

Utah Wildlife Board Work Session

May 4-5, 2011, DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

AGENDA

Wednesday, May 4, 2011, 1:00pm

1. Approval of Agenda **ACTION**
– Rick Woodard, Chairman

Items of Discussion – NOTE: The Wildlife Board will not be taking action on any of the following items. This meeting is discussion only. The meeting is open to the public however no public comment will be accepted.

2. Review of Thursday Agenda Items – Alan Clark **INFORMATIONAL**
• Process for setting recommendations – Anis Aoude

3. Board Meeting Procedures Discussion **INFORMATIONAL**
– Rick Woodard, Chairman
- Should public comment be taken at board meetings?
 - When should the board vote for a new chairman and vice-chairman?
 - Should the chairman be able to vote on each motion?
 - How can items be added to the meeting agenda?
 - Should sweeping motions to wrap up an agenda topic be made or should each item be discussed individually?

4. Antler Gathering **INFORMATIONAL**
– Mike Fowlks, Law Enforcement Chief

5. Cougar Plan Amendments **INFORMATIONAL**
– Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Coordinator

6. WAFWA Attendance **INFORMATIONAL**
– Rick Woodard, Chairman

7. Tri-State Attendance **INFORMATIONAL**
– Rick Woodard, Chairman

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May 4, 2011, DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

Wildlife Board Present

Rick Woodard (Chair)
Ernie Perkins (Vice Chair)
Del Brady
Jake Albrecht
Keele Johnson
Tom Hatch
Bill Fenimore (excused)
Jim Karpowitz (Exec Sec)

Public Present

Fred Oswald (Central RAC)
Robert Byrnes (Northern RAC)

Division of Wildlife Resource

Anis Aoude
Kevin Bunnell
Staci Coons
Cindee Jensen
Martin Bushman
Robyn Thomas
LuAnn Petrovich
Greg Sheehan
Mike Fowlks
Alan Clark
Terry Davis
Dean Mitchell
Director Styler

Chairman Woodard welcomed everyone to the work session. This is to prepare for tomorrow. He introduced the Wildlife Board members and Division personnel who are here to participate in today's meeting. Mr. Fenimore was excused.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Rick Woodard, Chairman went over the agenda.

Mr. Perkins asked to add "when the Chair is speaking or voting" to the Board meeting procedures.

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

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

2. Review of Thursday Agenda Items – Alan Clark (Informational)

Process for setting recommendations – Anis Aoude

Mr. Aoude said he will go over the process used for making number recommendations and he will use two examples, one on deer and one on elk. He went over the buck/doe ratios relative to the information that goes into Division recommendations. He went over the process the regions go through to make recommendations on deer numbers.

Mr. Hatch asked if they ever ground proof these surveys. He has been reading lately about the disparity in a lot of these surveys, not necessarily wildlife, but any type of survey, especially on telephone or return mail surveys. Do you put up check stations to see if they really support the percent of success?

Mr. Aoude said they are mandatory surveys by the hunters. We have set up check stations on general season, but not on limited entry hunts. Every wildlife survey that is done is done that way. Usually checks would have to be done as a law enforcement action. To make everyone stop you have to get a judge's order and it becomes quite cumbersome. Pretty much all the research that is out there says there is some bias but it is not great enough to affect it. For the most part the information provided is accurate. There is some boasting bias. In the past there has been information checked on these surveys.

Mr. Hatch asked about wounding.

Mr. Aoude said that type of information we take with a grain of salt. Year to year the information is helpful. For the most part people do tell the truth on harvest and such. It really serves them no purpose to lie on things like that.

Director Karpowitz said they have done some studies in past years comparing checking station data to survey data. There is always some bias in it, but the important thing is to recognize the bias and do it the same every year so there is consistency. There is inherent bias in any survey. We have followed up over the years, calling them even after they were checked to see if they reported differently on the phone than they did at the checking station. We feel good where we're at. The limited entry surveys are very accurate because they are mandatory. We are using the most effective methods to gather information.

Mr. Aoude went on to discuss the information that goes into making recommendations. There is a lot more to it than just the buck/doe ratio, including hunter satisfaction and fawn/doe ratios in past years.

Chairman Woodard then welcomed the internet audience. He also encouraged those present to ask their questions when needed. This is an informal meeting.

Mr. Aoude then continued to go over the spreadsheet. He also explained the interaction of the Salt Lake Office and the various regions in this process. He then went over the elk example. Harvest information, age objective and the cow/calf ratio are tools they use to make elk recommendations.

Mr. Albrecht asked about the 45" inside spread, what age?

Mr. Aoude said usually between four and five.

Mr. Albrecht said when they do the aerial counts, do they count calves and cows?

Mr. Aoude said yes. They try to classify them right when they count them. On some units the flight is the only cow/calf information they get. On preseason classification it isn't as important.

Chairman Woodard asked if they have flown the San Juan, there are a lot more bulls than cows. What about the spike hunting?

Mr. Aoude said it was just flown this year. He said Chairman Woodard probably hunted it before the spike hunting. The first year the spike harvest was very low, only four or five. This year it has come up and eventually people will figure out how to hunt spikes on that unit.

Mr. Perkins asked if Mr. Aoude has an antlerless elk spreadsheet. When you are reviewing the antlerless permits does it show herd objective and the herd estimate for several years? Does it show a breakout of different types of permits? Is that data then reviewed?

Mr. Aoude said he doesn't have a spreadsheet, but the answer to all those questions is yes. All of that is considered and is in the Board packet.

Mr. Perkins said there are no guidelines for appropriating the split between public CWMU and landowner tags.

Mr. Aoude said yes there is. They have to take a proportion of what their portion of the unit is of the elk habitat. It doesn't always turn out exactly like that. There are loose guidelines and there is a lot of give and take between the biologist and the CWMU operator. We can't really force the issue on antlerless.

Mr. Perkins asked if there is a percentage that should go to the public draw.

Mr. Aoude said there isn't because we have to take a certain number of animals. So many animals have to be killed to maintain objective. There is usually never more on the CWMU, unless there is a disproportionate number of CWMUs on the unit. He went on to discuss the recommendation process. He went over the success rate for the various weapons. We review the recommendation at the Salt Lake Office when it comes from the regions and make sure the recommendations are sound. The final product goes out to the RACs and Boards as the Division's recommendations. Antlerless is similar and the target is population objective. On deer, the target is population objective and also range damage assessments.

