

**Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Beaver High School
Beaver, UT
April 12, 2011
5:00 p.m.**

1. REVIEW & ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

MOTION: To accept minutes and agenda as written.

VOTE: Unanimous.

2. BUCKS, BULLS & OIAL PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011

MOTION: To accept the Bucks, Bulls & OIAL Permit recommendations for 2011 as presented.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION: To leave the limited entry bull elk permit numbers for the Fishlake, Manti, and Wasatch units at the same level as 2010.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT: Carried 6:2

VOTE ON MOTION: Unanimous

3. ANTLERLESS PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011

MOTION: To accept the antlerless deer permit recommendations as presented, further to recommend the Wildlife Board adopt an “action item” relating to the Division developing a transplant proposal for additional deer on the Panguitch Lake Unit using sportsmen’s financial and physical support, as suggested here tonight, and explore having BYU assist in documenting methods and outcome.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: To accept the remainder of the antlerless permit recommendations as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

4. BIG GAME RULE AMENDMENTS R657-5

MOTION: To accept Big Game Rule Amendments R657-5 as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

5. ANTLERLESS CWMU PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011

MOTION: To accept the Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2011 as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

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RAC Members Present	DWR Personnel Present	Wildlife Board Present	RAC Members Not Present
Rex Stanworth Dale Bagley Layne Torgerson Chairman Steve Flinders Dell LeFevre Clair Woodbury Mack Morrell Paul Briggs Steve Dalton	Douglas Messerly Teresa Griffin Jim Lamb Anis Aoude Jason Nicholes Dustin Schaible Kent Hersey Vance Mumford Lynn Chamberlain Giani Julander Heather Grossman Josh Carver Gabe Patterson Russell Stoker Scott Dalebout Blair Stringham Brent Farnsworth	Ernie Perkins Jake Albrecht Tom Hatch	Cordell Pearson Sam Carpenter

Steve Flinders called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. There were approximately 23 interested parties in attendance in addition to RAC members, members of the Wildlife Board, and Division employees. Steve Flinders introduced himself and asked RAC members to introduce themselves. Steve Flinders explained RAC meeting procedures.

Review and Acceptance of Agenda and Minutes (action)

Steve Flinders: Look to approve the agenda and last meeting minutes.

Layne Torgerson: Mr. Chairman I make a motion that we accept the minutes from the last meeting.

Steve Flinders: Motion by Layne. Seconded by Rex. As far as a wildlife board update. Boy that was a long time ago. We e-mailed out a list of the motions it was on bears. Nice save. Motion by Layne, seconded by Rex. Vote, please. Unanimous.

Layne Torgerson made the motion to accept the agenda and minutes from previous meeting. Rex Stanworth seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Wildlife Board Update:

-Steve Flinders, Chairman

Steve Flinders: Now moving on. Let the record show that Mack's here. We're excusing Sam Carpenter and Cordell Pearson tonight. Back to the wildlife board update, agenda item three. The wildlife board did extend the spring bear hunt one week on the boulder unit. Looking at other things that we did in the Southern Region. Statewide bear plan was approved as proposed. Trap check time frame stayed as it's historically been. Do you have anything else, Doug, to add from that meeting? Anybody have questions from the Bear RAC? That was back in January. If no questions we'll move on to regional update. Doug.

Regional Update:

-Douglas Messerly, Regional Supervisor

Douglas Messerly: Thank you Mr. Chairman, I'll try to keep this brief typically this meeting is a long winded one and that's why we started it early. Probably the best news that I have to deliver is according to the studies and observations that our biologists have made, winter loss has been very minimal on big game herds this year. We have, as we've mentioned before in this meeting, two radio collar studies going. One on the Monroe unit and one on the Pinevalley unit. In both those cases we have very minimal fawn loss over this winter. We collared those fawns in December. And according to recent flights we've only lost two on each unit, two fawns, in that neighborhood in any event. As compared to last winter survival was much higher this year, and the same with adults. That's a pretty good indication in addition to that, on other units where we don't have radio collar studies, the deer appear to be in good shape. The weather is a good indicator of that too. We've had a good spring for the animals and green-up has been very sufficient. At this point a lot of the animals are down on the valley floors feeding on that green-up and they'll follow that as it moves up the mountain. We saw some just north of Paragonah on the way up here. It was pretty early in the afternoon. Things look good from a winter survival standpoint this year. They went into the winter in good condition, they seem to be coming out of the winter in good condition so we're hoping for a good fawn crop, we just need some precipitation this summer. In addition to that, drawing results will be posted May 31st for the bucks and bulls drawing and we'll look forward to those results. Turkey hunt is in progress now, the first limited entry turkey hunt just began. Mixed reports of success, the weather's kind of messing up the early turkey hunters and that's typical. We expect a good fishing year this year. I met with the water rights and water resource folks this morning. Reservoirs are at capacity, our snow pack is well above 100 percent so we expect,

depending on how the run-off comes we expect high water in our reservoirs and typically that is reflected with good fishing so look forward to that. Some of the lower reservoirs have been ice free for some time now and actually some people are already taking advantage of that so it's working out well. Our aquatics crews are doing their annual gill netting surveys at this time and results are good on many of the reservoirs. You can see our website for information about what they're finding on those and that's a good indication of what fishing's going to be like this summer. Things look like they're in pretty good shape. Unless there are any questions Mr. Chairman, that's what I have.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Doug, any questions for Doug?

Clair Woodbury: What areas did we do fly-overs this winter and what were the results of those?

Doug Messerly: Teresa, could you answer that question for us please, which elk units we flew?

Teresa Griffin: We flew the Pahvant, the Beaver, and the Zion. I can pull up those numbers if you give me one second. Or do you guys know them off the top of you're head? Zion was about 25 below, it's objective is 300 so it's about 275. Yeah, yeah.

Steve Flinders: Thanks, Teresa. Any other questions towards the regional update? Seeing none let's move on to the action items. First up is number five bucks bulls and once in a lifetime permit numbers recommendations. Anis.

Bucks Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2011 (action)

-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

-Teresa Griffin, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

(see attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Rex Stanworth: You're showing Indian Peaks there with an age objective of 7/8 so it's above but according to you 2011 permits they're less.

Anis Aoude: Right, they did reduce permits, they really cranked them up last year when the objective was lower and they're just leveling them off to see what it would do. I mean they really poured the permits on them last year if you remember. So I think they felt they needed to back off otherwise they would dip the whole year, the following year.

Rex Stanworth: Okay, I got you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Anis. Couple of questions from the RAC. Elk ages are all the teeth from all the hunts lumped together still, archery, late rifle, early rifle, they're all lumped?

Anis Aoude: They are, yeah, for the age objectives.

Steve Flinders: What about the proportion of tags, to the different limited entry elk seasons? Is there, I see wide variation in the proportion of tags in the late rifle vs. the early rifle are there some rules of

thumb in the elk plan?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, in the elk plan it says that if you have a late hunt, and I don't have it memorized, but it can't be more than a certain percentage that goes into that early season and a percentage goes into the late season. So there is a percentage there and I'm not, I'll have to go back and look, I don't know that exact number. It's a proportion. If you have a late hunt, and not all units have late hunts, but if you have a late hunt 65 percent have to be in the late. No more than 65% can be in the early hunt.

Steve Flinders: Can be in the early hunt.

Anis Aoude: Right, so they can't put more than 65% in the early hunt so it provides more opportunity and the later hunt is the lower success hunt so it provides more opportunity.

Steve Flinders: Sure. In the old buck to doe ratio objective and the deer plan there was a sub-objective for proportion of mature bucks. Did that stay with the new buck to doe ratio?

Anis Aoude: That kind of went away and the reason for that is, whenever...

Steve Flinders: If you meet that you're gonna have the mature bucks.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, all the data we've ever collected, if you have 15 bucks per 100 does, almost without exception 30% or more are mature bucks, are three points or better. So after years and years of having that in the plan it really was something that is automatic if you manage for 15 and now that we go to 18 it's gonna be a given that you have those as well.

Steve Flinders: Little bit redundant, yeah. Any questions from the RAC? Sure Layne.

Anis Aoude: We still collect the data it's just not an objective in the plan, it still holds true every year.

Steve Flinders: Yeah.

Layne Torgerson: Anis, on the cuts on the general season deer tags, what is, I mean, you show I think it was 2000 tags in the Southern Region, how does that break down? What percentage is muzzleloader...

Anis Aoude: Those come out of the same pool, as you know, muzzleloader and rifle come out of the same pool, it's almost like a drawing. Usually what it ends up, probably a small proportion of them, I would guess in the southern region maybe it'd be around two maybe 3000 would be muzzleloader, maybe even less than that, and then the rest would be rifle.

Layne Torgerson: Like 60/40 probably?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, roughly, it varies a lot because they come out of the same pool. So it can vary from year to year.

Rex Stanworth: This says, I was curious, it goes from where the cuts were taken but there's no cuts for archery.

Anis Aoude: Right, and the rationale for that is that archery is still statewide so if you cut archery it doesn't always mean you're going to cut them in the region where you want to cut them. So you could cut archery permits by say 1000 if it's proportional then you may still have the same number of archers coming to the southern region so it really makes no sense to cut archery permits when they're hunting statewide if you're trying to reduce harvest in the southern region. The best way to do it is to do it through muzzleloader and rifle because you know those are actually hunting in the southern region. And that's the rationale for that. And another reason for not cutting archery is that they have half the success so basically you'd have to cut way more to get a bang for your buck than you would with rifle and muzzleloader. So if you're trying to increase buck to doe ratio the best place to cut permits is rifle and muzzleloader because you know they're going to be in the southern region where the archery if you cut them and they're statewide, you still may have the same number hunting the southern region it's just you'll have fewer hunting the northern or whatever.

Rex Stanworth: Are the archers...I was under the impression that the archers were going to have to pick a unit this year .

Anis Aoude: In 2012 not in 2011.

Rex Stanworth: 2012?

Anis Aoude: In 2012 when it goes to unit by unit then they will be lumped into the split or however we end up doing the split between rifle, muzzleloader and archery.

Rex Stanworth: I guess the only reason I, I'm not trying to pick on the archers but I guess the folks that I've spoken to, one of biggest complaints we have is you got 16000 archers and you get 16000 muzzleloader or rifle hunters and there's such an impact on the ground.

Anis Aoude: But not 16000 archers hunt the southern region.

Rex Stanworth: Well, okay, 15999.

Anis Aoude: No, actually, only about 5000 archers hunt the southern region.

Rex Stanworth: 5000?

Anis Aoude: Yeah.

Steve Flinders: They all go to your spot Rex.

Rex Stanworth: Wow. Okay. You're telling me something that I've never heard before.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, that's the data we collected in that way. If you remember a couple years ago I did a presentation when we asked them to pick a region and that data bore that out, that's how many it was.

Steve Flinders: Does that include dedicated hunters?

Anis Aoude: No, it doesn't. It's about an additional 2000, so roughly 7000.

Steve Flinders: Any other questions? Layne.

Layne Torgerson: Do we know what the success percentage was on the Fishlake early and late bull hunts? Do you have that Teresa?

Steve Flinders: Any other questions while she's hunting that up? Sure Dale.

Dale Bagley: On the spike hunt you show 18 % success rate are there some units that are extremely high to where that averages in or are they all pretty consistent?

Anis Aoude: No, they're all really low. There's no unit in the state that's over 20.

Steve Flinders: Let's jump to questions from the public. If you can hold these to questions we'll go to comments next. Sure Paul.

Questions from the public:

Paul Niemeyer: I've just got a question on this tooth data. If a bull is born in June, and he goes through that year then we harvest him next year he's really like a year and a half old or if it's two years he's two and a half years old. But when they collect that tooth data and cut the teeth, what does that show? Does that show if that bull is you know really like a year and a half old bull does that show that he's a two year old bull or a yearling bull? How close are we on that when we cross section those teeth?

Anis Aoude: The half year is truncated so actually all of our ages are a half year below what they should be. So you could add a half year if you wanted to but we don't. So basically if you kill a yearling it's a one year old we don't call it a one and a half year old. So when we average it together if you get a three point or a 4.6 it could actually be a 5.1 but we truncate the half year. So we're managing on a whole year not a, we don't add that half year.

Steve Flinders: For the record that was Paul Niemeyer from Richfield. Other questions from the public.

Teresa Griffin: Layne, really quick, for the Fishlake harvest success, early rifle was 74.3% and rifle late was 88.6.

Lee Tracy, Enoch: We just talked about the number of people who are hunting during archery season on the southern unit, keep in mind that the elk season is congruent with the archery season and the archery elk tags are unlimited so I don't know how you can speculate how many people are going to be up there hunting and, of course, the elk and the deer don't know which one you're looking for.

Steve Flinders: Is there a question in here

Lee Tracy: Yeah, are the archery elk hunters still going to be able to buy a tag regardless of how many are buying tags? Are they still unlimited?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, the archery tags for elk are still unlimited and roughly about 11000 statewide buy an archery tag, even though they are unlimited that's roughly the past three year average.

Steve Flinders: What's their success rate?

Anis Aoude: Success rates are about 8%.

Verland King, Henry Mtn Grazers Assoc.: My question is, our bison committee we had an in depth discussion and study of the model and we were told the permits would be 24 this year, how come we're only hunting 20?

Anis Aoude: There's conservation permits that don't go through the drawing, this is just the drawing's permits.

Steve Flinders: So there is 24?

Anis Aoude: Yes.

Steve Flinders: Other questions from the public?

Todd Abelhouzen SFW: There's been some discussion about opportunity vs. quality on the limited entry elk hunts, have we looked at possibly moving the archery spike or the spike hunt out of the archery limited entry same time frame to offset some of the effect it's having on the limited entry archery hunters because we've received a lot of complaints about that on many of the units especially the ones that it's new to in the last couple of years. The second thing is because of our feeling on the number of high quality bulls that are being taken during the rut with high powered rifles and some of the more efficient muzzleloaders. Have we looked at opportunities of moving some of those limited entry tags out of the rut with the rifle still having some rifle tags either rotating it or doing something where we're increasing opportunity but maintaining some of the quality and I have a comment later about that but I'm just wondering what The Division's recommendations are on those things.

Anis Aoude: What was first question? Spike hunting? That one comes up pretty much every year and with the time frame we have there's really no place to put it so what we have done to accommodate limited entry archers is basically we've carved out the last seven days of the season and cut the spike hunt short by seven days and that allows those archers to hunt the closest to the rut without being.... I know that's not a perfect solution, we do get a few complaints every year. We get fewer complaints on the units that have always had it we get more complaints on the units that have never had it so I think as time goes by archers kind of learn how to navigate around each other. It becomes less and less of an issue. It's an issue and I don't have a perfect solution for it but what we have tried to do is carve out that last seven days and have the limited entry folks just have those to themselves. As far as opportunity vs. hunt success rates and all that, the statewide committee struggled with this quite a bit and that's where a lot of the stuff in the plan came out where, you know, no more than 65% could go in the early vs. the late. But the committee was not willing, and most of those were sportsmen reps, SFW was represented, were not willing to put more of the permits into more restrictive weapon types nor were they willing to cut opportunity for rifle hunters by much just because they felt so many hunters have been putting in for so long for these units that if you cut permits you're going to lower their success rates of drawing by a whole lot. All of this was bore out through the committee process and we feel it was a good balance. If down the road we want to change it, there's certainly, you know, right now we're not recommending any change, we feel the statewide plan tries to balance all those that do want to hunt, you know,

opportunity and.... Sure if you have more in archery you're gonna probably be able to issue more permits but there wasn't the willingness in the committee to put more permits into archery. I hear that again and again, most hunters are rifle hunters, let's be honest. If you put more permits in archery you're really penalizing the rifle hunters. And as far as moving the rifle hunts out of the rut, again that wasn't very palatable to those that were on the committee either just because most of them that have been putting in are putting in for a rut hunt with a rifle. So it just becomes like a bait and switch where you have all these great bulls out there then you tell them "oh, by the way, you can't hunt them in the rut anymore even though you've been putting in for 15 years." So that was the discussions that took place at the committee meeting and that's how we came up with the compromise that we have now.

Teresa Griffin: And to add to that a little bit, within the Southern Region, Todd, the biologists do have the flexibility to make adjustments a little bit between early and late and in our region we go from 65 down to, I think, 40. So the biologists do have that flexibility to move that. So it's really across the board on every unit. If you wanted to look at it more in detail you could get with me.

Rex Stanworth: I'd like to make one comment about what Anis just said on that elk committee, Todd, basically Sportsmen for Wildlife was the one that forced that issue. I was one that did not vote for that. As Anis will tell you I dug my heels in the ground. If we would have gone to taking that elk hunt out of the rut we could have issued probably more permits, more opportunity. We probably would have been able to save some big bulls. But unfortunately that was not what they wanted and there were too many votes there that went that way. So I will tell you, and this is telling the truth, it did not bide well with all of them.

Steve Flinders: Other questions from the public?

Brayden Richmond: Question on the tooth data that we're collecting. Why is it that we combine the CWMU tooth data with the limited entry tooth data? Where CWMUs are typically managing for an older bull to help their unit, just wondering why we're combining that tooth data and putting that data for the whole unit.

Anis Aoude: Okay, yeah, because the CWMUs fall within that unit so the bulls that are harvested on those CWMUs are falling within the unit. There's not very many units that actually have CWMUs that are limited entry. The majority of the CWMUs are in the northern part of the state, very few CWMUs are within limited entry units. We feel that, as you know, if an elk is within the unit it's within that population so that's why we use all data from that unit.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? Yes sir.

David Brinkerhoff Henry Mtn Grazers Assoc.: My question is on the bison, they've talked about four conservation permits, how are they sold? Are they auctioned off? Are all of those conservation permits on the Henty Mtns.?

Anis Aoude: Yes, that's the only unit where we have bison.

David Brinkerhoff: I was wondering about the Antelope Island?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, Antelope Island is State Parks and it's a captive herd, it's not a wild, free ranging

herd. Even though we do put those in our proclamation to sell the permits, they're not considered a Division of Wildlife resource because they're basically a captive herd they're basically under the Department of Agriculture, that's why they can round them up every year and sell off the surplus. The only hunt that we currently have where we hunt free ranging bison is on the Henry Mtns. And that's the only permits where The Division of Wildlife has the authority.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? Yes Sir.

Lee Tracy: If the deer permits were reduced in some regions why weren't they reduced in all of the regions to prepare those other regions for the cuts next year?

Anis Aoude: If you saw that when I put up buck doe ratios by region, the regions that we didn't cut are already almost at 18 so there really isn't a need for a cut this year. We could probably smooth out without having to do very many cuts. So, the only regions that had a sharp decline in buck doe ratios were the three that we're cutting. And it's not just looking at the three year average, it's looking at a trend where we had two years going good then it dropped. And we want to make sure we're not over-harvesting them again and then having to cut way more permits in 2012 to bring it back up to 18. So the other two regions where we did not recommend a cut they're almost, they're between 17 and 18 on a region-wide basis.

Steve Flinders: Any other questions? Move on to comments.

Comments from the public:

Steve Flinders: Mary do you want to comment on this agenda item or do you want to talk about antlerless permit numbers? Probably the next agenda item then. Brayden Richmond followed by Brian Johnson.

Brayden Richmond, SFW Board: We just had a couple things we wanted to present and get the RAC to look at. First we want to support The Divisions numbers on the deer, next year we're going to make enough changes we didn't want to rattle that cage this year. And they look pretty good to us. On the spike elk permits, raising those to 15000, we'd like to ask that those remain the same. We just feel like we're killing our bulls before they have a chance to grow up so we want to keep that number at the current number and not raise that up to 15000. And then the last one is on the tooth data we'd like to see The Division separate that and on limited entry units use only the tooth data collected on the limited entry unit and not combine it with the tooth data of the CWMUs since those are managed differently. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Rex?

Rex Stanworth: Could I ask Brayden one question? Brayden, one of the problems that we've run into is a lot of people want to keep the big bulls. And the only way we can keep a large number of big bulls, which seems to be the priority of a lot of groups, is that we gotta kill cows, so now we have a lot of bulls, we don't have too many cows. The issue that I would ask you, would you rather have a cow that can produce another bull or would you rather have a cow killed instead of a spike bull?

Brayden Richmond: Let me be careful how I answer this because I'm representing SFW right now. I

think what we would like to see is, as the SFW board, we would like to see more bull hunts moved out of the rut so that we can increase numbers on those bull hunts and increase harvest over a wider spectrum of bulls. We'd rather harvest mature bulls than spikes. We understand you have to kill elk, there's no doubt about that.

Rex Stanworth: As a committee member I only voted to have the statewide spike hunt simply because 15000 cows were spared. And I've told Don this when we were in our committee meetings. No matter what anybody believes there's two facts. Number 1, you cannot bank big bulls in the wild because they die. And the second thing is that no matter how hard he tries he's not going to get a bull that produces a calf. So that was the only reason that I personally voted for that was because is saved a cow.

Brayden Richmond: Now, once again, let me just make a point clear here. You said that Don said this. Like me, I have my own opinions, Don has his own opinions, what I'm doing today is representing the SWF Board, we speak collectively as a group. So Don's opinion's does not necessarily reflect the board's opinions when you're talking to him personal, on a personal level. Now, having said that, that's why we feel if we got the rifle hunt out of the rut we could increase tags on mature bulls and I think that's the answer to that.

Rex Stanworth: There you go Anis. That was the one thing we struggled with and we could not get past. So there you go. Thank you, appreciate you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks guys, moving on to Brian Johnson followed by Richard Rollins.

Brian Johnson, Utah Bowman's Assoc: We think you guys have done a great job as far as The Division goes collecting the data and we as Utah Bowman's support the numbers that you've come up with and support the objective and everything you're doing so far, so we support the numbers. Thanks.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Brian. Richard Rollins, followed by Donnie Hunter.

Richard Rollins: I wanted to talk about the transplanting of deer instead of killing does, maybe I'll make another comment after you do that.

Steve Flinders: Do you want to talk about this on next agenda item when we're talking about antlerless deer? Does this deal with antlerless deer and moving them?

Richard Rollins: I'd rather move the deer than kill them, the does, and was involved in it in the late 80's. It seemed to work pretty good. We moved about 400 from the Beaver face here...

Steve Flinders: Do you mind if we hold these comments to the next agenda item? We'll talk about antlerless deer? I think it'll be more appropriate. Thank you. Donnie.

Donnie Hunter, SFW: Appreciate the opportunity to speak with you people today. First of all we'd like to concur with The Division's recommendation on the general season deer tags, the reduction of 5000 we think that's reasonable. And then, on the spike elk tags, we'd like to see that stay as it was last year, the 13750. And then on the limited entry permit recommendations, we'd like to concur with The Division on those except for the Fishlake, the Wasatch, and the Manti: we'd like to see those numbers stay the same as they were last year. On the, yeah, the Fishlake, the Manti, and the Wasatch we'd like to

see the permit numbers stay the same. We're also interested in this CWMU data on the teeth. We'd like that taken out so that we just check the limited entry teeth data alone. We don't feel like that's a fair shake. One other quick thing on the, we're interested in some mandatory reporting of our hunters each year on all of our limited entry hunts. We'd like to see something put on the internet so that when you apply for that permit in January, there'll be about 10 questions that you have to answer about how your hunt was last year. In fact, we need to do it on not just limited entry on all of our hunts so that we get a general idea of how the public perceives our hunting. And sometimes you say we don't get good true information but I think if we get it from everybody you'll get enough idea to give you some good information on what we need to do to manage our animals. The sportsmen are out in the field and they're interested in having the best hunt they can and if we're reporting back to you what we see then I think that's good information that we can use for the next year.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Donnie. Todd Abelhouzen followed by Wade Heaton.

Todd Abelhouzen, SFW: Concerning the way we're hunting these bulls, and the way we're growing our herds. I really like what Rex had to say about these females in our herds are the ones that are absolutely producing and carrying on the off-spring. But we also have genetics that help to establish the quality of our trophies and the quality of our opportunity from a trophy hunting standpoint. And it comes down to economics as well. Because sportsmen's groups utilize quality to generate income through the conservation permit programs and if our quality's in the tank but we have great numbers then everybody's happy but we don't have any money to do any projects. So my feeling is that we need to do a better job on putting together a management hunt. Coming home from my hunt on September 13, 2011 I called Doug and I said, "Wow, I saw a lot of five point bulls out there on Indian Peaks, what can we do about it?" And he said, "Well, it's hard to get hunters that draw a tag that wait 12 years to shoot a 5-point bull." So we tried to do something and it might have been successful, it might not have been. I think that getting the outfitters involved on a unit, because they know a lot of times where those big mature 5-point bulls are, could help out that management program with a management bull hunt. I also think that we're killing spikes with the understanding that spikes need to be killed to keep the herd, the bull to cow ratios correct. I don't think it's as necessary to kill them during the limited entry hunts. If you need to kill them, kill them in December when you have cow hunts, they're running with the cows anyways. I just think that we're focusing so hard on opportunity, but having those limited entry hunters in there tripping over spike hunters on the archery, I'm not sure, I think the muzzleloader is later, I'm not sure how the dates work. I just really feel like you're having a problem because you got a lot of guys out that are party hunting and camp hunting with guys that are out there that have been putting in for 10 years, 12 years, 15 years to draw a tag. And we are trying to help the archery hunters, they're part of our dynamic, they're part of our group, they're sportsmen, they're not our enemy. I liken it to raising a basketball team. If you're not recruiting freshmans they'll never gonna turn into seniors. And if you're sending all your seniors off to college before they become seniors you're never gonna have a basketball team that's gonna win championship, on a high school or college level. So to me you've got to move some of those rifle hunts out of the rut to allow some of those big bulls that show up during that 15 days or 12 days or eight days, whenever it is they show up and they get shot from 700 yards across the canyon. We need to do something to maintain that because that's gonna allow our genetics to be there to breed our cows which is gonna in turn raise us calves that have quality genetics. It's the same thing when you're raising pure-bred black angus, you want your herd bull breeding your cows. You don't want the 3-legged dwarf that got born because it was cross-bred, you don't want him breeding your cows. So that's as explicit as I can make it without saying "breeding" too many more times. Thanks.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Todd. Wade followed by Verland King.

