

Public Comment

Don Peay of SFW addressed the Wildlife Board. On the Paunsaugunt, it is hard to do sophisticated management practices in a public process. This is difficult. When Sam Carpenter takes three weeks off work to go gather data on the Paunsaugunt deer herd, he should be given consideration. SFW would like to keep permits there the same as last year. On the San Rafael, we need to find out what is going on with sheep. SFW is already working with the Division and BYU to see what is going on before we lose another desert sheep herd. It is amazing that every time we try to do something positive for wildlife there is criticism and when there is something bad, no one seems to care. Living with management plans is very important, especially with the bison on the Henry Mountains.

Mr. Peay then presented some before and after pictures on rangeland in southern Utah, illustrating the great progress that has been made. We are getting national recognition on our conservation efforts. He complimented the Board and the Division on the habitat work. Over the next few years, hopefully we can get a return on that investment and we can have more wildlife and livestock on our public lands.

He then passed around some pictures of wolf depredation and what they are doing. (See Attachment #1) They do not just kill the sick and the weak, or just to eat. We need to stay with the plans and manage accordingly. Hank Fisher said in a recent newspaper article that we need to live with the wolf plans, which called for 300 wolves. The federal government has killed 700 wolves in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho over the past few years. In spite of that, there are 1,500 wolves, which is way over the 300 that the plan called for. We must manage to plans. He handed out an article to the Board on living

with the wolf plan. Mr. Peay had to make all his comments now, because he cannot be here later.

Mr. Peay also said that Wyoming, Idaho and Montana have been dealing with the same droughts as we have, but their game populations are going down and ours is going up. We are doing a good job.

Board Discussion

Chairman Niemeyer summarized the RAC recommendations and said we would address the Paunsaugunt issue first.

Mr. Hatch said the buck:doe ratios are up there. It is a premier area, but they are concerned with the quality of deer going down. Sam Carpenter has done a lot of work down there and they are not seeing the tremendous trophy bucks. Is there a biological reason for that?

Mr. Aoude said we are harvesting all those bucks before we do our classifications.

Mr. Hatch said hunter comments do not reflect the satisfaction that they used to and they are not seeing the huge number of trophy bucks as in the past. Mr. Hatch cannot see how killing fewer bucks will help that situation. It is further complicated, because we share the deer with Arizona. He would like to have a deer management team put in place to look at these issues on the Paunsaugunt in the next year and come back with recommendations.

Director Karpowitz said later in the meeting we are going to ask the Board to approve the new Deer Management Committee. They will address a lot of these issues. The Cache Working Group has had real success and he would not be opposed to having a Paunsaugunt working group. They have had one of sorts and discussed some of these issues.

Ms. Bonzo said she has had some conversations with different concerned hunters. Some are Friends of the Paunsaugunt. They are trying to get together throughout the summer and fall to work on some strategies to present in November. The buck:doe ratio is 59/100, average age is close to objective, but quality and satisfaction is declining.

Chairman Niemeyer said there is another group from Arizona that has been formed and looking at this. They are not killing premium bucks on this unit. It used to be the best unit in the U.S. The late hunt right on the Arizona border might be one of the problems.

Mr. Aoude said one of the problems might be forage. Antler size is correlated with forage. Since we have an over population of bucks, it might be a nutrition issue. We cannot manage genetics by hunting. It is not because we are cropping the best that that population is getting there.

Mr. Johnson said what we are seeing there is what we saw on Elk Ridge years ago. Are there similarities?

Mr. Perkins said he agrees with Mr. Hatch on looking at what is going on with that deer herd.

The following motion was made by Tom Hatch, seconded by Ernie Perkins and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that when we look at the statewide deer management plan, we look specifically at creating a Paunsaugunt sub-working group and make recommendations accordingly.

Mr. Johnson said he would like to comment on genetics and the deer herds. On the San Juan we have hit these deer so hard we have messed up the genetics. Genetics makes a big difference and we need to keep this in mind. He continued to discuss various areas where he believes deer herds have been over hunted and the genetics have been adversely affected.

