

**NORTHEASTERN REGION RAC  
DECEMBER 15, 2005  
MOTION PAGE**

**MOTION:** to accept the bear proclamation as presented by DWR with the following exceptions: no spot and stalk hunt, limit the number of non resident pursuit permits sold, when possible use sportsman to deal with nuisance bears, and change the terminology of “pursuit” to “training” in all wildlife documents and rules.

**VOTE:** Passed.

**MOTION:** to accept the Taking of Non-game Mammals Rule as presented by DWR.

**VOTE:** Passed.

**MOTION:** to accept the Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy as presented by DWR.

**VOTE:** Passed

**MOTION:** to accept the Handling Cougar Problems Policy as presented by the DWR.

**VOTE:** Passed

**MOTION:** to accept the Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule as presented by DWR.

**VOTE:** Passed

**MOTION:** to ask the Wildlife Board to add bee farming to the definition of livestock.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

**MOTION:** to accept the Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule (5-Year Rule) as presented by DWR.

**VOTE:** Passed

**MOTION:** to accept the RAC Rule (5-Year Review) as presented by DWR.

**VOTE:** Passed

**MOTION:** as the NER RAC we write a letter to the Wildlife Board or the Directors office letting them that when we voted on the Big Game information we all had the impression that we were voting on a split season for Diamond Mountain.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

**MINUTES**

**THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:**

Floyd Briggs  
Curtis Dastrup  
Nancy Ebbert  
Tim Sweeney  
Clay Hamman  
Bob Christensen  
Amy Torres

Dave Chivers

**RAC Members Excused:**

Mike McKee

**DWR Personnel:**

Dave Olsen

Ron Stewart

Boyde Blackwell

Steve Phillips

Garrett Whatcott

Marcia Keddy

Randall Thacker

**REGIONAL UPDATE:** Ron Stewart.

Informed the RAC that Walt Donaldson will be leaving the Region to work in Salt Lake City for the Aquatics Section Chief. Chad Crosby and Kirk Mullins retired, both had over 30 years of service for the Division. Earlier in December the Division did the Pronghorn Transplant from the Parker Mountains. Approximately 100 antelope were brought to our Region.

**The Biology of the Spring Bear Hunt:** Hal Black. Dr. Black reported on his findings on the Book Cliffs Bear Study.

**Questions from the RAC:**

None

**Questions from the Public:**

Mitch Hacking: Believes that there is quite a few activities going on in the mountains during the Springs. They run cattle in the spring.

Hal Black: I meant mostly hunting activity.

Greg Cover (Utah Federation of Houndsmen): There are numerous other states that run bears from bait during the summer. Would like to see where you could train yours dogs by baiting the bears. (He indicated these stations were good for bears because they supply extra food so the bears would be fatter in the dens and so fewer lost cubs.) Why aren't we feeding the cubs (orphans) at bait stations rather than sending them to Idaho?

Hal Black: I would like to see the data from the other states that you refer to. The mortality does not happen in the dens it happens later in the spring. The condition of a sow bear in the fall before going into the den determines if she will continue with the pregnancy.

Greg Cover: Feels like there is another solution rather than shutting down the fall pursuit season.

Bruce Horrocks: Where are the cubs going in the spring? What do you think the mortality is- reasons?

Hal Black: We don't know, that data is very hard to get. Sometimes dogs. We only have once record of a female bear dieing of malnutrition.

Jason Binder: Lack of vegetation and nutrition is more likely than dogs.

Hal black: Nutrition does play a major role – dogs are in addition (cumulative effects). Now that the drought is over the sows are more than likely able to sustain their cubs.

**Bear Proclamation and Rule:** Boyde Blackwell

**Questions from the RAC:**

Clay Hamman: What is the hunt strategy in the book cliffs?

Boyde Blackwell: Offer more permits in the spring to reduce conflict in the fall. This would also allow the sows to increase their fat and be healthier going into the den (fewer disruptions).

**Questions from the Public:**

Greg Cover: We do appreciate the training seasons in your region. How many complaints were received from elk hunters in the Book Cliffs?

Boyde Blackwell: Quite a few over the last five years I have been taking calls. Two years ago I came to this RAC and I didn't have it documented then and I swore that I would not come back and request this again without the data, and here I am. I take three to five calls a year; others also get calls. One of the main concerns is the condition of the bears going into the den.

John Breakfield: What is the average draw time for a Book Cliffs bear?

Boyde Blackwell: I am not sure on this.

Dick Bess: The harvest in 2005 was down, is this because of access?

Boyde Blackwell: Access was more limited this year.

Jason Binder: We are under 40%, at 32% sows, why change the fall hunt? And why are the elk hunters taking precedence over the bear hunters. Drawing??

Boyde: Majority of the sows are killed in the fall hunts. Our goal is to keep it at 40% or less. The lower we keep it, the more breeding bears exist in the population. No one is taking precedence- elk and bear drawings are done the same way.

Bruce Horrocks: Each year when I am in the Book Cliffs we have hunters stop us and ask if we have seen any elk. I just don't want to lose time in the field with our dogs.

Greg Cover: Rather than shutting down the entire fall season why not just shut it down during the big game hunts? If we don't run bears hard, they will just be killed by ADC in the spring. Which is better?

Boyde Blackwell: There has to be some give and take between hunters (elk/bear). Voiced concerns again over the condition of sow bears in the fall going into the den.

Mitch Hacking: As a landowner most years the Diamond Mountain is not accessible by April 15.

Boyde Blackwell: Feels like accessibility between all units will balance itself out.

Mitch Hacking: Most normal years you can't access Diamond by April 15.

Hal Mecham: Do you have any data that show the number of hunt days for big game hunters compared bear hunters.

Boyde Blackwell: I don't have that data. There is five months of pursuit time, only 11 days for deer hunt. I don't know total hunter days, I just simply do not have data on that.

Hal Mecham: How much revenue do you get from deer and elk hunters and how much from bear hunters – bear's is a longer season? (Unknown)  
Wants to separate a fall hunt, a two week period for bear hunting in the book cliffs.

Matt Mahler: How did you come up with the five units for the training areas?

Boyde Blackwell: They are areas that have most nuisance issues. The purpose of having an extended pursuit is to hopefully put pressure on the bears to keep them out of the inhabited areas – push them back into the hills. It is experimental.

Matt Mahler: Would like to see some of the more premier areas on the list of units for dog training like the Book Cliffs.

Boyde Blackwell: One of the reasons for not having Book Cliffs on there is to keep the deer and elk on the summer range as long as possible. The Book Cliffs is summer range dependent and hounds chase wildlife across and off the range - hurts elk, deer and bear populations. Need to give them (wildlife) a break and a place with the best forage.

### **Comments from the public:**

Bruce Horrocks: Is concerned about Diamond being on the list of training units because you can only hunt half of Diamond because of the private property. Does not matter if they kill another bear they would just like to hunt their dogs. He feels like hunters should have more opportunities on taking depredating bears. He does not agree with a government trapper taking 33 bears to be wasted.

Dick Bess: Would like to see the spring season extended to June 15, because of access

- Extend spring bear hunt to weeks to June 15.
- Disagrees with limiting Book Cliffs fall hunt (just close for elk hunt).

- Would like to see non-resident houndsmen limited, (pursuit permits). Something put in place like a draw for an out of state for pursuit.

Greg Cover (Utah federation of Houndsmen): (Presented letter from Todd Black.)

- We would like to see the word “pursuit” changed to “training” just to be more politically correct in society.
- Do away with the last two weeks of April and extend the spring hunt June 15.
- Add more units (statewide) into the summer training. It is not about killing for the houndsmen it is about training our dogs.
- Keep fall hunt/pursuit. Why not shut us down for the five to ten days during the deer and elk hunts rather than taking away the entire season.
- More females are killed with the spot and stalk so I would recommend that we not have a spot and stalk season.
- More kill tags in the spring.
- Would like to see the number of non-resident guides be limited by a draw or something.
- Likes extended summer season (would like longer dates and more units). George Washington brought he first pack of hounds here. Thank you.

Jason Binder: Presented a letter from the Utah Federation of Houndsmen.

- Split tags 50/50 season spring/fall: maybe with sow subquota – stop if we hit 40%
- Entire state as “training” season
- Pursue year-round like cougars
- Too many non-residents

Ken Labrum (Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife): They support the spring kill season. They would not like to see opportunity reduced in the fall.

Hal Black: Book Cliffs has been hammered. Personal experiences plus studies. Your dogs have an impact on the bears and sometimes even deadly and you all know this, you may not be willing to admit this in public but it is true. Best time to hunt in the spring. I am surprised that you want more. We impact them no matter what we do. If you don’t leave the spring season alone (April 15 to May 31), you will kill more females (by going into June 15.) What is recommended will only enhance the bear population and I am surprised at you wanting more access and more opportunity. If you have the long spring hunt and the training season and hunt/pursue in the fall, the bears are being hunted or pursued the entire active period of their life. Spot and stalk will give a little reprieve to that. Asking way too much and you will not get it. No one else has that opportunity.

Hal Mecham: Bear hunters are not all on the mountain at the same time like the deer hunters and elk hunters. They do not have as much impact when they are there. Use sportsmen for problem bears. Is it possible for young bears after being chased from campgrounds to be more wild?

Boyde Blackwell: We have tried to use the sportsmen as much as possible. There are programs in other states that do chase bears with trained dogs or rubber bullets and some data indicates they are successful programs.

Hal Mecham: Feels like if the spring season is extended in June that the hunter would be able to be more selective, they would choose a trophy.

Boyde Blackwell: In some cases.

Kelsey Dickson: The same bear is not being chased every day. It takes a long period of time to train a dog. There is a study on bears that says there is more pressure on bears to find food than the pressure a pursuit puts on the bear. (Data ???) It adds up to the same amount of time that the big game hunters are getting.

**Comments from RAC:**

Curtis Dastrup: Can live with changing the word “pursuit” to “training”. Do not extend spring bear hunt. Can’t justify with the stats given. I support spring kill season recommended by the Division. You cannot compare the two animals (cougar & bear) they are completely different. I am not in favor of the spot and stock. No hunts/pursuit in fall.

Nancy Ebbert: When there are bear problems, how old are the bears usually?

Hal Black: Young male bears.

Nancy Ebbert: Would like to see the Division using hunters for depredation bears. Does not agree with extending spring bear hunt. Stabilize these populations. Following Dr. Black’s recommendation. Ok with a Policy/Legislation to allow houndsman to pursue problem bears.

Tim Sweeney: Is it legal to limit the out of state hunters? – didn’t we go through this with permits/prices?

Greg Cover: It can be done legislatively.

Curtis Dastrup: I’ve no problem with limiting out of state hunters or guides.

Dave Chivers: As a landowner I am concerned with everyone chasing bears on just these units – everyone from three states. While houndsmen are happy with the summer training and it may be beneficial to the community dollar wise, we would have a lot of other people coming to this area to train their dogs. Out of state, out of area hunters will have the exact same opportunities as our residents. I can see access – landowner/livestock problems. I am not for the spot and stalk. Why are we scared of overrunning Book Cliffs now when a few years ago we were limiting the bears we put out there?

Boyde Blackwell: We put campground bears out there, problems from other areas. Cut back on what we were doing because we were concerned of the saturation level in the Book Cliffs. We don’t have data and we didn’t want to put additional pressure on bears that were suffering due to drought. BC is summer range limited and that’s what the bears use.

Amy Torres: Using houndsmen to chase nuisance bears is a good idea. How would the Division choose the hunters?

Dave Chivers: We need to make sure that we don't tie the hands of the Division. Sometimes the Division has to act now and may not have time to contact hunters.

Clay Hamman: We need to make sure that we do what is best for the bears and still provide opportunity. Sometimes we have to say no and do what's best for the resource – best for everyone. Then we will have a larger bear population to enjoy. Everyone wants more of a good thing but some of the things suggested here are contrary to good biology.

Curtis Dastrup: Makes the motion to accept the bear proclamation as presented by DWR with the following exceptions: no spot and stalk hunt, limit the number of non-resident pursuit permits sold, when possible use sportsman to deal with nuisance bears, and change the terminology of "pursuit" to "training" in all wildlife documents and rules.

Nancy Ebbert: Not so concerned about being politically correct on the word change, she would just like to see it be accurate. Pursuit may be more accurate.

Amy Torres: Seconds it. Thinks training is accurate.

**Vote: 6 to 2.**

Tim Sweeney: Voted against it. Agreed with everything except for the word change from "pursuit" to "training".

Dave Chivers: Voted against it. Agreed with everything except the training units. His concern is the number of people or impact on Diamond that this training season might have.

**Taking Non-Game Mammal Rule:** Boyde Blackwell

Boyde Blackwell: The only change to this rule is that a certificate of registration would be required to take Utah Prairie Dogs.

**Questions from the RAC:**

None

**Questions from the public**

None

**Comments from Public**

**Comments from the RAC:**

Tim Sweeney: Makes the motion to accept as the Taking of Non-Game Animals as presented by DWR.

Nancy Ebbert: Seconds it.

Vote: Unanimous.

**Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy:** Boyde Blackwell

Boyde Blackwell: We will allow sportsman as much as possible. We do recognize the need for predators in system. If there was a transplant area for sheep then we would increase the number of predators taken on that unit.