Wade Heaton, Friends of the Paunsaugunt: I realize that we're talking about the Paunsaugunt, a small portion of what you're dealing with tonight. But I did want to make a few comments. We had a Friends of the Paunsaugunt meeting last week. We had Dustin there and talked about some of the issues that are gonna effect the Paunsaugunt. For the first time in my short memory, as far back as I can remember, we all agreed, we were all kind of on the same page, it was quite refreshing. In 2010 the Paunsaugunt had, in my opinion one of the best years we've had in nine or 10 years, from the standpoint of the quality of bucks, the top-end bucks. Which is what a lot of people are caring about on premium limited entry units. And so we're pretty excited, we're pretty optimistic, we're happy. The management hunt seems to be doing what its goal was, what it was intended to do. The age class of the bucks and the quality of the bucks continues to progress. We haven't seen huge leaps, but gradual progression. So we're all pretty excited about that. Dustin Schaible, our biologist seems like he's really put in a lot of effort to fine-tune and make the models that he's using more accurate. We think he's doing an awesome job, we think he's a rock star. He's really done a lot of good things and spent a lot of time, we sure appreciate it. We do support all the recommendations that The Division set forth for the Paunsaugunt limited entry unit on the trophy and the management side.

Rex Stanworth: You didn't make any comments on the elk Wade.

Wade Heaton: We're getting to that.

Steve Flinders: Verland

Verland King, Henry Mtn Grazers Assoc.: I just wanted to put in a plug for the bison study that's going on now. I want you guys to know it's put everything pretty much on hold what we used to fight about in this bison meeting. We're waiting to find out some real data on mortality and on sightability. We're real excited about the study. I appreciate everyone that's worked to get this on the ground to get it going. They've collared close to 60 buffalo and they're getting some really good data, something that's really been needed on this herd on the Henry Mtns. I think it'll open their eyes. So I just want to make that comment that right now we're happy to set back and wait for some scientific data. It'll help us in the decisions that are made on that herd as far as the numbers that are truly down there and why in the past the models haven't been working. I think we're gonna find out. Also, the other comment I want to make is on these conservation permits. I've looked through the data here and I can't find them written here. Even though in our bison committee we're told a certain number are gonna be hunted. Are those four that aren't hunted or however many elk, deer? I hope they're not a secret or something the public ought to be able to know how many. To me, it irritates me because if I'm putting in for a hunt and they're gonna let out 24 tags, four of those are taken out of the pool that I could draw out of. So even though they're being sold for big money, to me that's my money. I'm donating as much as anybody else in the state of Utah. So, I think they should be listed here so we can see how many there are and they shouldn't maybe not be a secret. Maybe it ought to be published how much they make so I might feel better, and maybe how that money is spent, I'd feel a lot better about that. So anyway that's my comment. Thanks.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Verland. Hope we get to see some of that data ourselves here in the future, that should be interesting. Are those all GPS collars? How many GPS collars? 40?

Anis Aoude: 40 GPS collars, 45. The rest are VHF collars. Some have both so when the GPS collars fall off we'll still track them for survival.

Steve Flinders: That'll be a neat data set. Well our turn for comments and was going to follow some questions. Yeah, Anis.

Anis Aoude: One thing I wanted to clarify, there was a lot of comment about CWMU vs non-CWMU. Kent ran the data pretty quick and basically what it came out to is about one tenth of the year is the only difference. So it's six and a half for the CWMU bulls harvested and 6.4 years old for the non-CWMU. So when you look at on a unit by unit basis there's so few permits that are in the CWMU, the permits on the unit actually outweigh them when you do averages like that. So I think some people are overstating the importance of that age data. It's not that much higher.

Steve Flinders: Don't the cwmus have to have management plans with age objectives? And they can be more restrictive than the unit but not less.

Anis Aoude: Right, exactly. And some of them are more restrictive but over-all if you have a certain amount of bulls on a unit you're going to harvest fairly similar on the CWMUs as you do otherwise. I just want to shed light on that. It's not something I anticipated questions on.

Steve Flinders: I want to make sure I got everybody's comments for this agenda item. We've got a number for antlerless that we assume you want to discuss antlerless harvest and things like that. Did we miss any body? Comment card? Sure, hand us your card. We missed one? Is it the one in your hand?

David Brinkerhoff Henry Mtn. Grazers: I too feel a lot like Verland, I'm glad we have this study in place to see exactly what is taking place down there. The problem I think where we get in trouble is here we've got 46 calves we've counted in 2010, we're only gonna kill 24. And in the past, in a lot of our opinions, that's where we've been getting in trouble. If you've got that many calves coming into the herd it's definitely going to grow by that much. The sightability has been a main issue that we've argued over in the past and I think these collars are going to open up the movement of those buffalo and where they're at. We've had a lot of problems in the past thinking we've missed different bunches of buffalo. And this study is going to help a lot on that I think. I think it's something that's really great and I'd like to commend those that put forth the money and the effort to help see this project through. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you David. That should conclude all the comment cards. Anis, you want to follow up.

Anis Aoude: Just one thing on conservation permits, the reason we don't talk about them here is they're set in their own meeting. And those do come in front of the RACs and Board. They are approved by the RACs and Board. So those permits are very clearly, we're not hiding them and we subtract them from the number that goes out in the drawing. That's why you only see those here. So there is a RAC specifically for setting conservation permit numbers. And those are basically, they can't exceed eight on any unit, and usually they are about 5% and can't exceed eight permits. So, even though like on the unit that has four or five hundred permits you can only have 8, so on elk units and things like that. The reason why they're high on the bison is because they were set in a time when the population was, we were doing a lot of control. I imagine the next three year rotation will probably reduce the conservation permits on that unit. Just to clarify that as well.

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Steve Flinders: While you're up Anis. Before we deliberate this up here, we've had some discussion about lack of support here to increase the number of spike bull tags. Will you tell us again the success rate of that spike bull hunt and maybe more importantly, what proportion of those bulls are recruited into the older age classes.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, basically the way that was set in the statewide plan is a lot of the committee members felt uncomfortable if we're killing more than 20% of that 15000 that more spikes would be killed than they could palate. They said if it stays below 20% we could basically go to that 15000. So basically, you're not gonna kill a whole lot of bulls if you have an 18% success rate hunting 15000. So you're basically on most units are recruiting 40 to 50% of those yearlings into the older age classes. I know there was some research initially when we were doing spike hunting that showed a higher harvest but that doesn't seem to bear true when you look at it overall. So even though we are harvesting spikes a lot of them and most of them are ones that are branch antlered are making it from the yearling class to the two-year old class. So we really have been doing this on units, big units, like the Manti and the Wasatch for over 10 years now and we haven't depleted the large bull populations. We're still killing seven year old bulls on the Wasatch and almost seven year old bulls on the Manti while having a pretty high spike harvest. I think the statewide plan is sound, I think we should follow it and go to that 15000. I see why people want to hold it there but, think about it, that additional is probably gonna kill maybe a couple hundred more spikes statewide. It's not that big of an issue.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Anis. Any other comments and discussion by the RAC? We've heard several comments from the public. Go ahead Mack.

Mack Morrell: My question, I have two questions. One when you collared the buffalo did you take just what was easiest available or did you try and get all these satellite groups all over the mountain?

Anis Aoude: Basically we tried to split up the mountain and ask them to go to all the areas where they're likely to see bison. So yeah, they were spread out. We even tried to collar some on the north end where there are very few animals. I think they got a couple up there but yeah, they tried to spread it out along the whole mountain.

Mack Morrell: Okay, my next question is if one of these collared bison are killed are you going to put that collar on another bison or what's the policy?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, we likely will. We put it in our guidebook to try to keep people from shooting collared animals. But if an animal that's collared does get killed we will, depending on how long life is left on the collar we'll put it back on another bison. Like the GPS collars are only good for two year. So those if there's only six months left it really does no good to get a new bison, put it on a new bison cause you're only gonna get six months of data and it's gonna confound the data that you got from that first bison. But the other, the VHF collars, the regular radio collars are, I think, 10 year collars so those we will definitely put on another bison.

Mack Morrell: But you're going to continue to try and keep 60 bison collared?

Anis Aoude: Not indefinitely. We'll probably have about 50 collared throughout the 10 year period.

Steve Flinders: Other follow-up questions or comments? Sure Rex.

Rex Stanworth: Anis, last year I was one of them damn spike hunters that went out on the Southwest Desert, and lots of elk, I've never seen that many elk. When we were there I believe the limited entry was over with. Most of the bulls that were there that were five point or better they'd all broke their horns. I only saw in the whole time I was there I think three big bulls that hadn't broke one antler off or both. I was told by a gentleman out of Minersville that he had folks show up at his home during the late hunt that asked him if they had any clue where they could go and find a bull that had an antler 'cause everything was broke off. That tells me that we may have too many big bulls fighting over what few cows there are out there. I'm actually surprised, I didn't see Mr. Yardley come in and I didn't him come up to the pulpit and speak but I guess that's why I was shocked with bringing down the number simply because I've never seen that many elk and I've never seen that many five point or better bulls.

Anis Aoude: I can speak to the breakage but I'll have Teresa speak to why they reduced the permits. The breakage does happen and it sometimes it happens not because there are too many bulls, some years the forage quality is such that antlers are more brittle than other years. So you do see breakage more on some years than others. And yeah if you have a high bull to cow ratio you're going to see more breakage it's just because they're fighting more for the females that are there. But as far as the permit numbers I'll have Teresa come up and address that.

Teresa Griffin: Last year we did do quite a big increase on the Southwest Desert that unit, the average age of harvest did take a pretty good dip so we wanted to slightly go down and level off a little bit so as those cohorts come up we don't want to dip far below the age objective so we wanted to decrease it a little bit. Does that about sum it up Jason?

Jason Nicholes: Just to tell you in 2009 we had around 90 permits and we increased to like 149 in one year. Almost a 50 plus permit increase, that resulted in bringing the average age from about 8.2 down to 7.2, pretty big drop in one year and the objective's 6.75 so as we approach that we want to level it out especially with the increased bull harvest in spikes.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Rex. Other discussion? We want to come towards a motion with any of the recommendations or recommended changes? We've heard about mandatory reporting with limited entry hunters and general season hunters. Sure Rex.

Rex Stanworth: Let me see if I can summarize what we've heard here, see if we can put this in perspective. There was those folks who were hoping that we would go back to 13750 elk tags from 15000. But obviously with less than 20% for every 10 spikes only two are being killed, less than two are being killed. So that gives us a pretty good feed into the herd. I like the idea of a, and I've told many people that complain about the family deer hunt is gone. I tell them, "Good, go take a family elk hunt." The other one that I heard was about the teeth from the CWMUs to the limited entry all being pulled into one. But, Anis I think has pretty much squashed that one in my mind because there's not really that many elk teeth that are being put in it. And two-tenths of one point isn't gonna make or break the hunts. I hate to tell you I don't like the idea of losing deer tags but I understand we're gonna have to get there in order for this deer herd to come back. So while I'm not one that really likes that idea, I guess I'm probably gonna make a motion that we accept the permit recommendations for 2011 bucks and bulls as

presented.

Steve: Motion by Rex. Seconded by Paul. Any discussion on the motion? Sure Mack.

Mack Morrell: I've got a question on the bighorn sheep. We've got a herd, Jim knows, above Bicknell there. It's been there for a long time and they've been trying to get a resolution to take them off or whatever but I would think that we ought to pursue that and take care of it rather than just let it drag on and drag on and drag on. I know Jim's made another third recommendation so we oughtta just keep after it until we get it resolved.

Steve Flinders: Motion on the table. Go ahead Layne.

Layne Torgerson: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to amend motion. I'd like to amend the motion to, as was stated earlier in one of the comments, to leave the limited entry bull permits on the Fishlake, the Manti and the Wasatch as they were in 2010.

Steve Flinders: Any second on the amendment? Amendment seconded by Steve Dalton.

Rex Stanworth: Layne, you're talking about the Fishlake, the Wasatch, and the Manti?

Steve F: 2010 limited entry elk permit levels.

Rex: Go back to 2010, K. I will accept that amendment if everybody will vote for it.

Steve: Everybody understand the motion on the table as well as the amendment? How 'bout the recorders? Let's vote on them. Further discussion about the comments?

Rex Stanworth: I think Clair had a comment.

Steve Flinders: You okay Clair?

Rex Stanworth: So we're just voting on the amendment?

Steve Flinders: So let's vote on amendment first. Any discussion on the amendment? Let's vote on that one. Those in favor? See the hands. Those against? Amendment passes. Get that vote okay? Let's vote on the...

Layne Torgerson asked to amend the motion below to leave the limited entry bull elk permit numbers for the Fishlake, Manti, and Wasatch units at the same level as 2010. Amendment seconded by Steve Dalton. Amendment to motion carried six in favor, two opposed (Mack Morrell and Dale Bagley opposed).

Rex Stanworth: Now Clair had a discussion on the main motion.

Steve Flinders: Let's go Clair.

Clair Woodbury: You can't get through without me saying at least one thing, Steve.

Steve Flinders: I'm glad you made the drive.

Clair Woodbury: I would like to, like Rex, compliment The Division on their proposals this year, a lot less discussion and controversy. When I first saw the 2000 reduction in deer I kind of did a double take. As you know I represent the general public. The rationale, the first rationale was well we need to ease into next year and I don't buy that for a second. The real rationale is we did take a hit in those yearlings last year and we saw that in the deer count that we did this winter, so I can support that whole-heartedly. And also on the spike elk, it's a great hunt. While we're waiting to draw that elusive limited entry, the spike hunt is a great hunt. We have just under 3000 limited entry bull tags, we have 15000, five times as many, people can hunt a spike and not have any detrimental effects on the overall elk herd. In fact, it is a help. And that's all I had.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Clair, great comments. So back to the original motion on the table which is the balance of the proposal from The Division. If there's no further comments I'm ready to call for a vote? Those in favor? Well, that looks unanimous. Good job Anis. Do we need a break before the antlerless? Let's take a 10 minute break. Thank you.

Rex Stanworth made the motion to accept the Bucks Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2011 as presented. Seconded by Paul Briggs. Motion carried unanimously.

Steve Flinders: Are we ready to get this moving? Moving on to agenda item number 6, antlerless permit recommendations. Anis, you're up again. Can we get folks to sit down and get their attention to the screen?

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2011 (action)

-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

-Teresa Griffin, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

(see attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Rex Stanworth: I was just going to ask you, Sam's not here to defend himself but Sam's been adamant on the Paunsaugunt that they want zero elk there and I noticed that we don't have any zero elk for the Paunsaugunt.

Anis Aoude: That's not what the unit plan says the Paunsaugunt. Unless that changes you won't see it up there. If the new unit plan that comes about when the committee meets comes out with zero elk objective then you'll see it the following year. So as of now, we still in our unit plan for the Paunsaugunt have an objective for 200 or 150 elk or something like that. So yeah, the unit plan has to change for us to use this tool.

Mack Morrell: I have a question Anis, if you don't want any elk on these units why don't you just open it up to buy cow permits? Instead of issuing for the ones that have bull permits can buy cow. Why don't you just open it up for everybody to buy a cow permit?

Anis Aoude: The reason why we don't do that is both of these, some of these have issues with crowding

so we're trying to keep, there's very few elk so if you saw a lot of cow permits you're gonna have a lot of unhappy hunters. So what we're trying to do is target those elk with people that are already out there hunting whatever species they're hunting on those units. The bottom three are private land so you can sell a thousand permits and you'll never get access on it. So we're trying to target those folks that are already out there hunting. We do actually have permits in addition to these on those units but they have very low success rates just because of access and the numbers of elk so it's a two-pronged approach. We're doing both. We're putting permits on them. All these have permits in the draw as well. And we're giving the opportunity for those that are already out there hunting an antlered animal can shoot a cow as well. Yeah, we could just open it over the counter but it's basically on some of these units like selling a white elephant. You're not going to go out there and find an elk. So to sell a bunch of permits you'll just have a lot of unhappy people. A lot of times what people feel when you put a lot of permits out there is there's a lot of elk there but the opposite is true on these units or the ones up on the top. There's very few elk there so we're trying, as much as possible, to take them when people are already out there hunting. Does that make sense?

Mack Morrell: Yeah, but on this current process how many years will it take to reduce the elk to zero on these units?

Anis Aoude: Well, there's very few animals there already. The Henry Mtns there's probably 20 to 40 elk there.

Steve Flinders: You'll probably never get to zero. Good questions and discussion but, Anis, do you want to finish up this questions then let's let you get to your presentation. You guys just jot down your questions.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Mack, do you want to follow up with that discussion? Did you get your questions answered on that?

Mack Morrell: What's the objective Steve?

Steve Flinders: The point being that you send a bunch of people out there who don't know the area and they trip on other hunters.

Anis Aoude: And most of these units, as you know, are out there a ways for people to get there and not find any elk is a bad situation.

Steve Flinders: But a buffalo hunter on the Henries who sees a cow elk and has a permit in his pocket is a good situation.

Mack Morrell: What I'm saying though is where you're at zero and some of these elk are coming from the Boulder and winter down in the desert and just continue on to the Henry Mtn. They're migrating.

Anis Aoude: Right, I understand that, that's why we're trying to kill as many as we can there we've tried every approach. The thing is, as I mentioned, if you just flood with permits you're gonna have a lot of unhappy hunters that aren't going to find any elk.

Steve Flinders: If you sell a guy a cow tag on the Henries he's libel to come in and ask for a camel tag.

Anis Aoude: And we do have a hunt there, I think there's about 40 permits that they sell for people who want to buy them and know where to find the elk.

Rex Stanworth: On southwest desert, it's saying that you're giving 25 antlerless deer. Is that close to Milford or is that in the farms?

Anis Aoude: Jason says yes. That's basically to deal with depredation.

Teresa Griffin: And it's actually the Garrison hunt. And it deals with depredation issues, getting into fields there around Garrison.

Rex Stanworth: Now a couple years ago I had a gentleman that come in from Garrison that said there was somebody out there guiding and they were shooting a lot of does and fawns and they were only taking a little bit of the meat, throwing the rest of it into the dumpster there. So I'll keep my eyes and ears open on that but that's what I was told.

Doug Messerly: Rex, I'm familiar with that situation. The situation is that Spruce Lake and the Big Spring country that goes right up to the Nevada line is where we're talking about. That's where the depredation is occurring. This outfitter is actually guiding in Nevada on the other side. The deer come down off of Wheeler Peak and into those fields. We try to control them when they're on the Utah side of the line and Nevada tries to control them when they're on the other side of the line. We did pass that report on to the Nevada fish and game but I don't know what the outcome was.

Rex Stanworth: Okay, awesome. If that's where it's at I don't have a problem.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Doug. Other questions from the RAC? Sure Dell.

Dell LeFevre: You're going to have 630 antlerless permits on the Boulder Plateau?

Anis Aoude: Yep, that's what it says.

Teresa Griffin: That's correct but on the last page of the antlerless recommendation it is broken into five hunts. We've got two for the Boulder unit wide.

Dell LeFevre: How many permits?

Teresa Griffin: The first one we have 200, the second one we've got 300. We've got one specifically for the circle cliffs, and two different ones for the Salt Gulch area.

Dell LeFevre: Okay, you know we're overrun with elk, and you talked about your deer I think you're going to have to quit shooting your depredation deer. They're taking advantage of you. Those guys broke them fields up into little 20 acres. They're screaming but they're not making a living off them. You're fawns now are being born in the middle of summer. We've got spotted fawns in October and just since the last two or three years. I think the elk are just pushing the deer. Right now you can count your deer 'cause they're all right there in the fields. You don't see any deer outside the fields. I've got the elk right now and the deer are being pushed off. Hell just shoot the whole herd and do away with it.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? That's all the questions from the RAC? Questions from the public? Sure guys. First come first serve.

Questions from the public:

Lee Tracy: I actually have four questions, one of them is: are we going to continue the additional opportunity during the archery season and the rifle season with the elk with the antlerless hunt? Right now if I buy an antlerless deer or elk tag and I happen to draw one of those antlerless tags I can hunt that antlerless tag during the regular archery season. Is that going to continue?

Anis Aoude: yeah, there's no recommended change to that.

Steve Flinders: Not the rifle, just muzzleloader and archer right?

Anis Aoude: Last year we made it all weapon types can hunt. If they have like a late season tag they can hunt it during their general season rifle if they choose.

Lee Tracy: Okay, I have three questions on the antlerless elk control tags. Number one: are these antlerless elk control permits in addition to the two elk permit limit? In other words could I get three elk?

Anis Aoude: No. You can only take two elk. If you have an elk tag you can buy a cow tag and that would be your two elk.

Lee Tracy: What are the seasons for these permits?

Anis Aoude: They coincide with the season that you have with the antlered animal so if you have a general deer tag that would be during the general deer season.

Lee Tracy: Okay and you mentioned antlered animals, does that include OIAL?

Anis Aoude: Yes, it does, both antlered and OIAL species.

Lee Tracy: What about pronghorn? They're not antlered.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, pronghorn as well I guess, any male of the species. Bison are once in a lifetimes.

Todd Abelhouzen: I just got confused. Mainly a question for The Division and the RACs as we move forward into 2011 and 12 we have another competitor that's moved into our wildlife world and that's the antlerless wolf. There's some things happening with that I just wanted to find out what exactly The Division is doing in recommendation to prepare for that? Because they are going to have an effect on our over-all herds starting in northern Utah and as they move south. And they're already moving south. I'm unsure of the exact numbers. Are we concerned as The Division of Wildlife, are we forecasting our concern into our management plan? Are we looking at some of the things that are going on with wolves along the Idaho Wyoming corridors and beyond?

Anis Aoude: Utah currently does have a wolf management plan so when and if they become delisted in the whole State of Utah that plan will go into effect. If they become delisted only in part of the State of Utah the legislature has basically said the plan is not to manage for any wolves in Utah. Until the whole state becomes delisted we're managing for no wolves in the state. Having said that, because they're not delisted right now, we don't have authority to do a whole lot in Utah with wolves. Once they become under our management we do have a plan to move forward.

Todd Abelhouzen: Can I just add to that so everyone understands where I'm going with that? Are you aware that they're looking like they're going to be delisted in the next few days from a portion of Utah, Idaho and Montana?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, that's where the problem comes in is it's a very small part of Utah. And basically, if that's the case, if they're not delisted in the entire state, basically we're managing for zero in that small area. But if the whole state becomes delisted then our management plan will kick in. I am aware that they may become delisted. But they've been listed and delisted so many times I've lost track now so I guess I'm not holding my breath one way or the other.

Steve Flinders: Is that line still I 70?

Anis Aoude: No, that's still in flux right now. No the line where it gets delisted is basically down I 15 to 89, to I 80 yeah, 84 I'm sorry to I 80. So basically, Rich, Cash, Morgan, Summit, just those counties would be involved. So the Uintahs would not be included.

Steve Flinders: Probably enough time spent on something that's not on our agenda.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, and we have not documented any breeding pairs. Wolves are very vocal when they start breeding. So we have had transients come through the state but as of now we don't have any resident wolves in Utah.

Steve Flinders: Other questions from the public about antlerless ungulates.

David Brinkerhoff HMG: My question is, if we're looking for zero tolerance for elk on the Henry Mtns, how come we're not issuing any tags for bulls? That would solve it. Maybe I missed it somewhere.

Anis Aoude: The Henry Mtn. is an any bull unit so anybody who buys an any bull tag can go and shoot a bull there. Yeah, they can hunt them during any bull season. They can hunt them during the any bull season so you can buy those over the counter right now, an any bull tag, and go hunt it during the season. They can get a bull and a cow tag.

Steve Flinders: Other questions from the public.

Lee Tracy: That reminded me, archery hunters can take either sex. Is that still en vogue? Archery elk hunters can take either sex.

Anis Aoude: That's correct.

Lee Tracy: Is that part or has that been considered in the antlerless plan?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, that's still true. There are some exceptions to that. Units that are below 75% of objective are not allowed to take those. And those units are the Bookcliffs, the Paunsaugunt, there's another one I don't remember but there's three units that will be in the proclamation that you can't take a cow but everywhere else you can take a cow during your archery hunt.

Steve Flinders: Any other questions from the public? We ready to move into comment period? Layne, go ahead.

Layne Torgerson: Anis, on the Monroe antlerless deer tags that you've recommended, you've recommended 100, I'm sure they're Sevier Valley tags as has been in the past. Isn't there a provision in there that The Division can issue depredation tags if there is a problem rather than just throwing 100 tags at them and saying go kill them in Sevier Valley?

Anis Aoude: I'll let Teresa answer that but I think we do both.

Teresa Griffin: Yeah, last year on page two of your handout we actually issued 135 mitigation tags to try to take care of some of those issues. Vance do you have anything else to add? So we continue to work with the landowners to try to get that but there are so many living down there in the river bottoms and you're familiar with that situation.

Layne Torgerson: Yeah, I am familiar but what I'm seeing and the comments that I'm getting from the sportsmen there in the valley that are coming to me are saying that we've got those valley deer kinda under control now with the exception of just a few separate areas. They're not seeing the numbers that they were seeing even in the Wildlife Management Area in Annabella or the north end of the valley like around Redmond Lake and those places they're not seeing the numbers of deer we were seeing. But they're hitting like south of Monroe and there's some specific areas that need some attention to them.

Vance Mumford: Yeah, we have seen a reduction in the over-all numbers in the valley and on the mountain and that's why we recommended to go from normal 300 permits to 100 permits. Keep in mind it's a really long valley it goes all the way north of Redmond to south of Monroe. Even though we've reduced the permits we still want to issue enough that we keep on top of the herd to keep it from growing and just increasing those, you know, letting the population increase.