Mr. Brady said he agrees that genetics make a difference, but it could very well be forage. The Southern RAC voted to keep the permits where they are this year, because of the unknown factors. He supports the Southern RAC's recommendation to keep the numbers the same this year and follow up with Mr. Hatch's motion.

Mr. Howard said we need to use more caution on the number of deer permits, because we are most likely going to have a much larger winter kill than anticipated.

The following motion was made by Del Brady, seconded Tom Hatch and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we keep the Paunsaugunt permit numbers the same as in 2007.

The next topic is the 1,000-permit reduction recommendation by the Central RAC.

Director Karpowitz said if we cut these 1,000 tags, they will not come back. He suspects that cutting 1,000 tags will do little to affect buck:doe ratios. This will eliminate 1,000 opportunities for hunters and their families. If we do this we should also cut Dedicated Hunters. He has concerns about the spiraling downward trend in hunting, and also youth recruitment.

Mr. Oswald said there was not a lot of comment from the public on reducing these numbers.

Director Karpowitz said he gets many letters each year pleading that we not continue to reduce opportunity in hunting.

Mr. Woodard said, nothing against the Dedicated Hunters at the Central RAC, but many of them leave once the roll has been called.

Mr. Oswald said there was not a lot of public comment in favor of reduction, but the motion did come from these comments.

Mr. Aoude said the permit numbers were lowered three years ago by 1,000. They were changed because we were under objective and we are currently up to objective.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by Del Brady and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the deer permit numbers for Central Region as proposed by the Division.

The next issue is Crawford Mountain and the proposed increase from 15 to 21 permits.

Mr. Fenimore said there was some discussion about the number of hunters there. The hunting is impacted by crowding. They are hunting Wyoming deer that come into that area.

Mr. Aoude said that unit did have 30 permits on it initially. They recommend bringing it out of limited entry, because of the low buck:doe ratio. The crowding issue is not really an issue. There used to be a lot more permits.

Mr. Perkins said there were also some safety concerns. A suggestion might be keeping the numbers there and have the Division look at adding an early and late hunt for next year, then the permits could be increased to 30.

Mr. Aoude said it is a small unit, but it can easily accommodate 30 hunters.

Mr. Hatch said crowding is a relative issue. A lot of the Dedicated Hunters are those who are causing the crowding.

The following motion was made by Tom Hatch, seconded by Lee Howard and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the deer numbers as presented by the Division.

The next issue is the San Juan Elk - Southeastern recommendations.

Mr. Johnson said we are getting close to the tipping point on the San Juan Unit elk. The Division numbers are close to where we want to be. The changes in the numbers were to try to leave total harvest the same, with movement toward the variety of hunters who are applying. Instead of increasing from 10 to 20 permits, he would like to see it go to 15. He went on to discuss last year's harvest. On the management hunt, the CWMU in that area would be interested in some permits. He shifted permits from very successful hunts to less successful hunts, but increased the number of permits overall. He then went over the RAC recommendations compared to his. The goal is to keep the harvest close to

what the Division wants, but add more tags to the less successful hunts. Mr. Johnson feels we owe people the right to go hunt.

Mr. Brady asked Mr. Aoude for his opinion on this motion.

Mr. Aoude said they were working for more satisfied hunters and were also looking to get to age objective with their recommendations. We want to get to objective and having the permits in the more successful areas gets us there a lot quicker. The management permits is not that big of an issue, because they are such a low success rate. The percentage on the various weapons is set with a formula, and the only leeway the biologists have is on the early and late hunts.

Mr. Perkins said he is concerned that we are not working toward the age objective. We are two full years above age objective. Mr. Johnson's proposal will put us back at the last year's harvest numbers. He then went over the changes proposed and these will not move us toward objective.

Chairman Niemeyer said the hunters in the area will start killing more bulls in the late hunts.

Mr. Johnson said his recommendation added eight more permits, beyond the Division's recommendation.

Mr. Hatch said we have management plans for a purpose and we do not come up with numbers arbitrarily. We need to stick to the formulas and biological science. He is concerned that we might flaw the entire RAC and Board system. We should resist micro managing the system as a Board.

Mr. Gilson said their recommendations come from overcrowding during the rifle hunt. They are trying to maintain the quality of the hunt. They were looking to reduce the permit numbers during the early rifle hunt. That is their concern.