**Questions from the RAC**

None

**Questions from the Public**

John breakfield: Why not allow the sheep to live naturally in their habitat with lions and other predators?

Boyde Blackwell: When a group of sheep are first introduced they do not know where escape routes are and they are very vulnerable. Our ultimate goal is to have the Bighorn live with the predators but first we need to help them get established.

**Comments From the Public**

Comments from RAC:

Dave Chivers: Makes the motion to accept the Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy as presented by DWR.

Tim Sweeney: Seconds it.

Vote: Unanimous.

**Handling Cougar Problems Policy:** Boyde Blackwell

**Questions from the RAC**

Dave Chivers: On page 2 why is livestock defined the way it is?

Boyde Blackwell: People have different meanings of livestock. The legislature defined it for us. Actually this came from Agriculture.

**Questions from the Public**

None

Amy Torres: Makes the motion to accept the Handling Predatory Wildlife Species Policy as presented by DWR.

Dave Chivers: Seconds it.



Vote: Unanimous.

### **Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule:**

#### **Questions from the RAC**

Tim Sweeney: Why are horses are left out?

Boyde Blackwell: They are left out of the legislative definition. However, we can still compensate an individual for them. UDWR policy.

Mitch hacking: What about wolves?

Clay Hamman: The Division has no say. Wolves are protected by the US Fish and Wildlife.

#### **Comments from the Public:**

Alan Smith: Bee Keepers in the Uintah Basin. Bees are not included in livestock definition however the past years they have suffered a lot of damage from bears..

Clay hamman: a viable crop.

#### **Comments from the RAC:**

Bob Christensen: Makes the motion to accept the Cougar/Bear Compensation Rule as presented by DWR.

Amy Torres: Seconds it.

Vote: Unanimous

Tim Sweeney: Makes the motion that the wildlife board change the definition of livestock to include bee farming.

Nancy Ebbert: Seconds it.

Vote: Unanimous.

Nancy Ebbert: Would like everyone to know that there has been a serious decline in bees nationwide. Utah has some of the most stable bee numbers. The significance cannot be denied.

Amy Torres: Believes that livestock needs to be redefined to include a whole realm of animals.

### **Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule 5 year: Boyde Blackwell**

Questions from the RAC:

None

Questions from the Public:

None

Comments from the RAC:

Bob Christensen: Makes the motion to accept the Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule as presented by DWR.

Amy Torres: Seconds it.

Vote: Unanimous

**RAC Rule 5- year Review:** Steve Phillips

Steve Phillips: No changes to the rule.

Questions from the RAC

None

Questions from the Public:

None

Comments from the Public

None

Tim Sweeney: Makes the motion to accept the RAC Rule as presented by DWR.

Bob Christensen: Seconds it.

Vote: Unanimous.

Dave chivers: There have been so many changes to the RAC he would like to have a list of RAC members. Does the public have access to the changes being recommended before each meeting? Last meeting (big game) we had a change that went through by mistake which impacts 140 landowners on Diamond Mountain. How can we prevent this?

Steve Phillips: There was a mistake with this last meeting on getting information out to the public. However, normally all recommended changes are posted on our website as well as sent to RAC members and Board members.

Mitch Hacking: Diamond Mountain was suppose to have a split season on elk hunt. Last RAC meeting we thought that there was no changes now we found out that went through

with just the one season. What are we doing wrong? How did I miss this? How can I catch this in meeting?

Boyde Blackwell: That was the impression here, we did not recommend a change. No one picked it up on the misinformation. I thought it was there, Charlie thought it was there. I called Craig McLaughlin and the director's office is not inclined to change it back. I don't know if there is anything we can do but we will next year.

Marcia: The proclamation has not gone to the printers yet.

Nancy Ebbert: Makes a motion we as a RAC send a letter to the Wildlife Board or Directors office to clarify how we voted and get it sent in tomorrow. Before proclamation gets printed.

Dave Chivers: Seconds it.

Vote: Unanimous.

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**Northern Region RAC - Summary of Motions  
Brigham City Community Center  
December 21, 2005**

**Item 1. Bear Proclamation and Rule**

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board add additional units for (dog) summer training (pursuit), and change the wording from "pursuit" to "training" in the proclamation and rule.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board allow fall hound hunts on the San Juan and Book Cliffs, with appropriate permit reductions.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt the remainder of the proclamation and rule as presented by the Division.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

**Item 2. Taking Nongame Mammals Rule**

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt as presented by the Division.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

**Item 3. Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy**

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the policy as presented.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

**Item 4. Handling Cougar Problems Policy**

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt the policy as presented.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

**Item 5. Northern Region WMA Management Plans**

Motion: Recommend the Director adopt these plans (Coldwater Canyon & Peterson Weber River Properties Complex) as presented

Motion Carries: Unanimous

**Item 6. Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule**

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt the rule as presented.

Motion Carries: For 8; Recused 2

**Item 7. Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule**

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the rule as presented.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

**Item 8. RAC Rule**

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the rule as presented.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

**MINUTES**

**RAC Present**

Darwin Bingham, Agric  
Bill Fenimore, At Large  
Ryan Foutz, At Large  
Shawn Groll, At Large  
Mark Marsh, Sportsman  
Ernie Perkins-Chair, At Large  
Jim Poulter, At Large  
Bret Selman, Agric  
Lee Shirley, Noncon  
Brad Slater, Elected  
Richard Williams, Forest Service

**DWR Present**

Kirt Enright  
Scott Walker  
Phil Douglass  
Jodie Anderson  
Kevin Bunnell  
Karen Caldwell  
Steve Phillips  
Randy Wood  
Justin Dolling  
Scott Davis  
Robert Hasenyager

**Wildlife Board**

**RAC absent**

Glenn Carpenter, BLM  
Wayne Iverson, Sportsman  
Ann Neville, Noncon

**Public Present-** See Attached Roll Sheet

**Meeting Begins:** 6 p.m.

## **Introduction-Ernie Perkins**

### **Agenda:**

The Biology of a Spring Bear Hunt  
Bear Proclamation and Rule  
Taking Nongame Mammals Rule  
Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy  
Handling Cougar Problems Policy  
Northern Region Wildlife Management Areas-Management Plans  
Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule  
Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule, 5-year review  
RAC Rule, 5-year review

### **Approval of Minutes- (Action)**

Adopted by Consent

### **Approval of Main Agenda (Action)**

Adopted by Consent

### **Item 1. The Biology of a Spring Bear Hunt**

Dr Hal Black, Brigham Young University

See Handout

### **RAC Questions**

Fenimore-At what age do females become sexually reproductive?

Black-Under good conditions in the Book Cliffs, at least, we've had some four year olds who have had cubs. Probably more realistic number six. We've had females that didn't have their first cubs until they were eight. So if you are born and you are not growing to well and conditions are bad then that just retards the development. It's not unlike the situation in humans where a young woman with good nutrition will probably enter reproductive state sooner than someone in poor condition.

### **Item 2. Bear Proclamation and Rule**

Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

### **RAC Questions**

Selman-Is there any difference with depredation on females with cubs, males, or females without cubs, do you know?

Bunnell-I don't know about females. In general depredation comes from adult males. If you look at our statistics it's about 4:1 in terms of the numbers of males we kill in depredation situations versus females. I don't know the difference between females with cubs and females without. In theory you would say that a female that's raising young would have a higher food requirement and maybe that would increase her odds of being involved in depredation. I'm not aware of any data. Dr. Black do you know of anything along those lines?

Black-It's predominately male.

Bunnell-A large proportion of the problems are not only males, but large adult males in a lot of cases.

Poulter-How many black bears are there in Utah? Estimate?

Bunnell-Somewhere between 2,000 and 5,000.

Fenimore-Given the data and statistics about the Spring survival versus Fall ones, have you considered switching all bear hunting to Spring hunts?

Bunnell-We didn't consider that. The reason being that we put the majority of the tags in the Spring. Based on our performance targets although we do have lower percent females in the Spring, even Fall's below 40% and by quite a bit. We're not going to impact our bear population significantly with a few tags that we have in the Fall.

Fenimore-On cub survival, does the pursuit with hounds have any impact on that?

Bunnell-I'm not aware of any data along those lines. That would be a hard question to answer.

Black- Occasionally hounds men have reported in. (He was not near a microphone and only got a partial statement).

Bunnell-That's as likely any time you are hunting bears really. There is not a time issue.

Fenimore-The reason for my question is that we are talking about the importance of building the fat reserves in the Fall. Pursuit interrupting some of that and then perhaps some caring on the pregnancies so they don't have that fat reserve. I was just wondering what the impact that pursuit has on the cubs that were already born.

Bunnell-The cubs aren't nursing any more when they go into yearlings, they are relying on their own fat reserves the same as the female. So it would be a similar dynamic.

Poulter-As I was reading this trial spot and stalk any weapon. Don't I understand that if you draw a bear permit today you are allowed to hunt that bear however you want whether that be pursuit or whether that be spot and stalk. If you choose to put up bait station could you do that?

Bunnell-You can, the only restriction being that if you use bait you are limited to archery tackle.

Poulter-Why is it a trial spot and stalk when every bear permit we're issuing is for the same thing?

Bunnell-Because it's only for people hunting without the use of hounds.

### **Public Questions**

Juston Dickson-Do you have any statistics or data that shows, maybe not in Utah but anywhere, that when they pursue in the Fall that it does hurt reproduction the next year?

Bunnell-We have the results of the study on the Book Cliffs that showed when forage conditions are low you have a lower reproduction. Meaning that the bears weren't able to build up the fat reserves. We don't have direct data that is the data that we are using. There certainly is a high-energy expenditure during pursuit and that affects in two ways. The bears reach a certain level of fat reserves. Once they get chased they have used up a portion of that and they have lost opportunity to forage. Then they have to first regain and get back to where they were which takes two or three days. Then they have to make up for the two or three days that they missed. That's a critical time period.

Dickson-Do you know of any data that shows for the five years they chased and this is what the results were?

Bunnell-There isn't any data like that that exists.

### **Public Comments**

Juston Dickson-I support whatever some of these guys say.

Aaron Johnson-I support the Hounds federation and their goals. I know that there is some conflict out there between the deer and elk hunters and the hounds men, but it is my opinion that I have just as much right to the mountain and the hunting season in the fall as an elk or deer hunter does. When I have been out there hunting in the Fall I have shown courtesy in the bow hunters and stayed away from them. I have never run in to a conflict with them. I think that there is a way to cut the pie and have everybody a fair shot at the mountain in the Fall like some other States do. Maybe that is something the Board can look at.

Perkins-Give me the specifics of what you would like to see then.

Johnson-I would like see in the Fall when the deer and the elk hunters are hunting that the bear hunters can hunt the same time. I like the way it is right now and I know we are asking for some things. I've hunted in Idaho and I like the way that they do it. They have a Spring season and they also have a Fall season where they can kill. I wouldn't kill a sow that's just my opinion, but some hunters are going to do that and maybe that needs to be addressed. Maybe there is a way to limit the areas to sow only with an enclosure to taking bears by just allowing the hunters to continue to hunt. I just hunt for the pleasure of it. I really don't intend on killing one, but I don't want them to take away a month in the Fall which is basically one of my hobbies and would eliminate that.

Perkins-If I am understanding correctly you would then recommend that the hunt with hounds be allowed on the Book Cliffs and the San Juan.

Johnson-Yes in the Fall, Spring, and then I love the idea of the training season as well. That is what I would recommend.

Perkins-Are you asking for pursuit or for kill in the Fall?

Johnson-Both.

Orin Midzinski-I would also like to support that we remain able to pursue and hunt in the Fall. We don't want to lose something like that. The chances now a days that if we lose a Fall hunt and getting that opportunity back gets a lot harder to get that opportunity returned to us. I do like the idea of the training season. I support that. I do think we ought to extend that. It is limited to certain areas mostly in the Northeast and the Central. I would like to see that made Statewide, to have that training season Statewide. At least more evenly distributed, I know you guys have had some problem bears and you want to use that as a tool. But a lot of those units don't have much for hounds men access and the bear population isn't the best in a lot of those units.

Byron Bateman-SFW and self-The SFW voted twice on this issue at board meeting and the vote was unanimous both times that we split the tags half and half between the Spring hunt and the Fall hunt and that we don't decrease any hunting opportunity. The two premium units that have been eliminated from the Fall hunt with hounds, which are the Book Cliffs and San Juan Elk Ridge, we would like to see at least six tags where you can hunt with hounds on those two units. We lost our Spring bear hunt in 1992, we went eight years without a Spring hunt and you saw what happened. The harvest of females went up substantially. Only half of the bears are female that people have the opportunity to pursue. We've never exceeded the threshold of going above 40% of females in a harvest since we've had our experimental Spring bear hunt and our Fall bear hunt. This training season will help eliminate some of the problems we've had with depredating bears in some of these different areas. We need to keep that training season alive, bring it back like we use to have. The other thing is that we need to keep the Fall hunt for those two units, the San Juan Elk Ridge and the Book Cliffs, because those are two of the three best units. The three best units we have in the State are the Book Cliffs, LaSals, and the San Juan Elk Ridge as far as the numbers of bears. Lets keep those two units for Fall bear hunting with hounds.