Steve Flinders: Seeing no more questions we'll go on to the comment period. John Keeler followed by Mary O'Brien

Comments from the public:

John Keeler, Utah Farm Bureau (see attachment 2): We support the recommendations for increases on the elk numbers. On the Beaver the Farm Bureau and Mary will be talking probably about this also of the Grand Canyon Trust, we're co-chairs of a collaborative group that looked at several issues. One of those issues that came up as we went through this collaborative effort for two years was that there was a lot of grazing pressure on aspen regeneration. The permittees took significant reductions on the Pine Creek and Ten Mile allotments so it was our position that we would recommend that there not be increases on that Beaver unit. There was a letter prepared two years ago and sent to The Division and I'll make that available to you. We feel like while we're watching this effort on the grazing pressure for

aspen and other species but particularly aspen that we not have increase on the Beaver unit. I'll hand you this letter.

Steve Flinders: Thanks John. Mary O'Brien followed by Allen Rowley.

Mary O'Brien, Grand Cyn Trust: As John mentioned we've worked together it's on now for four years on the Tushar Collaboration Group and have looked really closely at willow and mountain mahogany and aspen and some cottonwood and in some of the places there is pressure on those plants which are pretty key even prior to the cattle coming on and in those allotments as John mentioned there has been a fair amount of reduction of utilization by the livestock both in numbers and the amount of time that they're on the allotment. So it's important to all of us that this proposal to increase the antlerless elk permits to bring it back down to the statewide plan is important to that collaboration. Right now the objective is 1050 it's at 1100 and the proposal is to increase the permits, almost doubling them, this year on antlerless. And that's just real important given the give and take on both livestock and the elk in those two allotments and similar pressures are on a couple of the other allotments that are down lower on both the east and west side of the Tushars.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Mary. Allen followed by Amy Barker

Allen Rowley, USFS (see attachment 3): Good evening, Thanks. I have a letter, Steve already has a copy I'll bring you another copy. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Rather than go through the letter, I'll summarize a couple of key points. Supportive of the Division managing to the existing herd management objectives in terms of following in the plan. We think that's a good stroke of business. We continue to have some sight specific concerns where it appears that elk are having a negative impact on some of the other resources we're managing: aspen on Monroe Mtn, some riparian areas out of Circleville where it looks like we may have some issues. So, as we get a chance to update our herd management plans we'll be happy to work with the Division to look for solution space there. And my last comment is in deference to the really smart folks who built this proposal a back of the envelope calculation on the way here today would indicate we're at the objective in many of the units on the Fishlake and the Dixie National Forest and it would be pretty easy to grow big really fast. So, again deference to the folks who do that calculation, but we're supportive of going forward with managing to the objective.

Steve Flinders: Thanks, Amy followed by Chad Nowers.

Amy Barker, USFS: Just ditto what Allen said.

Steve Flinders: Thanks. Chad followed by Verland King.

Chad Nowers: I would like to address the antlerless plan on the Panguitch Lake unit. I went out on that study and looked at the range and there are several areas getting pretty hammered by deer. Maybe they warrant the 150 antlerless tags on that but... I bitterly oppose killing does anyway when we've got a deer herd that's struggling. If there's any way possible to save those does from dying of lead poisoning, I'd rather transplant them, move them or do something other than just kill them. Maybe high fence 20 from I 15 over would keep part of those deer back on this side where they belong. All those years of hunting in South Creek and Freemont encouraged those deer to blow right through Freemont and go on over into that other winter range. And so they just come down and go straight over there instead of hold in

Freemont and South Creek in that area. If we high fenced 20 over that'll help hold them deer back and take pressure off that unit, 'cause they are getting a lot of pressure there's some areas where that's very very small winter range. If we could hold some of those deer back from migrating that far and hold them over in the Freemont it might encourage them to go over into the Bald Hills where we've done a lot of habitat work on winter range. I'd like you to think about that. We'd like to propose doing a transplant we'll talk about that later.

Steve Flinders. Thanks, Chad. Verland King followed by Lee Tracy.

Verland King, HMGA: We're concerned about the elk herd on the Henries and you've heard some comments. I don't see why on these units where zero elk are planned for why we can't do this program but also instead of just antlerless, any elk for \$25, whether it's a bull or a cow. I think Henry Mtn Grazers would like to make that recommendation to this RAC Board, that something like that be looked at. Thank you.

Steve Flinders. Thanks. Lee Tracy followed by Wade Heaton.

Lee Tracy: You've recommended zero public moose antlerless moose tags. There are 13 of them on CWMUs, six of those are private, seven of those are public. I think you've done a disservice to the general public to put those on the CWMUs when they're located in areas that do have public land. It makes it unavailable to people who do own property in that same area.

Wade Heaton, Friends of the Paunsaugunt: As I mentioned earlier, Dustin has really put in a lot of effort on his modeling and as you look across on the population estimates for the Paunsaugunt for 2010 it came down considerably on the deer. We feel like, and I think rightly so, that this is probably, we didn't lose a lot. On the Paunsaugunt we don't have a lot of winter kill. We think it's probably the modeling and the classification getting a little more accurate. Because of the fact that we're at 4900 now estimated population our objective 5200 The Division has recommended we don't have any doe hunts. Friends of Paunsaugunt, we're obviously gonna be in support of that. We've struggled with some of these doe hunts as it is, not because there aren't habitat issues, simply because there are areas that could handle more deer. We feel like we've done a lot of habitat projects, there has been done, that we can handle just a little bit more. Let me shift to elk, you know I've got to talk about elk, Rex. By the grace of God we had few elk that actually wintered on the Paunsaugunt this year and that made it possible that our winter counts, estimations got remotely close to our objective so it has triggered some antlerless permits, some elk permits for the Paunsaugunt. It's only 15 but we're going to take it and we're going to be very happy. So it's a good start. We do have a lot of the bull tags, there's several bull tags on there now. This is going to be a good start to hunt late, it's when it needs to be. I think it's some pretty wise choices. Friends of Paunsaugunt do want to support both the deer and the elk antlerless recommendations from The Division.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Wade. Donnie Hunter, followed by Richard Rollins.

Donnie Hunter SFW: I want to talk a little bit about the antlerless deer permits. First I'd like to commend Doug and his people for setting up range a little range observation on the Buckhorn Flat. And we need to do more of this. Some sportsmen went out with some biologists and the BLM was involved and we looked at some range that was in pretty tough shape and it opened our eyes to see why we need these antlerless permits in that area. There's some serious damage and it's not gonna get fixed by the

150 permits that they want there this year. It's gonna take a lot of years to build that back up. So we need to work together to do something to help that. They talked about the high fence along 20, I think that's one thing we can look at. I don't mind seeing, there's a lot of people around Cedar, Southern Utah that enjoy shooting antlerless deer, they really do so we probably need to do some of that. But also, we've talked in our SFW meeting the last time, we talked extensively about doing some deer transplants. We're willing to put the money up and work with The Division to do some relocating some of our deer to see if we can make it work. There's some areas that we need some deer. We're willing to help out and there are a lot of guys that want to get in and roll their sleeves up and help with this. We know there's a lot of information out there that says this don't work but we want to have some hands on with sportsmen and we want a chance to see if we could make it work here. And so we're going to ask for a few of those deer to do that. We'd like to do that next fall, late fall. We'd like to work with the Division and get a plan made up to do that. That's my recommendation, thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks.

Richard Rollins: I concur with what he says I think we ought to try some transplants. I've already been involved in one. I think it was in 1988. Brent Farnsworth was involved in it. We moved about 400 deer and it did definitely help the West Desert. They do it in Texas. We've done a little research and I think it can be done. We know it can be done. It's just a matter of people getting together and doing it. I know that sportsmen will help and furnish trailers and whatever you need. That's my comment. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Richard.

Rex Stanworth: I just got the new mule deer foundation magazine. On page, it doesn't tell me the page. It talks about the state of Washington and the Mule Deer Foundation people getting together for mule deer relocation. This is of interest, it says six traps were set on the afternoon of December 7, 2009. By morning four deer had been loaded into a horse trailer for transplant and for release. On December 13 an emancipated and blind in one eye adult female was captured and released. Three days later she was found dead counting as the only mortality of the project. On December 17, so it went from December seven to December 17, all traps were shut down for the holiday season with a total capture and release of 42 deer. And they only had one mortality. So I would sure suggest with SFW and sportsmen I really think we ought to try it. Obviously some of these deer are going to die, I think as Chad said, with lead poisoning. Rather than have them die with lead poisoning I think we oughtta give them a chance and do that transplanting to take some of these problem deer away and put them into some areas where we need them. So I really concur I think that's a great recommendation by these gentlemen.

Steve Flinders: Let's finish public comment then we can discuss this further, Rex. Thank you. Kelly Rollins followed by Brayden Richmond.

Kelly Rollins: Well guys, I'm gonna say about the same thing everyone else said. I'm in support of transplanting, giving it a go and getting it done. Get good records and let's make it work.

Steve Flinders: Thank you Kelly. Brayden followed by Brian Johnson.

Brayden Richmond, SFW: This last week at our SFW board meeting we presented this and discussed at board meeting. Pretty energetic support of this idea of doe transplant. Let me just back up and say how much we appreciate the opportunity we had to go out with The Division and look at these winter ranges.

For the past three years we've killed 150 does between highway 20 and Summit. This year it's planned to kill another 150. That's 600 does we're killing in that area. Our opinion in the past has been why are we doing this we couldn't understand. We thought there was plenty of habitat. This year we learned that there is some depredation there. And that was a good educational experience for us so thank you for that. What we'd like to do though, is we'd like to look at other options. Instead of shooting them, they're going to die if we shoot them, let's try to help. The Board supported, we'd raise the funds for this transplant, we'd buy the collars. We'd do whatever The Division would let us do as far as funding it, that would come out of our pockets. Sportsmen would love to put out man hours, we'll help with it. Most importantly to make this time different than maybe what we had in the past, we'd like to have better monitoring and better statistics of what happens after the fact. In the past we don't think we tracked them real well. We did what we could. We'd like to get some GPS collars on them, some death collars on them and really find out if it's successful or not. If it's not successful we don't want to waste our money either, that's the bottom line. But we want to try. We're tired of shooting them. Now we believe that they do need to be shot so let's take the next step and see what else we can do. We really would like the RAC to support us in this and help us push this forward. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Brayden. Brian followed by Mitch Carter.

Brian Johnson, UBA: As a group, as a bow hunting group, we agree with all of your antlerless tag objectives except that we do support the SFWs idea of trying different means with this particular little deer herd. Coming from a bow hunter I'm all about opportunity so it's a little bit weird for me to say let's not pull the trigger, because I really like to pull the trigger, personally. If we can do this at minimal expense to The Division and have SFW and other supporting groups flip the bill, so to speak, with man hours and everything else. I understand there's definitely going to be costs that happen. We're not dumb when we talk about this. But if we can split those costs with different organizations and give it a shot, what's it hurting. So that's kind of where we're at as an organization. Thank you so much for your time.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Brian. Mitch followed by Lynn Kitchen.

Mitch Carter: Good evening. I just wanted to reiterate what everyone else has said. Thank you for the opportunity for the comment section. Reiterating on the transplant, we're thankful again for the opportunity which we had to do the ride along and see and understand that there is an issue there. Again, to reiterate, to see an effort made to transplant a few of these deer. Like Brayden talked about doing a study on them to actually see if it does work. I don't see where we'd be out much. If they die, they die, they're going to die anyway. It'd be a great opportunity to do a study and then maybe take it to other areas to see if it actually works. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Mitch. Lynn followed by Shawn Limb.

Lynn Kitchen: I'd like to see this proposal, the transplant have an opportunity and see if we can get some people involved and have it be a learning experience, and see what we can do with it. It sounds like there's kind of a new twist to this that maybe it might be more successful than it has been in the past. And some willingness on a number of parts and parties to do it so I'm in support of giving that a try. Thanks.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Shawn's the last card I've got if we've missed anybody.

Shawn Limb, SFW: I got two or three comments. I'd like to support these guys too, I'm the co-chair on SFW Beaver. I think it's a no brainer, SFW is willing to fit the bill. We're willing to fit the man power, the study, the collars. What have we got to lose? Another comment on your questionnaires too, do what Nevada does, if you don't send in your questionnaire on your hunt you can't apply the next year. That's a no brainer to me. If you want 100% return, if you want to hunt you're going to return your card. Then the third one, on Indian peaks, if bulls are breaking their horns and there's so many bulls and very few cows, what are we still killing 150 cows for. We don't want to see another Panguitch Lake, they've pretty much hammered the cows on Panguitch Lake. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Shawn. Todd Abelhouzen

Todd Abelhouzen, SFW: I filled out another card in case you need it. I think the real key here is deer population increase. Anis talked about the deer population maintaining somewhere in that 300,000 range. I think the model is messed up. I think they're counting the same deer over and over again. I think the deer vacation in different areas around the state. That was a joke, Anis. I think there's four things we need to focus on and we are doing these things: number one, predator control; number two, habitat enhancements; three: decrease hunter pressure, not just bucks but on does; and then moving deer, we talked about transplanting. Predator control, we're focusing heavily on it. Directory Karpowitz has put out some e-mails and things that I've had the ability to read that I've been very impressed. The key to predator control has always been our ranchers. I think they need to be given credit because they've always done a great job up until 10-80 (is that what it was called? Cyanide or whatever?). I just think that bullets, poison, and trapping are the key and we've got to knock down the coyotes. We're in a predator glut where our population has not been able to rise above what the predator effects are having on it. Habitat enhancements, we need less pinion-juniper. I think The Division and the sportsmen's groups have been doing a great job. Just driving up today I saw a whole bunch of pinion-juniper trees that were being thinned along I15 on the south side, just south of Beaver. I've been very impressed with that and I know we've been trying our best to try that along the Parowan Front. We need more sage, bitterbrush and cliff rose. And really the key to what I want to say here is something that Doug and his team have enlightened me on this week. I saw a program called doctor deer, it was a white-tail deer guy. He set out, I think, 14 different food plots in one field and he criss-crossed a grid and he let the deer choose which ones they liked. Some of the food plots were eaten down to the ground others looked like they were flourishing. What he pointed out was that deer will choose what they want to eat and there is some forage out there that gives us the ability to grow some wild food plots that help the cattle, that help with fire, that help with soil conservation and help a great deal with the wildlife. I think you called it Kosha or something of that sort. I don't know what it is exactly. I think if we can do some things and work with some of these farmers and ranchers to grow some of this forage and put it out there, I know we're going to have some issues on some of the public land but, on some of the private land and some of the state land and some of these areas like the Parowan Front, if we can go in and create some areas where these deer aren't just knocking the crap out of the sage brush, 'cause it is really beat up. I think we'll have some great positive effect on our mule deer herd. And then the last thing is the transplant. I was involved a little bit when we tried to move the deer out to Vance Springs. We were working on a transitioning point where we could take the deer out of the Beaver hay fields out of the Beaver hay stacks, move them out to Vance Springs, let the grass come up. But I really think we need to create some more forage because the wild horses and the elk and the cattle are using almost all that there is available. So we need to do the same thing with habitat where we're moving these deer because these deer aren't going to know where they're at. And if it's not readily available we're going to have problems so we need to look at not just gathering up 100 deer and moving them out there. Doug, I know what you guys

went through and you had about 100% mortality on your collared animals. Didn't you? On one of your transplants? I'm not interested in doing something that's going to fail. Let's figure out a way that we're going to do this successfully. We have the funds, we have a transition location or we have had one in the past that we can look at again. Monitoring, which university is it, Brayden? Brigham Young University professor has allocated one or more of his students that are doing their doctorate or their thesis, masters thesis to study this transplant. And we should have information back on that on what funding they're gonna need. And we're gonna work on doing that. So I think that will help The Division with monitoring and studying. And I know you guys are really pushed hard. I appreciate the RAC, you've done a great job, Mr. Chairman and the rest of you, I appreciate you've handled the comments and I really appreciate what The Division of Wildlife does and the other groups. Thank you very much.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Todd. Have we missed you Brayden? K, you got 15 seconds left on your clock, go ahead.

Brayden Richmond: Just the last part of the proposal, what we'd like to do is take 75 does off of the Cottonwood allocation and 25 does off the Summit allocation. There's 150 does that we have tags for. That's where we'd like to pull them from, do the 100 does into this transplant. That's specifically where we'd like to do it from.

Steve Flinders: Okay, thanks. Maybe we'll break this agenda item up and deal with deer first. Don't know what you guys think about that. It's a little bit of a subject and the RAC can't dictate and tell the Division what to do. Whether we want to make a motion to this end or not is the first decision but do we just elevate it to the Wildlife Board as an action item we can discuss at the board meeting and see if they want to task the Division with looking at this or... That would be my suggestion that we deal with deer separately. I look forward to your comments here, what you guys would like to do. Rex. Paul.

RAC discussion and vote:

Paul Briggs: Maybe I need a little clarification. I heard a couple of things. I heard Donnie Hunter say they were supporting the recommendations for this year and, Donnie correct me if I'm wrong, but maybe looking at trapping deer, moving deer the year following. But I think I heard something else from Todd. Maybe you guys could clarify what we're talking about and the time frames. That'd help me out.

Steve Flinders: Well they're different SFW Chapters. Go ahead Doug.

Douglas Messerly: Let me make a plea, I'll try to keep this under an hour. The deer transplant issue has come up several times in my career. Without going into some ancient history let me just say that our experience has not been good with having success doing this. The immediate need at hand here is to do what we can to minimize further damage and I think everyone acknowledges that this is hammered, I've heard that word several times. And I don't know if you know what hammered means but hammered means there's no forage available for deer. It doesn't matter as long as the deer are taken off the range whether they're taken off in a horse trailer or in the back of a truck with one eye to the sky. But what is important is that it happen this fall. What I propose is, as a potential solution to this is something that Steve mentioned and that is to ask The Board to make this an action item and ask The Division to study it and come up with a proposal and we'll work with the BYU professor and SFW and everybody else to come up with a proposal in this. But let's not put this harvest of these deer on hold in the interest of that. I heard it said that 150 deer is not enough and I agree whole-heartedly that 150 deer is not enough. It's

what we thought that we could get away with politically, actually. And so here we are trying to keep the lid on it with 150 deer, let us do that. And if we do end up doing a transplant this fall, let's put it on top of those and do some more good for the habitat. Because the immediate need here, and I don't want to debate the transplant issue, as Steve has pointed out, it's probably not appropriate that we do at his point, it's an alternative way to control these and from that standpoint it is appropriate that we do it here in terms of whether there is the need to remove these animals. But I think everybody's in agreement that there is the need to remove these animals. And what I would ask is that you let us have the harvest as we've asked for and as per direction from my administration and The Wildlife Board we'll pursue these other discussions with regard to the transplants. And I'm not trying to put it off. I think every 10 years we have to do this is what it boils down to. And we'll be glad to do it again and I hope we do get somebody to do a masters thesis on it that we can all remember in the future. Those are my comments on this. Thanks.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Doug, that was well put. So we want to make some motion on this? Go ahead Dell.

Dell LeFevre: Have you thought about transplanting these deer to where there's already a lot of forage. Out on the Smoky Mtn I've had a lot of deer in the past. The cougars and coyotes have moved in and I don't have any deer left. Get them cougars and coyotes out of there and put them where there's a lot of forage. There's any kind of a shrub out there you want, it's a browse range. You get the early reseed the spring of the year. Right now the deer have disappeared out there but you can shoot three or four coyotes every trip.

Rex Stanworth: I had one question and comment I think it was Shawn Limb from Beaver made a comment that he was concerned about 150 cow elk being killed at Indian Peak. I guess the question I would ask then pertaining to that, Teresa, what's the number of bulls vs. cows on that permit unit? Can you give us any kind of number?

Jason Nicholes: According to our population modeling we currently estimate the bull to cow ratio is one to one, maybe slightly more bulls to cows. The permits, we estimate that we are at objective, the permits that we proposed for antlerless will help us take care of the production for the coming year and help us maintain objective as well with the bull permits we'll reduce the bull to cow ratio.

Rex Stanworth: So let me just go back and ask this question. We're at one to one or maybe a little more than one bull for one cow, we're gonna go take 150 cows off. Is that a healthy way of running a herd. I know it's not politically correct but I'm just asking is that a healthy way, and we've went through this discussion, is that a healthy way to have the herd?

Jason Nicholes: It's necessary to maintain at our objective. And, it may not be the best way, if we could start over with our bull to cow ratio lower, but we've got to balance both of them. Hopefully by taking the bulls and the cows we're working towards that objective

Rex Stanworth: Okay, Chad and Shawn, give me your comments on that. Our three big game Board members need to hear this.

Shawn Limb: From what I've seen you're getting it from all these guys that've got permits, broken horn bulls, seeing a ton of bulls and not a lot of cows. You've got an issue when you're flying these elk.

Some of these elk are on the Hamlin Valley side close to Nevada, you're getting Nevada elk in that count too. So, you know, you take Panguitch Lake, guys with 16, 17 points killing rag-horn bulls on there you can't go over there right now and find a cow elk. We hunt a lot of shed horns on there and I've some guys from Parowan that's hunted it. They've decimated that herd. I'm like you, you can't increase a elk herd if you don't have mothers. If you've got more than one to one ratio or you've got two to one, you've got a lot of bulls out there and not enough cows. Thank you.

Anis Aoude: Just to clarify we're not trying to increase that elk herd, we're trying to maintain it. And it takes at least that many antlerless permits to maintain it.

Steve Flinders: Rex, I'm not gonna let you off the hook. You brought this mule deer foundation report. Let's get a motion on deer and then let's go into elk.

Rex Stanworth: You want to go into deer?

Steve Flinders: Let's stay with deer and then let's go on to elk.

Rex Stanworth: There's a couple of issues I heard on deer. Without exception, deer transplant seems to be number one discussion. I think Doug is probably correct in that we need to kill some deer this fall, 150. But from what it sounds like I don't think anybody's going to object to going and trying to transplant or capture some deer and move them along with that 150. So, let's see, is there anything else? Basically I didn't hear anybody that was commenting that they disagreed with the numbers but we ought to figure out a different way. So I guess what I'd do is I would make a motion that we accept the deer numbers with a provision that we ask the big game Board to make this a action item that can be looked at in coordination with the hunters group, our higher education people, the BYU professor people, and The Division and let's get this working. We got people who've got money and they've got time and they're got people. And I say that's a degree for a good opportunity. That'd be my.

Steve Flinders: Can we restate the motion in 20 words or less?

Rex Stanworth: Sure. I would like to make the motion that we accept the deer numbers as proposed with a recommendation to the big game Board that they make this a action item that the Division, BYU, and the sportsmen's groups can work together in putting this plan together.

Steve Flinders: Perfect. Second? Seconded by Steve Dalton. Any discussion on that motion? Can The Division live with that? Those in favor? Unanimous. Thank you.

Rex Stanworth made the motion to accept the antlerless deer permit recommendations as presented, further to recommend the Wildlife Board adopt an "action item" relating to the Division developing a transplant proposal for additional deer on the Panguitch Lake Unit using sportsmen's financial and physical support, as suggested here tonight, and explore having BYU assist in documenting methods and outcome. Seconded by Steve Dalton. Motion carried unanimously.

Steve Flinders: Moving on to elk where the balance is. Keep talking about elk. Tom. Sure. Come up to the mic. We appreciate you guys being here, it'll make more sense in a couple weeks.

Tom Hatch: I want to make sure that I understand the motion, maybe Jake and Ernie do but I heard, on this last motion that just passed, on the transplant, is the motion that we kill 150 deer and look at transplant, that we support killing 150 deer and then look at transplanting in addition to that?

Steve Flinders: That's exactly how it's stated.

Tom Hatch: Okay. Because some of the guys behind me I think were thinking it was a little different than that. Okay, that's the motion then.

Steve Flinders: We accept the recommendation, in terms of numbers. Lets move on to other species. We were talking about elk in the Southwest Desert. How we've tied The Division's hands with killing more bulls and age objectives.

Rex Stanworth: I guess I just have a problem that we're killing 150 cows.

Doug Messerly: How many bulls are we killing Jason? How many bulls do we intend to harvest in the fall of 2011 with spike and trophy bulls assuming average success rates?

Jason Nicholes: We intend to kill on the limited entry hunt about 115 to 120 bulls, spike hunt in addition would be somewhere around 75 bulls.

Doug Messerly: We're killing more bulls than we are cows, Rex.

Jason Nicholes. We are. Probably 200 bulls and we'll probably kill 100 cows.

Doug Messerly: Yeah, we've had about 50% success on the 150 cow tags and he's optimistic to think 100. So we're killing more bulls than we are cows. And that's how we fix this problem.

Rex Stanworth: I was actually speaking, Doug, for those lonely bulls out there who never found a cow during that period of time so. If you're happy that they're going to be happy then we'll go.

Doug Messerly: It would be nice if we could fix it all in one year and we kind of took a stab at that last year. We upped bull tags a lot. What we did was we dropped the age of harvest back toward our objective. And as you've heard me say a time or two, we try to manage to the plan. So, we're getting close to that objective and we don't want to overshoot that, we're trying to come in for a soft landing with the average age of harvest. But at the same time we have to maintain the population size and we do that with antlerless harvest. So 150 tags is often equated to be 150 cows but it's not, we run about 50 to 60% success out there.

Rex Stanworth: Okay, having said that, now we're happy. That was about the only thing I saw with the exception of zero percent elk on the Henry Mtns and kill those elk. And I also, again speaking for Sam and the Paunsaugunt folks, I'm shocked that we want to even continue with any kind of elk herd on the Paunsaugunt. Jim Edwards came in and saw me three weeks ago and he said we need to go back and pull up the minutes from when we had Clint Meacham talk to our group when we were in Panguitch. He said one question was asked to him in regards to what was happening with the Stansbury, the Kennecott property up there, one of the comments he made was once we got rid of 300 elk on that hill the he says those mule deer just exploded. And I don't know why it went over my head, he said it went over

everybody's head but his. And he says but Clint spoke in that meeting telling us that when they removed 300 head of elk the mule deer really expanded. I guess that's the only question I've got is there any discussion pertaining to the Paunsaugunt and any other issues pertaining to the Henry Mtn 'cause it sounded like as long as we kill on Beaver the number of antlerless that we've got it sounded like everybody's going to be happy there. So that was the only issues I heard about as we spoke about elk was keeping the Beaver numbers to where they're at, zero percent of elk on the Henry Mtns. I think that's being addressed because they can kill both bull and cow at the same time. So that herds probably in jeopardy. And the only other issue was what we talked about with Paunsaugunt and I don't know how to address that. So those were the three issues on elk that I've got.