Mr. Albrecht asked about preseason elk classifications. How does that criteria compare to ten years ago as far as the size and number of bulls?

Mr. Aoude said on preseason classification we don't use it on the bulls because it is very sparse. We use it for cow/calf information to get production numbers. That time of year the bulls are hard to locate. This concluded the presentation.

Chairman Woodard said he has heard there is high fawn mortality being reported from the range rides. Is that refactored in on permit numbers?

Mr. Aoude said it is, but the fawn mortality you see this year is probably going to be the buck numbers of the following year. On limited entry units it is not factored in so much because very few yearling bucks are taken. On general season it could be a bigger factor than limited entry. It is taken into account.

Mr. Perkins said there can be substantial fawn mortality after these figures are derived.

Mr. Aoude said yes. It will affect success rate, but it's going to reduce the population. It will be reflected in the next season's buck/doe ratio. This will not show up until later.

Mr. Hatch said if we know there's a problem, even with the lag time we should address it.

Mr. Aoude said we do take it into consideration if the problem is large enough. It is never high enough to effect things. He thinks they are hearing things on a localized situation, but unit wide we haven't seen that high of mortality from the collar data.

Mr. Brady said in Northeast region the biologists said the fawn mortality is high. If we consider the November information on fawns, we are down to 20-30 fawns per 100 does. That information came from the Book Cliffs and the Current Creek area, both general season deer hunts. It would be wise to back off.

Mr. Aoude said the Book Cliffs is limited entry. Although there has been some localized mortalities over range wide with the data we have so far, we've had about 50% fawn mortality, only up about 10%. That is what we always have and it is not catastrophic.

Mr. Hatch asked when it gets to be catastrophic.

Mr. Bunnell said right now when you're hunting region wide, it is hard to make an adjustment when you have these pockets, but starting next year hunting unit by unit the adjustment can be made much more easily.

Mr. Brady said that is why the Board wanted to go that way to focus on some of those hot spots.

Mr. Aoude said catastrophic is 70-80% fawn mortality. It is mostly affected when we start to lose too many adults. When we have high fawn mortality, the only effect is a lower success rate the following year on the hunt. It does not affect the herd as a whole and the potential for growth in the future.

Director Karpowitz said any deer herd has natural fluctuations on survival over the years. If you try to manage for the fluctuations it gets very difficult. You have to deal with the average and how it goes over time. When a trend is apparent with those numbers going down continuously over time, it needs to be addressed.

Mr. Aoude said the 2007-2008 we lost 60-70% of the fawns in Northern. We did not change the permit numbers and they have now rebounded to almost 18 bucks per 100 does, since we didn't lose a lot of adults.

Mr. Hatch said he would argue that if you are losing 80% of the fawns, half will be does that would be recruited into the herd. That will effect the population of the herd.

Mr. Aoude said it will have a short term effect on the following hunting season, but no effect relative to recommendations. The decline of the deer occurs that one year, but there is nothing that we do will have an additional effect if we have the same number of buck permits. Fawn mortality does have an effect but it rebounds a lot quicker if you have not lost a portion of the adults.

Mr. Brady asked about the doe hunts. He is concerned about the doe hunt in Ashley Valley. He referred to the boundary and the 100 doe deer permits recommended covering an area from Colorado to the Duchene River to the White River on the south to the Forest Service boundary on the north. There is private land within that area, but a large portion of it is public land. They would like to take that boundary and make adjustments since we need to focus on the deer. Can't we write those descriptions of the boundaries and come up with something? He discussed this with Mr. Christopherson and they want to get with the sportsmen and derive a better description. We need to work on that and not go with the same 30 year program.

Mr. Aoude said he agrees and those details are left to the regional people relative to boundaries and such because they are the most qualified to make those decisions.

Mr. Brady asked if it is too late to make that change.

Mr. Aoude said no, he doesn't think so.

Mr. Johnson said does are very valuable in a lot of areas. The biologists at the local level need to really look at this in losing does. Are we too general on the doe hunts? In some areas the does are the future. It caused real problems on the Elk Ridge during the 70's. In the 1960's we had way too many deer and did real damage in the massive doe hunts in the 70's. The habitat was damaged and we didn't pull back fast enough.

Mr. Aoude said on the current recommendations we only have 660 doe permits on a statewide population close to 300,000. Biologists are sensitive to this but sometimes they are dealing with situations they have to deal with relative to range damage and things like that. We have tried to say no doe hunts unless it is absolutely necessary. There are always exceptions, but he agrees we need to be watching every doe.

Mr. Johnson talked about speed limit reduction, predator control, timelines etc. We need to look at every doe as being extremely valuable. The highway issue is huge.

Mr. Aoude said he agrees. They have really looked at these things. Our biologists do know how important does are, but there are some times when you have to kill animals.

Mr. Brady said he really believes the biologists in their area and they have their hearts in what they are doing. With the 100 doe hunt in the "valley," what would be the objective percentage of does taken?

Mr. Aoude said we know the success rate and it is about 60-70% success, 100 permits.

Mr. Brady said the does that need to be taken care of are in our yards. They shoot the does on the periphery of that boundary. He would like to see some of the does herded up to the mountain or transported up there.

Chairman Woodard asked about the big game rule.

Mr. Aoude said it went through relatively easily. There were very few questions.

Mr. Albrecht asked about Mr. Niemeyer's questions at the RAC meeting. Did we get that clarified?

Mr. Fowlks said those questions revolved around the use of the muzzleloader and the sabot verses the round ball. The reason we changed it to 140 grains smaller on the round ball is it is a 45 caliber round ball is 130 grains. Most of the muzzleloaders are built to shoot well with a round ball, but you can shoot sabots out of them. You need a longer sabot to shoot out of those guns to maintain accuracy. That is why we recommended 170 grain on the sabot. It needs to be bigger and longer so it will shoot accurately.

Mr. Perkins complimented the Division on that issue. He got an email from someone asking about this issue. He sent it to Mr. Fowlks who worked on that for 30 days and we will have the recommendation tomorrow.