Ernie Millgate-I have worked with a lot of hounds men this past year and also with the State. Like Byron said, the San Juan unit and also the Book Cliffs unit are the two important units for bear hunters. I propose that we give a few tags for those two units and not totally do away with them. I also recommend that you add a few more units, like Fish Lake and Boulder, to the Summer training season.

Greg Cover-Utah Hounds men Association-We propose a change to strike out the word pursuit in all of our proclamations for the chase of hounds and change it to training season. We would also like to go with the Southern and Central recommendations to add a couple of units to the Summer training season.



## **RAC Deliberation**

Foutz-Are we too concentrated with these training areas? I guess I'm looking at that like 'goosh we've got a lot of these out-of-stater's coming in plus the guys that are trying to train their dogs in-state'. Is that too concentrated of an area?

Bunnell-There's probably some logic in opening a few units in other portions of the State. The Southern RAC recommended the Boulder and the Fish Lake units. Then last night the Central Region recommended adding the Wasatch West. That would give eight units instead of five and be spread out in the State a little bit better. That's still pretty limited compared to our thirty units. That's eight of them that we have Summer training just to try on. I wouldn't have a big problem with it.

Foutz-This is more for clarification. It looks like the Book Cliffs your recommending for Fall hunt three and twenty on San Juan, those are all you're recommending to be trail spot and stalk any weapon over bait and archery tackle correct?

Bunnell-Right and the reason that there's such a high recommendation for twenty permits in the fall in the San Juan is we are anticipating a lot lower success. If we were to make a recommendation to include a fall hunt on the San Juan, we had a recommendation on the table that we were discussing that was for twenty-four spring permits and six fall permits. That's pretty close to the split that we have on other units in terms of the proportion of the tags in the spring versus the fall.

Foutz-Byron did you asked for six and six?

Byron Bateman- Six on the Book Cliffs and six on the San Juan.

Foutz-If these guys made that recommendation, what would that do to these numbers?

Bunnell-I assume you would take the permits from the spring and put them into the fall. So, that would put you at nine and six on the Book Cliffs. If we're going to have hounds in the fall on the Book Cliffs, twenty is too many. That recommendation was based on assuming a lot lower success rate.

Foutz-Actually it's twenty on San Juan and three on Book Cliffs.

Bunnell-Right, did I say that wrong I meant San Juan. Twenty would be too many in my opinion.

Foutz-Could there be compromise? Can you have spot and stalk and hounds?

Bunnell-If you're not eliminating, anybody can draw a tag out. If they want to hunt spot and stalk they are welcome to do so. It just becomes a kill tag at that point and it is up to you how you do it. You're not eliminating the opportunity for someone to hunt spot and stalk, you're just opening up the opportunity to also hunt with hounds.

Fenimore-We're given 265 permits as the recommendation and if the population is between two and five thousand that represents between five to thirteen percent depending on where that population might be. It seems to me that potentially you could allow some of these other hunts and not restrict opportunity if the harvest could withstand those

numbers given what you would need for population stability. So if there is 5,000 bears or 2,000 and you're only harvesting 5-13%, where could your harvest be and still not lose your population stability goals?

Bunnell-You can't look at it in terms of total numbers. The impact is going to be your breeding age females. Which is a lot smaller proportion.

Fenimore-(The recording was unclear and could not get what he said. Something about reproduction and four to six years)

Bunnell-The majority of them will live to be four to six years. So you're trying to protect a limited portion of the population for the benefit of the larger population. If you look at the things I showed you, our average age and survival has kind of leveled off the last couple of years. That gives us a pretty good indication that we are pretty close to where we probably should be.

Fenimore-The other question was in regards to Byron's comment about the distance that you have to travel now for training opportunities. I have been down on the LaSals and on the San Juan unit actually hunting bear and other times doing different recreational things. I have seen lots of the bear hunters that are there. It also seems to me, even if we expanded these hunt units the bear hunters are still going to go where the bears are. I would expect to still see the LaSals and those areas fill up first because that's where the highest densities are, as opposed to people going on the Wasatch West. If we opened up four units, as Ryan was talking about, do you really expect bear hunters to fill up those other units? Or are they still going to go where they now go traditionally?

Bunnell-That recommendation is in relation to the summer training season. The way it is right now and none of the RAC's have recommended either the LaSals, the San Juan, or the Book Cliffs be opened up for that summer training season. So it would distribute. There are some pretty good bear units. Those three are the prime, but the Wasatch units have pretty good bear densities. The South Slope of the Uinta's has pretty good bear densities. There is opportunity for guys to go and turn their dogs loose on those units.

Shirley-(Not speaking into a microphone and could not here the question on the recording).

Bunnell-No I don't. We have about thirty units in the State and that would put us at eight. Give us an opportunity for a year and see. The only reason we have gone real conservative is it's new. There is probably some issues out there that we haven't anticipated. We need to see what falls out after we have done it for a year and reevaluate it.

**Motion-Foutz-** Recommend the Wildlife Board add additional units for (dog) summer training (pursuit), and change the wording from "pursuit" to "training" in the proclamation and rule.

**Seconds-Shirley**

Fenimore-I'm fine with the first part of Ryan's motion, it's the "training" versus "pursuit" that I have a problem with. I think from a legal definition standpoint, "training"

means not to take. "Pursuit" means a take. Maybe I've got it wrong. I prefer to be real clear on what training is and pursuit is as opposed to just trying to be politically correct. I don't know if in the proclamation maybe we can review what the legal definition of those words are. Otherwise you would have to change the legal definition.

Bunnell-What Bill is referring to is that "pursue" is a subset of the definition of take. I don't think that applies. We're referring to a specific activity of going out and chasing bears with hounds. I don't think we would have to mess with any definitions in rule or code by making that change in the proclamation.

Selman-So is this something they want for lions as well?

Bunnell-It hasn't been asked at this point, but I would anticipate that it will be.

### **Motion Carries-Unanimous**

Foutz-This is a trial correct? Why did we pick those two units? Why San Juan? And why Book Cliffs?

Bunnell-Because those are the units that we've had the most conflict on in the fall. They are two of our premium elk units. The San Juan's are premium for everything. They are premium for turkeys. They're premium for bears. They're premium for elk. They're premium for deer to a large extent. When you have that situation it is prime for conflict. The thought process from the biologist that made the recommendation is that the hounds men already have 54 days to run their dogs in the spring. It is an opportunity that the big game hunters don't have. So they didn't want to eliminate bear hunting but saw that as an alternative to allow some bear hunting but get away from the conflict. The level of conflict is where some people think there is a lot and some people don't think there is any.

Perkins-What were the recommendations of the Regions involved and what were the actions taken by the RAC's that have those units in them?

Bunnell-What you have in front of you is the recommendation by the Regions to do spot and stalk on those units with the permit numbers that are in front of you.

Perkins-That was based primarily upon conflict?

Bunnell-Yes. The Southeastern Region did not vote to allow hounds on the San Juan unit. They tackled that issue by voting to open up the summer training season Statewide kind of a give and take. The Northeastern Region did vote to not go spot and stalk on the Book Cliffs. The Central Region last night also voted to allow hound hunting on those two units. The Southern Region I can't remember if they even addressed it.

Shirley- How many complaints have you had? (Not speaking into the microphone and could not pick up exactly what he said on the recording)

Bunnell-Bill or Guy threw out that he had six last year.

Shirley-Where?

Bunnell-On the San Juan and I am not sure on the Book Cliffs.

Shirley-Are these hunters with trophy permits? (Not speaking into the microphone and could not pick up exactly what he said on the recording)

Bunnell-Trophy permits in general. If you have an elk permit on the San Juan you have a premium permit. You had to draw it and you have nine days to hunt.

Fenimore-I agree with this objective regarding the complaints. We've had one email from an outfitter down there who said that he enjoyed having the bear hunters there at the same time because they gave him good information on what they were seeing in terms of elk. So, he was okay with them being there.

Bunnell-There is that sentiment.

Foutz-I talked to quite a few people. The San Juan's produced four 400 class bull this year.

Bunnell-The rumors are out there.

Foutz-The elk and the deer hunt on the Book Cliffs is the best it's been in terms of quality. I know some outfitters that spend a lot of time there.

**Motion-Foutz-** Recommend the Wildlife Board allow fall hound hunts on the San Juan and Book Cliffs, with appropriate permit reductions.

Bunnell- In our managers meeting, we had both recommendations on the table. Twenty and twenty on the San Juan or the alternative if we were to recommend hound hunting on the San Juan was for 24 spring permits and six fall permits. On the Book Cliffs the numbers didn't change. The biologists in that Region didn't want to up the number of permits in the fall, even if it was just spot and stalk, so that would make 12 and 3. The proportion there is the same.

**Seconds-Slater**

Bingham-What I'm wondering if they open up for hounds throughout the summer or spot and stalk, will that affect it if they don't have that in the fall? Some of the regions have wanted to go with spot and stalk during the summertime and not in the fall.

Bunnell-There is no harvest in the summer. The summer is strictly an opportunity to train dogs. The spot and stalk recommendation is only on two units and only in the fall.

Bingham-How do you feel with the ideas on this? Can you work with it?

Bunnell-We went with the recommendation because the local biologists felt they wanted to try it. There were two reasons we went ahead and made that recommendation. The two biologists that are over those two units brought that recommendation to the table and that recommendation was consistent with the bear management plan. That was their view point on why the recommendation was made. They came with two recommendations.

They could have gone either way in the discussion through the meeting that we had. We had enough make in the recommendation, but we could probably live with changing. The other thing we've done is eliminated fall pursuit so you're only going to have six hunters out there with hounds. Versus in the past they've been open to pursuit so anybody with a pursuit tag can go out. So by going with a limited number of hounds we've already reduced the potential for conflict.

Aaron Johnson-(He was not up to the microphone and could not hear his response on the recording well enough to transcribe.)

Bunnell-I need to clarify something. Several years ago the Board voted to eliminate the early portion of pursuit on several units; the LaSals, the San Juan's, and the Book Cliffs. So there hasn't been pursuit on those units during the deer and elk hunt. The only people who have been out there has been the people with kill tags. In the past there has been thirty fall kill tags on the San Juan's. So we are reducing that number 30 down to six. So we still are reducing the potential for conflict for going with this recommendation.

Poulter-They came to us with this pretty good bear recommendation. Recommended by the biologists and so far all we've done is tear it to pieces. I have to side with the elk and deer hunters on this pursuit thing. These guys are pursuing and training their dogs. The guys who are deer and elk hunting out there put in their money year after year against our insane odds drawing contest and finally drew a tag. It may be the only they ever draw. Where as the bear tags, they can draw and draw and draw and/or get another tag or go out and train just for fun. That elk hunter can never have another opportunity. They may never get another opportunity. I think it is great that we should allow them to go in and hunt those with bears. Bears with dogs for those legal permits. I don't believe that we should allow anyone to train or pursue those animals at the cost of someone else.

Slater-I want to see if I am following the motion right, our recommendation to the Wildlife Board is that we still allow a hound hunt in the Book Cliffs and the San Juan's. Six tags in the San Juan's, three in the Book Cliffs. There still is a limitation on training or pursuit in the fall hunt. So that would take care of that issue, I would think, as far as having no training. That is what the hounds men are recommending. We're still having a kill tag but we're not having all the different pursuer training opportunity. We have expanded the recommendation to expand the training opportunity to other locations throughout the State. So that takes care of the training desire, I would assume. I am very comfortable with motion and would speak in favor of it.

Foutz-One clarification. Jimmy pointed something out and I wanted to clarify to make sure it was right. You were saying training but it was actually only six tags.

Poulter-But isn't it in the motion to open up to pursuit?

Foutz-No, training is closed now in the San Juan's, the Book Cliffs, and a couple of other units during the hunts. You're only going to have six hunters with kill tags.

Marsh-One clarification on the trial period, is that for a number of one, three, five years. How long are you guys intend to look at that if that recommendation went through.

Bunnell-For one year right now and reevaluated it next year.

Slater-I just wanted one last point of clarification from you, Kevin, while this may not be the first option it is an option that you can get behind and work through okay.

Bunnell-It's kind of a happy medium.

Slater-It may not be the preferred course from your point of view, but it is one you can live with reasonably.

Bunnell-I present the recommendation, but the recommendation was brought to me by the Regions. I hate to speak for them, but I am going to anyway and say yes we can live with it.

**Motion Carries-Unanimous**

**Motion-Slater-** Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt the remainder of the proclamation and rule as presented by the Division.

**Seconds-Marsh**

**Motion Carries-Unanimous**

### **Item 3.Taking Nongame Mammals Rule**

Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

### **RAC Questions**

Poulter-Coyotes and raccoons are who's problem?

Bunnell-Coyotes and raccoons are under the authority of the Department of Agriculture and Wildlife Services.

Poulter-What is the criteria for holding them alive? Is there one?

Bunnell-I don't know if they have any regulations. I would assume the State vet is also under the Department of Agriculture and they are going to say "no holding of them alive without a special permit."

Poulter-Shouldn't that be included because it's not under our jurisdiction, we just can't handle it?

Bunnell-We don't address it.