Steve Flinders: Let's talk about elk management plan revisions.

Doug Messerly: What you're suggesting, Rex, I guess, is a change to the Paunsaugunt management plan, this isn't the meeting where we do that. But the existing elk management plan is consistent with the recommendations that we're making here tonight, or actually vice versa our recommendations are consistent with that plan. It was actually discussed last time with the Paunsaugunt local working group to make the Paunsaugunt an open unit. That was our idea is to make it an any bull unit. That was unacceptable to the group at the time. And actually there were speakers that came to this meeting and spoke against that as well. I think that everybody's got to get together on this. Because there are people that think the Paunsaugunt's a good place for the elk. What we do in the mean time is try to manage to the plan and these recommendations are consistent with that. And as you heard they were supported by local sportsmen.

Rex Stanworth: Okay, well it wasn't my idea, I just repeated what the comments were from the public that dealt with elk. Based upon that unless somebody else has any...

Steve Flinders: Rex, Clair had something he was going to jump in here with.

Clair Woodbury: When we get a quarter in you, it's goes for a long time. I'd just like to comment on that Southwest Desert. I love that area and I'd just say let's give the spike hunt a chance to work a few years and I think we'll see those numbers come more into where it's appropriate. Looking at the count now, it's at 975, which would mean 500 bulls, about 475 cows. I think we just need to give it a few years and I think that'll be a marvelous unit again. That's all I had.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Clair. Layne you're studying those numbers awful hard. Comments?

Layne Torgerson: I just have one concern. I know last year we had, I think, correct me if I'm wrong Doug, but it seems like we had 1200 cow tags on the Fishlake, we ended up canceling the last hunt because of the weather. Well, because they got on the triangle in that snow storm and we smoked them. This year we're proposing an additional 860 and also, which goes hand in hand with that, there's 300 proposed on the Boulder at the same time as there's 270 on Fishlake. The only problem I have with that is those 300 permits on that one hunt on the Boulder which coincides with the 270 on the Fishlake, the problem I have with that is they end up killing Fishlake elk on that hunt. The cross the highway right there between the Fishlake turn-off and Loa and those Boulder elk tags end up killing Fishlake elk.

Doug Messerly: We know that, in fact that's our intent. And I will not say any more except that we're, as I've said before, trying to manage to the plan. These people that are here are very familiar with that

and I'll let them speak to the specifics of this and what they see as far as the population objectives and what we need to harvest. The simple fact is 5000 elk have babies and you heard the forest supervisors say that doing a little math on the back of an envelope on the way down here he could see that they can get out of control pretty quick if we don't get on this. For more comment in great detail I'd invite Teresa and or Vance and Jim to come talk about this if you'd like. That's kind of the overall picture. We need to do what we need to do to keep these animals under control. It's not that we're trying to reduce populations we're trying to maintain them.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Doug. Want to hear more Layne? Other comments, discussion about elk, other species, there was talk about moose on CWMUs? I have a question there. Is there Division policy, we've discussed in the past about public hunts, CWMU hunts, moose tags on a CWMU without a corresponding public hunt?

Anis Aoude: There are public permits amongst those. The way CWMUs work is they're three year plans. And they do have enough moose in that area to harvest it. It's all private land, there's really no way we could have a public hunt in that area. But there are public permits that go to the public on the CWMU. So even though they are CWMU permits some of them do go to the public.

Steve Flinders: Thanks. Does that help Lee? We discussed this on the Paunsaugunt for a few years. More discussion? A motion?

Paul Briggs. I make a motion that we accept The Division's recommendations on antlerless elk as presented.

Mack Morrell: I'll second it.

Steve Flinders: Seconded by Mack. Motion by Paul. To accept the balance of the antlerless I heard. Rex? Discussion?

Paul Briggs: Can you amend that to the balance of the antlerless, not just elk?

Steve Flinders: That okay with you're second? The balance of the antlerless recommendations in the motion. You still want to second that? Well, did you assume that was just elk or did you want to cover the rest of the species? Discussion on the motion? We already did the deer, this is the balance of the antlerless recommendations. Seeing no discussion, those in favor? Any against? I think that was unanimous. Thank you very much. Clair.

Paul Briggs made the motion to accept the rest of the Antlerless permit recommendations as presented. Seconded by Mack Morrell. Motion carried unanimously.

Clair Woodbury: Just one question for Anis before we leave elk. Last year in this meeting there was a plan stated by you or someone that we were looking to increase to 80,000 elk in the state, that we would be calling some management groups together and that's the last I ever heard of it. What happened with that?

Anis Aoude: That's still ongoing. We had, before we could go forward we had to put together another committee to look at some kind of incentives for public land grazers to be able to increase elk 'cause

that's kind of been an issue. We did convene that committee. They came up with some recommendations. Through the work planning we are this coming year planning on getting committees together. Again, I can't promise that we'll get to 80,000 but we'll at least hold committees.

Clair: I just wanted to make sure it just hadn't been dropped and nothing ever said again about it.

Anis: No, it was just protracted because we had to do some other things to set it up basically.

Steve Flinders: Moving on to item 7, Big Game Rule Amendments.

Big Game Rule Amendments – R657-5 (action)

- Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

(see attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Steve F: Thanks Anis. Questions from the RAC? Go ahead Layne

Layne Torgerson: I just needed to clarify, so by removing the temporary game preserve item out of that rule, that would allow for coyote hunting or hunting jack rabbits or whatever in those unites during the big game hunt?

Anis Aoude: Correct.

Clair Woodbury: On this big game "we recommend lowering the bullet weight restrictions for muzzleloaders from 50 caliber." You put weight and not bullet caliber restriction on that 'cause there's a lot of different weights. I just wondered if there was a reason that it was put weight and not caliber.

Anis Aoude: I may have done that wrong. There is a weight restriction as well for bullet weight in the rule. So that did also....

Clair Woodbury: But from 50 caliber to 45 caliber it's caliber not weight.

Anis Aoude: Both have changed actually. Both the calibers, you can use a 45 caliber now and there are some weight restrictions as well in the rule that I didn't go into.

Steve Flinders: Good clarification. Other questions from the RAC? Yeah, Rex.

Rex Stanworth: You talk about laser type scopes are available. Are we still to a one power only on a muzzleloader?

Anis Aoude: Yes.

Steve Flinders: On rifle scopes or muzzleloader?

Anis Aoude: Muzzleloader scopes are limited to a one power.

Rex Stanworth: And the state's convinced that a 195 grain on a 45 caliber is not sufficient it has to be up in that 210 to 240 on like an elk?

Anis Aoude: Yes. A lot of the ballistics research suggests that.

Rex Stanworth: I looked at this 45 that Thompson Center has and those things have got velocities and muzzle energy that are over the top of some of the lighter calibers that we allow for elk.

Steve Flinders: Center-fires, yeah. Other questions from the RAC? Sure Steve.

Steve Dalton: Anis, it says, "We recommend allowing archery and muzzleloader hunters to carry a handgun in the field. In the field does not include a hunter's camp or enclosed vehicle." So how does he get from his camp to the field?

Anis Aoude: Well, it's a given that they can have it in their camp because the new law says that they can have it in their vehicle and in their camp. But they can now also have it in the field.

Steve Dalton: The way I read it I'm confused.

Steve Flinders: It's meant to dovetail with concealed carry laws.

Anis Aoude: Exactly, so basically. Well if you have a concealed permit you can carry a handgun regardless, but even if you don't have a concealed permit...

Steve Flinders: Now you can take it to the tree stand with you, just don't use it.

Steve Dalton: Okay, the way its worded there is really confusing. It sounds contrary.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? RAC members? Questions from the public?

Questions from the public:

Paul Niemeyer: Somehow we're all, I don't have the thing in front of me. You could always hunt elk and deer with 45 caliber in Utah. I don't know why it says now you can 'cause you always could. There was some bullet restrictions. Now the question I've got since we didn't put the screen up on bullet restriction. Where are we going with this? What's the whole deal? Well we don't have that so we don't know 'cause it wasn't on the screen but you could always hunt them with a 45 so that's nothing new.

Steve Flinders: Have we got that specific text?

Paul Niemeyer: Have you got a screen that shows where we're at on that? You could always shoot 45 caliber deer and elk in Utah.

Anis Aoude: I'm not that clear on it. It's a law enforcement presentation.

Steve Flinders: I've got the cross-out stuff that came in our packet. 130 grains or heavier instead of 170 grains for deer and pronghorn. So it's been lowered. 130 grains or heavier or if it's a sabot 170 grains or heavier must be used for taking deer and pronghorn.

Scott Dalebout: That's correct and in the past it was 170 grain bullet or 170 sabot. Now it's just 170 grain sabot and 130 grain bullet. Because 130 grain bullet was test to have the same foot pounds of energy. The foot pounds of the 130 is equal to the legal handgun foot pounds at the muzzle.

Steve Flinders: So it's less restrictive now. So it's from 170 to 130, it's less restrictive now. Unless you shoot a sabot then you've got to stay at 170.

Paul Niemeyer: I don't have any of that. So sometimes when we do these slides it'd be good to have it fully rigged to see what it is.

Rex Stanworth: On elk and all other big game, though Paul, you have to use a 210 or heavier

Steve Flinders: And that didn't change.

Rex Stanworth: Or must be a minimum of 240 grains if you use a sabot. That's on a 45. The interesting thing is, well there's a few companies out there that go over 200 but there's not a lot. For example Barnes does not make any bullet for a 45 over 195. So, on elk for example, some guys are going to be pretty limited unless they get on the internet where they find somebody who can get them.

Steve Flinders: So what they're proposing is to relax the restriction on bullet weights as it relates to deer and antelope to 130, unless you shoot a sabot and then you've got to stay at 170, as I read it. Thanks for bringing that up.

Lee Tracy: I have two questions. Last year non-lead ammo was optional, is that going to be required in the southern unit.

Anis Aude: No, it will not be required.

Lee Tracy: You mentioned that one power scopes are legal for muzzleloader. What about shotguns and archery.

Anis Aoude: I don't know if any scopes for archery. But shotgun, I don't think there are restrictions for scopes on shotguns. If you have a rifle barrel you can shoot them like a rifle so you can have any power. Just muzzleloader have a restriction right now.

Steve Flinders: Other questions from the public? Moving on to comment cards, I've got a comment card from Brian Johnson. You put scopes on your bow?

Comments from the public:

Brian Johnson: They can't have magnification. But we should change that. Is this where we talk about changing that?

Steve Flinders: Right now.

Brian Johnson: Right now. No, actually, we don't have an official position on that. I've got all sorts of jokes I could say now but I won't in the interest of time. We do agree with changing these rules, they make sense. And, anything makes sense that will allow other people to hunt some coyotes in these higher elevations is probably a good idea. So UBA agrees with these rule changes just 'cause it makes sense and it makes it a little easier for these guys to enforce laws too. Thanks.

RAC discussion and vote:

Steve Flinders: Thanks. That's the only comment card I have, so moving on to RAC comment, discussion, motions. Muzzleloader hunters up here? Sure Layne.

Layne Torgerson: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion that we accept, I gotta read the rule change....

Steve Flinders: R657-5

Layne Torgerson: I make a motion that we accept Rule Change R657-5 as presented by The Division.

Steve Flinders: Seconded by Dell. Moved by Layne. Any questions, discussion about the motion? Those in favor? Looks unanimous. Thank you.

Layne Torgerson made the motion to accept Big Game Rule Amendments R657-5 as presented. Seconded by Dell LeFevre. Motion carried unanimously.

Steve Flinders: Finally, number 8, Antlerless CWMU permits. Teresa.

Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2011 (action)
-Teresa Griffin, Regional Wildlife Program Manager
(see attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Steve Flinders: Great, any question from RAC, CWMUs, antlerless? Going once...

Questions from the public:

Steve Flinders: Questions from the public? We have one comment card. Wade Heaton.

Comments from the public:

Wade Heaton, Alton CWMU: I'm not going to giggle too much. I'm working with the CWMU now. I am excited, Teresa knows, about five tags. Originally we did ask for 12 but you guys have been generous enough with us in the past helping us get some elk tags. We couldn't get The Board to see it that way so we're going to take five and be very happy. Dustin and I kind of worked on this and basically what we're doing, we're trying to put enough tags on the CWMU so that we can at least keep

them moving. And five is obviously not going to, biologically, make a whole lot of difference but it makes us feel a whole lot better. We do support this recommendation. Coming back as well to the deer tags, as I mentioned, with Paunsaugunt antlerless there are some issues there, we'd like to expand the herd just a little bit in some areas and we would like to decrease it in others. But we're fine, we're not going to, there are some areas on the CWMU, as I've mentioned in the past, that have got some pretty high densities. We're willing to kind of work and play ball with the rest of the Paunsaugunt, there are areas on the Paunsaugunt that need a few more. Originally our management plan called for some antlerless tags this year but we're willing to play and help out on that. We're fine as well with The Division's recommendations of zero antlerless deer tags. Thanks.

RAC discussion and vote:

Steve Flinders: Thanks Wade. Further discussion? Motion? You guys ready to go home? Paul.

Paul Briggs: I make the motion that we accept the antlerless CWMU permit recommendations as presented.

Steve Flinders: Seconded by Steve Dalton. Motion by Paul Briggs. Any discussion? Those in favor? Unanimous.

Paul Briggs made the motion to accept the Antlerless CWMU permit recommendations as presented. Seconded by Steve Dalton. Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business

-Steve Flinders, Chairman

Steve Flinders: I don't have any other business at this time. Motion to adjourn? On May 10, Cedar City, it's on the bottom of the agenda. Cedar City Middle School. On the hill right?

Layne Torgerson: Mr Chairman I make a motion to adjourn.

Dell LeFevre: I second it.

Steve Flinders: Thank you.

Layne Torgerson made the motion to adjourn. Dell LeFevre seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

TUSHAR COLLABORATIVE GROUP

March 18, 2009

To whom it may concern,

The Tushar Collaborative Group is a working group of environmental organizations, ranchers, agencies and interested parties that was brought together by the Fishlake National Forest as a conflict resolution effort to an appeal process. This group is co-sponsored by the Grand Canyon Trust and the Utah Farm Bureau and has been meeting together for the past two years. These meetings and on the ground inspections have evaluated existing and new information on the Ten Mile and Pine Creek/Sulfurdale Allotments south of the Tushar Mountains. This collaborative effort has attempted to evaluate resource degradation and to find solutions to the causes of the degradation.

One of the causes identified has been livestock grazing pressure. After a great deal of negotiation the permittees have agreed to significant reductions of livestock use both in numbers and time in order to give the landscape an opportunity to heal.

Another cause of some resource degradation has been identified as wildlife grazing pressure as it relates to the browsing of aspen, willow, mountain mahogany, and cottonwoods. The lack of recruitment of young plants is because these plants are being constantly eaten before they are able to get established. Part of this pressure is occurring in the spring as soon as the plants are emerging and is due in part to heavy use in the spring by Elk.

As we deliberated the issue of grazing pressure by wildlife it was brought to our attention by UDWR (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources) representatives that it is difficult to quantify the damage done by wildlife. We realize this to be the case but we also realize that damage is being done by wildlife because of research information that has been gathered using exclosures and by visual assessments made before livestock go out. We also discussed the state Unit Elk Management Plans with the emphasis from the committees that adequate forage must exist in an area prior to increasing any wildlife number goals.

Our purpose in writing is to ask for your cooperation in preventing excessive grazing and browsing by Elk. There is an effort by some groups and agencies to increase the number of Elk in the state. We would ask that this increase in Elk numbers not be supported at this time in the Beaver Elk Unit. Livestock permittees are helping to reduce the impacts of grazing with reductions in domestic animals and we are asking that you help in reducing the impacts of Elk by not allowing increases in Elk numbers.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Fishlake National Forest
115 East 900 North
Richfield, UT 84701
(435) 896-9233

Dixie National Forest
1789 N Wedgewood Lane
Cedar City, UT 84721
(435) 865-3700

File Code: 2610

Date: April 12, 2011

Mr. Steve Flinders
Chairman
UDWR Southern Region RAC
575 South Main Street
PO Box E
Beaver, UT 84713

Dear Mr. Flinders:

We would like to take this opportunity to offer comments from the Fishlake and Dixie National Forests on the proposed harvest levels of elk for the 2011 hunting season.

We support the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources efforts to manage elk and deer to the population levels identified in the existing herd management plans. The existing herd management plans were built collaboratively with sportsmen, landowners, land management agencies, and UDWR. It is important to honor these plans and the agreements made through the plans.

We do have a concern that in some specific locations elk appear to be having a negative impact on our ability to regenerate aspen communities. In some cases it also appears elk grazing in riparian areas in the spring is having a negative impact. Both of these plant communities are critical for elk habitat and other natural resources. We will bring these specifics forward as we work with the Herd Unit Committees. We look forward to working with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources in the public process to develop the Herd Unit Management Plans, and we know we can develop durable solutions for elk management by working through the process with the local committees.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments.

Sincerely,

/s/ Allen Rowley
ALLEN ROWLEY
Forest Supervisor, Fishlake National Forest

/s/ Robert G. Macwhorter
ROBERT G. MACWHORTER
Forest Supervisor, Dixie National Forest





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Sincerely,

ALLEN ROWLEY
Forest Supervisor, Fishlake National Forest

ROBERT G. MACWHORTER
Forest Supervisor, Dixie National Forest





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Cedar City Field Office

176 East DL Sargent Drive

Cedar City, UT 84721

Telephone (435) 586-2401

www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/cedar_city.html



In Reply Refer To:

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April 8, 2011

Southern Regional Advisory Council
C/o Steve Flinders, Chair
P.O. Box E
Beaver, Utah 84713

Dear Regional Advisory Council Members:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on antlerless recommendations tonight.

We'd like to address what some may consider a controversial recommendation - the antlerless deer permits on the west side of the Panguitch Lake unit. This is the only unit in the state where antlerless permits to deal with habitat damage on rangeland are proposed. BLM has been concerned about the condition of these rangelands for years. We have implemented habitat restoration projects on over 6,000 acres of crucial winter range, in cooperation with our many partners. Along miles of the Parowan Front, the public land available for these deer during the winter is only 1 mile wide. Somewhere around two-thirds to three-quarters of the deer on the mountain in the summer will migrate to the west side for the winter. The valleys where these deer once wintered are no longer available. Interstate 15 blocks access and many lands are developed for housing or agriculture.

BLM has been renewing livestock grazing permits in this area. Many areas did not meet BLM's Rangeland Health Standards. We have implemented changes to livestock seasons of use on several allotments to address rangeland concerns. Also, portions of the winter range are unallocated and receive no livestock grazing.

BLM agrees with UDWR that the winter range cannot support additional deer. A severe winter would result in high deer mortality and additional damage to the habitat. We encourage the RAC to allow the harvest and use of these deer by approving the antlerless permits.

Thank you,

Randy Trujillo

Acting Cedar City Field Office Manager

Restoring Utah's Mule Deer Requires a Solid Foundation

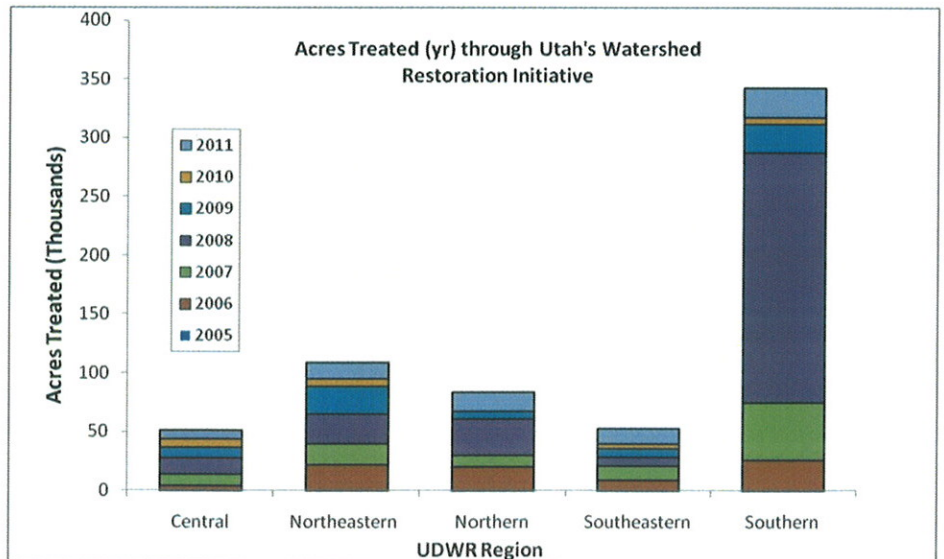
By Paul Briggs, Southern Region Regional Advisory Council (RAC) member

Sportsmen that spent time hunting mule deer in southern Utah this past fall know that the success rate was lower than in previous years. Hunters in Utah were frustrated with the experience and have let state wildlife managers know. Many issues and solutions have been proposed in the form of harvest strategies, predator control, season length, along with all the usual suspects. It seems that most individuals and sportsmen's groups have a solution or cause on which they are focused and all are correct in part. The management of mule deer on a statewide scale is much more complex than any one issue, but each issue is an important part of the total project.

With that said, let's look at the restoration of Utah's mule deer population as if it were a home restoration project. It all begins with the foundation. The foundation of any wildlife population is the habitat. Just as in restoring a house, none of the other investments put toward framing, wiring, plumbing, roofing, etc. are going to pay off when the foundation is inadequate. In Utah's Southern Region, as in most of the intermountain west, the foundation of mule deer populations (habitat) has suffered decades of neglect due to urban development and infrastructure construction. As a result, some sections of the foundation have deteriorated beyond repair. This requires a new blue print with additional footings to maintain or increase the square footage (population levels). This blue print is the Utah Mule Deer Plan (approved on December 4, 2008) and will be in effect for five years from this date. The plan identifies over a half million acres of habitat improvements and a statewide population objective of 426,000 deer.

Utah hired a general contractor to initiate needed repairs - a partnership known as Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative (WRI). As an example, in southwestern Utah from 2005 to 2011, the partnership treated approximately 341,628 acres of land, accounting for 54 percent of the states' total acres treated, while utilizing only 36 percent of the states' funding (approximately \$38,650,224). The extensive habitat improvements provide the foundation for increasing the number and quality of mule deer and other species, while providing additional opportunities to sportsmen.

This graph illustrates the effectiveness of Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative in the southern region and the leverage this great partnership has produced in regards to quality landscape level projects.



The WRI, general contractor, has enlisted the help of an extensive group of subcontractors. The list includes: the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Mule Deer Foundation, Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, and the National Wild Turkey Federation, to name a few. For a complete list of partners visit the WRI website at (<http://wildlife.utah.gov/watersheds/index.php>).

These subcontractors complete the structure by controlling predators, improving fence and road crossing structures, providing law enforcement, facilitating land purchases and conservation easements, creating additional hunting opportunities, providing youth and public education programs and increasing access to public and private lands.

“Cooperation and partnering by all those who manage and care about mule deer habitat has provided the necessary leveraging and funding for the success of the WRI,” said UDWR Southern Region Habitat Restoration Biologist, Gary Bezzant. This group of subcontractors, like any other, is assembled based on the specific skills they bring to the project. But instead of dry wall, tile, or HVAC, the specialties include fund raising, vegetation management, land acquisition, wildlife management and education. Unlike conventional construction, these subs don’t have to wait for the concrete to cure to begin their work - state and federal agencies, sportsmen’s organizations, private landowners and others work year-round to meet WRI objectives.

As with any construction project, after the initial investment is complete, the finished product requires periodic maintenance and upkeep, as well as some unexpected repairs and maybe an upgrade or two. However, there are some variables in population management that can’t be mitigated with money. Disease, unplanned fire, insect infestations, prolonged drought or severe winters have and will always result in a temporary reduction in population numbers. However, if the foundation is solid, the rest of the structure is much easier to restore.

Now let’s zoom out a bit and see where our newly restored house fits into the neighborhood. By proactively managing the landscape and improving habitat, other benefits are achieved as well. Including, improved water quality and fisheries habitat; increased forage for livestock and big game; reduced car/deer collisions, increased recreational opportunities for hunting and non-hunting wildlife enthusiasts; and benefits to sagebrush obligates, such as sage grouse.

By investing in and restoring our property (mule deer habitat), the property values (overall rangeland health) in the neighborhood increase as well.

This treatment was conducted south of Beaver, Utah and east of Interstate 15 to improve wildlife habitat and reduce the risk of wildfire to Beaver County Residents.

Multi-phase and multi-year landscape level treatments conducted in this area are very noticeable and are just in the beginning stages of producing improved rangeland health benefits in southwestern Utah.



There are always serious threats to the foundation of the project. These include increased human development on critical habitat, invasive plant species (both native and introduced), special interest groups who paint habitat/fuels management as devastation or deforestation, politicians who don't value or haven't been patient enough to see the return on the investment. Utah's general contractor and the subs all need to be aware of and address these threats to the foundation by taking steps to educate and involve others in the project, where appropriate. They also need to involve others in cooperative partnerships, while remaining focused on the overall objectives. While each component of the construction is important to the success of the project, it is a mistake to fight to the death over the color of the shutters when the foundation is being knocked out from beneath your feet.



The upper photo was taken in Kane County in a treatment conducted in 2010 on BLM managed lands (Muddy Creek). It is common practice for mule deer to follow behind the "bullhog" machines, even in early stages of vegetation enhancement restoration projects. Big game continue to take advantage of newly created forage and habitat provided by WRI funded projects.