The following motion was made by Keele Johnson, seconded by Lee Howard and failed 4 opposed, Ernie Perkins, Tom Hatch, Rick Woodard and Del Brady to 2 in favor, Lee Howard and Keele Johnson.

MOTION: I move that on the San Juan Elk Unit, we give 15 permits on the management hunt, 21 on archery, 10 on muzzleloader, 24 on early rifle, and 30 late rifle.

Mr. Brady said we have reservations on these issues, but he feels we need to stick with the biologists. We stick with the plan, in spite of social concerns and other unknowns.

The following motion was made by Del Brady, seconded by Rick Woodard and passed 4 in favor, Ernie Perkins, Tom Hatch, Rick Woodard and Del Brady to 2 opposed, Lee Howard and Keele Johnson.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations on the San Juan limited entry elk unit.

Chairman Niemeyer said we might get more tags if we moved some into the late hunt and it would also address the overcrowding issue. This might be something we should look at.

Mr. Johnson said we need to look at elk numbers statewide. We are never going to work through our numbers of people drawing out. We need to look at it with all of our units. That is what he was trying to do with his San Juan proposal. He said he is damn tired of the biologists not talking to him. He makes the final decision on this and he wants to know what is going on.

Director Karpowitz said he thought Mr. Johnson expressed appreciation for the opportunity of working with Guy Wallace.

Mr. Johnson said that is true, but he had to set it up himself, Mr. Wallace did not contact him.

Mr. Woodard said we need to address the North San Rafael sheep.

Mr. Howard said we should leave the non-residents permits where they are and should not do anything at this point. Cutting 4 permits out of San Rafael at this point is more than we need to do.

Director Karpowitz asked what the total number of rams observed was.

Mr. Bates said we have 47 total rams and 15 rams, 6 years of age and older. They based their recommendation on 30% of 15 of the older rams. Total permits on the unit is 4, plus a conservation permit.

Chairman Niemeyer asked what sightability is.

Mr. Bates said 80%.

Director Karpowitz said on our OIAL permits, nonresidents get 5-8% of the permits. We are looking to get more permits out through the convention, which are draw permits and this would get it up to the 10%. It would put a few more permits out there. This is still in the process.

Mr. Brady asked Mr. Howard what his proposal is on the San Rafael nonresident permits.

Mr. Howard wants to go to 6 permits.

Director Karpowitz said that would add three with the additional conservation permit. We have been very successful with our sheep formulas and he does not want to vary from them.

Mr. Perkins said we should not dip into the conservation permits, since FNAWS might already be looking to market them.

Mr. Brady said he agrees with Director Karpowitz and if there are more rams there than we thought, we can increase permits next year and stay within the formula. Based on what we have right now, we are making decisions based on the best knowledge available to us.

The following motion was made by Tom Hatch, seconded by Rick Woodard and passed 4 in favor, Ernie Perkins, Tom Hatch, Rick Woodard and Del Brady to 2 opposed, Lee Howard and Keele Johnson.

MOTION: I move that we approve the DWR's recommendation on sheep statewide, as presented.

The following motion was made by Del Brady, seconded by Tom Hatch and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the remainder of the DWR's recommendations on the Bucks, Bulls & OIAL Permit numbers for 2008.

5) Elk Unit Management Plans (**Action**)

Anis Aoude, Big Game coordinator presented this item. These plans are dealing with population objectives on these elk units. We dealt with age objectives on these units last year. He then went through the initial steps, starting in fall of 2006. Regional Wildlife Managers and biologists evaluated all elk units, and identified units where objectives could be increased. The criteria used was capacity of range, depredation, and competition with livestock. The units where regions thought population increases may be feasible formed committees to gain public input and recommend new objectives. On the remaining units the existing plans were updated with no increase in population objectives.

Mr. Aoude then presented charts illustrating unit objectives, population estimates, and committee status. He went through the units and stated which had a committee. Almost all units in Southern region had a committee. (See Powerpoint Presentation) He also listed who served on the elk unit committees

Generally, the elk unit-planning outcome was the committee recommendations/new plans had no substantial increase statewide. In the winter of 2007-08 the regions reconvened the committees to push for increased population objectives. No additional unit committees wanted to increase elk numbers. After meeting with most committees twice and some even three times to try to increase population objectives, there was basically no increase in Northern or Northeastern regions. He continued to go through some of the units in the other regions relative to an increase in population objectives.