Poulter-Who addresses those issues?

Bunnell-The Department of Agriculture.

**RAC Deliberation**

**Motion**-Marsh- Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt as presented by the Division.

**Seconds**-Fenimore

**Motion Carries**-Unanimous

**Item 4. Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy**

Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

**RAC Questions**

Selman-Will you back up to that slide where you were protecting the lions and not the coyotes or vice versa? I just wanted to study that for a second.

Bunnell-That comes under the identify the strategies. That 4A, what the predator controls are going to be and what species it directed towards. So on a specific unit you may list several different species of predators in that 4A section. You can remove one of those from that without ending the predator management plan overall.

Fenimore-Kevin, have you also looked at this in terms of the Waterfowl Management Areas like to say fox, skunk, raccoons, on productivity of waterfowl or so forth?

Bunnell-That's in there and you may have missed that. That's one of the places where we have better management plans in place.

Selman-I was just studying that new language, I think I'm okay with that.

Bunnell-The only addition to this is what is in the orange there at the bottom.

**RAC Deliberation**

**Motion**-Poulter- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the policy as presented.

**Seconds**-Shirley

**Motion Carries**-Unanimous

**Item 5. Northern Region Wildlife Management Areas- Management Plans**

(Coldwater Canyon and Weber River WMA's)

Scott Walker, Northern Region Habitat Manager

See Handouts

### **RAC Questions**

Fenimore-I just had a couple of questions to better understand the Weber River, but I think that was the red barn plan. We had talked previously about the walk-in-access program that is going to be implemented and tried out. As I read through this plan it appeared to me that on some of these conservation easements and such that we've received, that there was some attempt in one, I can't remember the name of it, where the easement was restricted on what the activity could be.

Walker-That is correct on the conservation easements.

Fenimore-Can people make restrictions like that? Like strings attached on these easements how the activity is going to be used? And will there be signs then so that an angler knows he can go fishing while a duck hunter knows he can't go duck hunting and so forth?

Walker-Yes on both counts. These conservation easements are brought together and there is often a lot of strings attached with what activities can occur on those. If they become too restrictive and we feel like they are too restrictive and would inhibit public activities then we probably wouldn't enter into them. For these particulars we still gained primary activity of that. In the publications there, there are signs on these areas that there is no hunting. If there are any restrictions they are usually signed on the property.

Fenimore-With the restriction on parking along I-84 now also is there signage directing people to parking areas where they can have access and be legally parked and so forth. So they are not breaking any laws or endangering themselves as such. Fence crossovers and so forth.

Walker-As you read through that you may have picked up that this particular complex doesn't have good access right now. Right now there is a frontage road that is off the I-84 corridor and there is good access there as far as that frontage road, however, we do have to cross the railroad. The railroad is very reluctant to allow us permanent access to cross the railroad. We are working on a plan to come in from the other side, from the Morgan Valley Drive side and through some private land. We are meeting with some landowners that are willing to work with us. It's a very high priority for the Division to acquire access from that other side with a good parking lot and a good corridor access from the other side.

Poulter-(New tape missed the first of his question). If a person were to float that section of the Weber River and hunt ducks would that landowner have any legal recourse? They just fought a court case over the canoe guy going out over the Weber River and he won. Now couldn't you legally hunt ducks if you were in a floating craft.

Walker-I'm not really geared up to answer legal questions on that particular question. It's interesting, I'd like to see how the lawsuit came out that you are referring to. From our prospective we're signing from the terrestrial aspect.

Selman-Scott on Coldwater, is there a spring grazing plan in that for the dyers woad?



Walker-Dyers woad is a noxious weed that we control on all of our WMA's. We use grazing across the board as a management tool to improve habitat. If we deem necessary that that's our best strategy to control that weed, we would absolutely graze.

**RAC Deliberation**

**Motion-Slater-** Recommend the Director adopt these plans (Coldwater Canyon & Peterson Weber River Properties Complex) as presented

**Seconds-Marsh**

Fenimore-I'm just very complimentary on the Divisions work on putting these easements together. (Could not hear the rest of his reply on the recording.)

**Motion Carries-Unanimous**

**Item 6. Handling Cougar Problems Policy**

Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

**RAC Questions**

Shirley-(He was not speaking into a microphone and could not hear him on the recording)

Bunnell-What we are envisioning in that is that you've got a lion, a domestic animal, and a person all in close proximity to each other. Or an animal that's coming so close to a house that they're taking pets out of someone's yard. That's the circumstance that we're addressing. They are not necessarily a dog that is out ranging away on a hunt that happens to encounter a lion. In most cases the lion is going to run away from the dog.

Shirley-I remember an instance, above Park City, where some cats were disappearing and a guy found a cougar under his car. Under those circumstances would the cougar be killed?

(Was not speaking directly into the microphone and did not get all of his statement)

Bunnell-That's where this idea of leaving it to the Regional Supervisor being able to make the call based on the circumstances on what the right action is. That is the way that would proceed.

**RAC Deliberation**

**Motion-Foutz-** Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt the policy as presented.

**Seconds-Marsh**

**Motion Carries-Unanimous**

## **Item 7. Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule**

Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

### **RAC Questions**

Perkins-Do you know if the Governor's budget include that extra \$100,000 this year?

Bunnell-I don't know. Bret may know. Were you involved with the lobbying to get it up to the \$200,000?

Selman-No, but as far as I know its there.

Slater-Does this become a lapsing fund or is it non-lapsing? If the claims are less then what is appropriated will that money continue to carry over?

Bunnell-That's a question we had. I'm guessing that we are going to pay the entire \$200,000 out. The Legislature didn't include any language in the bill directing us to what we do with the left over money.

Bingham-Who determines the kill?

Bunnell-Wildlife Services. It's confirmed losses. They send us the paperwork and they give us information on fair market value. They make it independent of the agency that's paying the claims. The fair market value is determined based on a survey of several sales and that is done independent of the Division. They send us the information and then we apply it.

### **Public Questions**

Orin Midzinski-I didn't hear Darwin's question, would you repeat your question?

Bingham-I was just wondering who determines the kill?

Midzinski-That's was what I was going to ask was who determine that, but I didn't hear the answer.

Bunnell-That's Wildlife Service agents.

### **RAC Deliberation**

Abstains from voting due to conflict of interest-Bret Selman and Darwin Bingham

**Motion-Slater-** Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt the rule as presented.

**Seconds-Marsh**

**Motion Carries-** For-8  
Recluse- 2

**Item 8. Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule, 5-year review**  
Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

**RAC Deliberation**

**Motion-Foutz-** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the rule as presented.

**Seconds-Bingham**

**Motion Carries-Unanimous**

**Item 9. RAC Rule, 5-year review**

Steve Phillips, RAC Program Coordinator

See Handout

**RAC Deliberation**

**Motion-Poulter-** Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the rule as presented.

**Seconds-Slater**

**Motion Carries-Unanimous**

**Meeting Ends:** 8:48 p.m.

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**Central Region Advisory Council**  
**December 20, 2005**

**Motion Summary**

- 1) **Bear Proclamation & Rule**  
MOTION: To eliminate the spot and stalk recommendation and then change the numbers of permits on the San Juan unit to 24 spring permit and 6 fall permits, any method  
Motion passed unanimously  
  
MOTION: To add the Wasatch West unit to the summer training season  
Motion passed 7 to 1

MOTION: To change the spring hunt dates to April 15<sup>th</sup> to June 4<sup>th</sup>

Motion failed 5 to 3

MOTION: To eliminate baiting and then accept the balance of the bear proclamation

Motion failed 6 to 2

MOTION: To accept the balance of the proclamation including changing the word pursuit to training throughout the proclamation

Motion passed 7 to 1

2) **Taking Nongame Mammals Rule**

MOTION: To accept the rule as presented

Motion passed unanimously

3) **Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy**

MOTION: To approve the policy as presented

Motion passed unanimously

4) **Handling Cougar Problems Policy**

MOTION: to accept the policy as presented

Motion passed unanimously

5) **Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule**

MOTION: To accept the rule as presented

Motion passed unanimously

6) **Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule 5-year Review**

MOTION: To accept the rule as presented

Motion passed unanimously

7) **RAC Rule 5-year Review**

MOTION: To accept the rule as presented

Motion passed unanimously

## Minutes

### **Members Present**

John Bair, Sportsmen  
Calvin Crandall, Agriculture  
Ed Kent, Chair  
Fred Oswald, Non-consumptive  
Steve Perry, Sportsmen  
Jay Price, Agriculture  
Allan Stevens, At Large  
Curtis Warrick, BLM  
John Weis, At Large

### **Members Absent**

Bruce Blackham, Elected  
Byron Gunderson, At Large excused  
Dennis Shirley, Non-consumptive  
Jeff Waters, Forest Service excused

### **Others Present**

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

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by Steve Perry to accept the agenda as written**

**Seconded by John Weis**

**Motion passed unanimously**

2) **Approval of the November 8, 2005 RAC summary (Action)**

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Bair to accept the summary notes as transcribed**

**Seconded by Steve Perry**

**Motion passed unanimously**

3) **Regional Update (Informational)**

- **John Fairchild, Central Region Supervisor**

4) **The Biology of a Spring Bear Hunt (Informational)**

- **Dr. Hal Black, Brigham Young University**

5) **Bear Proclamation & Rule (Action)**

- **Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator**

**Questions from the RAC**

Q: John Bair – On the Book Cliffs and San Juan you have recommended no fall tags that would allow the use of hounds, why?

A: Kevin Bunnell – Traditionally those are the units where we have had the highest number of conflicts between big game hunters and houndsmen. I know that is not a popular recommendation with the houndsmen but I have to look at the big picture. These are both prime elk units. Any elk hunter has at maximum nine days to hunt compared with a bear hunt that goes for almost 60 days. There are some reasons to favor one side there when you are looking at the big picture.

Q: John Bair – Was there any consideration given to a split? By offering only two or three tags on those units would you still anticipate a conflict? I have hunted one of those units both ways, for bear with dogs and for deer. It seems like I had more trouble with deer hunters than I ever did with dogs.

A: Kevin Bunnell – That did not come up.

Q: John Weis – When you talked about the percent of females in the harvest how do you separate that from better hunter education? Especially when you look at females taken in the fall. You have a direct drop in the five years, which looks to me like you have more hunters in the field who are recognizing the difference between the females and males.

The other way I could interpret this might be that in the time frame where you are taking more females, in 2001 and 2002, you actually have fewer bears with yearlings in the fall to where you don't identify them. Is there any data which fits with that?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It would be pure speculation on why that would be. I don't know why in 2004 and 2005 we had such a big drop. That goes against the 20-year data set that we have on bear.

Q: John Weis – It really looks like there are two different events going on. Also, I have the same objections as I did last year to the use of bait. Is there any correlation you see in having baiting stations and having nuisance bears? Are there areas in which you have higher or less use of bait and you can see higher or less effect of nuisance bears?

A: Kevin Bunnell – We have so few bears taken over bait that you don't even have a sample size to look at that. It is a small percentage. I think we gave a total of 16 or 17 CORs for bait stations last year compared to 252 bear permits.

Q: John Weis – You seem to have a contradiction in your regulations. You say you can only have a bait station open during the hunt itself but then it says you have to clear out your bait station within 72 hours after the end of the hunt.

A: Kevin Bunnell – That is probably something we can clean up.

Q: John Weis – Has there ever been any consideration with using bait really for hunters with disabilities? We have other situations that allow people with disabilities to shoot from a vehicle and other things.

A: Kevin Bunnell – I think something like that would come before the Wildlife Board as a variance.

Q: John Weis – You mentioned that some of your low success hunts occurred when the weather washed you out. When you split the season and you have the same number of tags do you expect to have a higher success rate?

A: Kevin Bunnell - That reminds, I need to go back and point something out in our recommendations. In the past we have closed the spring hunt the third week of May. Our recommendation this year is to go to the end of May to allow another week mostly to address those access issues in the spring. The reason we feel comfortable making that recommendation is that as I showed you the percent of females in the harvest does not go through the third week in May. There is some indication that if we kept going into June we would reverse that and we would eventually have more females in the harvest.

Q: Allan Stevens – You have talked about conflicts between big game hunters and bear hunters in the fall. With all the movement of bear permits to the spring has there been any consideration given to potential conflicts with turkey hunters? A lot of the turkey hunters only have five days to hunt. I have experienced more conflicts with bear hunters in the spring on the Blue Mountains than any other hunt I have been on.

A: Kevin Bunnell – There is a potential conflict where we have Merriam's. With the Rio Grande turkeys there is a separation in habitat use. We have a lot more Rio Grande hunts in the state. That is something we will have to watch. I think most of the turkey hunters actually have at least two weeks, if not three. We did not hear about conflicts with turkey hunters and bear hunters on the La Sal Mountains during this experimental period.

Q: Fred Oswald – One of your objectives is to have 78% surviving adults. How do you determine that?

A: Kevin Bunnell – There are models. We use the Chapman/Robinson survivability model. It is based on the separation of the ages in the harvest. How many yearlings versus two year olds versus three year olds on down there are. Every year we kill a few bears that are upwards of 20 years old. That survival estimate is based on a model that is calculated from the age of the bears in the harvest.