**Southeast Region Advisory Council
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main, Green River
April 13, 2013 ~ 5 p.m.**

Motion Summary

Approval of Agenda

**MOTION: To accept the agenda as written
Passed unanimously**

**Southeast Region Advisory Council
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main, Green River
April 13, 2011 ~ 5:00 p.m.**

Members Present

**Kevin Albrecht, USFS
Bill Bates, Regional Supervisor
Blair Eastman, Agriculture**

**Derris Jones, Sportsmen
Laura Kamala, Non-Consumptive**

**Christine Micoz, At Large
Travis Pehrson, Sportsmen
Pam Riddle, BLM**

Others Present

Keele Johnson

Members Absent

**Jeff Horrocks, Elected Official
Wayne Hoskisson, Non-consumptive
Todd Huntington, At Large**

**Darrel Mecham, Sportsman
Kenneth Maryboy, Navajo Rep.**

**Terry Sanslow, Chairman
Charlie Tracy, Agriculture**

1) **Welcome, RAC introductions and RAC procedure**

-Kevin Albrecht, RAC Vice chairman

Kevin Albrecht-As of right now, we don't have a quorum so we won't be able to make any official motions unless we get another RAC member, but that doesn't mean that we can't have a good discussion on the agenda items or try to come to some consensus. First of all, we need to get an approval of the agenda. Since we can't vote, how do we handle this, Bill?

Bill Bates-Well, let's approve the agenda and if that's out of order, then I will have to deal with the consequences later on.

Blair Eastman-What constitutes a quorum?

Bill Bates-The rule says that you have to have a simple majority. We have a lot of absences tonight due to a number of reasons. The Utah Association of County governments is meeting tonight and a dental convention is keeping Todd from attending. Terry had surgery and just got out of hospital. Wayne's mother is ill. Charlie's daughter is in a play. Darrell is sick. We have just had a series of unfortunate circumstances that have kept some RAC members from coming tonight.

Kevin Albrecht-We do need an approval of the agenda tonight, regardless of whether we have a quorum or not.

Blair Eastman-I will move that we approve the agenda.

Derris Jones-I'll second the motion.

Kevin Albrecht-We have a motion to approve the agenda and the second. Can we have a vote on that? The voting is unanimous.

Derris Jones-Just so I can understand what's going on, are we going to vote for everything, just as if we had a quorum? Or is the agenda the only thing we will be voting on?

Bill Bates-Staci Coons told me that the agenda is the only thing we can vote on. Right now, all we can do is jot down notes so that Kevin can carry the sentiment forward to the Board.

Bill Bates-Let's go ahead and do the presentations and **we** will have the questions from the RAC and the questions from the audience and the comments from the audience and **we'll** see just what consensus we can come up with. We just won't make the actions. Kevin will just have to go to the Wildlife Board and explain the opinions of the RAC. He will also have to describe what the public input was like.

Derris Jones-I wouldn't want to be in Kevin's shoes and try to explain to the Board what the general feeling of the RAC was if there were no official vote.

Bill Bates-We will just do a straw poll or something like that. After the presentation, if some new recommendation comes out, and everyone can support it, I think the board would really like to hear it. I think that a straw poll is something that would be appropriate.

Kevin Albrecht-I'm still not sure what to do about finding a concurrence with the RAC.

Bill Bates-You could say that we discussed such and such and the vote was split or agreed upon or that such and such was our recommendation.

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

-Kevin Albrecht, RAC Vice chairman

VOTING

Motion was made by Blair Eastman to approve the agenda as written.

Seconded by Derris Jones

Motion passed Unanimously

Kevin Albrecht-Does anybody have any amendments to the minutes? If there are no amendments to the minutes, we will go on from here.

3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update

-Justin Shannon, Wildlife Program Manager

Kevin Albrecht-We'll take just a minute to talk about the actions of the Board from its last meeting.

Bill Bates-. I've asked Justin Shannon to come up and give us a review of the Board meeting actions since Terry Sanslow couldn't be here tonight.

Justin Shannon-As far as the recommendations made by the Board with regard to the southeastern region, the most controversial thing was the split in the San Juan unit. There was also the controversy about increasing bear permits. There was a lot of discussion by the Board, but in the end, they voted in line with the Division's recommendations.

Kevin Albrecht-Thanks Justin.

4) Regional Update (Information)

-Bill Bates, Regional Supervisor

Bill Bates-We didn't put together a PowerPoint presentation tonight because we expected a large crowd and we thought we'd save time. Let me just give you a summary about what's been going on. Right now, we have two RAC vacancies that are open. We have nine or 10 applications. Once Terry gets better, we're going to hold interviews about the middle of May. I think there have been some good people who have put in. I'm looking forward to it. We have a vacancy for the public at large position and also for the non-consumptive position. Laura's term will expire in two weeks. We have a new employee here tonight. We have just hired Stephanie Matkin, who is working on the front counter and she will be taking minutes. She's here tonight to learn how Brent takes the minutes. She's looking forward that. I know it's a difficult job. I've been called on many times to interpret what I said at a past RAC meeting and have been unable to do so. We have a new conservation officer that will be coming to the region. J.D. Abbott has been hired. He will be working in the East Carbon district. He graduates from POST on 21 April, and he will spend the next three months in Salt Lake, and then we look forward to having him here with us. That will put us almost at full strength. Officer Shuman is still serving in Afghanistan. He will be coming back in June, but will still have to spend some time with his unit in the Salt Lake area. Then we hope to have him back before the hunts start this fall. We are not quite sure on the date he will be back. Other than that, we don't have any personnel changes. The division is facing some pretty serious budget issues, and we are facing some serious problems as a division. We lucked out this last week with the federal budget passing. Money was put in for the state wildlife grants, which will help us quite a bit. We will have a reduction in our endangered species mitigation fund. We are losing about half of that. Our sensitive species program is going to be seriously curtailed. The Gunnison sage-grouse is currently in consideration for listing as threatened or

endangered. We will just do what we can with that program. We will likely have only one person in the sensitive species program for the summer season. I don't know what we'll end up with as far as Dan Keller's aquatic native fish program. We will see how the dollars trickle-down. Also, we had a \$1.2 million reduction in Pittman Robertson funds. Dingell Johnson funds are down several hundred thousand dollars. Tonight, we will be looking at cuts in the deer permits. All told, our budget picture is going to be much worse than it has been during the past year. I do have some good news. We have wolf delisting in Montana and Idaho and in portions of Washington, Oregon and Utah. It's a good thing that will turn management over to the states.

Bill Bates-I almost forgot to introduce you to Devin Christensen. Have you guys met Devin before? Devin's been around several months or so. This is probably his first RAC meeting. He's the conservation officer in the Carbon district. We are glad to have him on. Are you from the West Jordan area?

Devin Christensen-No, I'm from the South Jordan area, but you're pretty close.

Questions from the RAC

Derris Jones-Does the state management plan only take effect North of I- 84, or will it take effect statewide?

Anis Aoude-Only north of I-84. The state's management plan does not make any allowance for wolves in Utah. There is a zero tolerance management plan.

Kevin Albrecht-I also read that in Wyoming there was some language that their management plan had not been accepted by the federal government.

Anis Aoude-We don't really know what's going on in Washington, DC. All I know is that that they have been delisted in that small portion of Utah.

Bill Bates-What I saw in the papers about Wyoming is that their management plan does not meet federal guidelines as far as the wolf recovery plan is concerned. Once Wyoming's management plan meets federal guidelines, I think delisting will occur there as well.

Kevin Albrecht-We'll turn the time over to Anis Aoude for the Bucks, Bulls and once-in-a-lifetime permit recommendations.

Anis Aoude-Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5) Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2011 (Action)

-Anis Aoude, Wildlife Program Coordinator and

-Justin Shannon, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

Questions from the RAC

Kevin Albrecht-. There any questions from the RAC?

Derris Jones-Could you pull the buck to doe ratio by region slide up? The southeast region is on a downward trend. The southern region is on a downward trend, but not as much. Yet both regions are going to take the same cuts.

Anis Aoude-The southern region is taking a bigger cut, because it's had a two-year drop. So 2,000 deer permits will be cut in the southern region, and 1,000 in the southeastern region.

Derris Jones-Are the cuts designed to meet the target objectives in 2012?

Anis Aoude-The cuts are designed to make it so that we don't have to make all of the permit cuts in a single year.

Derris Jones-I assume you're comfortable with the number of permits that will be cut?

Anis Aoude-Yes, after having made the calculations, we are comfortable. Obviously we didn't want to make all of the cuts in one year. Basically, we wanted to have a transition year, and will take more permits away the following year. It's obvious that we'll take out more permits next year, when we go to unit by unit.

Kevin Albrecht-Do you feel that the cuts we're making this year will be about the same as those that will be taken next year?

Anis Aoude-They should be a little bit lower. We have looked at the projections of buck to doe ratios in the past, and we have looked forward to the time when we need to cut 13,000 permits. (Inaudible) ...Something about an additional 5,000 drop this year on all regions in the state.

Kevin Albrecht-But the cuts you have made this year will set you up for the cuts that you expect to make next year?

Anis Aoude-That's right.

Travis Pearson-On the age objectives for the limited entry elk, are the CWMU's calculated in those?

Anis Aoude- They are. About one eighth of the numbers are CWMU. (Inaudible). If we took the CWMU ages out, our data would **change very little**.

Justin Shannon-Anis' statistics are on a statewide level. The San Juan statistics are a little different. The average age of the CWMUs on the San Juan is about 6.4. Whereas on the public, it is 6.8.

Travis Pearson-This might be off the topic, but how are the bison on the Book Cliffs?

Anis Aoude-It's hard to say exactly how they are doing. There are mixing with bison from the Ute Tribe. We do surveys. But it's hard to tell the bison apart. Even though we have collars on them, they are hard to see from the air. We do know that reproduction is good. (Inaudible). It will be about six years down the road before we will be doing any harvest.

Bill Bates-Anis, can we invite Justin Shannon to give us a picture of bison depredation on the Book Cliffs?

Justin Shannon-We have had bison move from the Book Cliffs to the Nine Mile unit. The northeastern region has issued 25 public permits, and have directed hunters to those areas where the depredation has been the most severe. They have tried to put pressure on the bison that way to drive them back onto the Book Cliffs. (Inaudible).

Kevin Albrecht-Are you satisfied with the movement of the bison in terms of where you wanted them to move?

Justin Shannon-The bison have come further south, down by Thomson, and some bison have gone further east. It's been interesting how the Ute bison have mixed with the Henry Mountains bison. (Inaudible). It has been a problem with the bison moving over into the Nine Mile unit. It is nice to have a plan passed, where we can issue permits through an alternate list and put pressure on them and move them back onto the Book Cliffs.

Bill Bates-Why don't you tell them about the bison study going on down on the Henry Mountains?

Justin Shannon-We collared 59 bison on the Henry Mountains this year. Forty five of them were equipped with GPS collars. The rest have been affixed with VHF collars. It's given us a much better feel about mortality and (Inaudible). There is a group from Utah State University that is researching this herd and there is a lot of good research momentum out there.

Derris Jones-Is part of the study, designed to help us learn more about the sightability of bison during annual flights?

Justin Shannon-Yes that's correct. This will help us tweak our data. The GPS collars will help us learn where the bison are on the landscape. We'll know if they are in the canyons, where we don't survey. The collars will give more credibility to our aerial data. The bison committee is excited about the collaring project. The more we know about the population, the better able we will be to manage it.

Travis Pearson-As far as the 25 depredation permits that were issued for the Book Cliffs depredation, where did the permit holders come from?

Justin Shannon-We took the alternate list from those who applied for permits on the Henry Mountains. These are guys who would have drawn, had we issued more tags.

Blair Eastman-Justin, I've noticed this winter, it's been hard to tell the cows from the calves, and it seems like some of the bulls are coming back. I don't know if anybody's killing bulls. If you could kill some of those bulls to keep the others from coming back, it might have a positive effect (inaudible).

Justin Shannon-I don't know what the gender breakdown is. (Inaudible).

Anis Aoude- They have killed at least five bulls. (Inaudible). Let me clarify something. These bulls are animals that came from the Ute tribe. They are not the ones that were transplanted from the Henry Mountains.

Derris Jones-Just a quick comment. On the Indian Peaks elk hunt, they were quite a bit... (inaudible).

Anis Aoude-The rationale for that was that we had a one-year **drop** of an age class (inaudible) from the previous year. When they saw the way the numbers dropped, they realized that it had been over-harvested the year before. That was the rationale they gave us. It's not a big reduction in permits. It's only a slight reduction. I think they are starting to get to the point where...(inaudible).

Bill Bates-Will you go to your once-in-a-lifetime table? Do the bison include conservation permits?

Anis Aoude-No, it doesn't. None of them include conservation permits. All of these permits go through the drawing.

Bill Bates-And that doesn't include Antelope Island as well, correct?

Anis Aoude-No, it doesn't. As far as conservation permits, they don't include... (inaudible).

Questions from the Public

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any questions from the audience? Please state your name.

James Gilson-Could you go back to the part where you talked about cutting the limited entry bull tags? (Inaudible) What was the intention? What was the target?

Anis Aoude-The intention was to bring them to the target objective. We never take them below.

James Gilson-There is a 124 decrease. Was that just on these units?

Anis Audi-That's correct.

James Gilson-Maybe I misunderstood this, but could you explain where you got your numbers?

Anis Aoude-It went from 2976 last year to 2989 this year.

James Gilson-Okay, I must have misunderstood.

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any other questions from the audience? We do have comment

cards if you would like to come up and make a comment. You can go ahead and hand the comment cards to Bill here. Comments from the audience?

Comments from the Public

James Gilson-I'm James Gilson and am representing the SFW. I would like to make a recommendation that we don't have any increase in spike tags. We are still of the belief that people don't want to shoot all of the spikes on the units. If we shoot all the spikes, they never grow up to be mature bulls. So our request is that we don't increase spike bull tags statewide. I just want to make a few more comments. The trend on the Manti is decreasing numbers of tags and shooting below objective, and if you look at the Manti specifically, in 2010 we raised 35, and in doing so, we dropped the age objective to 7.(?) In 2009, we dropped it down to 6.4. It looks like we may be shooting that unit down below objective. I think we are approaching the situation we've talked about for years. In this case we have seen a dramatic decrease with only 35 tags. Our recommendation is to maintain permits at 2010 levels. We would like to not see an increase in permits on the Fish Lake or Manti units. Also, our recommendation is that we go to mandatory reporting. You have spent a lot of money having college kids call my house, asking where we hunt and what we killed. We could've given that information over the Internet. We use the Internet to complete our applications. Why can't we use the Internet to report our harvest success. It seems like it would be very easy to get all this data over the Internet and have a complete set of data for making future recommendations. In addition, we wouldn't have to pay calling survey companies for their services.

Kevin Albrecht-Thank you. Any other comments?

Eric Luke-My name is Eric Luke. I am also a member of SFW. One recommendation that James left out is that tooth data on CWMU units be kept separately from the public units. CWMU units have a longer season to hunt. They are guided. They generally kill an older age class bull. They don't have the pressure from the public. We would like to see tooth data kept separately. Throwing that tooth data in, affects the public hunters. CWMU units are not managed the same way as public units.

Cole Noyes-The United Wildlife Cooperative would like to thank the division for the work that they have been doing in behalf of our deer herds. We would like to acknowledge the workshops and outreach the division has been doing as part of a great tool to promote education and reduce apathy among the public. The UWC opposes all management strategies and practices that support blanket managing Utah's deer herds and 18 to 100 buck:doe ratio. It has been stated time and time again that DWR employees believe that raising the buck to doe ratio will not increase the number of deer in our state. We believe that social hunter management strategies should direct and reflect the wants and desires of Utah hunters. We believe these recommendations do not allow this. We urge the division and the Wildlife Board to reconvene and readdress the direction of mule deer management in our state and make changes necessary to grow more mule deer and second, to maximize opportunity on general units and implement those policies. Furthermore, if the RAC and Wildlife Board are unwilling to consider changing the buck to doe ratios as previously mentioned, we would like to see some of the lost rifle tags moved to primitive weapon seasons since the ultimate goal of the new buck to doe ratios is to kill fewer bucks. By moving lost tags to some of the less successful hunts, we can give more folks an opportunity to hunt while still killing fewer bucks. The UWC would like to see and is happy to assist with setting up and implementing mandatory education

and surveys to be taken prior to applying for and purchasing licenses and tags. Much of our information regarding hunter desires is incomplete and we feel that implementing these things will allow little dispute and add clarity as to what Utah's sportsmen and women desire. Thank you for your time.

Derris Jones-How many members do you have in your Utah Wildlife Cooperative?

Cole Noyes-I don't know. I just barely joined. They had a spokes person coming down, but his little boy became ill and he asked me to do this.

Derris Jones-Do you guys have a website up yet?

Cole Noyes-I think they do.

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any more comments from the audience? Are there comments from the RAC?

RAC Discussion

Derris Jones-Anis, could you talk a little bit about spike hunting? What percentage of spike bulls get into the older age class? How many get into the age cohort where they are considered trophies?

Anis Aoude-About 18% of all spike bulls are harvested and taken home, but as far as how many of the spikes are escaping harvest, we estimate about 40 to 50%. The spike bull program is one that we've had for many years and has been very successful. It keeps the cow: bull ratio such that we can maximize production. There are 7,200 spike bulls now, and may translate to 200 big bulls 6-7 years in the future. There is natural mortality and other factors that play into the survival of yearling bulls. I think the spike bull program has helped production in the state. SFW has had ample representation on the statewide elk committee. We are following the plan as we have presented here. I hope you take that into consideration.

Kevin Albrecht-I have a question for you, Anis? Can you explain that 20% trigger?

Anis Aoude-Basically, the higher the success, the more spikes you'll kill. With a 20% trigger, the most spikes you could kill in Utah with 15,000 spikes, are 3000. That would be the total we could ever kill statewide. If it gets above 20%, we would have to start thinking about reducing the number. Basically, that's what we're trying to do with the population of 70,000. We are trying to kill 3000 spikes statewide. That's where that 3000 permits come in.

Kevin Albrecht-Can you speak to where we've been in the last two or three years on that percent?

Anis Aoude-It has fluctuated. It is never been it 20%. Let's put it that way. That's why we have had this discussion have picked that number to make sure we don't over harvest spikes. It has fluctuated between 15 and 18%. Most years it is 15%. It just depends on vulnerability during the hunt.

Travis Pearson-How many on the archery tags? How many of them are killed on the cow versus spike?

Anis Aoude-It's almost 50% cows.

Travis Pearson-Now if it goes above 20%?

Anis Aoude. Basically, we try to harvest 3000 or less.

Derris Jones-On the tooth data you are collecting, it sounds like if you're able to pull the data apart if you want to any time?

Anis Aoude-Yes, it's not a problem. The reason why we don't do it is because the CWMU is part of the unit. Most hunts are not that much longer or guided, although some clients

hold out for bigger bulls and have a longer time to hunt. I worked as a biologist on CWMU for three years, and worked with tooth age data. There are so few tags on a CWMU that it is only a few permits that we are talking about. The weight of that is not going to change the data. If we pulled it out, it wouldn't really hurt us. It wouldn't change their recommendations at all.

Derris Jones-The method that you are collecting the data..it can be done?

Anis Aoude-Oh yes it can be done.

Laura Kamala-Are you still monitoring chronic wasting disease on the LaSal Mountains?

Anis Aoude-Where we have detected it, we still monitor it. Now that federal budgets have been cut, we have less money for monitoring, but we continue to have enough budget to continue monitoring for chronic wasting disease. The incidence of chronic wasting disease has not increased a whole lot. We do see a few animals every year, but we don't have a problem of it increasing. Yet, it ultimately will. It almost always does. It's a protein that stays in the soil, and it's not easy to get rid of. Once you have it, it stays in the system. We expect that prevalence rates will increase. It depends on how you manage the herds. It's mostly carried by older age individuals. The older segment of the population propagates it more quickly. It's just one of those things that once you have it, you have it.

Kevin Albrecht-I've got a question or comment. I'll start with my comment. I want to talk about the mandatory harvest reporting for the general season hunts. I believe that that is already done on all of the limited entry hunts. I would like to know what the cost of that is.

Anis Aoude-The elk contract is \$3.40 per call. The new contract will change to about 4-5 dollars a call.

Kevin Albrecht-Approximately how many surveys are done?

Anis Aoude-It depends. We try to get around 20% of each unit in the state. We spend about \$20,000.

Kevin Albrecht-And then that is carried over to the deer?

Anis Aoude-the cost for deer and elk is about \$70,000. Just to clarify, the web also costs us. As far as reporting on the web, it's not free. It's about \$2.50 per survey. So if you are to add Internet reporting with surveys by telephone, the cost would increase. It's not a net zero, if everybody reported on the Internet. That's why we do a statistical sample rather than sample everybody, because every type of survey comes at a cost.

Kevin Albrecht-If there were a mandatory reporting before you put in for a draw, is that something that is administered by the division?

Anis Aoude-All of our surveys are done through a company in Fallon, Nevada. They are now doing our online surveys and telephone surveys. They have to do the design and there is a cost for any program changes, which are made. To be honest, the cost issue is not the only reason we do this. It's not needed. If you do a statistically sound sample, you can pay more and you get the exact same data. The division is trying to be frugal, and we try to make the dollar go as far as we can. It does not make sense to spend more money, to get the same data.

Derris Jones-Can I ask Brad Crompton to come up and give us some information? Can you give us your thought process as to why you made your recommendation as far as increasing the Manti elk tags?

Brad Crompton-As Anis pointed out earlier, we have an objective for the Manti, and it's between 5.5 and six. We are above that age objective right now. We are at 6.4 overall.

We are going to trim this down, which may seem alarming, but we are still above that objective. We have to put in a recommendation that would trend the population toward our objective.

Justin Shannon-It seems bad to move back from 7 to 6.4, from 2009 to 2010, but what wasn't mentioned, was that from 2008 to 2009, we went from 6.3 to 7. And so, this past year, there was a drop, but before that, there was an increase. (Inaudible.) There may be some noise in the data.

Derris Jones-I guess my question is on Indian peaks. They were thinking that they were close to that big change point. With the noise in the data, that may be here, are we now in the same place as Indian peaks is?

Anis Aoude-With Indian peaks, they doubled the tags last year from the previous year. We have never doubled the tags not even come close. I'll put something in perspective. The Wasatch unit has almost half the elk, and has higher numbers of permits and their herds are not being adversely affected. So I don't think increasing the number of permits will have a adverse effect on the Manti.

James Gilson-We had a meeting with Alan Clark in the division, and we talked about our concern about the sampling. There's a belief that the elk are coming off the Manti and going on to the Wasatch unit. And that is why it seems to sustain the numbers it has. Allen's answer is that he believes there have been elk that are crossing the highway and have been providing an influx to that population on the Wasatch, and that's what they told us there. It seems that we're getting two conflicting answers as far as the questions that we're asking.

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any other comments for the RAC?

Kevin Albrecht-One comment I have is that I had the opportunity to serve on the mule deer and elk committees and I do appreciate the time and effort that have been put into the surveys. Having worked with Anis and Kent, I appreciate the huge amount of time that they have put into this to get good management data and come to a valide statistical analysis. I think that the elk plan is much stronger because of the surveys that have been completed. The surveys have allowed the elk committee to know what the public has really wanted. I feel that if everyone were given the opportunity to put their input into this survey, it would help with the belief that the division is not hiding anything. I have had some statistics classes, but I think there's a lot of weight in surveying the entire number of hunters. Even if statistically it's not going to change the numbers, it carries a lot of weight.

Travis Pearson-So, are you saying you would like to see 100% surveyed?

Kevin Albrecht-I'm saying that I don't know if we could get the hundred percent, but if in the application process, you had to complete a survey to get in, they could answer questions about their harvest that would provide us with more complete data.

Derris Jones-I have just one more comment. What Kevin just suggested, would that require a program modification? And also, would it require a fee?

Anis Aoude-Right now, it is costing us about \$60,000 and we are surveying about 20% , so if you cut that in half, you get 30,000 and 30,000 times 4 is \$120,000. So you go from \$60,000 to \$120,000 and that's just for deer. This is not going to get us anything, especially when we go to unit by unit, especially when the data will be even be that much better. We can target people for each unit, and on a regional basis where they hunted. Once we go to a unit by unit survey basis, our data will improve even more. In some states, it has gone back and forth, but they have gone away from it, because they have

found out that the data has not changed. We could do it, but it will come at a higher cost and there will be no change to the data. It may make some people feel better, but it won't change anything.

Kevin Albrecht-I have a question on that. Right now the data is done by a contractor that that makes calls, and what I suggested is that the surveys be done through the web which is already there.

Anis Aoude-If you are going to have someone do a survey it has got to go through someone. This will mean, it will take more hours to analyze, and in doing so, we will need to hire more people to analyze the data. That's why we have Fallon do the survey and take the data. They have skill in that area. Nothing comes for free. There is an additional cost. It will go from about \$60,000 to \$120,000 and that will be just to get the deer done. Elk will be a lot harder because they are sold over-the-counter, so you would have to do something else, if you're going to make it mandatory. None of it is impossible, nor is the cost too great, it's just that the cost is not needed to have a statistically sound sample.

Christine Micoz-My comment is, if you did both, you would get some people with an online survey, and some could be contacted with a call.

Anis Aoude-It wouldn't work that way.

Bill Bates-In this time of limited budgets, you have to ask what the increased cost is going to get us. What do we have to cut in order to accomplish a complete survey? When you look at having to cut some things to accomplish this, there's a trade-off.

Kevin Albrecht-I understand all this. I just didn't have a good understanding of the system. I thought that since the website was there, it's not an additional cost. I thought it would just save the division money.

Anis Aoude-There is a difference in cost between the telephone survey and the web site application, it's about half the cost.

Travis Pearson-How about a compromise where you double the online surveys and cut out the telephone surveys?

Eric Luke-Can I ask a question, Anis? Explain the cost per application. Will there be an additional cost, or is it the same cost for a survey along with the application?