Mr. Fowlks said he gives Gary Cook the credit for doing the research on this issue.

Director Karpowitz said relative to deer transplants, there seems to be a growing momentum to do transplants rather than harvest antlerless animals. He did the last deer transplant where they moved deer from the San Juan Unit to the Henry Mountains. He talked to Jim Guymon again and he said he has done five transplants over the years. All of those transplants have been failures. Deer are very difficult to trap, handle and move successfully. You get high mortality rates. When you get them to their new location, they do not persist very long. After two years, there is no evidence that the deer are still alive on the unit. There have been no successful transplants in starting new herds or augmenting existing herds. They have done various levels of studies, just marking deer, color collars and ear streamers. When they transplanted them to the Henry's they put a

fair number of radio collars on the deer. Everything they can see is that the deer can last a year or two and then they're gone. They can't habituate to the new habitat, the new levels of predation and the new situation. It really becomes an exercise in futility. He would not be opposed to a study, but he doesn't want to get into this as an answer for the antlerless hunts. We might give it one more shot using radio collars, but it is very time consuming and very expensive. The last time we did it we used the sportsmen and we wore them right out with baiting, transplanting and moving the deer. He knows of six transplants that have been done in the state and all have failed.

Mr. Hatch said he knows they have tried it on the Beaver at least a couple of times. He wonders if rather than transplanting them, just let a couple hundred deer across the freeway.

Director Karpowitz said that is a good idea. Some natural movement across a barrier like that would be great.

Mr. Hatch said that might be a better solution.

That would be a good thing in a lot of ways but it is changing some migration habits. You must be careful with fencing and have adequate bypass structures to accommodate the changes. Fortunately there are a lot of good bypass structures on that highway and UDOT has done a great job as that highway has expanded. It is very expensive and it takes deer a long time to get used to the bypasses and even longer for elk.

Mr. Albrecht asked if the transplanted does live long enough to produce a few fawns.

Director Karpowitz said he doesn't know. When they did this on the Henry's there was a little jump for a couple years, but then it dropped off. If we do a study we should do it right with a sufficient number of radio collars, enlist a graduate student and tract these. They could follow up on the productivity of the does that were moved. We will have to rely on the sportsmen to help fund these studies.

Mr. Perkins said he talked to Randy Larson from BYU who was brought into this by SFW. It would probably be a 3 ½ year study on survival, production and recruitment. Additionally the cost estimate might be \$300,000 for an average study. Study design in trying to do it this year would be rushing things because of the need to determine the right sites, an accurately defined question, and the specifics for the study, before you jump in and move 50 deer.

Director Karpowitz said the Board needs to be aware that the Division has been asked to answer a lot of questions with research. We are getting somewhat over extended on research. We now have 100s of collars out on fawns and does to measure winter survival. They have a survival study in process to look at the impacts of predation and the effectiveness of predator control. That is going to be a very expensive project. There has to be a limit to it. We have to pick and choose and make sure we are spending our

money in the most effective way for our mule deer around the state. You have to prioritize and make them count.

Mr. Aoude said relative to prioritizing, if we do this study, how often are we really going to move deer? Is it even something we would utilize enough to make it worth doing the research?

Director Karpowitz said that is what concerns him. To use this as a management tool long term is not very likely. He would try it one more time if we can come up with the money. He knows this will come up in the context of antlerless removal on the agenda tomorrow. You move deer for a totally different reason, than taking antlerless deer and that is to start a new herd or supplement a small herd that is struggling. You could never put enough deer in an average size deer unit in this state to ever have any effect.

Mr. Brady said his concern is the South Slope of the Vernal Unit has tanked as far as deer go. Now we've got 100 doe tags and might take 60 of them. To him it looks like we are wasting those 60 does.

Director Karpowitz said the permits are to remove farm deer. The law is that we need to address the depredation situation. The biologists have to weigh what is the tolerance for deer in that situation. If people are okay with having the deer on their property we would be okay with not having the hunt, but we do have to respond to depredation situations. Also, one more thing, to move 50-60 deer into a herd with 1000s of deer will have not effect. That hunt is just to keep a little pressure on the deer in the valley.

Mr. Brady said in talking with Mr. Christopherson this morning he asked if we have depredation permits for those does and Mr. Christopherson said he didn't know of any.

Director Karpowitz said he is sure there are mitigation permits in that area.

Mr. Aoude said it should be in the Board packet and he can look it up.

Mr. Brady said that might be something different because it is not what Mr. Christopherson told him today. If they're giving the farmers and ranchers a bad time, they should be given vouchers for those deer, rather than the sportsmen.

Director Karpowitz said the Vernal Diamond unit had 237 mitigation permits last year and the South Slope Yellowstone had 552.

Mr. Brady said here again we are saying Vernal Diamond Unit, but it is just a small portion of the Vernal Diamond Mountain. When he asked Kevin he said there were zero.

Mr. Aoude said that is how many were issued last year. We don't know how many will be issued this year. Usually when you have depredation issues, you will have the same ones year after year. Sometimes the biologists extend the boundary outside the area to kill a few before they get into the fields. Sometimes we end up killing more in the fields

than if we had intercepted them on their way into the fields. Sometimes you can kill more with mitigation permits than when you have a hunt.

Director Karpowitz said nobody is pushing the region to have that hunt. They made the recommendation. If they don't feel they need it they could drop it.

Mr. Brady said he is just telling him what he was told yesterday and this morning.

Mr. Hatch asked about where the pressure might be coming from.

Director Karpowitz said no one from Salt Lake.

Mr. Hatch said they may be getting some pressure from the agricultural community out there.

Director Karpowitz said they obviously are where they issue the number of mitigation permits they are in addition to that. Our recommendations come from the local biologist. Our instructions from Mr. Aoude were very clear this year and unless you have a depredation or a serious range concern that you can demonstrate, there will be no doe permits. We are lower than we have ever been on doe permits.

Mr. Aoude said we have to work within the guidelines and we pass these along to the regions. But basically they make the recommendations to us within the guidelines. We are looking at things statewide and set guidelines from there.

Mr. Perkins said the mitigation permits that are listed encompass both the landowner permits and the vouchers?