Q: Fred Oswald – Does the model allow you to use it only on a statewide basis or can you use it unit by unit?

A: Kevin Bunnell – A larger sample size is needed than one unit. If you remember our cougar recommendations we look at eco regions. We pull some units together that are geographically and ecologically tied. We could do a similar thing for bears. You get a better estimate the higher your sample size is.

Q: Fred Oswald – With all of the data we have heard about why we should go to a spring hunt rather than a fall hunt, my question is why do we still have so many permits in the fall?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It is 166 compared to 86. This is the first year we are expanding the spring bear hunt and it will be a work in progress as we continue into the future on how we allocate permits in the spring versus the fall.

Q: Fred Oswald – What pushes you to continue to have fall hunts? Is it simply the houndsmen who want to be able to pursue and hunt in both spring and fall?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It is tradition to a certain extent. I don't have a better answer than that. Our target over the five year period has been less than 40% females in the harvest. Even on our fall units we had 30%. I don't think we are irresponsible by allowing some fall harvest. A lot of the hunters will tell you if they had a kill permit they would prefer that it be a fall permit because of the condition of the bears.

Q: Fred Oswald – I understand that but for example on your central unit recommendations you pointed out to us that in a couple of those units the average age was only two years and you explained that depredation was the reason for that. Then on both of those units the 2006 recommendation was still a split hunt. If you do have that kind of a depredation problem why would you not abandon the fall hunt?

A: Kevin Bunnell – First there is no indication that there is any age difference between spring bears versus fall bears. If you remember one of the questions we asked with the spring hunt was does it reduce depredation? The answer was no. We hoped that spring hunts would decrease depredation going into the summer but it didn't.

Q: Fred Oswald – So there is no reason not to have a split hunt in those two units because not having a fall hunt will not bring your age up?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It is not going to change the age and the results of the spring hunt tell us that it is not going to effect depredation either.

Q: John Bair – On the Central Mountains, Manti unit this is the first year that we will have a spring hunt on those units for quite some time.

A: Kevin Bunnell – Since 1992.

Q: John Bair – Doesn't it make sense to maintain some fall hunting to compare?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It does. We will evaluate things as we move forward with this. This is the first year that we are recommending expanding the spring hunt. We will look at our data every year and fine-tune it into the future.

Q: John Bair – You have the Nebo unit as part of the experimental summer training. Having spent a fair amount of time on that unit and other units I would say that that the Nebo is a step down from some of the other units.

A: Kevin Bunnell – The success on that unit was one of the highest. The units where we traditionally have had conflicts with bears in campgrounds and things of that nature are what drove our recommendations. On the Nebo there is such high use that you have conflicts. The managers saw this spring training season as a potential tool that they can start using to deal with nuisance bears.

Q: John Bair – Don't we have a lot of conflict on the Wasatch? It appears to me that the Wasatch would have a lot of nuisance bears.

A: Kevin Bunnell – We have some. I would have to look at the data. This is a trial year. We are keeping it small on purpose. If we don't have a lot of conflict it may be expanded.

Q: John Bair – Conflicts with big game hunters has been talked about especially on the Book Cliffs and San Juan. I have hunted those units a lot. As a native of Utah I felt like I was a minority because eight out of ten trucks had Colorado or New Mexico plates. Could we not reduce conflicts if we looked at our nonresident situation and trying to do something there?

A: Kevin Bunnell – I agree. The problem is that we are not only up against state law but federal law. Our representative from the attorney generals office has looked at that and said we should not go there. The way we could address that is to regulate guides.

John Bair – The part that bothers me is that I can't go to Colorado at any time during the year and chase a bear with my dogs.

Ed Kent – We have talked about one housekeeping item on page 5.

Kevin Bunnell - It says turkey instead of bear. We'll take care of that.

### **Questions from the Public**

Q: Wayne Hutchings – Thanks Kevin for your time here. I can't help but be concerned when I saw on the news that 14 cubs were turned lose on Book Cliffs. I would like to know what happened to the sows?

A: Kevin Bunnell – A couple of things happened. It was a poor forage year. When you look at the natural history of the bear it is to the advantage of the female to save herself before she saves her cubs because she can live to produce again. When sows get to a certain point they will unfortunately abandon their cubs. We can trace some of those back to sows that were taken because of depredation.

Q: Wayne Hutchings – Is that recorded with the harvest data?

A: Kevin Bunnell – We don't have any data that indicates that having a spring hunt results in more abandoned cubs showing up in town if that is what you are asking.

Q: Wayne Hutchings – I have watched the bear harvest for a few years and been concerned with it. I have noticed that whether a bear is killed because of sport hunting or ADC it takes you three years to replace a bear.

A: Kevin Bunnell – It does and that is why it is so critical to protect the female portion of the population.

Q: Wayne Hutchings – Looking at your data you can see after a hard year it slowly climbs back up for three years.

A: Kevin Bunnell – Bears can't bounce back like some other species. There is a lot of time and energy invested in a bear cub.

Q: Wayne Hutchings – I think hunter education is also important. You should advise hunters to look more closely at the bear and know whether they are taking a boar or a sow.

A: Kevin Bunnell – We have an orientation course and that will continue.

Q: Wayne Hutchings – Have you noticed that the orientation course has changed anything and helped you out?

A: Kevin Bunnell – I don't have any hard data but I hope it is.

Q: Nikki Sharp – What is the estimated population of bears in Utah?

A: Kevin Bunnell - That is the thousand-dollar question. Bears don't lend themselves to be counted very well. Based on Dr. Black's work and the home range sizes of bears we



can make a guess and if I had to guess I would say there are close to 3,000 bears in the state. Do you have a different answer Dr. Black?

A: Hal Black – The problem that most biologists have, Nikki, is if they give a number or density then people quote it.

Q: Nikki Sharp – It helps to put things into perspective when see how many permits are given every year and you don't even know how many animals are out there.

A: Kevin Bunnell – That is why we have performance targets. That is why we calculate a survival estimate. That is why we track the age of the harvest and we try to reduce the number of females in the harvest. Although we can't go out and count them those things are a pretty good indication of which direction our bear population is going.

Q: Nikki Sharp – I have seen the charts and how many females that you have been what you call harvesting. I was wondering if you track how many of the females that are killed had cubs every single year.

A: Kevin Bunnell – It is illegal to kill a female with cubs with her. That is one of the reasons why the spring hunt is better because the females that have cubs are more likely to have cubs by their side then in the fall. That was the point of Dr. Black's slide with the circles. The best way to identify a female is if she has cubs by her side.

Q: Nikki Sharp – So you assume that every female that is killed doesn't have a cub?

A: Kevin Bunnell – We can't make that assumption but that is our hope.

A: Hal Black – A lot of those females that are killed in the spring aren't of reproductive age.

Q: Burke Robinson – Are you aware of any research on black bears indicating that sport hunting by targeting males predominantly has an indirect negative effect on cub production or survivability?

A: Kevin Bunnell – I am not aware of any. Are you Dr. Black?

A: Hal Black – There is an analysis by Dave McClellan from Canada. His study did not show any support for that. He quoted two other studies. One said if you kill adult males you probably have an impact on cubs and the other study said that if you kill adult males then cub survival would increase.

Q: Burke Robinson – Was this a study with American Black Bears?

A: Hal Black – There are no studies with black bears that I am aware of. These were both brown bear studies.

Q: David Benny – Utah Farm Bureau – We talked about depredation in the spring and fall being the same. In the long term do you foresee more females, more bears and therefore more depredation problems?

A: Kevin Bunnell – The good news is our depredation is down. In my mind depredation is more an issue of whether there are other food sources out there besides sheep. If we have good forage conditions we have low depredation. If there is not a lot of food out there then depredation goes up.

Q: Erica Wangsgard – Has DWR conducted a public survey concerning how the public feels about the bear hunt regardless spring, fall, male, female? I believe 1991 was the last time any kind of survey was made and it showed that around 70% of people didn't like baiting or dog pursuit for example.

A: Kevin Bunnell – To a large extent that is what we are doing here tonight. This is the forum for which the DWR receives public input.

Q: Erica Wangsgard – So is it intentional that you hold this meeting in Salt Lake City where the largest percentage of the population lives during the busiest week of the year?

A: Kevin Bunnell – This meeting is set up based on when our application period is and when the hunt starts. There is a timing that has to take place.

Erica Wangsgard – The timing is that it is always inconvenient.

Ed Kent – Do you have a question? It sounds like a debate. If you will give him a chance he will answer your question.

A: Kevin Bunnell – There is nothing intentional in the timing of the meeting. We have this meeting throughout the state five times in a two week period.

Q: Erica Wangsgard – How did you reach out to the public besides the newspaper?

A: Kevin Bunnell – We made news releases, it is on our web site. That news release goes out to over 100 papers throughout the state. I think we go to great extents to try to publicize what we are doing.

Q: Erica Wangsgard – There was an article today in the Deseret Morning News about a lot of things that are being done to protect wildlife. I feel that there is a lot of room for improvement. You have got to imagine that I am probably representing thousands of people that couldn't be here. I don't think I got the answer to whether you are going to have a survey?

A: Kevin Bunnell – There is not one planned.

Q: Erica Wangsgard – There is nothing planned in the future for that? Are you going to talk about that and try to do that?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It is something that we may talk about but we don't have anything planned at this point. Like I said these meetings are our forum for public input.

Q: Jason Binder – On units with high depredation problems why does the division not contact hunters that have tags to take the bears that are being killed and wasted by ADC?

A: Kevin Bunnell – In most cases we are not even contacted. That is not our jurisdiction. When a livestock owner experiences depredation they call Wildlife Services and they handle the situation. 99% of the time we find out after the fact because they respond very quickly. In public safety concerns and nuisance situations we go to every extent possible to try to let sportsmen take the animal. If we have bears in watermelons in Green River like we have had we have been able to allow hunters in to solve those problems. With livestock it is a timing issue and response has be quick.

Q: Tim Pilling – I have bear hunted several years in the Elk Ridge area and we have had zero conflicts with elk hunters so I am curious where these complaints are coming from and how valid they are.

A: Kevin Bunnell – The complaints for the most part come into the regional office. If Bill Bates or Guy Wallace were here they could answer that. They are the biologists and they receive the complaints.

Q: Tim Pilling – I was in Arizona hunting this fall. We had bear hunters and cow hunters in the field. There was multiple use and we had no conflicts.

Q: Ray – Do they kill more males or females in depredation situations?

A: Kevin Bunnell – I will look that up – Over the last 20 years 419 males and 181 females have been taken.

### **Comments from the Public**

Margaret Pettis – High Uintas Preservation Council – I am glad to be here to speak to the central RAC, I usually speak to the northern RAC. I have several comments. There really is no biological reason to have a spring bear hunt therefore we would like to ask that there not be any more action that direction. The bear is in a form of winter lethargy

for four to five months we are actually hunting the bear four months out of the year in Utah and to add additional time to do summer dog training, whatever that is, is really mistreating and not managing the black bear in Utah. There should not be any pursuit. That is a ridiculous thing to do to a large vertebrate. There is actually no reason to have a bear hunt at all in Utah. We don't know the numbers and we don't have any justification for it other than we like our targets big here and that satisfies that. To hunt a large mammal when cubs are in the field just emerging and when females or males are emerging and extremely hungry is an unfathomable hunt. It has no place in sportsmanship and it has no place in good wildlife management. I would hope that the non-consumptive representative here tonight would represent the points of view of the people who are non-consumptive and took the time to come here this evening. I would like to ask that my voice carry some weight for being here tonight. We kill bears for no reason. They aren't eaten. They are taken to a taxidermist who can change the face of fear into snarling aggression and then they are put on the floor so we can walk on them. It is unbelievable. We do this in a high tech way. We have radio telemetry on dogs and probably OHVs snowmobiles that are parked and you get off I guess because you can't shoot from the machine and then walk up and kill it after the dogs have done the work. What gives me great fear is that the dogs are in the field without the hunter and they arrive first. What is to stop them from ripping cubs apart? No one will admit it but it certainly could happen if you are not there with your dogs. We do not have population numbers so we don't know what we are doing. We keep doing computer modeling and playing around with the presentation. I think DWRs main goal in offering a spring hunt is the fact that it was taken away 1992 through great public pressure, public desire and public demonstration. It was decided by the Utah Wildlife Board that this was unethical and here we are facing it again just a little over ten years later. I please ask that there be no baiting, no hounding, no spring hunt. Let people stalk and find their bear. It seems to be fair sportsmanship. Thank you very much.