Anis Aoude-Yes, there is a cost per application and there will be an additional charge for every item that's tacked onto the application. The cost for an application is a totally different thing, the survey is a totally different thing. Fallon, Nevada did do the contract for both the application and the survey work this year, but they're entirely different contracts.

Travis Pearson-On the cow elk permits, there is actually a survey online we are supposed to fill out.

Anis Aoude-We did try that. This year on a voluntary basis with a reward for those who did complete the survey. But it still is not mandatory though.

Travis Pearson-Did you actually have to pay for that?

Anis Aoude-Oh, yes we did. We paid for the people who did go on and complete the survey in cases where completing the survey is mandatory before they can apply for the next years permit. There is still an option where they can pay \$50 and continue to do that. Our people who handle that are already inundated with calls. If we go to a 100% mandatory reporting, and 60,000 more applications, we would almost triple the volume. We would have to hire another person to take care of the extra load. There's a customer service aspect as well. People forget all the time, multiply that by many more, and you

have that many more people that are upset at you at the end of the year.

VOTING

Kevin Albrecht-If we do not have any more comments from the RAC, I would like to get people's feelings on some of these issues that will help me when I go before the board.

Are there any further comments from the RAC?

Bill Bates-The Utah Wildlife Cooperative does have a website. It is utahwildlifecooperative.org.

Kevin Albrecht-What about an increase in spike tags? What's the feeling on that?

Blair Eastman-It seems like it's contrary to what has been put into a five-year plan. I don't think we're in any crisis at this time, so we should follow out the plan as long as there is not a crisis going on.

Derris Jones-I would agree with that. We should stay with the current plan. We are still meeting the objectives on our elk units. Until that 20% magic number is reached, we should stay with it.

Christine Micoz-I would agree with that.

Travis Pearson-In the future, if there is a way to correlate the number of tags issued now, and how those spike tags are fluctuating, and if the herd is going down, because of spike tags, something can be implemented to reduce the number of spike tags issued.

Kevin Albrecht-I guess my feeling as well is the opportunity I had of sitting on the statewide elk committee, and that was explained very well to us, and it does have triggers in place, and I believe I was in support of this, having the spike harvest statewide. I believe it is a great tool. If you look at those units, that do have the spike harvest, there is a much healthier equilibrium throughout the herd. One thing that I believe will have to be managed, it's only been a couple of years since the spike harvest has been implemented, at some point when they reach 6 to 8 years in, that they will have to look at the number of tags, but we're not there now, so I will support the recommendation.

Laura Kamala-It also makes sense to me to follow the plan that's in place.

Pam Riddle-There has been a lot of research put into that. I support staying with the division recommendation.

Kevin Albrecht-. There has also been an issue about no increase in limited entry elk tags on the Central mountains Manti and the Wasatch.

Pam Riddle-Once again I believe we should stay with the plan.

Blair Eastman-One thing I read last night, and I wanted to mention this before, is that this information is on a statewide basis, where it says there are approximately 72,530 elk, which is up 3,500. Am I reading that right? The objective statewide is 68,820 elk, which leaves us with 3,700 elk above objective. I hate saying that, but there we are. We must not be in too bad a shape.

Derris Jones-As long as we are at age objective on the bulls, there's no reason to make changes. Let's stay with the objectives we have identified in the plan with limited entry. Since we aren't at 100% reporting online, there's no better method than the tooth data, so I say let's stay with the course and run with it.

Christine Micoz-I agree. Let's stay with the plan. We are following it, and if there are any big changes, we can address those later.

Kevin Albrecht-Having been on the elk committee, it would be hard to go against something I voted for. At the same time on the two units where I have the opportunity to

spend some time, and those are the Fish Lake and Central mountains-Manti, I was quite surprised because I felt that this would be the year when we would reach that equilibrium that Derris was talking about. When I talked with hunters, and I get a lot of input from them, I kind of felt that this would be the year when we would get some kind of surplus--that we would get some big calf crop and low harvest, and so I felt that that being out there, and seeing what the hunter harvest was, that we would see that this year and we would fall within that objective. We have had steady increases over the last three years and my feeling is with those steady increases, we would probably reach that, but at the same time, I would hate to vote against the plan. I approved it, so I am alright with sticking with the plan.

Pam Riddle-I agree.

Laura Kamala-I agree too.

Kevin Albrecht-What about mandatory harvest reporting?

Travis Pearson-If they feel like the data is accurate, let's stay with this.

Blair Eastman-I support the division on this.

Kevin Albrecht-Maybe I belabor this too much, but on the mandatory reporting, but if it could be used as a tool that's already there, people could get on the website, and it's not an increased cost, my hope was that if the cost could be negated it would be worthwhile. But if that's not the case, then I understand staying where we are.

Kevin Albrecht-There's an issue about tooth data on CWMU's. Should we separate that tooth data from the data from public hunters?

Blair Eastman-I can appreciate that CWMUs have some advantage age-wise, but it's more important to get an overall age, and I think it gives us a little bit better idea where things need to go, and I say that because of the Range Creek unit on public land, where the division has a different age bracket, than we have at the ranch. Whether that's good or bad, I don't know. The division and CWMU managers need to work together to reach those age objectives.

Derris Jones-. The issue is whether the teeth data from the CWMUs should be included in the tooth data from the public. Since it is such that it can be pulled out or put together, I don't think it's a big issue in my mind.

Bill Bates-I guess what the question would be, should that be included in the age objective. I think that's a more pertinent question.

Anis Aoude-I would like to correct something. Those are bulls that are taken out of the population. The age structure is going to shift around because those bulls have been taken out. We want to include them. If we don't include them, we're not going to have use for it. CWMU's often use age data for their management. Whichever way you go, it would be fine with us, but if you decide to separate it, we will not collect it.

Eric Luke-What was your reason for including CWMU data in the general population? The CWMU data was almost 1.5 years over age class objective. When you throw that into the mix, it puts the Manti a little bit higher. My thoughts are that it affects the public hunter; it doesn't affect the CWMU hunter and how they are managed.

Travis Pearson-It did the opposite for the San Juan unit. They say it was 6 year-old bulls on the CWMU's, and it brings the age objective down on the public unit.

Kevin Albrecht-And I guess that's my question, on the on the San Juan, a lot of those CWMU's are among lower in the fields across the road from Eastland.

Travis Pearson-. It's more the northern side. There are a lot more farms and CRP ground through there.

Derris Jones-I guess after Anis' explanation, I think it's important to include the CWMU data with that from public units. It still biologically the same group of animals. It's important to monitor the age of everything, and if there's any question on whether one is biasing the other, it's easy to separate and determine what percentage is being biased.

Christine Micoz-I agree, especially where we can separate the data. Monitoring the data of the whole herd seems like the best way to go.

Travis Pearson-I support the divisions recommendation.

Kevin Albrecht-I guess my feeling is a little different. The CWMUs do not use age data to make their tag decisions. I believe that it should be managed separately, because it does affect the public hunter. I think that the data should be separated. I think it's great data, but it should be calculated separately.

Pam Riddle-It seems that if we change, we won't collect it. If we need to, we can tease it out from the other data.

Blair Eastman-If there were some drastic problems, I would see a reason to break it out. I don't disagree with what you're saying, but I don't think there is any place where the data is changed, based on the data from the CWMU tooth data.

Bill Bates-I think Justin Shannon looks at that data anyway.

Justin Shannon-Yes we do. Our biologists look at it. The Manti public is 6.25. If you include the CWMU tooth data, it jumps to 6.4, so it jumps to just over a 1/10 of a year. The CWMU permits amounts to 1/8 of all the permits issued. If we are talking about drastic changes, we have the ability to tease it out.

Bill Bates-So, Justin what would you do if CWMUs were 7.5 and the public was 5.7?

Justin Shannon-My take is that we would work with the CWMUs on their plans, just like I was saying, the biologists would get together with the CWMU operators. They would work out the number of tags for the needs of the unit. In the situation we have now, it is not drastically changing the public situation.

Blair Eastman-I may be wrong, but just looking at the age objectives, the CWMU has a higher age objective than the rest of the Nine Mile Unit, so we are actually helping the unit.

Kevin Albrecht-What about the Utah Wildlife Cooperative's comments?

Bill Bates-I think we should tease that out a bit. They want to leave the buck to doe ratio at 15 instead of 18.

Kevin Albrecht-Bill Bates took better notes than I did.

Bill Bates-The issue is leaving the buck to doe ratio at 15 per hundred, instead of going to 18 per 100.

Travis Pearson-We already voted on this issue at our past vote. It was unanimous.

Christine Micoz-That was right. I agree we have messed around with this enough. We just need to leave it alone long enough to let it work.

Derris Jones-I agree. The deer management plan has already been agreed upon. Let's keep it that way.

Bill Bates-The next issue was revisiting the mule deer plan. The last one was to take the reduction in any weapon permits, and move those to primitive weapons. So, this year we are proposing to take 5000 permits out of the state pool, and they propose to put those into primitive weapon permits.

Anis Aoude-To clarify, those 5000 permits came out of rifle and muzzleloader, so the only other primitive weapon would be archery. (Inaudible). As you know, muzzleloader success is almost the same as rifle success. Archery success is a lot lower.

Derris Jones-If those tags were shifted to archery, in order meet the objective of 18 per 100, you would have to reduce tags by 20% or more or... (Inaudible).

Anis Aoude-For every two rifle tags, you could add an archery tag. Their success is about half.

Derris Jones-To reduce the number of bucks harvested, you would have to start with a higher number of reduced permits.

Anis Aoude-Yes, you're right.

Derris Jones-I want to stick to the 18 bucks per hundred does. We have approved it, and we should work through the five-year cycle. The next time the deer plan goes around, if the Utah Wildlife Cooperative is still around, we hope that they could be invited to participate in the management plan.

Kevin Albrecht-. That's my feeling as well. We had the opportunity to vote on the mule deer plan, and if we do that tag allocation, it looks to me as though, it's pitting one group against the other. At this time more than any, we need to be united in trying to get the mule deer back.

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any other comments or anything we might have missed?

Travis Pearson-Can we go back to the tooth data? I would almost like to change and say that if there is a substantial difference, then it should be looked at, but if it's very minimal, it shouldn't matter. This could be evaluated on a unit by unit basis and CWMU basis.

Kevin Albrecht-Your comment made me bring up a point that I thought a lot about last year. I thought that the mandatory reporting of harvest would be very helpful. We are going into a new strategy. That would really help understand where the age objective was. But again, I don't want to put a financial burden on the division in tough times. My thought was that if it could be added to the website that was already there, and there wasn't an additional cost, then that would be great, but if that's not the case, I understand.

Kevin Albrecht-Okay, Let's go to the Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2011.

Anis Aoude-Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6) Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2011 (Action)

-Anis Aoude, Wildlife Program Coordinator

-Justin Shannon, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

Questions from the RAC

Bill Bates-Did you mention the increase in the number of antlerless elk permits this year?

Anis Aoude-Yes I did. I've got them right here. We have increased permits from 11,803 last year to 12,174 this year.

Bill Bates-In your tables you have one CWMU that was up to...(inaudible).

Anise Aoude-There are a lot of permits that don't go into the drawing, but we do have mitigation permits that happen on an annual basis. That can't be preset... (Inaudible).

Kevin Albrecht-Thanks Anis. Are there questions from the RAC?

Travis Pearson-How many depredation tags do you issue for deer?

Justin Shannon-Do you guys know how many depredation tags are issued in your districts?

Brett Crompton-On the Manti, it averages about 300. Most of those are down... (inaudible).

Guy Wallace-There are very few on the LaSal's and the San Juan's.

Anis Aoude-(inaudible).

Travis Pearson-(inaudible).

Bill Bates-There are 285 on the Manti... (inaudible). There 35 on the San Juan, and five on the LaSal's. There are 69 on Nine Mile.

Travis Pearson-Do those stay the same each year, or do they fluctuate?

Justin Shannon-There are peaks and valleys every year. It depends on what kind of winter we had. It also depends on if the deer decide to move up on the mountain.

Kevin Albrecht-Are there other questions from the RAC?

Blair Eastman-Justin, how you come up with the number on the Nine Mile/ Range Creek?

Justin Shannon-Last year, we had about 2,100 elk, and this year we had an exceptional harvest of cows, and our population estimate is about 1,700 elk. We did cut 220 permits on there just because we thought with 480, we could get the same amount of harvest and get it closer to the objective. We've had such good harvest that we could back off.

Blair Eastman-Another year of really good harvest could wipe them out. What was the percentage that were killed in 2009-2010?

Justin Shannon-We killed 500 cow elk.

Blair Eastman-Brad, so if you have that kind of harvest, is that going to take us... (inaudible)...that's going to drop down again?

Brad Crompton-We have to count the production that's going into the herd is well.

Blair Eastman-So you still feel like we're going to be in that 1700-1800 population bracket, if they have really good success next year?

Brad Crompton-We backed off, so that we could approach 1600, but to give a stab at what the hunt success will be, depends on the weather next winter. We could always drop a little bit, but we've shown no problem in growing elk in this state so far. They will come back. That said, with that much cow harvest, our bull-cattle ratio will go through the roof, and there are different issues on that mountain, and we may be able to reduce that herd quite a lot more.

Blair Eastman-I have another question, Brad, don't go away. It seems to me, and I see other places that are this way, it really bothers me that we are literally chasing those cows from the end of August to the 31st of January. They never get a chance to rest or to catch up. That's a pretty tough time, especially when you get into January. This year, they were running pretty ragged. Is there any way that we can start breaking up some of those hunts?

Brett Crompton-Certainly, there have been concerns voiced by other folks throughout the state. Statewide, we are trying to minimize the late seasons to minimize the disturbance to mule deer and elk wintering as well. It's true, we harass them from mid-August to the end of January. Sometimes you have to, just to get the harvest. A year ago, we were here trying to figure out how to increase the harvest of cows on the Nine Mile/Range Creek units. It's hard to talk about overharvesting cow elk right now.

Blair Eastman-I think this year more than any other year, we have seen them on the run. They were in pretty tough shape.

Brad Crompton-It's true. They were in pretty tough shape. We had a good harvest.

However, the previous five years, the harvest was low. If you include the CWMUs and public grounds, there were 1000 hunters out there. Most years, you only kill between 100 and 200 elk.

Blair Eastman-I hope we do that next year.

Brad Crompton-Yes.

Blair Eastman-What is the breaking point to keep the cow elk hunters reduced? If we see 1600 elk, what will you do? Where is the breaking point to go back to 700 tags?

Brad Crompton-We have to issue a certain number of cow elk permits to maintain a population of 1600 elk. Our permit numbers are based on our average success. During the last couple of years, our harvest has been low, but with the harvest this year, we should be right around 1600. We will see next winter.

Blair Eastman-I have one more question. When you put together that landowner/division/PLM agreement, what was the objective number in Nine Mile/Range Creek ?

Brad Crompton-It was 1000 elk on the whole unit before, and then was raised to 1600. It was 1300 to the south and east of Nine Mile Canyon, and 300 on the Whitmore Park area.

Bill Bates-Brad, looking at this late-season, it looks like 250 permits were recommended.

Brad Crompton-That's when the harvest occurs. That's when our highest success is. This year, success was very high.

Questions from the Public

Kevin Albrecht-With that, are there any questions from the audience?

Bart Kettle-Do you have any data on the southeastern region fawn:doe ratio?

Justin Shannon-For Nine Mile this year, it was 60 fawns per hundred does. The Manti was 61.

Bart Kettle-Another question is what is our objective for deer herd numbers? That number was set around the 1994 era. Could you guys shed light on that? How do we set our deer herd objectives?

Anis Aoude-Are you talking about population objectives? Population objectives were set way before 1994. The way they were set was based on how many deer were being harvested from those units at that time. They tried to do a calculation about how many deer needed to be in the population. It's not really biologically set. It's not a carrying capacity per se. It is a number they thought they could obtain through time.

Kevin Albrecht-We do have comment cards. If you would like to make a comment, please bring those up to the front and give those to Bill. Any other questions from the audience?

Comments from the Public

Kevin Albrecht-Okay, we will entertain comments from the audience.

Bart Kettle-My comments revolve around population objectives for deer. As I look at fawn recruitment on the Colorado Plateau, I see the same thing recurring. We recruit 50 to 60 fawns per hundred does year after year. We have dry summers and harsh winters, so we see deer populations that are basically stagnant. During some good precipitation years, we gain a few deer. In tougher years, we lose a few deer. This tells me that we may be regulated by density-dependent conditions. This observation is based on range trend data, which is generally declining. There are a handful of range enclosures around and I see the same thing with each one. We have relatively healthy sagebrush inside the enclosures, and outside, the sagebrush is dead. In other situations, the sagebrush is in pretty tough conditions. We have marginal fawn recruitment, and we have difficulty making it through the winter. And then as we go to our spring counts, the fawn survival is quite low. I spent a little bit of time on the Manti deer unit this spring and I found 4 dead

fawns. Two of them died this winter. Two died last winter. None of them had been scavenged. Their skeletal structure was in place. Their death was not attributable to predation. I wonder if our deer herds are at or near capacity. From what I have seen and what I have read, we could potentially have more deer, if we cut down on the surplus numbers. If we do reduce the population of deer, and it is a predator driven population, it obviously will continue to decline. If it is a density-dependent situation, we should actually see increased fawn recruitment. Perhaps not immediately. That's not something you could act upon. It's just the thought that I have had. Thank you.

Kevin Albrecht-I appreciate those comments. I know how much time Bart spends on the Colorado Plateau. Even though those comments are hard as they may seem, they need to be looked at by all of this. That may be the case. Are there any other questions or comments from the audience?

RAC Comments/Discussion

Kevin Albrecht-Okay, we'll go to comments and discussion from the RAC and I want to start.

Kevin Albrecht-I want to congratulate the biologists in the southeastern and Central regions for maintaining the largest population of elk in the state on the Central mountains- Manti unit. You don't have the same problems with the antlerless harvest recommendations as I have seen elsewhere. I want to give the southeastern region and the central region biologists a compliment for that. For example, our neighbors to the south on the Fish Lake, we had several years ago what was referred to as the blue light special, and last year they had to stop shooting elk after the second season. It seems like on the Manti, there has never been a problem. There has never been a large problem with over-harvest. One of the things I think these biologists do very well is breaking the antlerless harvest down into 12 different areas. There is a lot of time and effort that goes into making these antlerless harvest recommendations. There is a lot of time spent on the ground and in speaking with other agencies, and coming to an agreement on the number of antlerless elk to harvest. It's not easy with 12,000 elk. They do it pretty smoothly, and I commend them for that. And with that, I recommend, even though it's not in our region, that the Fish Lake look at that. The Fish Lake biologists should look at the model used by the southeast and central region biologists. These biologists can do the same on the late hunts as they can on the early hands without producing over-harvest of elk. I would recommend that the biologists, who have done very well here, get with the biologists on the Fish Lake and help them achieve a much better and more balanced plan for the harvest of antlerless elk.

Derris Jones-I guess I would just like to express appreciation to Bart Kettle for his comments. He may be on track with what's going on. In my mind, I agree a lot with what Bart is saying. I am hoping that we can balance what we have with the habitat and range conditions. In the meantime, we need to work like crazy to improve the habitat and bring habitat up to the point to support the number of deer that we have. In the 30 years that I've been in this region, there is no question that habitat has gone downhill.

Travis Pearson-I don't know whether to address this now, but I was looking at the San Juan elk permits and they increased the draw on the public by 290, but decreased the CWMU tags. Is there a reason for that? I asked that question in elk committee meeting we had down in San Juan County. I asked whether we should open up the area north of Highway 491 or not. According to Guy Wallace, he said they were over-objective on that

side of the unit, not on the public side.

Justin Shannon-I think we can be more aggressive on our harvest on both sides of the highway, but where are you seeing a decrease in CWMU permits?

Travis Pearson-It says last year's antlerless CWMU permits were 130 and now we're asking for 114.

Justin Shannon-That should be the same. We really didn't do anything with the CWMU permits. If there's an error in that, we can correct that. Let's take a look at that. That's not intended all. There should be no change.

Kevin Albrecht-I will echo what Derris mentioned. I have tremendous concern for our mule deer herds. I have put a tremendous amount of money into habitat. I have had the opportunity to spend a lot of time taking that money and putting it on the ground, but sometimes I hear those comments, and they are not taken lightly, and I appreciate the division for the range rides. I guess you can't call them spring range rides anymore, because everybody has gotten rid of their horses. They will be doing some range monitoring with the public and I have been looking at those and there will be a lot of effort checking range trends. I encourage the division to keep that up, and ask that Bart get together with the division and provide his input.

Bill Bates-I was looking back on the CWMU portion and there are 130 antlerless permits on those two units. That must be wrong.

Justin Shannon-We were just looking at that. It's a calculation error. It's not pulling the data from the right cell. There won't be changes on either.

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any other comments from the RAC?

Kevin Albrecht-One thing I feel very fortunate about is that we have a lot of high elevation country and don't have the same weedy issues as the BLM. I recognize that our management is a lot easier than that of the BLM.

Bill Bates-I know that the Henry Mountains field station would like to burn 100,000 acres over the next 10 years. That's what they told me.

Kevin Albrecht-With that, is there anything else you would like me to carry forward on the antlerless?

VOTING

7) Big Game Rule Amendments-R657-5 (Action) -Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Kevin Albrecht-Questions from the RAC?

Laura Kamala-What is the purpose of the handgun provision?

Anis Aoude-The state statute changed to allow people to do it so we can't be more restrictive than state law, so we had to change our regulations to go along with the state statute change.

Travis Pearson-If I understand you correctly, you could carry a weapon while spotlighting?

Anis Aoude-That's correct. To clarify that, there are some counties where you have to get a permit to spotlight and shoot coyotes. If you are actually shooting something, then you have to get a special permit from the county where you will be spotlighting. You may get

into trouble if you don't have the proper permit.

Carl Gramlich-You can't shoot coyotes from a vehicle. With respect to the firearm regulations, in the big game proclamation, we changed the temporary game preserve, so that our regulations were not more restrictive than the state statute. Spotighting is still regulated by the state's sheriff's departments. You could spotlight, but you can't spotlight with a weapon in your possession. That has not changed.

Kevin Albrecht-I saw there were a few changes with the rangefinders as well.

Denise Aoude-To clarify, there are rangefinders in scopes now. That clarifies that these types of rangefinders can be used. If it actually has a visible light, then that cannot be used.

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any other questions from the RAC?

Questions from the Public

Kevin Albrecht-Questions from the audience? Comments from the audience? Comments from the RAC? I think that conforming with the state statute is a good thing and that we are going in the right direction. There were many sportsman that were wanting to follow the laws and bringing that up to state statute was a good thing . Are there any concerns that you would like me to take the Wildlife Board?

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

VOTING

- 8) **Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2011 (Action)**
-Justin Shannon, Regional Wildlife Program Manager or designee

Questions from the RAC

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any questions from the RAC? Are there any questions from the audience? Is there anything else I need to convey to the Wildlife Board?

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

VOTING

Lower Fish Creek Habitat Management Plan (Informational)

-Leroy Mead, Regional Habitat Biologist

Questions from the RAC?

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any questions from the RAC?

Laura Kamala-From the photos, it looks like the stream is in pretty good condition. Are you seeing any impacts to the wildlife from the livestock going into the creek?

Leroy Mead-No, most of the grazing takes place on the top. Cows do get down there once in a while so we put fences across the canyon. It's been pretty effective in keeping the cows out of this part of the canyon. I would say that it is not impacted by livestock. The railroad runs through there and whenever I walk up the railroad track, there is garbage and greasy things that the railroad throws out. I think that is more of an eyesore than anything else along the creek.

Kevin Albrecht-. One question I have is, you mentioned that there is no fencing on the uplands right now, and in one of the pictures you show there has been some spring improvements, and I wonder if that were a possibility that if you turn those off in summer, if that might keep the livestock from the property. Maybe that's not possible.

Leroy Mead-There would really be no way to turn off the spring. Even if you fenced it, then it would flow out below there on the extreme south part of the property, and so the cows could drink from it just below there, and so they would have access to most of the WMA. The WMA is not heavily grazed. There is a pond right by the road, and cattle hang out there to get a drink of water. The spring of water that was in the picture is not as pretty as this picture here, but most of the WMA receives probably moderate grazing.

Derris Jones-Is there any futurity in getting more in-stream flow? Is that a political reality or still kind of a dream?

Leroy Mead-When Mike Slater was here, he worked at something for a while but as my understanding is, nothing has happened since then. Do you know any more than I do, Bill? When the dam master believes that they will spill in the spring, they are a little bit more generous with in-stream flow. In the wintertime, we have very little flow. We've been mostly in a drought for the last 10 years, so they are very stingy about water. They do have to let water out for the power plant and things like that. So we do have a few options to pursue in that direction.

Derris Jones-I assumed that PRWID and the power plant are the main water users?

Leroy Mead-I would say that is true.

Derris Jones-Has there been any recent contact with them to try to coordinate when they call for water so that it matches what the fish need down there?

Leroy Mead-If there has been, I am not aware of it. I haven't done anything with that myself.

Bill Bates-It sounds like a good suggestion to follow up on.

Leroy Mead-Sure.

Questions from the Public

Kevin Albrecht-Are there any questions from the audience? Are there comments from the audience? Are the comments from the RAC? Seeing none, is there anything that you want me to carry forward? Thank you. Leroy.

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

Other Business

-Bill Bates, Regional Supervisor

Bill Bates-Justin, could you tell us about the range rides that will be happening? I would like everyone to know about the dates and you are all invited to accompany us on the range trend surveys. I also want to let you know that we have had three open houses up to this point. We had the one in Price and we had the one in Blanding and our Castle Dale meeting was kind of a hybrid. We went to kind of an informational meeting, and it got a little out of control, and didn't go over quite as well as the open houses did. We did get a lot of input and we appreciate all those who came out. And we enjoyed having you there. Justin, would you talk about those range tours?

