



State of Utah

Department of Natural Resources

MICHAEL R. STYLER
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

JAMES F. KARPOWITZ
Division Director

JON M. HUNTSMAN, JR.
Governor

GARY R. HERBERT
Lieutenant Governor

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 25, 2010
To: Utah Wildlife Board / Regional Advisory Council Members
From: Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator
SUBJECT: Overview of 2010 Big Game Permits Recommendations

The attached tables summarize the Division of Wildlife's recommended limited entry permit allocations for the 2010 big game hunts. These recommendations are based upon evaluation of information from the 2009 harvests and post-hunting season herd composition classifications. The number of permits proposed for 2010 should help achieve or maintain desired objectives for harvest size, trophy quality, and hunting opportunity under Utah's big game management plans.

Highlights:

- 1) Our statewide deer plan deals with buck to doe ratios on a unit by unit basis and no longer manages general season by regional averages. Last year, the Division reduced permits in the Northern and Northeastern regions by 2,000 and 1,000 permits, respectively. Although the statewide management plan allows us to recommend going back to the 97,000 general season permit cap, the Division is recommending leaving permit numbers at 94,000 because of the potential upcoming shift to unit by unit deer management. There are 5 units that are below 15 bucks/100 does that will have a further shortened season during the 2010 hunt to help bring those units to objective (approved December, 2009).
- 2) Premium Limited Entry deer unit objectives were revised (approved December, 2009) to make the objectives reachable. We are recommending going back to 2008 permit levels on the Henry Mountains Unit to correct for the reduction in permits that occurred last year. We are recommending leaving the Paunsaugant permits the same as last year.
- 3) We are revising the statewide elk management plan during this RAC tour, and in this revision, the age objectives are recommended to be raised on some units. Even with the new higher objectives, average age of harvested bulls remains above age objectives on 18 of 28 Limited Entry elk hunt units. As such, the Division is recommending slight to moderate increases in the number of limited entry permits for 2010 (an 8% overall increase). We are also recommending an increase in spike bull tags from 12,500 to 13,750.
- 4) The Henry Mountains bison unit management plan (approved August 2007) has an objective of 305 adults postseason 2010. The old unit objective was 275 adults postseason. The Division has been very aggressive in issuing permits (past 3 years) and transplanting animals (past 2 years) to help get the population to the 275 population objective before we start the increase. Additionally, range trend studies indicate that an increase is possible. As such, we are recommending permits to move to the new 305 adults postseason objective in 2010.