In summary, the DWR attempted to increase the statewide elk population objective:

1. identified units with potential to support more elk

2. convened committees to assess public input; support for increased elk population objectives.

3. review initial committee recommendations (no substantial increase on most units), then reconvened the committees.

Result: A net increase in the statewide elk population objective of 525 animals.

Mr. Albrecht asked if when these committees are set up, do you have to have a quorum?

Director Karpowitz said in state code, we were told to consult with certain interest groups, as a requirement. When we wrote the Statewide Elk Plan, we said no changes would occur without a committee being put together, and consensus with the group.

Mr. Bushman said relative to a quorum, the statute does not have a requirement for a committee. It states that in preparing plans, the Division shall confer with certain groups, but if they do not show up there is nothing that says we cannot move forward. The code does not require any type of committee. If we agreed in a management plan that we would not go forward, then having a quorum there might be implied, but we would have to read the document.

Director Karpowitz said in the goal section of the Statewide Elk Management Plan, it says we would not change objectives without consensus of a committee.

RAC Recommendations

Northern – Mr. Fenimore said they passed the recommendations as presented.

Northeastern – Mr. Christensen said they had discussion on the South Slope Diamond Mountain, but it was resolved. The recommendations passed unanimously with an amendment. AMENDED MOTION: Habitat section will read, “there is some exclosure data from summer range on the Anthro subunit that indicates elk may be inhibiting aspen regeneration.” Population section: will replace, “If we experience a decline in harvested bull age, harvest success rates, and/or hunter satisfaction . . .” with, “If harvested bull ages decline below age objective, and we experience a significant decline in harvest success rates, and/or satisfaction . . .” If the elk fall below the age objective, the Division may look at changing the management of that unit.

Central – Mr. Oswald said they passed the Elk Management Plan unanimously.

Southeastern – Mr. Gilson said they passed the Elk Management Plan unanimously.

Southern – Mr. Albrecht said there was comment on the RAC that they could not believe they couldn't have some increases within the units. On the management plans there were some areas where the DWR needed to go in and update the numbers and some of the wording. They passed the Elk Management Plan 6 to 4, including the corrections that were made during the discussion.

Public Comment

Todd Bingham, Farm Bureau said it is important that the committee continue to look at range capability in providing wildlife and livestock habitat. The Range Land Restoration Project, the Watershed initiative, and the Grazing Improvement Plan are all set to help the range improve. They are supportive of the committees and working together. They will always be actively involved in those meetings.

Board Discussion

Chairman Niemeyer summarized the RAC recommendations.

The following motion was made by Tom Hatch, seconded by Del Brady and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we amend the Nine Mile Anthro sub-unit management plan as proposed by the Northeast RAC.

Mr. Brady said on the South Slope Diamond Mountain, they are 500 over objective and they need to form a committee in that area and make sure the landowners understand. Otherwise, we need to start harvesting more cows, even though the landowners seem to be okay with the population numbers. We need to look at it from their standpoint and see what they really want.

Mr. Christensen said there was a lot of discussion on the age objectives and there was some misunderstanding about what we were voting on and what the objective was, age objective verses population.

Director Karpowitz said if they are 500 over objective the DWR is not okay with that. We need to reduce the population.

Mr. Christensen said they did have a discussion on cow tags. The landowners were okay with an increase.

Mr. Woodard said there is a growing concern about getting to the 80,000 elk. We need to come up with something, including the landowners as partners in order to grow these elk herds.

The following motion was made by Rick Woodard, seconded by Keele Johnson and failed with 4 opposed, Del Brady, Tom Hatch and Ernie Perkins to 3 in favor, Lee Howard, Rick Woodard and Keele Johnson with Chairman Niemeyer voting against the motion, breaking the tie.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Elk Unit Management Plans for one year.

Mr. Hatch said we are being a little bit near sighted. The forage that has been put down is not going to be available for a few years. He would like to see an increase in elk, but the habitat will not be available for 2-3 years. We should push it out a little further.