Justin Shannon-The biologists are going to go out on these winter ranges and do some spring range rides at the end of April and in the month of May. The public is invited and some of our federal agency partners will be coming. We will go out and look at the habitat. On April 27, there will be one in San Juan County and also one on the Book Cliffs. Guy, when is your range trend ride on the Abajo's ? It will be on May 3rd. Wade will have one on the Henry Mountains. This will be a hybrid, where we will be looking at bison, as well as range trend conditions. On May 4, there will be another one on the LaSal Mountains with Guy. On May 7, which is a Saturday, we will do a range trend survey on the Manti. If you'd like to go, give us a call or talk to the biologists. We can give you more details about the time.

Derris Jones-What kind of advertising are you going to do?

Justin Shannon-Some of the rides don't lend themselves to large groups of people, especially on the Henry's. On the Henry's, you'll need an ATV to get to some of the areas. Every area will be a little bit different. Some of the range trend surveys will be walking, others will be on an ATV. I don't know about advertising, Derris. I'm sure that there will be some advertising , where it's accessible, but I don't know if we can advertise all of them, just because of the circumstances that we will find.

Blair Eastman-So are you going to set a time and place to meet for each ride?

Justin Shannon-Yes, we will. Mostly those rides will begin in the mid-morning around 10 o'clock.

Kevin Albrecht-Can the RAC members get an e-mail, describing the date, the time, and where to meet?

Justin Shannon-Yes, we can do that. This will be an opportunity for people to get out look at the areas and assess the vegetation trend.

Bill Bates-Our next RAC meeting will be on May 11 and I would suggest that we start at 6 PM.

Kevin Albrecht-Thank you everybody. The meeting is now adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

7 in attendance

Next RAC meeting Wednesday, May 11 at the John Wesley Powell Museum, 1765 E. Main in Green River.

**Wildlife Board Meeting, May 4-5, 9 a.m., DNR Board room, 1594 W. North Temple,
SLC**

NORTHEASTERN RAC MEETING SUMMARY-MOTIONS PASSED
Bingham Research Center, Vernal/April 14, 2011

7. BIG GAME RULE AMENDMENTS-R657-5

MOTION: that it be accepted as proposed
Passed unanimously

8. ANTLERLESS CWMU PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011

MOTION: to accept as proposed
Passed unanimously

5. BUCKS, BULLS AND OIAL PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011

MOTION FOR DEER: 30% deer reduction in the Northeastern Region to 9,000 permits, and 100 less buck permits in the Book Cliffs.

Passed 8-1

MOTION FOR ELK: to have no spike hunt in Book Cliffs, but go with statewide 15,000 spike on the elk hunt.

Passed 5-4

MOTION: to accept the rest of the plan as presented
Passed unanimously

6. ANTLERLESS PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011

MOTION: to accept as presented
Motion passed 6-3

NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY
Bingham Entrepreneurship & Energy Research Center (Bingham Center), Vernal
April 14, 2011

RAC MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bob Christensen, RAC Chair
Kirk Woodward, Sportsmen
Wayne McAllister, At Large
Rod Morrison, Sportsmen
Beth Hamman, Nonconsumptive
Brandon McDonald, BLM
Brent Bibles, Nonconsumptive
Floyd Briggs, At-Large
Mitch Hacking, Agriculture
Kevin Christopherson, NER Supervisor

UDWR PERSONNEL PRESENT:

Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator
Kent Hersey, Wildlife Biologist III
Charlie Greenwood, NER Wildlife Pgm Mgr
Dax Mangus, NER Wildlife Biologist
Derrick Ewell, NER Wildlife Biologist
Lowell Marthe, NER Wildlife Biologist
Clint Sampson, NER Conservation Officer
Torrey Christophersen, NER Lieutenant
Randall Thacker, NER Wildlife Biologist
Ron Stewart, NER Conservation Outreach
Gayle Allred, NER Administrative Aide

UNEXCUSED RAC MEMBERS:

Ron Winterton, Elected Official

WILDLIFE BOARD MEMBERS:

Del Brady

1. WELCOME, RAC INSTRUCTIONS AND RAC PROCEDURE: Bob Christensen

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES: Bob Christensen

Suggest we move Item 7 Big Game Rule Amendments and Item 8 Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations before Items 5 and 6.

Floyd Briggs: motion to approve

Beth Hamman: second

Passed unanimously

3. WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING UPDATE: Bob Christensen

From the last Board Meeting we discussed bear permit numbers and pursuit permits. There was a question and discussion on the term “accompany.” We suggested the Division and hounds men get together and come up with a definition. It is that a person can split off from the person holding the pursuit permit only if the dogs split up and the person with the stray dogs does not pursue bear. If the dogs tree a bear, it has to be released.

Permit numbers in the Book Cliffs were changed from 15 to 25.

The trap check proposal had opposition. The Board voted to keep the trap check rule to 48 hours, which is what NER RAC proposed.

Self-defense against wildlife: There was one change the RAC didn't hear. That was that if a bear turns on the hounds during a legal pursuit and proceeds to do harm to the bear, you can't harm the bear.

4. REGIONAL UPDATE: Kevin Christophersen

Seep Ridge Road Environmental Impact Study (EIS): Uintah County's going to be moving forward with paving the Seep Ridge Road to the Grand County line. The project will take six years to complete. They have already started surveying. We've been working with them for a couple of years. They've agreed to several deer crossings and fencing, and we think we'll be able to minimize some impacts. They've been working on that for 30 years that I know of.

Winter survival on fawns: is only at 50 % on the North Slope. Also, on the Rabbit Gulch range ride biologists on the west side saw an unprecedented number of dead fawns yesterday: approximately 60 dead fawn carcasses in a four to five mile ride. The 50% loss of fawns is just since December. We expect to see more mortality with spring coming because as they switch back to green-up it's hard on them. Whole carcasses were found with full stomachs because their systems were so far spent and it takes a lot of energy to switch back to green feed. Half had already died. The good news is we had 42 adult deer radio collared on the South Slope, and have only had three die so far, which is over 90% survival since September. We may lose a few of those, but hopefully they transition better through the green up. The mid-elevations got hit really hard.

Turkeys came through pretty well.

Wildlife Resources Open House: was held a month ago. It was another experiment to get public input and share their ideas. We've summarized everybody's comments. We'll send it out to everybody who gave us an e-mail address. We'll try it a few more times to get input early in the process and incorporate into our suggestions. We had about 30 people there and would like to have twice that many.

Budgets: We had another general fund cut. (About 10% of our budget total come from the General Fund). There seems to be a movement to wean us off of that 10% which might mean a license fee increase. There will probably be a fishing license increase, which we haven't increased in years. Hunting licenses will probably go up as well as we cut back on the number of tags. We decided to fund the most important programs and eliminate some others instead of half starving every program. The Kamas Fish hatchery is closed and it's a significant hatchery for us, and we need to re-open it. The fishing license increase would be one way. We are looking at what other programs we can cut to fund it.

7. BIG GAME RULE AMENDMENTS – R657-5: Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

-Changes to firearms restrictions were made to align with state statute. Since new legislation has been passed, we can't be more restrictive than they are.

-Removing the temporary game preserve section from the rule for limited entry big game hunts. By removing that it allows people to hunt non-protected species while the limited entry units are going on.

-Allowing possession of a handgun in a vehicle in accordance with state statute while spotlighting, again to go along with recent legislation passed.

-Allow archery and muzzleloader hunters to carry a handgun in the field (a sidearm can be carried while hunting but not to be used to dispatch the animal).

Questions from RAC:

Kirk Woodward: Are laser range-finding just for rifles?

Anis Aoude: Just for rifles.

Kirk Woodward: I was at Cabela's and there were people standing in line for returns for range-finders for bows because they're illegal in Utah.

Anis Aoude: That's right.

Questions from Public:

None

Comments from Public:

None

Comments and Discussion RAC:

MOTION by Kirk Woodward that it be accepted as proposed

Second by Brent Bibles

Discussion:

None

Passed unanimously

8. ANTLERLESS CWMU PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011: Charlie Greenwood, NER Wildlife Manager

See handout

No changes for the Northeastern Region

Questions from RAC:

None

Questions from Public:

None

Comments from Public:

None

Comments and Discussion from RAC:

MOTION by Beth Hamman to accept as proposed

Second by Brandon McDonald

Discussion:

None

Passed unanimously

5. BUCKS, BULLS AND OIAL PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011: Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator and Charles Greenwood, NER Wildlife Program Manager

See handout

Questions from RAC:

Mitch Hacking: Spike hunt questions. How come there's only an 18% success rate?

Anis Aoude: Spikes are really hard to hunt because they have to have at least one clean antler. About 40% of the yearlings are forked. It makes it harder to find them as well. During the rut those spikes aren't around because the bigger elk are in the area. That's why the committee felt safe because not too many will be taken.

Mitch Hacking: Are they getting enough opportunity?

Anis Aoude: The satisfaction rates on surveys are almost off the chart.

Mitch Hacking: On Diamond, if you had too many hunters, the rates went way down.

Anis Aoude: They've been lower. It has nothing to do with having more hunters or fewer hunters. Statewide disperses hunters better. Now you can hunt all 28 units for spikes instead of being concentrated in a few areas.

Wayne McAllister: You also mentioned about long term.

Anis Aoude: It used to be 11,000 then 13,500 next, through 15,000 through the life of the five-year plan through 2015.

Wayne McAllister: What other things influence that decision?

Anis Aoude: We want to harvest around 3,000 if the success rate stays below 20%.

Rod Morrison: What was the hunter satisfaction on older age units in the state?

Anis Aoude: Most of them are in the 3-4 range. I don't have each one memorized. I could get them. They're never unsatisfied.

Rod Morrison: I'm concerned in the drop of quality on upper end hunts.

Anis Aoude: It's my job to recommend the right number of hunters to get us there. That's why we're cutting permits.

Questions from Public:

Mike Davis: Can we get a bull-to-cow ratio for the Book Cliffs unit?

Anis Aoude: Our bull/cow observations are not from observations; it's based on a model.

Dax Mangus: According to the model for the Book Cliffs, the bull/cow would be 45-50 bulls per 100 cows. What we count from the helicopter is less than that.

Brad Horrocks: I'd always been told that our buck/doe ratio was 11/100. You're saying it's 16 in the Northeast region?

Charlie Greenwood: It depends on the unit. Overall it has gone to 16. If we're talking about the Vernal, that's a different story although this year it did increase also.

Comments from Public:

Clay Hamman: Managing wildlife is not an exact science. It's arrogance on our part to think we can change things. Overall, I support the plan as presented.

Greg Gilroy (Northeastern Utah Wildlife Coalition): Our mission statement is aimed at creating the best hunting in Northeastern Utah. We're concerned because if you're looking at major hunted areas at 11 bucks/100 does, that's 40% below what is recommended in the state.

- We request to reduce the buck tags further from 13,000 to 30% which would be 9,000 tags in Northeastern Utah for this year, reducing it to that point, especially in light of the fawn mortality rate.
- Bucks and Bulls, no spike hunts in Book Cliffs. Objective is 7,000 head.
- No spike hunts in limited entry units if numbers are below what you want in age classification or total numbers.
- Want 100 fewer buck tags in the Book Cliffs, divided between ML and Archery.
- Would like to see more funds for predator control.
- Shed antler season to limit the stress on animals while on winter range. Season to begin April 1.

We did have the best elk state in the nation, but I think you're going to find that's no longer the case, with the spike deals, it may stop it and help get us back to where we belong.

Brad Horrocks (Grazing for Wildlife): We support the 9,000 tags reduction on Northeastern season and limited number of spike permits under objective. Want 100 less bucks in the Book Cliffs. The elk quality was not good in Utah last year. Was told there will be maybe only one entry in Boone & Crockett to date.

Kenny Mair: (United Wildlife Cooperative): We are a new group that started two months ago. We already have a membership of almost 1000 members. We acknowledge the workshops and outreach the Division has been doing to promote education and reduce apathy among the public.

- Oppose all management strategies that support managing Utah's general deer herds to an 18/100 buck/doe ratio
- Would like the Division and Board to reconvene and readdress the direction of the mule deer management in Utah, to (1) grow more deer, and (2) to maximize opportunity on general units
- If buck/doe ratio won't be changed, would like some of the lost rifle tags moved to primitive weapons seasons

Ken Powell: (Mule Deer Foundation): We support the 30% decrease to 9,000 permits, no spike hunt in the Book Cliffs, and 100 less tags in the Book Cliffs.

Dave Chivers (Diamond Mtn. Landowners Assoc.): we don't have a spike bull elk for Diamond, right? It doesn't show on the graphs, but we're supposed to be managing Diamond Mountain deer towards being a premium unit.

Morgan Birchell (Utah Safari Club International): We recommend that we reduce deer permits 30% to 9,000. No spike-only hunt in the Book Cliffs and repeat of the UWC recommendations. It was a terrible deer hunt in the Book Cliffs last year.

Kim Lawson (Split Mountain Archers): We agree with the proposal from the Northeastern Wildlife Coalition. Hope you go that way.

Daniel Davis (Bow Hunters of Utah, Northeastern Chair): We sat in on the meeting. We support reducing 30% to 9,000. We would like to recommend closing that Vernal subunit with this tag reduction and managing our major problem. We support the mission statement proposed by the Coalition.

Mike Davis (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation): Sat in the Northeast Utah Wildlife Coalition and have been in close contact with Bill Christiansen. We think the buck reduction by 30% to 9,000 tags is a good objective to move towards. We do need to reduce the tags greatly. Close the Vernal subunit. No spike-only in Book Cliffs is a strong recommendation. 100 tags in the Book Cliffs; I did see a lot of bucks but the quality of bucks is very poor. A year after I drew my tag, my son drew a tag. Again the same thing, a lot of bucks, lots of 4-points but only 18" wide. I did not see a record buck. We need to do something in the Book Cliffs reduce the number of poor quality bucks and to improve the quality and antler size.

Byron Bateman (President of Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife): We support this new group that has been formed out here in the Northeastern Region and the reductions that they have asked for tonight. You all got the handout that they passed out detailing the recommendations. In addition to those requests, we would like to see no increase in spike tags statewide. Let's stay at the 13,750. I think we need to take our time and work our way into harvesting more spikes in all these other units now. We want to get back to being the number one state we are record wise but perception wise... We just need to take it slow and cautious and make sure we're not overshooting these spikes. If Karl Malone dies as a spike, he doesn't make it to the NBA. You're talking about the recruitment for the bull elk on all these units by killing these spikes. You don't know what that spike is going to grow up to be, what the potential he has. So I just ask that you stay where we're at with the current 13,750. We would like to see Manti, Wasatch, Fish Lake, stay with 2010 numbers, with no increase. We support the rest of the recommendations, especially the units that need to be reduced.

Also, we would like to see mandatory reporting for all big game. In order to get the best information, everybody should fill out a mandatory report online. Teeth data should be mandatory for all elk. CWMU teeth data should not be averaged with all other elk hunts. Our population objectives are way below where they should be. We need to cut back. The number the other groups wanted was a lot lower than the 9,000 they're recommending here tonight. Let's look at getting the herds rebuilt and then getting the buck/doe ratio to match that.

Comments from RAC:

Mitch Hacking: I've never seen a group come together like this. I support the groups' recommendations.

Floyd Briggs: With a reduction in numbers of tags, isn't the opening season where 70% of the kill occurs on opening day of the deer hunt?

Charlie Greenwood: Right. The first two to three days.

Floyd Briggs: So could less numbers in the field increase harvest?

Charlie Greenwood: Sometimes.

Floyd Briggs: In the last couple years, the shorter season, did that have a positive influence on our buck/doe ratio?

Charlie Greenwood: On the Vernal, the buck/doe ratio did increase, but it still comes back to the first two days' harvest.

Floyd Briggs: I believe on the North Slope of the Northeastern unit that when the classification is done on buck/doe, I don't believe the classification we're getting is an honest classification from the resident herd on the northern side of the unit. Wyoming's season happened earlier and the does are moving into the field. During Utah's classification it includes Wyoming's bucks. I'd like to see the classification occur from Sheep Creek south get to a more true count.

Charlie Greenwood: We try to classify the entire unit. Around Manila there is a higher buck/doe there but we do the whole unit to get a better representative sample. I understand what you're saying.

Curtis Dastrup: I'd like to see more deer but how do you increase a herd when you increase from 15 to 18 bucks per 100 does? If you're going to increase the numbers in deer, you need fewer bucks per 100 does so you have more deer to have fawns. If you increase to 18 bucks, you're going to lose population. If you want to increase the herd, you need to reduce bucks.

In the Book Cliffs, I've been there since 1959, they say weather's the problem. My personal feeling is predators are the biggest problems in the Book Cliffs. Also, I have read about the poaching situation in the United States. They figure in some states there are more deer taken by poaching than in the legal season. Also, what's the percentage of does killed on the highway? That ought to be figured in to the kill.

MOTION by Rod Morrison to decrease the Northeastern buck deer permits by 30% to 9,000, no spike hunt in the Book Cliffs, no spike hunt in limited entry units that are below objective. Would like to see 100 buck deer permits cut in the Book Cliffs unit, and no increase in the spike hunts. Stay with 13,750 elk permits.

Second by Kirk Woodward

Brent Bibles: I'd like to get back to the spike proposal as far as how the statewide spike hunt numbers came in.

Anis Aoude: It goes against the plan basically. We would like to get up to 15,000 statewide so we can kill enough spikes to maintain healthy populations statewide. And I do want to iterate that a lot of our population objectives are not carrying capacity so we may never get to objective on the Book Cliffs and that may have nothing to do with cow many elk we kill. So keep that in mind and don't cut opportunity just because you think that we're killing spikes that may end up to be bigger bulls in the future. Actually by killing spikes, you're making that herd healthier, producing more calves which will be bigger bulls in the future. So by killing a few spikes you're actually helping yourself, not hurting yourself. I think a lot of people don't see the future. They see the present and they're not looking forward. To increase that herd you need fewer bulls and more cows. By killing spikes you are achieving that. So don't shoot yourself in the foot by looking at these bulls today and not at the bulls for the future.

Mitch Hacking: On Diamond Mountain we had the deer, we had the elk. We had a quota set on how many and we had those 11% and those 12% on the elk and the deer. They were not quality hunts. Everybody was dissatisfied. We decided we wanted to get to that 18-25 and even more. We still kept our numbers up. We started adding cows and deer. We increased our age ratios from 18-25. Our herds didn't go down. I have a hard time understanding why this 15 %, if we don't stay there that we're gonna lose our herds. I just don't understand that. When we went up to 18-25, the hunting on Diamond Mountain went from poor to excellent. Diamond Mountain used to be just like the general season is now. That's why I support the 9,000 head that's been talked about and the no increase in spike.

Bob Christensen: (Clarifying motion)

Kevin Christopherson: You're going to ask the Board to violate the plan the second year into the plan.

Bob Christensen: When we recommend something to the Board that goes against the plan, they want to know why.

Brent Bibles: I wouldn't mind seeing the plan split between deer and spike, because it is going against the existing plan on the spike hunt.

Bob Christensen: So should we make the motion two parts between deer components and elk components?

MOTION AMENDED by Rod Morrison to split the motion by starting the motion to start with the deer 30% reduction in the Northeastern Region to 9,000 on the deer, and 100 less buck deer permits in the Book Cliffs.

Second by Kirk Woodward

Favor: Brandon McDonald, Brent Bibles, Floyd Briggs, Mitch Hacking, Rod Morrison, Wayne McAllister, Kirk Woodward, Curtis Dastrup

Opposed: Beth Hamman

MOTION by Rod Morrison on the elk portion, I motion that we have no spike elk tags in the Book Cliffs, no spike elk permits in any limited entry unit that is below objective and no increase in spike tags statewide.

Anis Aoude: I'd just like to clarify, almost every unit can be below objective by one or two animals, so you could be forcing everybody that has a spike tag to go to two or three units in the state and that's going to be a total disaster. So you need to put a percentage that you want below objective instead of saying below objective because almost every unit with the exception of a few are below objective right now, so just to make sure that we don't end up with a disaster.

Rod Morrison: I want to leave it as is.

Second by Kirk Woodward

Kevin Christopherson: I'll elaborate. Anis' concern is that the 13,000, that's statewide, so as units drop out, it would still be 13,750 hunters. So potentially we could have all those hunters going to just a few units. That was Anis' concern. The way the motion is, it doesn't cut the hunters, it just forces them onto fewer and fewer units. That's what's being proposed.

Have you got a recommendation for a percentage?

Anis Aoude: What we've used in the past is 75% of objective. We use that on cow hunts when archers can take either sex, on units that are 75% of objective we don't allow them to take a cow. So that would make sense because anything above that is in all reality at objective. If you're above 75% with elk, you're within one year of being at objective because those populations grow so fast. So that would be my recommendation if you want to go that route. To just put a blanket statement, anything below objective, is really pretty arbitrary and almost every unit's below objective because we don't manage to be above objective, we manage to be around objective. So sometimes we're below, sometimes we're above. And on any given year half the units could be below objective.

Mitch Hacking: Say you have a couple units that go below that, could you work in a percentage of reducing the amount of spikes tags?

Anis Aoude: I wouldn't recommend that because the spike hunt is an opportunity hunt. We're trying to keep the public out there hunting, and to do that, you're micromanaging where you don't need to. They're going to go where the spike hunting is good, where there are a lot of spikes and they do distribute themselves well. So, to me it's more of a

hassle than it's worth. I would agree with something another gentleman said that we're really not that good. We are setting objectives that we're trying to reach but we're not going to manage to the gnat's ass. Wildlife management is not that precise of a science. That's why we set objectives that are fairly broad and we try to stay within them. When you go to try to micromanage all these little things, you often end up mismanaging more than you do managing.

AMENDED MOTION by Rod Morrison for the elk I recommend no spike hunt in the Book Cliffs, no spike hunts in units that are less than 75% of objective, and no increase in spike tags statewide.

Second by Kirk Woodward

Brent Bibles: I would like some clarification. Approximately how many units might be affected by this, like at 75% of objective?

Anis Aoude: I have all the units and what the population is but I can't calculate how many would be at 75% of objective. The biggest units would remain in the spike hunt. There are some units that would drop out.

Mitch Hacking: It could be possible that by not increasing to 15,000, that would compensate maybe for those units that drop out. That would help compensate.

Anis Aoude: You guys are messing with a statewide plan that took almost a year to put into place. You're breaking it all up and trying to put it back together in a haphazard way. I just want to caution you, this is not a good move. You can do whatever you want but it does not make sense.

Brad Horrocks: The public didn't get to comment.

Anis Aoude: Plenty of comment. Not only comment but they got to be on the committees. They got to comment on the plan and it passed this last year at this meeting, so you did get public comment. You were here.

Bob Christensen: Sorry Brad but we've already closed the comment from the public. And we're discussing amongst the RAC. I understand you wanting to comment but we'll stick with the RAC right now.

Rod Morrison: Can I amend my motion and start over?

MOTION by Rod Morrison: I recommend to no spike hunt in Book Cliffs and no increase in the spike elk tags statewide, stay at 13,750.

Second by Mitch Hacking

Kirk Woodward: I have one just quick thought. And I go back to Byron's comment from the Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife. He cautioned us just like Anis just cautioned us, that we were messing with the statewide elk plan and I understand that. But Byron's comment was, move slowly as we increase these because we don't know what effects the spike hunt really had on our herd from last year. Last year was the first time we opened that up to all of the units. We've heard lots of comment from the sportsmen. Some of those comments were positive, some negative. Overall it sounds like they liked the spike hunt, but we also heard limited entry guys out there worried about what quality was going to happen, with the Book Cliffs for instance. I'm sure all the units were that way. And so Byron I thought made a comment, cautioned us just to move slowly instead of moving rapidly through that succession from 13,750 to 15,000. So I think that makes sense to me that all we're doing is just moving slow, not changing that whole plan.

Wayne McAllister: I see the 13,750 is 18% the 17,000 is 20%. That won't change the harvest.

Amendment is no spike hunt in the Book Cliffs and spike tags remain at 13,750.

Favor: Mitch Hacking, Kirk Woodward, Rod Morrison,

Opposed: Beth Hamman, Brandon, McDonald, Brent Bibles, Floyd Briggs, Curtis Dastrup, Wayne McAllister

Motion failed

MOTION by Wayne McAllister to have no spike hunt in Book Cliffs, but go with statewide 15,000 spike on the elk hunt.

Second by Floyd Briggs

Brandon McDonald: Why?

Wayne McAllister: To have just a reduction on that one Book Cliffs unit.

Floyd Briggs: There has been an effort by a lot of sportsmen to put together recommendations; we also have information from DWR. The more information I get from them, the more I appreciate them. I think to keep our credibility as a RAC, we need to look at the information we get pretty seriously. With the elk, I'm going to take their expertise but I also want to listen to the sportsmen and go along with their recommendation.

Favor: Floyd Briggs, Mitch Hacking, Curtis, Dastrup, Wayne McAllister, Kirk Woodward

Opposed: Beth Hamman, Brandon McDonald, Brent Bibles, Rod Morrison

Passed 5-4

Bob Christensen: We need a motion for the rest of the plan

MOTION by Beth Hamman to accept the rest of plan as presented Second by Brent Bibles

Passed unanimously

Anis Aoude: I want to apologize for my outburst earlier, or getting angry, or whatever, but you have to understand how much effort goes into these plans and many of you were on this committee that put this together. And to just, one year into it, make that big of a change, and I don't think the change you made was that big, currently. But to basically throw out the spike hunt almost statewide, it would have been, I think, a travesty.

6. ANTLERLESS PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011: Anis Aoude and Charlie Greenwood

See handout

Questions from RAC:

Kirk Woodward: What is the population objective for the elk increase in the statewide management plan?

Anis Aoude: In the statewide management plan we have a goal of 80,000 but we can't get there unless all the unit plans add up to that and then we have to do those individually. So right now it is 68,800 and once we do the individual unit plans, we may or may not get to 80,000 depending on how those go. Those are slated to happen this coming year.

Kirk Woodward: My concern is that where you're issuing more cow elk tags to decrease our overall herd when next year we're going to increase our overall herd.