Mr. Aoude said yes. Those are only the antlerless.

Mr. Johnson said another problem is the different personalities of the landowners and the various situations. He talked about his area and the various opinions and responses that have come from there through the years. He then discussed the difficulty of dealing with the landowners and public and who wants what, when, and where. He doesn't know what the answer is because you're dealing with different human personalities.

Mr. Hatch said he tends to agree with Mr. Johnson. Sometimes our guidelines are what cause us problems. He went on to give the example of a landowner in the Panguitch area where some latitude would have been helpful. He got mad and ended up getting more buck tags, than if the Division would have worked with him.

Director Karpowitz said when we issue bull or bucks tags in a depredation situation the value of the damage has to exceed the price of the permit. You don't give a guy a \$10,000 elk tag if he has \$2,000 of damage. On general season we are more flexible. We can be more flexible. The Board drew the line at 640 acres because that sounded reasonable.

Mr. Hatch said he is wondering if you have a guy with 200 acres with 200 deer on it, it looks like he should be treated differently from a guy who has 200 acres and has no deer on it.

Director Karpowitz said we take that into consideration on limited entry landowner permits and we haven't so much on general season permits, because we have been quite liberal with them. There have to be guidelines so we can be consistent around the state and then we're fair and equitable. Our guys get in a lot of trouble when they treat one landowner different than another, so the guidelines become very important. There is no state in the west that offers more incentives to have wildlife on their land for private landowners than Utah. We also pay more in the way of actual payments and other forms of compensation than almost all the other states. Our regional depredation people do a great job working out case by case situations around the state. Still we have to have some policy and guideline.

Mr. Johnson said he wasn't saying we have to come up with a new solution. It is just a very perplexing problem. People are hard to work with quite often and often there is no logic to their demands.

Director Karpowitz said we often have problems that are very hard to resolve.

Mr. Johnson said in the 60's and 70's there were 1000s of deer and landowners were more patient with the deer being on their land and trespassing. There has been a big change in the last 15 years.

Director Karpowitz said it used to be about the meat and the value of wildlife has grown a lot. Things have changed dramatically.

Chairman Woodard recognized Mr. John Bair in the audience as a Board member elect. There was a 10 minute break.

3) Board Meeting Procedures Discussion (Informational)

Chairman Woodard said there have been questions on this issue. As a Chairman he has followed past procedure. We cannot make decisions on this today, but these ideas can be looked at in the future.

a) Should public comment be taken at Board meetings?

Chairman Woodard said this has always been the case since he has been involved in the system. The public always has one last shot, even if they have voiced their opinion at the RAC meetings. He feels public comment should be taken.

Mr. Brady asked about public comment at Board work sessions.

Chairman Woodard said there are two topics there and we should discuss that. It could make it a full day meeting if we did take comment at work sessions.

Mr. Hatch said it might not take that much more time. He feels we should let people speak, even at the work meetings, even if it takes all day. The Chair can control repetition and length of comments.

Chairman Woodard said they have the opportunity to express public opinion at the Board meeting.

Mr. Perkins said the Chair should poll the members and if any member of the Board wants public opinion, he'd like to decide as the meetings come along.

Chairman Woodard said the only thing is the meeting has to be posted ahead as to whether public comment will be taken.

Mr. Perkins said there is plenty of time to make a decision ahead of time on the work sessions.

Mr. Hatch said he doesn't feel that the public thinks they are listened to. That is one reason why nobody is present. There are more Division people here than anybody else. That is a problem with the perception.

Mr. Johnson said if people take the time to attend, they should be able to talk. The Chairman can handle the comments relative to time and repetition. We represent the public and should be listening to them.

Mr. Hatch said as a follow up, one of his pet peeves in being on the Board is the repetition of presentations in the RACs and the Board. We should restructure these meetings and it would cut back on the time involved.

Director Karpowitz said they do hear from people that they don't want to waste their time at the RAC meetings they want to come straight to the Board. Our attendance is going down at RAC meetings. When we started the work sessions the idea was to just talk about issues freely without the public. Are we headed toward a two day Board meeting? How much comment do you want to receive verses the RACs. If we open the work sessions to public comment we'll probably have a lot of public in attendance. The code says public comment comes through the RACs. We don't want to cut the RACs out of the system.

Mr. Hatch said you hear the same thing at the RACs and the Board. It is redundant.

Mr. Perkins said at the last work session his only concern about public comment was we had posted the meeting as taking no public comment. He has plenty of time for taking public comment as long as it's published as such. One way to get around this is to decide whether there will be public comment at work sessions ahead of time.

Mr. Hatch said we should just set the policy that we will take public comment always.

Chairman Woodard said the work session was set up to better educate the Board so we could have a free open forum.

Mr. Clark said the Division doesn't have to give the presentations again to the Board if Board members have attended a RAC meeting. The presentation that is given at the RAC meeting is for the public and the presentation at the Board meeting is for the Board members.

Mr. Perkins said as long as the presenter was available for clarification that would be okay.

Mr. Hatch said he was told when he came on the Board that they were not to comment at the RAC meetings. Why not?

Chairman Woodard said he made that comment. He feels that the RACs are for those present. Our turn to do that is when we get the presentation at the Board meeting. This might be something to be discussed by the next Board since three of the members will be leaving.

Mr. Hatch said he agrees if you are there trying to persuade one way or another, but if they have a specific question or want to know what the Board thinks, wouldn't it be appropriate to interact with them. I have done it a few times.

Mr. Johnson said just to get a clarification on something the Board is doing.

Mr. Perkins said he feels they should do the work sessions one at a time and decide if public comment is appropriate ahead of time.

Mr. Brady said he feels some of the work sessions would be better without public comment and others with. We could handle that as it comes up.

Chairman Woodard said we can table this.

Director Karpowitz said it is really the prerogative of the Board Chair.

Mr. Perkins asked what about the regular Board meeting.

Chairman Woodard said he feels we should continue with our current system. He thinks what has happened over the years is the various groups have been going to the RACs and the Board meeting and think the Board meeting is more worthwhile for public comment. I discount that and the Board weighs the RAC comment highly because that is where we get the bulk of our public opinion and information.