Mr. Perkins said he would like to see an approval for two years.

Mr. Johnson said he would like to go with one year. What is going on in the San Juan Committee and the feelings in that county are two different things. There are a lot more sportsmen than livestock people there. He went on to discuss several other elk units and the populations. The SFW puts a lot into the habitat to keep from hurting the livestock industry. He also discussed the elk and livestock competition issue. There are sportsmen who want to get out of the habitat game. Mr. Johnson is to the point of wanting to put his money somewhere else. Livestock people have no idea how elk compete with cattle. It is time for the livestock industry to get serious about this. There is room for increase on the elk. The sportsmen and the livestock people can be successful allies, if they wanted.

Mr. Howard said he agrees with Mr. Johnson for one-year approval and raising some objectives.

Director Karpowitz said if elk management plans are only approved for one year, nothing is going to change within the current system. We have invested 45 million dollars in forage and so far nobody has benefited in more numbers. We need to give this time to work, see what type of forage is produced and then look at it. We need to look at different types of incentive programs, let the forage get established and look toward a three-year program. Let's put it in place and then look forward.

Mr. Hatch said the livestock people would put a lot more into habitat if the Farm Bureau were receiving conservation permits like the sportsmen's organizations are to auction off. They would match them dollar for dollar.

Mr. Woodard said he did not include this in his motion, but we need to get all parties involved in a committee to bring both sides together on how to move this forward in an equitable way to both parties.

Director Karpowitz said it will take three years. It takes time to see results of all the habitat improvement. The reason nobody is wildly in favor of more elk is because they have not seen the new forage. We need to explore some new ideas also. If we go in with the goal of rangeland health, we can come out with some consensus.

Mr. Brady said he fully agrees with what Mr. Hatch and Director Karpowitz have said. We need to have the time to evaluate and see what benefits will come. He thinks we should be patient and look to a three-year program. We have to have cooperation from both sides.

Director Karpowitz asked when the current elk plan was put together.

Mr. Aoude said 2005.

Director Karpowitz said we said in five years we would try to get to objective. Give us the rest of the time. Maybe by 2010 we will be closer.

Mr. Howard said what has happened just now is Director Karpowitz has almost made a motion for three years. As our Secretary, when we have a motion on the floor, it is not right for him to skew the motion that has been made. This is not right.

Chairman Niemeyer said we need to get the best information possible and make the best decision possible. As long as some of these things take, it creates a certain amount of frustration. We need to wait for this habitat, but we need to move along with the program.

The following motion was made by Tom Hatch and died for a lack of a second.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Elk Unit Management plans for three years.

Mr. Brady said the statewide plan will expire in 2010, which is two years away.

Mr. Aoude said the way it usually works, we redo the statewide plan and if there are any significant changes, we will have to redo the unit plans. They usually lag a year behind, but we could revisit them in the same year if we had to.

Mr. Hatch said if they do nothing, the plan stays in effect for two more years.

Director Karpowitz said if we do nothing there will be no 525 head increase.

Mr. Johnson asked if a committee comes in with an individual plan, can we approve them independently, one at a time?

The following motion was made by Lee Howard, seconded by Del Brady and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the elk plan through March 31, 2010.

Director Karpowitz said the timing of this motion works well in anticipation of the elk plan expiring. We can look at some new ideas and new ways of managing elk. These can be worked into the statewide elk plan and then we can talk about changing objectives once it is all in place.

Mr. Woodard said in the discussion the ideas would be bounced off the livestock people and sportsmen.

Chairman Niemeyer said the plans will be easier to get through if everybody gets to give input. The livestock and the sportsmen need to be together on this.

Mr. Perkins said he has an item for the action log, the Box Elder Elk Management Plan. The herd objective is 275 without Pilot Mountain. Some of that is political and was agreed to 16 years ago. He would ask that the Northern region do some assessment of what the carrying capacity of that unit might be and some of the things that might have

worked with landowners. He is looking for the Northern region to do a clean sheet review.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by Rick Woodard and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that the Northern Region do a clean sheet review of the Box Elder Elk unit and this be placed on the action log.