Erica Wangsgard – Visual art educator and currently work for Salt Lake and Granite school districts – Please remember that even though I am not an organization and I only get three minutes I represent thousands of people who are not here tonight who would completely agree with my view point if they had any idea what was going on here tonight. I had to rewrite my letter because there was all this new information that was not available to me in my newsletter that I got from Mark Hadley. Thank you Mark for faithfully sending me that so I can stay informed. I appreciate that Mark Hadley did not use the word harvest, he did refer to the bear hunt as a bear hunt and that bears were killed. I want to declare that I am not an anti hunter. I am a non-hunter. I want to make that clear. I am not anti hunting. I found it painful to watch DWR hide behind the science and so many bar graphs, circles, colors and numbers. As a visual artist I was overwhelmed. I could not absorb all of that. Seeing a skinned bear, like that is supposed to be a fun thing to watch. I was offended by the biology of the bear. Here is the bottom line. Hunting bears newly emerging from hibernation is wrong. It is not fair to the bear and it is not good sportsmanship at all. I was here last year with my sons and I was going to bring them here tonight but they are in school all week. I brought their written comments to give to you in addition to mine as well. I think my son says it best. 'My name is Dane Wangsgard and I am an eight grader at Wasatch Jr. High in Salt Lake City. Please remember I probably represent hundreds most likely thousands of teens who agree with me. What I think of hunting bears especially after hibernation, is that it is cruel, un-sportsman like, and most of all it has no benefit other than fulfilling a man's selfish urge to kill.' Signed Dane Wangsgard. I hope that DWR does a better job involving the

public. They need to do a survey; they need to talk to people like me. I signed a list a year ago and no contact was made to try to involve me other than checking off a tax donation box on my tax return. That doesn't do it for me and I don't think that does it for a lot of people. I thought you would be interested, the Wall Street Journal had an article in its pursuits section "Hunting's Identity Crisis – Its ranks are shrinking". Here are some other articles that I will give to you. I would love to go along with Hal Black and BYU to go on one of those studies. I would pay money to do that. Why don't you involve people with the studies? Thank you for your time.

Chad Coburn – Utah Federation of Houndsmen – We have gone over this proposal. We agree with Hal. Like Kevin has said we are making a heavy swing to spring hunting and really reducing fall hunting. Our recommendation is that we make it a 50/50 split. Let's not make too big a move too fast. If you don't want to go with that then let's go with a sow sub-quota. We would rather do that than lose the majority of the fall hunt. The DWR proposal will really tie the hands of the houndsmen in the fall to going with someone with a harvest tag. The greatest majority of our club has more interest in just the pursuit not the kill. We went to the southern and southeastern regions. Bill Bates said he had six documented complaints by big game hunters. We don't feel that is a big problem. A member of the RAC down there commented to us that we should turn in 20 or 50 or 100 of our members saying that these elk hunters are in your way and shut the elk hunt down. As far as taking away the fall pursuit, our recommendation is that we go with a statewide training season from July 15<sup>th</sup> to August 13<sup>th</sup>. The other two RAC recommended that we try that. This would not be in the fall when bears need to store fat; this would not conflict with the big game hunters or the turkey hunters. If we go with just five areas instead of statewide you will pack every houndsmen in those five areas. I talked to Craig Clyde and Dennis Southerland and the both said they would have no problem opening the central region units to this. There is an overwhelming presence of nonresidents. We did talk with the assistant to the district attorney for the fish and game and he said that because of the immunities clause and because of the commerce clause there is nothing we can do. He said for a quick fix to solve this situation that we could get documented evidence, which is very obvious, of the overwhelming presence of nonresidents then we could limit how many nonresident pursuit permits we sell. Our recommendation is to only sale ten nonresident pursuit permits on those three units.

Matthew Hutchings – I would like to say that I support what Chad just said from UFH.

Wayne Hutching – Utah Federation of Houndsmen - I have no interest in killing a bear – I have known Hal for a number of years. But to make a bear dog you have to have some pursuit time out there. It takes five years to make a good bear dog and you have to have the time to work with that dog. I hate to see us lose any pursuit time. I think we should have more time to work with our dogs. I was raised with my dad hunting and I think that we can go back to making this a family oriented deal. I have a young boy now who enjoys going with me and enjoying the outdoors. I never realized how much being in the outdoors meant to me until I started hunting with my dad and learned respect for the ground and the animals on it. It makes a real good time to go out on the mountain with family even if you didn't turn your dogs loose. I think you need to look at the time it takes to make a good bear dog and the quality time on the mountain. Thank you for your time.

Chris Gressman – I support what the Utah Federation of Houndsmen is proposing. One point I would like to bring up is that on the fall hunt we are still 10% below the 40% female harvest. I think it is dramatic to get rid of the fall hunt as much as the Division is proposing.

Matt Blackett – I support the Utah Federation of Houndsmen and agree with what Wayne is saying about the dogs and the family time out there.

Cheryl Smith – I live in Salt Lake City and unlike most of the people in this room who are calling themselves sportsmen and have very selfish agendas in being here I do not. I don't represent a group I represent myself and the bears who can't be here tonight. I am not pretending to be so arrogant as to say that I speak for them but as you hear these people talk tonight it is all about how much can we take, what can the bear do for me what can the kill time do for me, what can the dates do for me. What about the bear and what about us non-consumptive tax payers in Utah who have a right to value this resources in its naturalness as I do. I am a taxpayer. The DWR and everybody who works for it I pay your salary too and I hope my voice is heard tonight. I am opposed to expanding the bear hunt in any way shape or form whether it is spring, fall, summer I don't care. As the biologists have said the six months of summer and into fall are the most critical to the bears survival and livelihood and yet this is what they are proposing in their recommendations for next year and no doubt the next year. The state spoke in 1992 yet here we are again ten years later trying to undo and invalidate the people who spoke. Those summer and fall months are so critical to the bear's survival but the way these dates are shaking up is that the bear will be allowed to be legally harassed, chased, baited, hounded every waking moment out of its den. It's inhumane, it's cruel, it's excessive and it does nothing but fulfill a bloodthirsty kill club.

Nikki Sharp - I absolutely love bears and that is why I am opposed to an expanded bear hunt and actually all bear hunts. Part of my passion for bears has led me to do a lot of work in India helping bears. I have been working to raise money and to end the practice of dancing bears in India. So far it is a pretty successful campaign. While I have been working on this I have actually had the privilege of talking to people internationally who also love bears and getting their feedback about how barbaric they find this practice in India. For those of you who don't know what happens, they kill the moms and they take the cubs and put a rope through their nose and then force them to be street performers. It is very painful and torturous. I too find this practice barbaric and that is why I have given a lot of my life to this cause right now and I guess that is why I am here tonight. Although this isn't making the bears dance in the street but I do find this to be pretty inexcusable what we are doing. I think if the world looks at us they might say the same thing. We are chasing them down with dogs and we are chasing them when they come out of hibernation. We are constantly after them. I would hope that we would give them some peace and appreciate them in the wild. Let people like me appreciate them too. I feel good knowing there are bears in Utah and I would like to see them un-harassed. Thank you.

Colleen Dinsdale – I am a retired teacher. I would like to have all of you ponder the question which is at the middle of this whole issue tonight. It's not about a spring or fall hunt it is about a bear hunt period. Why are we killing bears? Specifically why are we killing black bears in Utah. What is the point? We all know that for hundreds of thousands of years bears existed in our state long before we came upon the scene. They

existed with other species and everything was fine. We are the ones that have upset the balance. You all know that, I know that, everyone in this room knows that. Bear populations are contained by bears. Bears are territorial animals. Their population is determined by the amount of food available and the amount of other bears in the existing area. We don't have to control the population. They are not like deer. But I am not so sure that it is necessary to hunt them either. It has been admitted here tonight that predation is not really a serious problem with bears. We can use manners in the wild while camping to minimize conflicts with bears. We all know what those manners are. They consist of picking up our garbage, not cooking foods that have strong odors that may attract bears. If all those things took place we would have very few nuisance bears. One of the reasons we do have nuisance bears is because we are encroaching on their habitat. We do not use bears for subsistence either. You don't eat bear meat or use the hide for clothes. It boils down to one point. We are only killing bears because we like the idea of killing. It is a sport. I can guarantee that if we had a basketball game and one of the teams was absolutely slaughtered at the end we wouldn't have basketball. This is not a sport.

Kirk Robinson – I am here representing Western Wildlife Conservancy and also myself. I want to express my own ethical view of hunting because it is simply my view and I have a right like others to express my opinion on this matter and I wish for the advisory committee to hear it. I have a problem with the idea of sport hunting. Killing animals merely for sport, which I think is pretty much all there is to bear hunting, strikes me as being barbaric and I am not aware of any arguments that I think are good justification for the practice. I am not going to argue that point here now. I thought about it considerably and I taught philosophy in universities for 15 years among other things I taught logic and ethics. I am not naive when it comes to argumentation. I know how to spot a good and bad argument. If anyone wants to argue about it I will be happy to but I don't think you will have an easy time. I think a lot of people think that there is no justification to be had, they're bears. They are bears and we are just human beings. We are both mammals, we are both beings with a certain degree of intelligence. I make no claim that we are of identical or equal value but I don't think the bear falls into a category as being merely something for us to treat in whatever way we desire just because they are not human beings and perhaps not as intelligent as us.

Speaking for Western Wildlife Conservancy I have three recommendations. The first is that there be no bear baiting. It is unsportsmanlike. It is not necessary for management in any way that I can see and we recommend no bear baiting. Also we are concerned about two bear hunts and an additional pursuit as well. It bothers me for the same reason it may bother some of you. The idea of bears being unnaturally bothered for a great part of their waking lives. The second recommendation is that we not have the summer pursuit you are contemplating or perhaps do away with either the spring or the fall hunt. I think this should be looked into for the future. I doubt if you can really do this request justice here and now but maybe in future years. My third recommendation is that in the future the Division of Wildlife personnel should include in the presentation all relevant research regarding black bears or brown bears having to do with my previous question. What does the research show regarding indirect negative effects on cub production and/or survival due to targeting male bears through hunting? I don't know all the research and I am going to happily look at what Dr. Black referred me to. I know this. I was at a conference in Santa Cruz a couple of years ago now in which a presentation was made by Canadian biologists, whose names I now don't recall, who studying grizzlies in an area of Canada did find a significant reduction in production and I also believe

survivability of cubs where male bears were targeted. They compared study areas where there was bear hunting to areas nearby where there was not bear hunting. Also John Swenson, who is internationally recognized bear scientist, was speaking at Utah State University two weeks ago on studies conducted in Sweden where they found the same thing. In fact there was over twice the mortality to cubs in hunted populations. I think this needs to be included for the simple and obvious reason that the chief rationale for the research on the spring hunt and for extending it is to try to protect cubs. If indirectly it is doing just the opposite we ought to at least look into that. I am asking that the board please recommend that this literature whatever the findings are be presented to us next year. I do find the information that Dr. Black and Kevin Bunnell presented to be very helpful and I appreciate all the work that went into that. Thank you.

Greg Cover – President of the Utah Federation of Houndsmen – We would like to add to what Chad talked about. The other three RACs have passed unanimously to change the wording pursuit to training season. It is not politically correct and there is a big misunderstanding of the word pursuit. 95% of it is about training and not the kill. We also propose to give two weeks in April to the turkey hunters and put those two weeks at the end of the season extending the season to June 15<sup>th</sup>. The studies showed that as far as females being killed there should be no problem. We propose that the summer season be open statewide. If we can't get statewide it should be opened up some to reduce pressure. There are conflicts with out of state competition and their lack of education of our rules and ethics. We agree with the DWR as far as the fall conflicts that is why we propose to open the summer season statewide and let the big game hunters have the fall as far as pursuit. With spot and stalk only Colorado has a 75% female harvest. We do not think we should go to spot and stalk. Right now we are at 30% female harvest. In closing, hounding is a heritage and an American tradition. Our founding fore father George Washington brought over our first set of hounds and it has evolved into what it is today. It is a sport and a lifestyle. I share that lifestyle with a seven-year old daughter. She saw her first bear last spring. With that summer training season when our kids are out of school we are trying to emphasize in our group and educate the public along with you that a child can learn more and have a better respect for nature if they are out there learning with mother nature. Again it takes a long time to train a dog. It is not about the kill it is about the tradition and heritage. I thank you for your time.

John Bair – On the spring season you are proposing May 1<sup>st</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup>, is that right?

Greg Cover – Yes. It passed in the southern and southeastern regions. It reduces conflicts with the turkey hunters and like the study said female harvest should not increase in those two weeks.

Jason Binder – I am on the board of directors for the Utah Federation of Houndsmen and the vice president of the Wasatch Mountain Hound Association. We support everything that the UFH is doing. We would like to see you accept our proposals for a summer training statewide. It's not just like going to Wal-Mart and buying a deer tag and getting a box of shells and going out and killing a deer. It takes a long time to get a pack of bear dogs. I am still working on mine. I will probably still be working on them in ten years. That is what I hope to be able to enjoy and do with my family. I thank you for your time.

Rick Stratton – I agree with UFH recommendations. I think with a longer pursuit season especially on the San Juan you would have less conflict with other big game sportsmen. Thank you.

Ernie Millgate – I would like to thank the state for giving us the opportunity to pursue bears and to hunt bears. With a lot of these people here tonight I love bears, I really do. That is one of the reasons I have hounds. I love to see bears. I have worked with Kevin quite a bit on the lions and the bears. I appreciate him listening to us and working with us. We have wanted to get the spring hunt back. I appreciate that they proposed it. I hate to see it at the expense of fall pursuit but I understand Hal's position on that. I would recommend giving five tags for the Book Cliffs and the San Juan areas that would allow hunters to use hounds. I think it was drastic to completely shut that down. I have talked to a lot of the outfitters in that area and they haven't had any complaints. They actually like to see us down there. We usually help them locate other animals. As far as the summer pursuit season, I called Boyd Blackwell the other day and thanked him for giving us those areas in his region. He is a little concerned about the fact that those are the only areas that are listed for the state. He is worried he will have an influx of houndsmen there. He actually suggested to me that maybe we could get a few more areas throughout the state and give more houndsmen in different parts of the state an opportunity to go out and possibly help keep bears out of campgrounds and cabin areas. The southern RAC voted to add the Fish Lake unit and the Boulder unit to the summer training season. I would like to see you consider adding the Wasatch West unit. Thank you for your time.