Mr. Hatch said couldn't we accept public comment, but not have the entire presentation. The Division could just state their recommendation and then take public comment without the powerpoint presentation? This would save a lot of time.

Director Karpowitz said it is available on the internet and in a handout when they come in the door.

Mr. Bushman said when you are talking about taking public comment at a work session; it is only a matter of what we put on the agenda. There is no law that dictates that you have to take public comment. A statement we could put on the agenda could be, "limited public comment may be taken." That leaves a lot of discretion.

Director Karpowitz said rather than open public comment, say something like, "the Board may take comment/questions," or "Only limited public comment will be allowed."

Mr. Hatch said at the legislature he doesn't think there was anything about public comment.

Mr. Bushman said if we make no statement, then the Board is not obligated either way. If you're not going to allow public comment, that should be stated.

Mr. Perkins said that puts us in the position of settling it at the Board meeting and he doesn't like that.

Director Karpowitz said we could state it if no public comment was going to be taken and explain the work session in a little more detail. This meeting is primarily a work session and public comment will be at the discretion of the Chair.

Mr. Bunnell said from a coordinator's standpoint whether to make a presentation or not, their presentation is responding to the RACs and the Board relative to the issue, on what they may have changed and their stance on any RAC motions that were different than what we proposed. It would be shorter and more to the point.

Chairman Woodard said we will move forward in that direction.

Mr. Perkins said as a standard we adopt that public comment will not be taken, but the Chair can change it if deemed necessary on any specific work meeting.

Mr. Johnson said they might also simplify the RAC responses.

Director Karpowitz said especially if the Board is going to do a summary of the RAC recommendations. So as he understands it, next time it will say, "This meeting is primarily a work session and the public comment will be at the discretion of the Board Chair."

Chairman Woodard asked if they want to discuss actual Board meetings also. We have kind of changed them with the Division just giving an overview.

Director Karpowitz said at a minimum you need to educate the public that they cannot just bypass the RAC system. When someone stands up to comment, the Chair needs to ask them if they discussed this with their RAC, and keep referring them back to their RAC. He is worried that the RAC system is breaking down. They should be directed to attend their RAC meetings and give comment there.

Chairman Woodard said that should also apply to the groups.

Director Karpowitz said it used to be that the Board wouldn't entertain anything that hadn't been to the RAC. Now we have more flexibility in that and people are thinking now they can skip the RAC. We need to turn this around.

Mr. Perkins said one thing that has contributed to that is there have been several situations where the Board has not gone along with the RACs. Every time we do that we are telling the public not to worry about the RACs because the Board makes its own decisions. He is not suggesting they have done anything wrong, but we have a history and pattern of doing that and it takes away from the RACs.

Director Karpowitz said there have also been more split RAC decisions than in the past. They used to be more consistent.

Mr. Brady said in Northeast region, the people who attend the Board meetings are there to see what the Board members say and how they follow through with the RAC recommendations. We need to empower the RACs and push the public back in that direction.

Director Karpowitz said if the RACs become ineffective we ought to look at a code change where the Board goes back on the tour and collects their own input around the state. We need to watch that.

Mr. Perkins said the first goal is to push things back to the RACs and look to support them.

Director Karpowitz said Utah is one of very few states that have this sort of system. Other states are constantly looking at us and wishing they had it. He is not advocating that we abandon the system, but just make it work better for us.

Chairman Woodard asked about addressing ideas as a Board that haven't been to the RACs. Should they be put off for a year?

Director Karpowitz said that does create some issues and that is where the action log came from. This helped people not feel like coming to the meeting was in vain. They at least got heard, even though they didn't get the proposal passed, they got further

consideration. Good ideas come up in these meetings and this is how we get it through the system. He hasn't seen any ideas come up through the years where it hurts to wait a year and work it back through the system.

Chairman Woodard asked what the feeling is of the Board members that will go on. Do you want to get the word out on this, go ahead and make the change or maybe have a discussion with the RAC Chairs? They are a valuable tool for this process.

Mr. Perkins said we could do a policy letter to the RACs about this discussion.

Chairman Woodard said once we dropped the Dedicated Hunter requirements the RAC attendance went down considerably.

Mr. Bushman asked if the consideration is that the Board will only hear comments that have been to the RACs. He would encourage flexibility.

Chairman Woodard said no that wasn't the conclusion. We're always going to get comments pro and con on each of the new recommendations, but if there is a brand new fresh idea that comes up, it would go to the action log and then to the RACs.

Mr. Johnson said there is still the case where something needs to be dealt with quickly, but that should be at the Chair's discretion. The other thing with the RAC meetings that would help is if different members of the RAC travel, they let people from the community know they'll be traveling and they might have room for them to ride with them. They could send emails out to some of the local people and invite them to ride with them.

Mr. Albrecht said at the last meeting at Beaver after Mr. Aoude gave the presentation, the questions that came back in were answered by the local biologist. He thinks if they keep doing that it will bring better attendance to the RAC meeting. They know the local biologists better than the Salt Lake people.

Mr. Brady said that is a good point and it is the same in the Northeast.

Mr. Perkins said if an idea comes up in several RACs and is discussed in the RAC; the Board will consider that for an action that year, even though it wasn't passed at every RAC. It doesn't have to be heard at every RAC in order to be considered.

Chairman Woodard said if a RAC passes something the Board needs to act on it.

b) When should the Board vote for a new chairman and vice-chairman?

Chairman Woodard said the sitting Board has done this in the past and this was set up by Dr. Morgan. There has been some question on this. Some think this is not fair to the new Board members coming on the Board. They should have a say of who the Chair is going to be.

Mr. Albrecht said leave it as it is.

Director Karpowitz said he knows of no other Board or committee where the outgoing Board votes for the new Chair. The people who have to live with it ought to be voting on it.

Mr. Hatch said he agrees.

Mr. Perkins said he has seen it both ways. He sees advantages both ways.

Director Karpowitz said that all it says in code is the Board shall elect the Chair and Vice Chair.

Chairman Woodard said he would like to hear from the Board members. We are set to vote on this at the June meeting.