6) Bighorn Sheep Statewide Management Plan (**Action**)

Anis Aoude, Big Game coordinator presented the Utah Bighorn sheep management plan with some overall, minor changes. The dates covered will be April 2008-April 2013. They solicited comments from Utah FNAWS/SFW, the BLM, Forest Service, Wool Growers Association and Dr. Earl Roger, Utah Department of Agriculture.

The population objectives they plan to change are by 2013, to increase the total numbers of Rocky Mountain (including California) and Desert bighorns in herds managed by the DWR by 50% and increase all existing herds to at least the minimum viable level of 125 bighorns. He then went over the specific numbers. (See Powerpoint Presentation)

Under other changes, WAFWA wild sheep working group guidelines were covered and these will be incorporated into the Division's management plan. GIS modeling to aid identifying future transplant sites have been developed and they recommend ram harvest not to exceed 12% of total ram population or 30% of rams 6 years or older.

Next he covered the transplants of Rocky Mountain bighorn, California bighorn and Desert bighorn in the various units. This concluded the presentation.

Mr. Howard asked about Hoop Lake, where are the domestic sheep?

Director Karpowitz said Fenini's private land, immediately north of Hoop Lake, over the mountain and in the valley.

Mr. Aoude said that population has struggled and if we get a chance in the future we will try to supplement it.

RAC Recommendations

Southern – Mr. Albrecht said he read a letter from Norm McKee into their minutes. There was a little discussion and they approved the Division's recommendations unanimously.

Southeastern, Central and Northeastern passed the recommendations unanimously.

Northern – Mr. Fenimore said they voted unanimously to accept the plan. There was some discussion about data sharing within the Forest Service. Some of the members talked about the sources of some of the disease, whether it is from domestics or not. As

Mr. Aoude pointed out when the two meet, the wild sheep seem to come out on the shorter end.

Mr. Christensen said he represented the Forest Service on that plan. The Division asked for comments and the Forest Service did comment, but some of that did not filter down to the individual forests. That is where the breakdown in communication was.

Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Lee Howard, seconded by Keele Johnson and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Division's recommendations on the Bighorn Sheep Statewide Management Plan as presented.

Board Appeal Hearing for Matt Jennings

7) CWMU Rule R657-37 (5-yr review) (**Action**)

Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator presented this review. These are administrative rules that are up for review every five years. The CWMU Big Game and Turkey rule was revamped last year and we recommend no changes to this rule in the 5-year review.

RAC Recommendations

All RACs voted unanimously to approve the 5-year review on the CWMU Rule.

The following motion was made by Rick Woodard, seconded by Tom Hatch and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the CWMU Rule R657-37 (5-yr review)

8. Procedures for Confirmation of Ordinances on hunting closures R657-34 (5-yr review) (**Action**)

Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator presented this item. This rule is also up for review. No changes are recommended to this rule in the 5-year review.

RAC Recommendations

All RACs voted unanimously to approve the 5-year review on the Procedure for Confirmation of Ordinances on hunting closures.

The following motion was made by Del Brady, seconded by Lee Howard and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Procedures for Confirmation of

Ordinances on hunting closures R657-34 (5-yr review).

9. Approval of Mule Deer Planning Committee Membership (**Action**)

Mr. Aoude presented this item also. He handed out a revised copy of the recommended participants for the Deer Planning Advisory Committee for Summer 2008 and went over it. (See Attachment #2) He also wants to add a non-consumptive representative to this list.

Mr. Gilson said there are two Utah Bowman associations. They might come together and send one representative.

Mr. Aoude said that would work.

Mr. Howard said he has not seen anyone here from the Utah Wildlife Federation for years.

Mr. Aoude said they have always been included on our committees and it would not be right to leave them off.

Mr. Fenimore said he likes the idea of including someone from watchable wildlife on this committee.

Mr. Albrecht said when this board meets; they need a full quorum before agenda items are discussed.

Mr. Gilson said he would like the Wildlife Board to consider a mission statement for the board.

Mr. Aoude said you usually bring the new board together and form a mission statement together. This makes it so everyone has some say. The first order of business for this group would be to put together a mission statement. We have the direction to revise the deer plan.