Tim Pilling – I agree with the other organizations and would like to continue the fall bear hunt. Possibly minimize the hunting in November because most of the bears hibernate by November. I also agree with the May 1<sup>st</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup> season. We should continue the multiple use and not limit certain groups. Thanks.

Dr. Hal Black – I have a son who is much bigger than me that I questioned his paternity. Only his mother knows for sure. He engages in one of the stupidest activities I have ever seen. It is called golfing. I don't like to golf but I go caddy for him and embarrass him to death. I tell the people when I go that I think it is really stupid to golf. Then I talk to them about how environmentally foolish it is to use so much water and destroy diversity. But while I have that feeling about them I don't anywhere consider that it is my duty or right to try to abolish golfing because a certain percent of people like to do it. There are just a bunch of people all over the world who like to hunt and they hunt all kinds of things from mushrooms with pigs in Europe to deer over alfalfa. There are an awful lot of people who like to hunt. I am not entirely sure about the logic of wanting to impose your ethics on those people. In closing, the International Bear Association, which I think Nikki has worked with in Asia, in the last analysis they did of the black bear populations in north America I think it was either one million or three million black bears were thought to exist in north America north of Mexico. In none of the states except maybe Florida, which is a population problem, in none of the states or providences has anyone over the last 25 years that I have been familiar with that association ever talked about diminishing bear populations. In fact the current view is that bear populations are stable or increasing. That is just what everyone says. These are the professionals that are saying it. It is true that management is about maybe as much luck and art as it is science but whatever it is, black bears are not in any predicament. Some are hunted in the spring some are hunted in the fall. In some areas there is no hunting or no baiting. There are all kinds of ways to hunt bears and in spite of that bear populations are stable or increasing.



Craig Edwards – I am an avid sportsman in Utah and have been all my life. I do love hounds and I love that sport. I don't think any opportunity should be taken away from the sportsmen. I have four daughters that love my dogs and love to go hunt with me. I think it's a crying shame that we take opportunity away from them. They are youth and they want to be involved in it. I know this is the central region but I would like to talk about the San Juan and the Abajo units where we are talking about taking away the fall hunt with hounds. I have a letter in my hand that was supposed to be sent to all the RAC members from Black Timber Outfitters, the biggest outfitter for elk and deer hunts in San Juan. I would like to read this. 'As a big game guide outfitter who does more volume and takes more hunters during all three elk and deer seasons than anyone else I want to make it clear that by no means have bear hunters and those using hounds to hunt bears during the overlapping big game season caused Black Timber Outfitters any problems nor do we see it as a conflict. I have found most of the houndsmen to be very informative and to give information freely about sightings of deer or elk during the respective seasons. I would like to be able to continue these types of relationships. This is clearly a social issue not a biological issue and I would recommend leaving this as presently is on the San Juan units. Thank you.

Three comment cards read –

Colton Ingram – I support the proposal of UFH.

Jamie Russell – I am opposed to hunting bears in Utah.

Brant Klun – I support the UFH response. If the DWR decides on a 100% spring hunt I think the season needs to be extend through June 31<sup>st</sup> and keep the November pursuit season. Having hunted the La Sals and Book Cliffs areas, there is usually not much bear activity until mid May.

### **RAC Discussion**

Ed Kent – We have a number of comments ranging from eliminating all bear hunts to the UFH response. Kevin, have you reviewed the Utah Federation of Houndsmen proposal? Kevin Bunnell – It has been presented at all the RACs. I have not had a chance to respond to it at the other RACs. The one thing I am concerned about is the recommendation to go to June 15<sup>th</sup>. It is true our data showed that through the third week in May we haven't showed an increase in female harvest yet. We felt comfortable extending that to May 31<sup>st</sup>. If we go back to our data previous to 1992 we do have data that shows when we go into June we start losing that advantage of the spring bear hunt in terms of the percent of females harvested. The percent does start to increase as we go into June. Again I have to make a recommendation that represents the Division and in June we are at the peak of our calving and fawning. There is a lot of concern by the biologists about having hounds running around during that period. That would be my response to that portion of their recommendation.

John Bair – Are we not in danger if we limit ourselves to too small of a sample size? The houndsmen have brought up the concern that we are going to pile houndsmen in these units and we are going to force conflict. How concerned is the Division about that? To me, that seems like a real issue. If we concentrate the hunters on two small units are we not condemning ourselves to failure?

Kevin Bunnell – There's two ways to look at it. That is certainly one way. Are we going to create conflicts with campers and other recreationists? There are other people who use the mountains besides hunters and we could be creating conflicts with some of those folks. The other side of it and the side that we thought carried the most weight was that we wanted to see what the issues are first. We have never done this before and we want to ease into it. There is probably some logic in having it distributed better throughout the state. Right now the majority of them are in the northeastern region. The biologists there liked the idea better and saw it as a tool and took a different viewpoint than some of the others.

Ed Kent – We have several issues that we need to review. Some of them are the Utah Federation of Houndsmen proposals; bear bating, and including research in future presentations. How much heartburn would that create?

Kevin Bunnell – As I understood the request it was to research data relating to the effects of targeting male bears in harvest. To review, there is very limited research on that and so to review that wouldn't be a burden. I don't know of any that is specific to black bears.

John Bair – I have dealt with a lot of bear hunting issues myself and I speak as a Bair. Deer hunting and elk hunting seems to be a lot more of a regional thing than hounding is. We have a lot of houndsmen in the central region. When changes are made on units like the San Juan and the Book Cliffs it really has a big effect in the central region and I think it would be appropriate for us to look at those units and make recommendations based on that. I know a lot of guys who pack up every spring and fall and head for the San Juan and the Book Cliffs. We save gas money all summer long so we can go to the San Juan and get our tails kicked. I think by eliminating the hounding on those units, especially where they are so popular and they are such good bear units, to me that is a bit of a mistake. Kevin has done a great job in moving toward the spring but I don't agree with taking all the fall permits that allow hounds off those units. A good compromise would be a split, even if we had three or four or five tags on those units. I don't think it's right to take all that opportunity from guys that have a lot of bonus points and have waited to draw those units. I think the right thing to do would be to leave a few tags there. The other real concern I have is with the training season. I think it is the right thing to do but I am really worried because the Nebo unit is the only unit so close to such a big population of houndsmen that we are going to overcrowd that and we are going to cause problems where there doesn't need to be. If we had a little more area there, like the Wasatch West I think that would take some of the pressure. Opening the summer training season was also recommended for statewide and I am not opposed to that.

Ed Kent – So you are suggesting we review the elimination of the pursuit on the San Juan and the Book Cliffs?

John Bair – I think we should look at the elimination of all fall hounding tags.

Steve Perry - Do we have any idea how many are people are pursuing bears on the San Juan? We know that a tremendous number of those are nonresidents. If we went back to five or ten pursuit permits that you had to draw then could we limit the nonresident to 10% like in the big game draw?

Kevin Bunnell – We can limit the deer or elk hunt because it does not have anything to do with affecting a person's ability to make money across state lines. The reason we can't say 90% resident and 10% nonresident on pursuit is because of the commerce

clause which states that you can't do anything that gives an advantage to a resident of one state to make a living over a resident of another state across state lines. Because guides and outfitters are not regulated we can't limit things across the board. I am not a lawyer but my understanding is that if we limit it we have to limit it equally between residents and nonresidents.

Steve Perry – Five each then would be good. The big problem is you have 20 or more camps down there from Colorado.

Kevin Bunnell – The other issue we have is the spot and stalk regulations. It has come up in the past. It is actually part of the bear management plan. One of the strategies mentioned in there is to try a spot and stalk hunt to try to address the conflict issues. It hasn't been proposed in the past because we have been in this experimental mode with the spring hunt and we didn't want to complicate things.

Allan Stevens – The way I understand it there are no recommended pursuit permits in the fall on San Juan and Book Cliffs?

Kevin Bunnell – There would be no pursuit permits available. There are tags that you can use any method other than hounds on.

Allan Stevens – It seems to me that an intermediate step might be to get rid of the pursuit permits on those units but allow hounds for harvest.

Kevin Bunnell – That is the recommendation for all the other units in the state.

## **VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Bair to allow five permits on each unit, San Juan and Book Cliffs, where you can still utilize hounds to take a bear in the fall**

Fred Oswald – Clarification, so they would not be pursuit permits they would be hunt permits?

John Bair – Yes.

Fred Oswald – Would it increase the total number of bears taken or would you subtract it from something?

John Bair – Subtract them from the spring. The numbers would be; on the Book Cliffs 7 spring permits and 8 fall permits and on San Juan there would be 15 spring permits and 25 in the fall (20 being spot and stalk).

**Ed Kent – Johns motion was –**

**On the Book Cliffs and the San Juan hunting units to include 5 permits in the fall hunt that would allow hunting with hounds**

John Bair – Yes. The proposal by the Division right now is that there are no tags in the fall that would utilize hounds.

Fred Oswald – You would still have the spot and stalk numbers?

John Bair – Yes.

**Motion seconded by Steve Perry**

Allan Stevens – It seems more logical to me. We are trying to see what is happening with the spring hunts. I would feel more comfortable supporting a motion that got rid of the spot and stalk totally and just have all fall permits allow hounds.

**Motion amended by Allan Stevens to eliminate spot and stalk recommendation and keep the spring and fall permit numbers as proposed by the Division.**

Kevin Bunnell – From my standpoint, if we did that I think we would want to reduce the number of fall tags on the San Juan. We recommended 20 permits if they were just spot and stalk realizing that there would be a lot lower success rate and we actually have an alternative proposal that I think would be 24 spring permits and 6 fall permits, any method

**Amended motion to eliminate the spot and stalk recommendation and then change the numbers of permits on the San Juan unit to 24 spring permit and 6 fall permits, any method.**

Allan Stevens – John, would you amend your motion to that?

John Bair – I would.

John Weis – I would have a negative perspective to this because of what Kevin said. He said that in the bear management program that they have wanted to have these spot and stalk hunts and they haven't had a chance to do it yet. He has looked at this and these are the two areas that he would like to take a look at. We are not giving him the benefit of the doubt that this is an important part of the management process.

Allan Stevens – I have no problem in doing that in some units but the big problem here I see is that these are two of the prime units in the state. I don't think you should make drastic changes on these units.

Ed Kent – We have a motion and a second. I will repeat the amended motion. The amended motion is to eliminate the spot and stalk fall proposal by the Division on the Book cliffs and the San Juan units also change the allocated permit numbers to 24 spring and 6 fall permit on the San Juan and leave the permit numbers as recommended on the Book Cliffs (12 spring and 3 fall). The motion was made and seconded.

Fred Oswald – So does that mean that the total number of permits goes down 10?

Ed Kent – Yes.

Fred Oswald - Could the motion include that we would like to have the Division take a look at other options as far as spot and stalk? I wouldn't want the board or the Division to feel like our motion is an anti spot and stalk motion. It is more in favor of hunting on those units. I think we should clarify that we are not opposed to spot and stalk, I think we are actually in favor of having that develop somewhere.

Ed Kent – We could certainly make that a recommendation.

Jay Price – If the number is reduced by ten what would be the anticipated harvest?

Kevin Bunnell – 30 is about where we have been on the San Juan. We show our percent success over the five-year period is similar between spring and fall. We would anticipate our harvest would be about where it has been in the past, which we feel pretty comfortable with.

*Call for question*

**In Favor: all**

**Motion passed unanimously**

John Bair – I would also like to address the summer training season. I am really concerned about limiting the training season to such small units. I think that it was a good move by the southern region to add the Fish Lake and the Boulder units. The houndsmen have asked for statewide. I think we need to add some ground and I would propose adding the Wasatch West unit.

**Motion was made by John Bair to add the Wasatch West unit to the summer training season (keeping the Nebo, as recommended)  
Seconded by Calvin Crandall**

Ed Kent – Do you want the motion to include adding the Fish Lake and Boulder units?  
John Bair – I think it is enough that the southern region has done that.

Allan Stevens – What is the Wasatch West unit?

Anis Aoude – The whole Wasatch Front. It starts at I-80 and goes as far south as Spanish Fork Canyon.

John Weis – That area would be prime for conflicts with hikers. We have never had a pursuit season there in the summer.

Anis Aoude – One thing we were trying to solve is keeping bears out of campgrounds and reducing conflicts between bears and people.

John Weis – You may end up with a lot more conflicts than you get with elk hunters in the Book Cliffs. Is there an area in the central region that is not as close to the major population base that would still serve for an additional spot for training that would not have these predictable conflicts?

Anis Aoude – There is not another unit in the central region. These are basically the two units that hold bears in the central region.