Director Karpowitz said we know the two new Board members are from specific regions, Southeast and Central. With filling Mr. Hatch's seat, they could come from any region but Northern. It makes sense to find out how the regions fall out before someone volunteers or gets nominated to be Chair. That will factor into the decision. You need that information before you vote for a Chair.

Chairman Woodard asked about the timing on this new nomination.

Director Karpowitz said we are trying to do this to get the replacement for Mr. Hatch for the August Board meeting. That will be a fast turn around. Also this person could well be on the Board for eight years because they'll be filling two years of Mr. Hatch's term plus they'll be available for their own six year term.

Mr. Albrecht said those present on the Wildlife Board now might be able to see those who have leadership skills because they have been working with them.

Mr. Perkins said he has seen when someone is elected at a meeting and has to step right in. It would be good to have some preparation time.

Mr. Hatch asked Mr. Bair what he thought.

Mr. Bair said he doesn't think it matters. He trusts the current Board to vote, or he would be alright with voting.

Chairman Woodard asked how the Board wants to leave this.

Mr. Brady said he is not passionate about going either way, but in the normal process the Board elects the Chair. The new Board would elect the Chair.

Chairman Woodard said you'd have one meeting without a Chair because that couldn't happen until August.

Director Karpowitz said the Vice Chair would have to run that meeting or just vote and then turn it over to the new Chair.

Chairman Woodard said he thinks it would be best for the Vice Chair to run that meeting because it is a lot to put on a new Chair would be a little awkward.

Mr. Johnson said you could do it like the legislature and just bring everybody in to elect a Chair. They could meet the first of August to vote.

Mr. Perkins asked about doing a meeting in July to vote and visit the range trend crew in Northern region.

Director Karpowitz said there is a lot happening in July. We need to contact the Governor's Office and see what they suggest.

Mr. Brady said one of the problems he has is the calendar continually changing. Right now his July calendar is blacked out.

Mr. Perkins said he proposes that we have Chairman Woodard work with Director Karpowitz on this issue and come back with a suggestion.

Chairman Woodard said we will discuss this item at the start of the next work meeting in June and let everyone know.

Mr. Perkins said the recommendation should be out before that.

c) Should the Chairman be able to vote on each motion?

Chairman Woodard said the only time the Chair votes in his mind is on a tie. That is the way it has always been.

Mr. Perkins said he questioned this a few years ago at WAFWA. Utah's at one end of the spectrum. In Utah and Wyoming, the Chair does not speak to motions and only votes if there is a tie. On the other end are Alaska, Arizona and Colorado where the Chair can make motions and votes on all motions. All the other western states are somewhere in the middle on this subject. The last few years with Chairman Woodard being the only Central region member, sometimes Central region's issues didn't get spoken to quite as much as the other regions. He can see advantages to the Chair speaking and he doesn't see any difference as to their voting. The only time it counts is if there is a tie.

Mr. Hatch said he disagrees with that and it does make a difference if they vote. If they never vote you never know how they feel about the issue. The Chair should be able to

vote and not speak to motions. If they want to speak to an issue they can speak before the motion is made. Once a motion is made the Chair's job is to moderate the motion.

Mr. Brady said he leans that way also. We all represent a constituency and we should accept that responsibility.

Mr. Hatch said he feels that if the Chair adamantly disagrees he should be able to relinquish the Chair, address the Board and let them know how he feels about an issue.

Mr. Johnson said he has seen that done on the floor of the house.

Mr. Perkins said the Board consensus is the Chair should be able to vote and speak to a topic, but not after a motion is made. He would also add it is not incumbent on the Chair to vote.

Mr. Hatch said anybody can abstain anytime.

Chairman Woodard said the Chair will be able to vote and speak to a topic, but not after a motion is made.

d) How can items be added to the meeting agenda?

Chairman Woodard said the way this has been handled is if any Board member calls him and wants to add a specific discussion point to the agenda, he has always added it.

Director Karpowitz said from the Division's perspective they have always left that decision to the Chair. If they get a request from the public for an agenda item, they call the Chair and ask them if he wants it on the agenda. We put out a proposed agenda which we give the Chair opportunity to modify or change.

Mr. Hatch said that is the normal way it runs. He said it took him a while to figure out how to get an item on the agenda and what an action log item was. The new Board needs to be brought up to speed on that as part of the training.

Director Karpowitz said they viewed the work sessions as idea generators and agenda item generators. The Board needs to tell the Chair if there are things the Board members want to be on future agendas.

Mr. Albrecht asked if at a RAC meeting, the same process should be followed.

Director Karpowitz said we have to follow the same procedure with more than 24 hours in advance.

Mr. Perkins said every RAC Chair can amend their agenda. The state agenda is just a starting point.

Ms. Coons said we have to publish the agendas on the state's public website, not just on the door of the meeting. That is why the regions need to have the agenda to Ms. Coons 24 hours prior to the start of their meetings.

e) Should sweeping motions to wrap up an agenda topic be made or should each item be discussed individually?

Chairman Woodard said if there is a contentious point comes up he handled it a piece at a time, but if it is overall without controversy, a sweeping policy is adequate.

Mr. Hatch said he is probably the maker of the sweeping motions. He agrees if there is something that needs discussing, it should be taken individually. A lot of times a sweeping motion saves a lot of time.

Mr. Albrecht said it just depends on the agenda item.

Mr. Perkins said he has seen times when Chairman Woodard has a complicated topic that he is handling with a lot of suggestions coming in then one of the Board members overrides the process by making a sweeping motion. This makes Chairman Woodard's job harder when he is going down a checklist on how he wants to cover the topic. It also can mean that topics he thinks need to be discussed before the public don't get covered as well or that individual members of the Board don't get as good an opportunity to present their thoughts. His point is, let the Chair manage the meeting.

Mr. Hatch asked what if the Chair is taking too long. What do you do then?

Mr. Perkins said talk to the Chair after the meeting.

Mr. Hatch said there are times when we beat the thing to death. That gives the Chair way too much power and he can require every single separate motion and the rest of the Board feels that it is not working. Why not move on?

Mr. Perkins said he has set back several times very consciously and listened while others have said what they needed to especially relative to their individual constituencies.

Mr. Hatch said you can always vote against the motion.

Mr. Brady said he is up for moving on down the road in most cases, but sometimes he does have to give information on issues from his specific area of the northeast region.