Mr. Hatch asked who we would go to as an unaffiliated hunter.

Mr. Aoude said we have some people who show interest and we go with them, or they have suggestions.

Board Discussion

Mr. Perkins said he is concerned that the Wildlife Federation has gone inactive, but it would be appropriate to invite them to participate. They have been a strong participant for decades and have been part of every major management plan.

Mr. Aoude said he will contact them.

The following motion was made by Del Brady, seconded by Rick Woodard and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the recommended participants for the Deer Planning Advisory Committee as presented by the Division, adding a nonconsumptive member and that after the appointments are made it will be brought back to the Wildlife Board.

10. Wolf Management (Information)

Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator presented this agenda item. When the delisting starting happening in the Northern Rockies population, it did not happen like we expected. They determined that the plan is in effect in the corner of Utah where the wolves are. Today Mr. Bunnell will give some history, review our plan and review the delisting that has recently taken place.

Historically, wolves occupied the entire intermountain west. They were extirpated from the lower 48 states by 1940. The last wolf killed in Utah was in 1930. During 1917 to 1930, there were 160 wolves killed in the state.

Wolves were one of the charter members of the ESA when it was passed in 1973. The recovery effort in the Northern Rockies is in three areas, the Greater Yellowstone, Northern Montana and Central Idaho and Wyoming. There were 66 wolves released in 1995 and 1998. Wolves dispersed out of Canada into Northern Montana on their own. The population has grown rapidly and recovery goals were met in 2002. Those goals were 30+ breeding pairs equitably distributed between the three recovery areas for three successive years. Currently there are 1,500 + wolves in that Rocky Mountain population. Delisting became official on March 28, 2008.

The Utah Wolf Management plan was passed by the Wildlife Board in July 2005 and also passed by the Animal Damage Prevention Board in December 2005.

On background in the state, a dispersing wolf from Yellowstone was caught in a trap near Morgan in fall 2002. Shortly thereafter the legislature passed House Joint Resolution 12. The goal was to expedite the process for transferring authority to manage wolves to the state. They directed the DWR to draft a wolf management plan for “review, modification and adoption by the Utah Wildlife Board, through the RAC process. It outlines three objectives: Be consistent with the wildlife management objectives of the Ute Indian tribe, prevent livestock depredation and protect the investments made in Utah wildlife efforts while being consistent with the USFWS regulations and other Utah species’ management plans.

The Wolf Working Group was put together by the Division in summer of 2003. 13 members of varied representation made up the group. Expert presentations were given by people who were acquainted with those from the Rocky Mountain area. Meetings were open to the public. They set a consensus minus 2 standard for resolving disagreements. In the end the WWG was unable to resolve a few issues in the plan and the Wildlife

Board resolved them. Even though they did not meet the consensus minus 2 standard, it was still a fair, sustainable and flexible plan.

The purpose of the plan was to guide management from delisting to 2015, or until “establishment” of wolves in Utah, or assumptions of the plan change. The definition of established is defined as at least two breeding pairs of wild wolves successfully raising at least two young until December 31 of their birth for two consecutive years. That is not a goal, it is simply a trigger for when this plan will be revisited. During this interim period, arriving wolves will be studied to determine where they are most likely to settle without conflict.

The management goal was to manage, study and conserve wolves moving into Utah while avoiding conflicts. Management objectives are to allow wolves to disperse into Utah, and be conserved, except when or where they conflict with the management plans.

The second objective in the plan is to fully compensate livestock owners for losses of livestock to wolves. Management strategies include the development and implementation of outreach programs, managing wolf/human interactions to benefit both human and wolves, control livestock depredation, fully compensate livestock owners for losses of livestock to wolves and provide funding for wolf management. He gave further details on these strategies and guidelines for predation and compensation.

The advantage of having a Wolf Plan is to get state management authority as soon as possible. Utah and USFWS can deflect attempts to make Utah a recovery area with recovery goals. Implementation since the Wolf Plan was passed is the DWR now has a federal permit to capture and radio collar wolves in Utah. We have developed a sighting database with 50 sightings, several onsite investigations and at least three confirmed sightings. There are no wolves currently known to be in Utah.

In an outreach effort, the Division has given presentations to numerous groups and we have developed some brochures.