**In Favor: Jay Price, Steve Perry, Fred Oswald, Calvin Crandall, Curtis Warrick, Allan Stevens, John Bair**

**Opposed: John Weis**

**Motion passed 7 to 1**

John Bair – Talking about the season dates and the potential spring turkey hunt conflicts, is the May 31<sup>st</sup> date the Division's proposal and June 15<sup>th</sup> is the UFH proposal?

Kevin Bunnell – Yes.

John Bair – I think we can come to some common ground on that. I think we should move it five days and run it through the first week in June.

**Motion was made by John Bair to change the spring hunt dates from April 15<sup>th</sup> to June 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**Seconded by Jay Price**

Allan Stevens – Even though I am the one who said there may be turkey hunter conflicts I think we are getting into some dangerous territory here. We had the data through the first three weeks of May? We are already stretching that a week longer to the end of May. I think we really need to be careful stretching it any later than that.

Steve Perry – I am inclined to think that way too. They have already added a week to test the water. They could always address it next year.

Calvin Crandall – Does this proclamation come up every year?

Kevin Bunnell – Yes.

**In Favor: Jay Price, Calvin Crandall, John Bair**

**Opposed: Fred Oswald, Steve Perry, John Weis, Allan Stevens, Curtis Warrick**

**Motion failed 5 to 3**

**Motion was made by Allan Stevens to accept the balance of the recommendations as presented by the Division**

**Second by Jay price**

John Weis – I would like to speak against the motion. We heard this evening from a lot of interested citizens and so far we have only discussed those who are the consumers of the wildlife, houndsmen and hunters. We really haven't addressed some of the concerns that were raised by the citizens in terms of the ethics of hunting and so forth. I think it is important that we consider what has been said in front of us and we take some action. I would like to be able to delay the vote of accepting this to at least discuss one issue that I find particularly important about the proclamation as it is in front of us, which is the use of bait stipulation. I brought this up last year and at that time it was simply one bait station and guess as my punishment we went to two bait stations and I am bringing it up this year and we will probably go to three bait stations. I think that a lot of us here in this room do not understand the picture that is portrayed when a non-hunter thinks of baiting. I am not a hunter and I feel that the baiting gives hunters a black eye. We don't bait in any other hunt yet we accept it here. I would like to amend the motion to eliminate all bear baiting.

Allan Stevens – I would not accept that amendment to my motion. Throughout the world and throughout hunting baiting is an accepted fair chase practice. If you took away baiting in the United States you would have no deer hunting in the south and in the eastern United States. You would have no turkey hunting. You would basically do away with hunting. When you talk about baiting I think you really need to be careful. You could actually consider duck decoys as bait. The difference is one you are feeding and the other is visual. I think that in the hunting community whether it is visual or food baiting is a well-accepted fair chase practice.

Ed Kent – The other issue that was brought to us that we might want to consider as well was the houndsmen asked us to change the word pursuit to training season. We have a motion on the floor.

**Motion was made by John Weis to amend the motion to eliminate baiting and accepting the balance of the bear proclamation**

**Seconded by Fred Oswald**

**In Favor – John Weis, Fred Oswald**

**Opposed – Jay Price, Steve Perry, Calvin Crandall, Curtis Warrick, Allan Stevens, John Bair**

**Amendment failed 6 to 2**

Fred Oswald – As the representative of the non-consumptive users I want to thank them for being here tonight because most of the time at our RAC meetings we don't have a lot of non-consumptive users show up and make their interests known. I am appreciative of the fact that they have been here tonight. I also want them to know that I did hear them particularly when they talked about their opposition to the spring hunt. In listening to that and hearing them I was a bit perplexed because it seems to me that if you love bears and you are in favor of the bear management plan and you are in favor of having a stable bear population in Utah and you believe in all of the science that we do have before us then going to the spring hunt is certainly a big step in the right direction for all of us I think tonight regardless of whether we are houndsmen or we just love bears. I want those in the audience tonight who expressed their opposition to know that I did hear that but I don't agree with it. I think if we want to have a stable bear population in Utah we need to go to a spring hunt.

Jay Price – Can I ask that we change that wording?

Ed Kent – We can amend that.

- Yes

**Motion was made to amended original motion by Jay Price to include changing of the word pursuit to training throughout the proclamation  
Seconded by John Bair**

**VOTING (on amendment to motion)**

**In favor: Jay Price, Steve Perry, Calvin Crandall, Allan Stevens, Curtis Warrick, John Bair**

**Opposed: Fred Oswald, John Weis**

**Amendment passed 6 to 2**

**Motion amended to accept the balance of the proclamation including changing the word pursuit to training throughout the proclamation**

**In favor: Jay Price, Fred Oswald, Steve Perry, Calvin Crandall, Allan Stevens, Curtis Warrick, John Bair**

**Opposed: John Weis**

**Amended motion passed 7 to 1**

John Bair – I would like to make a comment. We have changed some things from the Divisions proposal, some social issues and hounds season dates and what not. I wanted to tell Kevin and Dr. Black and all those involved that as long as I have been doing this, this is the most biologically sound bear proposal coming out of the Division in a long time and I think they have done an excellent job and it's good to see the biology playing a big role. They have done a good job and I wanted to thank them for that after I pick at this proposal.

Allan Stevens – I would like to make a comment. I think it would be wise for the houndsmen and for the Division to look at legislative action to regulate nonresident pursuit permits.

Ed Kent – And Kevin, you will take a look at the bear research as we discussed?  
Kevin Bunnell – Presenting the research on the target of male bears in the harvest, yes.  
As long as the board tells me to do that, that’s what I’ll do.  
Kirk Robinson – I wanted to clarify that that’s not the only aspect I am interested in.  
Ed Kent – How about this, Kirk? Would you meet, Kevin and Kirk, and discuss this?  
Kevin Bunnell – Certainly.

**ALLAN STEVENS LEFT**

**6) Taking Nongame Mammals Rule (Action)  
- Kevin Bunnell**

**Questions from the RAC**

Q: Calvin Crandall – What is the difference between a Utah prairie dog and a pot guts?  
A: Kevin Bunnell – Most people call ground squirrels pot guts.

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by Jay Price to accept the rule as presented**

**Seconded by Calvin Crandall**

**In Favor: all**

**Motion passed unanimously (7) ALLAN STEVENS LEFT**

**7) Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy (Action)  
- Kevin Bunnell**

**Questions from the RAC**

Q: Fred Oswald – Does the predator management plan trump the cougar or elk or deer management plan?

A: Kevin Bunnell – Yes. The cougar management plan specifically says in it that the targets that we use for cougars and those objectives that we use to set management plans aren’t considered when we are under predator management plans. There is a different objective.

Q: Curtis Warrick – Everything you have talked about here as far as objectives for considering a predator management plan tie to wildlife. Your proposal doesn’t address and I suppose you do not intend it to address anything to do with livestock.

A: Kevin Bunnell – That is a whole different policy. We will talk about that a little here tonight.

Q: Fred Oswald – The plan then says that a deer is more valuable than a cougar.

A: Kevin Bunnell – That is one interpretation.

Q: Fred Oswald - How else could you interpret it? If the two come in conflict and you have a management plan for both species then the deer becomes a more important animal than the cougar and it also says, and this is the thing that I really wonder about, that it continues to put all the blame on the predator.

A: Kevin Bunnell - That is one of the changes we made. Let me go back to it. That is an important point. In number two, situations where prey populations are unable to meet management goals and objectives, we have added, and we have evidence that shows predation is playing a significant role.

Fred Oswald – It is very important. At least it puts them back almost on equal footing.



Kevin Bunnell – Predators are scapegoats sometimes. There are no two ways about it.

Q: Curtis Warrick – You need to consider short term and long-term objectives. In the short term it might be viable to say we are going to place a higher value on deer than on cougar.

A: Kevin Bunnell – The very first line in the policy says that we are not out essentially to scorch the earth of predators. We realize that they play a significant ecological role. One of the things that will be in the predator management plan in the future is this is accepted is consider for the predator population on when to back out of a predator management plan.

John Weis – There are two really important parts I saw in reading this. One that it does say that you can blame declining deer numbers on the drought instead of the predator population. The other thing is that you really allow yourselves for instance on the Stansbury Mountains, if those aren't capable of holding the sheep that you are putting in because the habitat isn't good for an optimal herd then you cannot continue to pound the cougars as a way of trying to establish sheep.

Kevin Bunnell – That language was actually part of the predator management plan previously.

### **Questions from the Public**

Q: Clyde Lameril – I heard you mention wolves. I am concerned about wolves coming to Utah. I have heard a lot of things and I am wondering what we are doing.

A: Kevin Bunnell – You must have missed the wolf management plan. We had a lot of meetings about that. I would encourage you to read the management plan on our website. The main point there is as long as wolves are listed under the endangered species act it doesn't matter what we say, they are under the authority of the federal management agencies and what they say goes.

Q: Clyde Lameril – So we are dead in the water pretty much.

A: Kevin Bunnell – Not completely. The federal agencies have not been shy about killing wolves. In Idaho, Montana and Wyoming if a wolf kills livestock, that wolf dies.

Q: Clyde Lameril – I saw some literature somewhere where the elk herd that leaves Yellowstone National Park and goes into Lamar Valley are only leaving with about one to three percent calves.

A: Kevin Bunnell – That is inflated. It is higher than that. They do take some calves but it is important to remember that on that particular unit is that that unit was significantly over objective before wolves got there and they tried everything to get it down.

### **RAC Discussion**

Fred Oswald – How does this affect the federal agencies?

Kevin Bunnell – It doesn't. Wildlife Services has their own policies.

### **VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Weis to accept the policy as presented**

**Seconded by Fred Oswald**

**In Favor: all**

**Motion passed unanimously (7)**

### **8) Handling Cougar Problems Policy (Action)**

**- Kevin Bunnell**

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Bair to accept the policy as presented**

**Seconded by Steve Perry**

**In Favor: all**

**Motion passed unanimously (7)**

**9) Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule (Action)**

**- Kevin Bunnell**

**Questions from the RAC**

Q: Fred Oswald – That slide seemed to be in opposition to what you said earlier in the evening about losses going down.

A: Kevin Bunnell – This is bear and lion combined. Before I just showed you bear compensation. In 2005 we had lower confirmed losses of livestock than we have had for quite a while. It has been a decreasing trend over the last three years. The numbers I showed before were the number of bears taken in relation to livestock damage. This the number of confirmed losses resulting from bears and lions combined.

Q: Jay Price – Why are horses not included in livestock?

A: Kevin Bunnell – Because they don't pay a head tax and that is where the compensation comes from.

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by Calvin Crandall to accept the rule as presented**

**Seconded by John Bair**

**In Favor: all**

**Motion passed unanimously (7)**

**10) Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule 5-year Review (Action)**

**- Kevin Bunnell**

**Questions from the RAC**

Q: Fred Oswald - How many licensed facilities are there in Utah?

A: Kevin Bunnell – I don't know statewide. I only deal with the ones that rehab mammals. We have a whole position that just deals with CORs and I could get you in touch with her if you would like.

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by Curtis Warrick to accept the rule as presented**

**Seconded by Calvin Crandall**

**In Favor: All**

**Motion passed unanimously (7)**

**11) RAC Rule 5-year Review (Action)**

**- Steve Phillips, DWR RAC Program Coordinator**

**Questions from the RAC**

Steve Perry - Can we make a ten o'clock bedtime rule?

Steve Phillips – I would love to.

**Comments from the Public**

Michael Anderson – One of the reasons I came here tonight is because I had heard rumors about the functioning of the RACs specifically from sources like the Division’s own internet forum. I wanted to comment that I was favorably impressed with the way in which every person I saw here tonight was able to speak and be respected even to the point that I think you almost went over board in my opinion in allowing people to get up and say what you had a rule against which was repeating what the guy in front of them said. I think it is better to err on that side then to make citizens feel that they have been shut up. Well done, thank you.

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Weis to accept the rule as presented**

**Seconded by John Bair**

**In Favor: All**

**Motion passed unanimously (7)**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.**

**Approximately 80 in attendance**

**Next board meeting January 5, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. at the DNR Auditorium**

**Next RAC meeting February 21, 2005 at Springville Jr. High School**

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**Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
Beaver High School, Beaver, UT  
December 13, 2005 -- 7:00 p.m.**

**REVIEW & ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** To accept the agenda and minutes from the November 1, 2005 RAC meeting as presented.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Panguitch Lake Treatment Plan**

**MOTION:** To accept the Division’s recommendations as presented.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Bear Proclamation and Rule R657-33**

**MOTION:** To accept the Division’s recommendations as presented with the provision that pursuit be allowed on the Plateau Boulder and Fishlake for the summer training season and continue the spring bear hunt until June 15<sup>th</sup>.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**MOTION:** To change the wording in the proclamation from pursuit to training.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Taking Nongame Mammals Rule R657-19**

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

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Managing Predatory Wildlife Species Policy**

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

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Handling Cougar Problems Policy**

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

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Cougar/Bear Depredation Compensation Rule R657-24**

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

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Wildlife Rehabilitation Rule 5-Year Review R657-40**

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

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**Plateau Pronghorn Management Plan (Action)**

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

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**RAC Rule 5-Year Review R657-39**

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

**VOTE:** Unanimous