Chairman Woodard said he has been very reluctant to cut any of the Board members off. We are all here and need to say our peace.

Mr. Hatch said the point is we have had the Division and RAC presentations and if there is just one little exception, it can be covered separately with the rest of the proposals taken care of. That is where a sweeping motion should be.

4. Antler Gathering (Informational)

Mike Fowlks, Law Enforcement Chief made this presentation on the antler gathering program that was put in place a few years ago. He will go over compliance and some anecdotal information from the regions as he went around on a work plan tour to get a feel for how the regions feel it is going. He got some information from Wyoming on their new law as well. We started this program two years ago, late winter, early spring of 2010 was the first year we implemented it. Generally we had about 11,000 people get the certificate the first year and will be a little ahead of that this year. Compliance in the field is good with about 97% of those out there with certificates who understand the program. On wildlife harassment, illegal harassment and illegal use of OHV in habitat destruction the regions are seeing a slight decrease or it's holding steady. There are some hotspots we are still dealing with. The Wallsburg Unit is still a problem. The Book Cliffs in Northeastern and the Henry's are also hotspots.

They compared 2009 and 2010 violations, before and after the program was put in place and also what they saw this last year. They are encouraged by lower number of 47 violations in 2011. We also had weather issues this last year and it may account for lower illegal activity because there were as many people out. He is not willing to say we're having success and heading for a downward trend but he is encouraged by that lower number.

With regard to Wyoming's new law, they closed the western half of the state from the Continental Divide to the west to antler gathering from January 1st to April 30th. They then define what collect means. It is a broad definition. He called and asked the Officers there how they feel about the new law. They like the law and they are being judicious in its application. They are seeing far less harassment and habitat destruction issues there, but they do not have any data yet. The jury is still out on their law, but what they are seeing is encouraging. This concluded his presentation.

Mr. Hatch asked what has made it so popular.

Mr. Fowlks said he doesn't know. They have scoring clubs up there and you see it on sportsmen's shows. It is just really climbing in popularity.

Mr. Albrecht asked if he has a break down on citations.

Mr. Fowlks said he doesn't have it with him but it was about 50% OHVs and 50% habitat harassment issues.

Chairman Woodard said of the violations, what percentage of the people actually out in the field do you encounter? Do you get a lot of the calls or tips reporting on someone? The focus is on the condition of the deer and the stress on them.

Mr. Fowlks said they get a fair amount of calls that they follow up on and they are out patrolling. He doesn't know exactly the number of people who were checked. They don't have the manpower to cover 24/7.

Director Karpowitz asked if the Board wants them to do something different. It can go on the agenda for November/December. If the Board is satisfied, they will continue to collect data for a few more years. They would prefer to stay where we're at for a few more years.

Mr. Brady said there are two individuals in their area who are real die hards. They have made comments that there is too much destruction going on. They would like it to come back to at least April 15th for an opening time and these are guys who are out there constantly. He mentioned the gathering going on up Daniel's Canyon. There is just too much habitat damage according to these two men.

Mr. Hatch said he agrees with Mr. Brady, but it's hard to put a date to it with the changing weather.

Director Karpowitz said we had an opening day phenomenon. It opened at midnight and people in the Northern region lined up with flashlights.

Mr. Perkins said Mr. Fowlks said he would continue to monitor the Wyoming program and when he's convinced that it is working better than what we have, he will push for change.

Mr. Albrecht said the only problems that he can remember that they had were in the Henry Mountains. Mr. Dalton commented that it was bad with people on his property. There were also some cowboys down there that said they cannot keep their cows together when there are antler gatherers in that area. There are some problems across the state but he thinks it has to do with enforcement with the BLM and the DWR. He is willing to wait another year and see which direction it goes.

Chairman Woodard said the consensus is that we will wait on it and continue to gather information.

Mr. Fowlks said the federal agencies have been very cooperative in the effort to control things with the antler gathering, along with the road closures and educating the public. One of the officer's in Beaver County told Mr. Fowlks he has seen a reduction in illegal activity around Beaver because of the coordinated effort with the Forest Service.

5. Cougar Plan Amendments (Informational)

Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Coordinator referred to the handouts (See Attachment #1) There are two topics we need to address that are related, one is amendments to the cougar plan and that leads into amendments to the PMP. He met with the Cougar Advisory Group and proposed to them some amendments to the cougar plan that would help us

better address areas where we are having issues with cougar predation particularly on mule deer. He referred to the map in the handout, looking at the four eco regions. This map shows a new way to split the state up into cougar management areas that are centered around the units where we are getting deer survival data. If we go with this proposal we will go from four eco regions to nine management areas. Each of these center around where we are tracking adult mule deer survival, because that is the metric that makes sense to look at relative to whether cougar predation is a limiting factor on a deer population. The Cougar Advisory Group approved the proposal and suggested we move forward from their perspective. There are two changes, first we increase the number of areas and also, instead of managing quotas on a unit by unit basis, we would manage quotas for the entire management area. He gave an example of how this would work. Another thing they would add into it is a female sub quota at the management area level. Female sub quotas would be set differently for areas under PMP. PMP would be for an entire area, not just for a unit. He asked if there were any questions to this point.

Mr. Perkins said if you had a harvest objective on the Monroe, would you have a harvest objective on each unit or on one of the eight management units?

Mr. Bunnell said if the Monroe management area had adult survival that was lower than expected, you could still have individual units that would most likely be under a split scenario, but you may have one unit that you don't think cougar predation is a problem. You could have that as a limited entry unit, but limited entry harvest would count towards the overall quota for the area.

Mr. Perkins asked if the overall area that is subjected, would you close the limited entry.

Mr. Bunnell said no, limited entry would continue to hunt and we would close the remainder of the area, but I don't see that happening very often. A couple of small caveats to this are we do have some areas where we are managing cougars in relation to bighorn sheep. There was some concern from the regional managers that for instance you have the Wasatch Manti Management area which includes the Avintaquin. You could see a scenario where guys hunted the Manti heavily, part of the Wasatch heavily and then they met the quota and we didn't get any harvest on the Avintaquin. So to deal with that issue he suggests setting a minimum harvest on those sheep areas and they would not close with the rest of the area unless the minimum had been met to keep some pressure on the bighorn sheep areas.