Moving on to the delisting, the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf population delisting was filed on the federal registry of February 28, 2008. It became official March 28, 2008. Lawsuits challenging the delisting cannot be filed until April 28th. Mr. Bunnell went over the specific efforts that were made to get Utah included in the NRM delisting. None of these efforts have been responded to.

Next, he showed a map of the area of Utah included in the delisting. The area includes Rich County, Cache County, and part of Box Elder, Weber, Morgan and Davis and Summit counties. Wolves are protected as game animals statewide in Montana and Idaho. Both states plan to implement hunting seasons beginning fall 2008. Idaho will manage to 500-700 wolves and Montana 400+ wolves. The status of wolves in Wyoming is determined by geographic location including trophy game status, or predator status. Wyoming will manage for 15 wolf packs – 8 in parks and 7 outside parks. In other areas of the state, wolves have a predator status.

In keeping this issue in perspective, there has been no pack establishment in the delisted portion of Utah. With delisting, the chances of wolves establishing in Utah are significantly reduced. This concluded the presentation.

Questions & Comment

Mr. Fenimore suggested adding a slide indicating the dispersing wolf that was killed a few years ago.

Public Comment

Kirk Robinson talked about the role of the Utah Wolf Forum and history surrounding the wolf that was caught in the trap in Morgan. They were invited to have two members on a committee that was formed at that time under Director Kevin Conway. They found the plan lacking in certain respects. It tends to pre-suppose that wolves are nothing but a nuisance. There is another side that is accurate and wolves have value for the ecosystem. Two of the strategies say the plan would seek ways to benefit both wolves and human beings. There was nothing in the plan that benefited the wolves or those who appreciate wolves. HB 12 said the plan should prevent livestock depredation and that cannot be guaranteed. In that sense the plan went too far. When livestock producers are grazing on public land, they should not be allowed so much autonomy dealing with problem wolves. At this point, that is why our Forum backed out and could not support that part of the plan. There are still many things in the plan we do support. We have a little more wolf friendly perspective.

Ericka Wangsgaard said she is with the public and probably represents thousands of people who could not be here today. Relative to perspective, where wolves are delisted in that area of Utah, are we going to do our best to keep them out?

Mr. Bunnell said there is no value judgment there, he is just stating the fact that under the current situation, wolves are less likely to arrive in Utah, post delisting than they were prior to delisting. That is just a fact of the situation.

Ms. Wangsgaard said she feels it is strange that wolves are delisted in that area of Utah, even though they are not even here yet. It seems like with important predators, involving the public is always under the radar. Who were the groups involved in the Outreach?

Mr. Bunnell said in relation to the first question, that is a decision that was made by the USFWS in terms of drawing that boundary. In relation to the second question, there have been presentations done at several of the universities, to classes at the Utah Chapter of the Wildlife Society and we have filled other requests. We will give presentations anywhere we are requested. We also have done a few scout groups.

Ms. Wangsgaard asked if the DWR or the Board has thought about eco-tourism with wolves. People come into an area and want to get involved in watching and experiencing wolves.

Mr. Bunnell says this plan does not address that at all, because when we have two packs in the state, this plan goes away.

11) Other Business (**Contingent**)

Chairman Niemeyer said that in some of the RACs, they are not taking public comment on information items. We encourage them to go ahead and do that, because it is useful to get some of the ideas. You can limit the time on that comment.

Mr. Woodard said in the Southeast RAC they have very brief minutes and they would like a little more information to get a feel for their meetings.

Ms. Coons handed out WAFWA information to the Wildlife Board members.

Mr. Brady asked, regarding trespassing when someone is trespassing and damage is done, and there is a case and a fine, what is the recourse?

Mr. Bushman said on criminal trespass on posted property, or if people have been asked to stay off property, it would be proper to ask for restitution. A city or county prosecutor would handle it and the landowner does not have to hire a lawyer. They do have to establish that a person was put on notice that they were not welcome. In common law trespass, which is a civil proceeding where people do not go to jail or get fines for it, but people can be sued when you go onto the property of someone and do damage. If there are signs posting the property that is criminal trespass.

The meeting was then adjourned.