Mr. Brady said so that is something that they would put into the revised amendment to protect the sheep areas.

Mr. Bunnell asked if this was what the Board had in mind to address this issue.

Mr. Brady said in the Uintahs, we are killing maybe six cougar up on Diamond Mountain for instance or killing a bunch on the west end of the Uintah Mountains, would that shut down the whole thing or is the harvest objective going to be roughly the same as it is on the subunits?

Mr. Bunnell said yes, it will be fairly close for this round. The recommendations would run for two years to finish the cycle then we would get back on schedule with the plan. Then they'll go back and look at the metric within the plan, follow it and adjust according to what happens. It will keep areas where there is opportunity from closing down as fast as they have done in the past. The female sub quota is a safety valve.

Mr. Albrecht asked on the cougar's treed per day on average, is that an honest item that comes back to the DWR or is it a secure number?

Mr. Bunnell said the reason they put that in the plan is part of the research that has been going on up at Utah State University found that of all the things we look at, that is one of the items that tracks overall populations on a broad scale better than most others. Not on an individual unit, but on a broad scale. There is going to be bias, but we assume that it is constant. As we watch the metric change, the information is still valuable.

Mr. Perkins asked if when they took this to the Cougar Advisory Group, was it unanimous agreement or were there elements, i.e. the houndsmen, that had big reservations on portions of it.

Mr. Bunnell said at the end of the meeting, we didn't vote. We just worked for consensus and moved on. They did vote at one point and it was unanimous because they called the vote themselves. We didn't have anyone from the Wool Growers Association and Mr. Bunnell has talked with him since, and we were missing one of the houndsmen.

Director Karpowitz asked what the net result of this will be.

Mr. Bunnell said increased cougar harvest overall, at first until we see how it goes back into the metrics of where we are at with adult female harvest and we will adjust accordingly and we still want to stay between 17 and 20% female harvest in areas that aren't under PMPs. We want to be at 25% for areas that are under PMPs.

Mr. Johnson said on the sheep management area, a place not on there where the cougars have been a limiting factor is the Dartanian Plateau where it used to be the North San Juan.

Mr. Bunnell said we can still deal with some individual small units like that, but there are deer in some of those areas. Certainly there are areas where we have both deer and bighorn sheep. We will continue to treat them the way we have been.

Mr. Johnson said 30 years ago on the Dartanian Plateau they were doing studies and finding collared sheep that were being killed by cougar. We have had a hard time getting that area to recover.

Mr. Bunnell said it has been documented across the West that there are cases where cougar predation can be a limiting factor to bighorn sheep. It works a little differently

with deer. Cougars are rarely the cause of the decline, but they can keep it down. With bighorn sheep, because the populations are small, they can cause a decline.

Mr. Albrecht asked when they will bring this to RACs.

Mr. Bunnell said at the July/August RAC/Board meeting. They will bring the amended cougar plan and updated cougar recommendations.

Mr. Bunnell then went on to discuss the Predator Management Policy. He sees this as a big improvement to what we had before. Presently, they look at the percent of a population being relative to objective. That doesn't tell us a whole lot. Some of the problem is in some cases we are not sure how appropriate the objective might be. So what they have put together is a new approach of when we start looking at predator management relative to mule deer. He referred the Board to the flow chart (Attachment #2) and went on to discuss the triggers that lead to initiating coyote or cougar PMPs.

Director Karpowitz said this is information we wished we had years ago. We now have hard data on doe and fawn survival because of the radio collars we have out there. They will allow us to target our efforts better on the right predator. It will make us more efficient, the deer will respond better and we won't be needlessly killing or wasting money on predator management on the wrong species. This is a good thing.

Mr. Bunnell said if we had had this in place we wouldn't have gotten into the situation in some of the southern units this past year. Those units did not meet the criteria predator management under the old system because they were above 75% of objective, yet they had fawn/doe ratios that were way down. This will allow us to be more proactive and address the problem sooner.

Mr. Albrecht said if he reads this right on the coyotes, if you have two of three years with fawns below 50, then you have coyote control.

Mr. Bunnell said yes you would consider it.

Mr. Albrecht said or in the south for one year you have less than 40.

Mr. Bunnell said yes. This is a real improvement to the old policy.

6. WAFWA Attendance (Informational)

Chairman Woodard turned the time to Director Karpowitz.

Director Karpowitz said we are experiencing a huge loss of funds and revenue across the board. We also have some additional payments we have to meet. The net effect is we are doing some significant budget cutting. By the end of next year FY 2012, it could be over five million dollars of lost revenue and additional expenditures. Some people will have to change jobs and attrition due to retirement will make it so we don't have to lose too

many existing employees. We are not going to wait until the money is gone. We're going to make adjustments ahead.

WAFWA is in Big Sky Montana this year. If we can car pool that will save money. We need to keep expenses to a minimum. He would like all the Board members to go if possible. The summer meeting is more important than the winter meeting. There are a lot of good things we'll pick up there along with the interchange with those attending. We need to be careful and frugal. Overall, on a priority list, it is very important.

He wants the Board members to look at the agenda and if they can't be there the whole time, they should schedule time accordingly. Friday, Saturday and Sunday are the best days to be there. He went on to discuss the agenda.

Mr. Perkins said Monday is a worthwhile day also.

Director Karpowitz said if they are interested in going get with Becky Johnson and tell her what your preferences are.

7. Tri-State Attendance (Informational)

Chairman Woodard said this conference is with Utah, Idaho and Colorado and in some ways this is more helpful than WAFWA because we have a lot in common. He has attended it twice.

Mr. Brady said it is very helpful and he has really enjoyed it. The three states have a lot in common.

Director Karpowitz said Utah is hosting this meeting on August 23-25, 2011 in Manilla, Utah. Mr. Clark has arranged the accommodations. There is a new hotel there and they reserved the whole thing. In the past they have limited attendance to the regions that touch these states. The meetings are more informal than WAFWA. Maybe they can think about doing one meeting or the other.

Mr. Clark said he would like to know as soon as possible who is going. It is after the new Board members are on so we could invite them also.

The meeting was then adjourned.