Anis Aoude: May or may not. We have to manage to the current objective and to be honest with you it wouldn't take a whole lot to go once we are there. Elk are not a problem to grow. They are a problem to keep within objective so if you err on any side of caution in elk you want to kill more not fewer because they tend to be eruptive in nature.

Kevin Christopherson: Those have to be approved by the elk committees, the local committees, and it's difficult to get those increased. The elk are already over objective so we have to show that we can manage to the current objective before we can ask, especially Agriculture, for more.

Questions from Public:

Ken Powell (Individual): When do they do the counts for the Nine Mile and Nine Mile Anthro and Range Creek?

Charlie Greenwood: That's due to be counted next year. It's been two years since we counted. We just started 40 radio collars on elk to help us understand where the elk are and what time they are on the unit to help us refine our management.

Dave Chivers (Diamond Mountain Landowners): Questions. There are 100 doe tags on South Slope Diamond Mountain Unit. What are the boundaries?

Charlie Greenwood: It's only private lands in Ashley Valley.

Dave Chivers: South Slope Ashley Valley Deep Creek, that's the one I'm talking about.

Dave Chivers: So are these two the same two hunts?

Charlie Greenwood: Yes.

Comments from Public:

Josh Horrocks: I have a big problem with the 2011 antlerless recommendations. On the South Slope Vernal Diamond Mountain Unit the plan objective is for 13,000 and our 2010 population estimate was 12,000, 1000 less deer than our objective, yet you want to give 100 antlerless doe deer permits in 2011. That's my major concerns for the antlerless deer. When we fly those and do those counts, I think we get a flaw in those counts because of the time of year when they do their counts. We have the National Monument that has a high population of deer and elk. We have Unit 1 in Colorado. The time of year when they're flying in and doing these counts, we get the Colorado and Monument deer and elk that come down and get counted as part of our counts for the Diamond Mountain Unit. After saying that, I think that's one of the problems that might be why our deer herd is suffering so badly in the region. Also, I'd like to talk about Ute Tribal grounds and Unit 1 in Colorado. I believe our counts get flawed as compared to units in the other parts of the state and so our biologists statewide might be thinking about that more so and we're not taking into consideration the Northeastern Region and those areas.

In the elk herd status for the South Slope Vernal Diamond Mountain Unit the objective is 2,500. When they flew it and counted it there were 2,800. But as a sportsman, I know that a big portion of those are coming from the Monument and being included in that count. They want to issue 675 tags for that unit. The last two years, we have seen a huge decrease in that unit. Also, in the Book Cliffs unit, the objective plan is 7,500 elk. They counted in 2010 4,200 elk. That is way low considering that unit borders the Ute Tribal grounds. They want to offer 80 permits and we're way below that objective.

Charlie Greenwood: Talking about the elk that go onto Diamond Mountain, we did a radio telemetry study in 2003. We did not find a lot of elk moving off of Dinosaur National Monument and moving onto Diamond so that's not what's going on there. In the Book Cliffs we have a few cow permits because of depredation in Little Creek, depredation problems we're dealing with required by law and working on deer management so we're trying to keep elk from coming in on deer winter range. As far as deer classification, we're not classifying deer on the Monument. In 1990 we had a telemetry study and found they were not migrating from the Monument from Diamond Mountain.

Kevin Christopherson: The deer coming up are valley deer. That's what those 100 deer are. They really aren't contributing to the deer on Diamond Mountain.

Kirk Woodward: So they can't hunt them on Diamond Mountain.

Charlie Greenwood: The boundary is for Ashley Valley deer. You cannot go on Diamond Mountain. It's in the Vernal subunit.

Mitch Hacking: The boundary is confusing.

Anis Aoude: There's one table that summarizes all the hunts. We put a summary of all hunts and then the specific hunts on a specific table that goes in the proclamation.

Byron Bateman (SFW): We're trying to get a study to transplant deer. We have a pilot program south of Beaver and want to get does in the spring. There has been a study in Alpine, Texas for New Mexico. The hard release success was 57%; the soft release to adapt was 83%. We've heard you can't transplant mule deer, so we'd like to get your support done by a university. Also, we support the recommendations of the people who live out here in the area.

Kirk Woodward: What support are you asking for with the transplant? You're just giving us a heads up?

Byron Bateman: Instead of taking the 100 deer and having the hunt, instead of killing the 100 valley does, we'd like to transplant them somewhere else.

Mitch Hacking: Can transplanting help with genetics?

Anis Aoude: No. The only time you need help with genetics is if you have a small herd that doesn't have interactions with other populations. On open populations, all the research shows that it doesn't do a whole lot.

Mitch Hacking: You always hear that the best deer are shot so you only have 3-points left.

Anis Aoude: Half the genetics is in the female so there's always going to be some big bulls, rams or bucks.

Greg Gilroy (NE Utah Wildlife Coalition): I'd like to applaud Byron Bateman with trying to find an alternative to killing valley deer when we need the population. I want to clarify that 100 tags is all we're offering. The Red Fleet deal is no longer.

Charlie Greenwood: Right.

Greg Gilroy: I'm addressing concerns on cow elk hunts from the Diamond Mountain landowners. Hunters start hunting the cows in August and have been going clear into January. They think enough's enough. They would like it over by November 15 to give the elk a break when they're coming into their wintering time. Premium entry elk units are when we are in competition with the people who have become a once-in-a-lifetime hunt and the cow hunters. We would recommend that we don't hunt cows when other guys have a premium hunt going on.

Dave Chivers (Diamond Mountain Landowner): I think my questions have been answered. We would support a shorter season on cow elk hunts. It causes problems with people harassing all the animals that are up there.

Tim Powell (Individual): There are 790 tags on the South Slope Yellowstone, that's a unit where the Tribe already gives out over 300 permits. We need to cut down the tags. I also propose with the Nine Mile cow hunt, there's not the elk they're saying. You can't find elk like there used to be. I propose to reduce them by 100 permits. Keep them in the South Slope Yellowstone but don't raise them.

Kim Lawson (Split Mountain Archers): We support the Northeastern Utah Wildlife Coalition on no elk hunts after November 15 and giving guys who have premium tags the opportunity to hunt without other competition around them.

Daniel Davis (Northeastern Chair for Bow Hunters of Utah): We support the Northeastern Utah Wildlife Coalition's proposal.

Mike Davis (RMEF): Regarding the doe tags in the Northeastern Region, accept permits DWR has recommendation to prevent lawsuits, liabilities and the depredation. Also, no cow elk hunts on Diamond Mountain or anywhere after November 15. The elk are almost halfway through their pregnancy after that. We support the Northeastern Utah Coalition on elk. The guys with the premium tags need to have a premium hunt. Keep the others off.

Brad Horrocks (Diamond Mountain): Dave Chivers forgot to mention, they want to cut the cow tags from 675 to 300 due to the wintering problems and had a question as to how long has it been since they flew for cows.

Charlie Greenwood: Last year.

Brad Horrocks: We support Byron Bateman and can come up with funding on a deer transplant. We support Dave Chivers in wanting the 300 cow elk tags. We support the Utah Coalition. We want to pursue more coyote control money and want to pursue no antler hunting until April 1. We don't want another Red Fleet doe deer hunt this year.

Dan Stewart (Individual Sportsman): The South Slope 100 tags that's been going on for years, which mostly encompasses Dry Fork, Deep Creek and valley deer. Is this hunt supposed to be a private land hunt? Well, it's not. I live in Dry Fork and you have to go on public land to hunt deer during shooting hours because they come into private land after the shooting hours are done at night and they leave before shooting hours start in the morning. But if there are deer on the airport, they are not given permission to hunt where the problems are.

Kenny Mair (Individual): I'd like to ask the RAC if they would be considerate when they cut the tags. A lot of it is family experience, whether it is antlerless or antlered, people just want to go hunt. Keep that in mind before you cut a bunch of tags. There's other ways that we can go about it to help keep opportunity there and keep people interested.

Clay Hamann: On the Ashley Valley hunt, I support it and it wouldn't bother me if we increased the deer tags in the valley. I lost a lot of trees and put a lot of money into fencing. One of the problems is that those tags are not being hunted down where the problems are; they're being hunted in other areas. If we can adjust the boundaries and get people to take deer down in the valley where the problem is. I don't know what the situation is on Taylor but we shouldn't allow the archery tags and doe tags to be used in those areas. If we can transplant them and get them to stay away that would be great.

Comments from RAC:

Kevin Christopherson: The later cow hunts that we have is because that's when they're available. It's been mentioned about Monument and Tribal land. Often, these animals don't come down until after November 15. We're required to do something and it would be our guys taking them. We'd prefer to give hunters the chance to take them.

Kirk Woodward: I hear the comments saying they don't want to go too late in the primitive areas.

Charlie Greenwood: A cow elk hunt first of all is to control population numbers. The late season hunts are primarily because of depredation. Another thing is, we'd like to put some pressure on lower winter ranges. The elk can hammer that deer range. On Dry Fork for example, they hammer the browse. We've seen it at Red Fleet. That's another reason for late cow elk hunts. One thing to clarify is there are lots of comments to move cow elk hunts out of trophy bull elk hunts. We've tried very hard to keep those hunts out of the limited elk hunts. That's already being done.

Mitch Hacking: On the Diamond Mountain late cow elk hunt, how much will it affect you if we excluded the top of Diamond Mountain?

Charlie Greenwood: We can look at that again. We can use the rim. We've done it before. We can do it to keep those cow elk hunters down lower. Diamond Mountain and the Vernal population is 2,800 elk. The objective is 2,500. If you've already cut those permits by 200 we eliminated the January hunt already. We have elk coming in to Maeser, Jensen, Ouray, Dry Fork, causing depredation, so that's some of the purposes.

Kirk Woodward: So it would be fairly easy to close the top of Diamond Mountain on November 15.

Charlie Greenwood: We could do that.

MOTION by Beth Hamman to accept as presented

Second by Brent Bibles

Favor: Beth Hamman, Brandon McDonald, Brent Bibles, Floyd Briggs, Curtis Dastrup, Wayne McAllister

Opposed: Mitch Hacking, Rod Morrison, Kirk Woodward
Motion passed 6-3

Ended 8:15 pm. Next RAC meeting: May 12, 2011.

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Jr. High School
165 S 700 E, Springville
April 19, 2011 @ 6:30 p.m.

Motion Summary

Approval of Agenda & Minutes

MOTION: The agenda and minutes as written
Passed unanimously

Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2011

MOTION: To accept as the Division's recommendations as presented
Motion dies for lack of second

MOTION: To keep the limited entry bull elk permit numbers at the 2010 level on the Manti and Wasatch units and accept the balance of the Division's recommendations
Passed 7 to 5

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2011

MOTION: To approve the Division's recommendations as presented
Passed 11 to 1

Big Game Rule Amendments R657-5

MOTION: To accept the recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2011

MOTION: To accept the recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Jr. High School
165 S 700 E, Springville
April 19, 2011 @ 6:30 p.m.

Members Present

Members Absent

John Bair, Sportsmen
Matt Clark, Sportsmen
Larry Fitzgerald, Agriculture
Sarah Flinders, Forest Service
Michael Gates, BLM
Byron Gunderson, At Large
Richard Hansen, At Large
George Holmes, Agriculture
Gary Nielson, Sportsmen, Vice Chair
Fred Oswald, Non-consumptive, Chair
Jay Price, Elected
Duane Smith, Non-consumptive
Allan Stevens, At Large

1) **Approval of the Agenda and the December 14, 2010 minutes** (Action)

VOTING

Motion was made by John Bair to accept the agenda and minutes as written

Seconded by Duane Smith

Motion passed unanimously

2) **Regional Update** (Information)

- **John Fairchild, Central Regional Supervisor**

3) **Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2011** (Action)

- **Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator &**
- **Craig Clyde, Regional Wildlife Manager**

Questions from the RAC

John Bair – Do you know fawn survival rates for the Paunsaugunt and Henry Mountains?

Anis Aoude – It has been fairly good on the Henrys for last few years, around 70 or 80 (percent). The Paunsaugunt is probably around 60 to 70. I am not sure for this year.

John Bair – Is adding tags to Wasatch and Manti aimed at reaching our age objective target and not satisfaction with the hunt experience?

Anis Aoude – We do look at all those aspects and all of those indicators say we should increase permit numbers. There are still a high percentage of hunters who are satisfied with the quality of hunt. Those who remember the good old days are going to be disappointed that we are killing a lot of bulls and the antler quality.

John Bair – How many younger bulls do we need to kill to average out a ten year old killed?

Anis Aoude – It would take two four-year olds. Most of the ages harvested are right around the average. It is a bell shaped curve.

Allan Stevens – Have the bison transplants on the Book Cliffs been successful?

Anis Aoude – They have done great. We haven't lost any to natural mortality. One was shot on the tribe. I don't anticipate a hunt until we have mature bulls and no cow hunts for four to five years. It may be earlier if we had a hunt more focused on taking some of the animals that come off the reservation. That would be a late hunt. No adult bulls were transplanted because a helicopter just can't transport one.

Fred Oswald – In regards to the reduction in deer numbers, the RAC has received information that this is sociological not biological. Your presentation says otherwise.

Anis Aoude - It is not totally biologically. In 2012 we will have to reduce permits a lot to reach our 18 bucks per 100 does. By reducing some permits now makes it more gradual. It is both biological and sociological and it is always both. Biologically it is sound and socially it is acceptable.

Matt Clark – By changing to unit by unit in 2012 it was said we would have to cut 13,000 permits.

Anis Aoude – That is an estimate of what it would take to get to 18 bucks per 100 does.

Matt Clark – So with this 5,000 permit decrease this year next year we could still see another 8 to 10,000 permit decrease. Couldn't we shift some of the permits to youth permits?

Anis Aoude – It doesn't matter where you put them. A permit still equals a dead buck.

Matt Clark – I am concerned about youth recruitment. It is already difficult to draw a tag. If a youth cannot ever get a tag and hunt they will lose interest.

Anis Aoude – I agree but the only way to get to the 18 bucks per 100 does is to cut permits. If you shift them to a lower success type hunt you would still harvest so many bucks.

Matt Clark – Do you have data that shows ages of deer hunters?

Anis Aoude – We know at least 20 percent are youth hunters because we take 20 percent off the top and give them to youth.

Matt Clark – But as far as trend...

Anis Aoude – Your average hunter is a middle aged male.

Matt Clark - Don't you worry that is going to keep going up?

Anis Aoude – We do worry. This is certainly going to reduce opportunity. There is no doubt.

Matt Clark – All you have talked about is a reduction. I think we should look at ways to increase opportunity.

Anis Aoude – Most hunters are like you. The surveys we have done show the majority of hunters just want to be able to get a permit and go hunting.

Duane Smith – Why did you not cut archery permits. If you leave the same number of archery tags and most of them go to the southern or southeastern regions you are going to further decrease those buck to doe ratios.

Anis Aoude – You would have to cut archery permits in half to make an impact.

Duane Smith – By why not remove some of the permits?

Anis Aoude – Because it is a statewide hunt if you only cut a few permits the majority of archers would still go southern or southeastern. Why cut the permits when you don't have to and further reduce opportunity?

Duane Smith – It is not fair for the people in the southern region.

Anis Aoude – It is better for them to leave the permits if they also want to archery hunt there. If you look at numbers overall the archery permits are already a smaller portion of the permits.

Richard Hansen – I realize quality vs. opportunity is a balancing act. People I have talked to struggle to get their kids hunting because they don't see mature bucks or sometimes even a buck at all. If you want to take your kids hunting you can find something to hunt in Utah. There are a lot of things you can do to introduce them to hunting. You just increased the spike tags for instance.

Anis Aoude – Even the number of spike tags is low at 15,000 vs. 90,000 deer permits. They also have a limit.

Richard Hansen – When I grew up there were not many elk. There is definitely more elk hunting opportunity now.

Anis Aoude – I agree.

Jay Price – On the limited entry elk units how was it decided which would be for opportunity or quality?

Anis Aoude – The approach was taken where would you get more bang for your buck? The larger units where you can put a lot of hunters are more likely to be an opportunity unit. We didn't change a lot from what it was. The recommendation was made by the elk committee with input from all parties interested in elk. The units that are managed for larger animals are units that you can grow bigger bulls on.

Sarah Flinders – Do you count all the animals on private and public land to get the buck to doe ratio?

Anis Aoude – Yes. We have some units with primarily private land that tend to have higher numbers and we take those out so the number is more accurate.

Sarah Flinders – In the central region you have the lowest available habitat but a high number of tags and one of the highest number of hunters yet you are not recommending to decrease permit in central or northern.

Anis Aoude – Northern region does have a lot of area.

Sarah Flinders – So is habitat not taken into account?

Anis Aoude – The buck to doe ratio almost automatically shows that, that is why we use buck to doe ratio. The number is always correlated to the number of animals.

Sarah Flinders – But the southern region is much larger and has more habitat.

Anis Aoude – But not all habitat is created equal. The northern and central regions have more precipitation and high production as a result. Southern has lower production.

Sarah Flinders – Why are we not looking at reducing permits in northern or central?

Anis Aoude – The northern and central regions are at or above objective. It is easy to get all these things confused but it all comes down to one number, the buck to doe ratio.

John Bair – You said the only way to reduce harvest is to cut tags so there are not ideas to move tags to archery hunters?

Anis Aoude – We could certainly move tags to archery but there is opposition to that. There are more rifle hunters than archery hunters. We just heard a minute ago why not cut archery tags this year along with rifle and muzzleloader.

John Bair – But I think that here in the central that is something we could look at.

Anis Aoude – That may be palatable here but not in the southern region.

John Bair – That is the great thing about unit by unit management.

Anis Aoude – It gets complicated really fast. We hear from the public that think they are shorted.

John Bair – Are you going to recommend increasing archery permits in certain areas with the unit by unit recommendations?

Anis Aoude – We will probably take a broad approach and recommend a 60/20/20 (rifle/archery/muzzleloader) split. You don't buy a whole lot of opportunity with a few permits. You are still killing quite a few bucks.

John Bair – What about units like the Wasatch extended archery area?

Anis Aoude – Why the Wasatch works is because it is archery only.

Larry Fitzgerald – What are your plans for the antelope west of Utah Lake?

Craig Clyde – The problem antelope are the ones by the lake. Further west they are not. We are working with Saratoga Springs city. They are hard to deal with in that area. You can't herd them with helicopters because of the power lines and can't hunt because they are in city limits. We are working with the city to have a hunt. We want hunters to take them rather than us having to remove them.

Larry Fitzgerald – Couldn't you hunt them further west before they get to the city?

Craig Clyde – There are some that don't move back and forth so you wouldn't be targeting the right animals.

Questions from the Public

Don Peay – I want to thank the Division for all their work. I know you are trying to get perfection on average ages. On four units the tags have been status quo for the last few years. Have we done an analysis and compared say 2005 and 2007 through 2010?

Anis Aoude – We have done a lot of predictive models. We do know where it should level out but you know it is never right to the animal. You have to remember that the age objective on those units was raised.

Don Peay – But the number of permits was stable and then this year the ratio dropped.

Anis Aoude – I agree. That is why you saw drastic cuts on some units. Fawn production has been low and we expect buck to doe ratios to reflect that in the next few years.

Jason Lowe – Just to clarify, the potential 5,000 permit cut, was that to lower the potential backlash you will receive from the public next year when you cut even more permits?

Anis Aoude – It has nothing to do with backlash. We know we are going to have to cut so many permits to get to 18 bucks per 100 does. This will help biologically and socially not doing a big cut in one year.

Jason Lowe – But the proposal to change to unit by unit was to go into affect in 2012, not in 2011.

Mike Anderson – On fawn recruitment what is the problem, fawn mortality or fawn production?

Anis Aoude – Both fawn production and mortality. We don't know what happens between zero and six months. On the Monroe unit you have both low fawn to doe ratio and high mortality. On other units it is just low fawn production. It is not one thing on any given unit.

Comments from the Public

Michael Anderson – We agree with the central region recommendations but I still think we should look at ways we can shift permits to provide opportunity. Bow hunters and rifle hunters are not political parties or a religion. We are just hunters and hunters will change weapon type if it means they can go hunting. If we don't look at changing

weapon types we are being irresponsible. Cutting that many permits takes money away from the economy. Hunters will change to a bow rather than stay home.

Jason Lowe – United Wildlife Cooperative – Thank you for your time. We are opposed to all management strategies to maintain 18 bucks per 100 does. The Division has said this will not help grow Utah's deer herd. Quotes from our members show they are not pleased with the direction things are going. They are in favor of management for more big game and less trophy hunts. We commend the Division for not cutting tags for the central region. We urge the Division and Board to reconvene and readdress the mule deer management in our state. Shifting permits is a great way to give opportunity. We support the limited entry elk recommendations. We would like a mandatory education course and survey. Implementing this will allow little dispute and add clarity to what sportsmen and women desire.

Dave Woodhouse – SFW – We want to thank the Division for all the work they do. We are concerned about the Wasatch and Manti units. We would like to remain with the current numbers to get another year of data. If they numbers stay up we would support increasing the permit numbers. We don't want to overshoot the objective. We have grown a great elk herd. We support the deer permit decrease, not just to meet 2012 recommendations but because the southern units have been below objective and have had low fawn production. There has never been more work being done. We have a lot of habitat work going on right now. I hope in years to come, because of the work we are doing, we will see those tags come back because they come back to our youth. Even if we move tags so youth have the opportunity they will still not see animals. I don't want to see more limited entry but if we had large bucks you would have twice as many people putting in for them.

Mike Pritchett – I want to commend the RAC for all their work. I am also concerned with the Wasatch and Manti units. We should wait another year before we increase permits due to the quality of the hunt. I would like to see DWR experiment with a management elk hunt like they have with the deer. I think it is offering some great opportunity for deer.

Chad Coburn – Utah Houndsmen Association – We have been told we are in an emergency situation for deer and sheep and so we have to increase pressure on predators. You are doing predator management here tonight. We are in an emergency and yet 5,000 tags are all we are going to cut. It seems all we can come up with time and time again is go after the lions. If we are really in an emergency situation we need to control the biggest predator and that is hunters.

Ben Lowder – Utah Bowman's Association – We support the permit recommendations. We realize that more permits will have to be cut in 2012 and we would like to see the Division look at decreasing the number of tags that have to be cut by moving tags to archery. Archery does have a lower success rate and can offer more opportunity.

Don Peay – The SFW board met and agreed with 95 percent of the recommendations. However, on the Manti, the Wasatch, the Fish Lake and the Cache we feel that the permit increases are too high. On these units permit numbers have stayed static and the average

age dropped. That is why on these units we would like to stay at last years numbers and see what another year of data shows. We need to ease into this rather than make such drastic changes.

Paul Phillips – Thank you for your time and the DWR for their hard work. I would also ask that you look at the Wasatch, the Manti and Fish Lake. If we over harvest these units we will have less opportunity in the future.

RAC Discussion

John Bair – I have talked to a lot of guys about these elk proposals. The thing I got the most comments on was on Wasatch and Manti. People are concerned about quality of the animals. More and more are concerned about the quality of the hunt. For every big bull hunt a hunter has 30 guys with them. The experience is starting to suffer because of the numbers of tags. When people heard about the almost 100 tag increase they freaked. We need to ease into this and wait a year to see what the numbers look like.

Allan Stevens – I strongly support the Division’s proposals. If we pick and choose which units that we are going to follow the management plan then nothing we are doing is worth anything. I love the Manti as much as anyone else but there is no rational not to follow the recommendations according to the management plan. We had this fight last year. There comes a point when we have to follow the plan. We could just say let’s let everyone hunt or only guys who are going to pay lots of money. We didn’t follow the management plan for deer for years. When are we going to listen to the biologists and let them do their job?

John Bair – If we are just going to rubber stamp the Division’s recommendations then why are we here?

VOTING

Motion was made by Allan Stevens to accept as the Division’s recommendations as presented

Motion dies for lack of second

Motion was made by John Bair to keep the limited entry bull elk permit numbers at the 2010 level on the Manti and Wasatch units and accept the balance of the Division’s recommendations

Seconded by Jay Price

Larry Fitzgerald – Don’t they need to reduce the number of elk to get to the elk objective? If they are over objective on elk will we address that with cow tag numbers?

Fred Oswald – Yes.

Allan Stevens – If we approve this motion we decrease opportunity by 4,300 animals overall.

Matt Clark – Please clarify the motion.

Fred Oswald – To keep the number of tags on the Wasatch and Manti at 2010 numbers and accept the rest of the Division’s recommendation on the bucks, bulls and OIAL permit numbers

In Favor: John Bair, Gary Nielsen, Richard Hansen, Larry Fitzgerald, Sarah Flinders, George Holmes, Jay Price

Opposed: Byron Gunderson, Duane Smith, Allan Stevens, Matt Clark, Michael Gates

Motion passed 7 to 5

4) Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2011 (Action)

- **Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator &**
- **Craig Clyde, Regional Wildlife Manager**

Questions from the RAC

Allan Stevens – If there are no antlerless moose permits in the draw will people still be able to apply for a bonus point?

Anis Aoude – Yes, they will still be able to buy a point.

Larry Fitzgerald – Do you have the cow to calf ratio on elk?

Anis Aoude – Cow calf ration does not vary much on elk. It is always between 50 to 60. It is fairly constant. We do figure it every year. It is fairly constant production. They are never where they are declining.

Larry Fitzgerald – I spend a lot of time in the northeastern region and I from what I see I would say it is about 30 percent. I see a lot of barren cows. Is that good management to have those barren cows?

Anis Aoude – I have seen elk produce into their 20's. There are probably very few barren cows. Our lowest unit is around 45 calves per 100 cows.

Larry Fitzgerald – I will have to write down what I see.

Anis Aoude – I think you would find it is higher than you expect. Adult survival is likely in the 90 to 95 percent annual survival. Once they get to a year old they basically never die unless you shoot them.

Duane Smith – You have talked about trying to increase the antlers harvest in places like East Canyon. East Canyon Resort only allows so many people in there. Can you work something out with places like East Canyon Resort?

Anis Aoude – In the past at least on the Salt Lake portion we can get harvest. The problem is not that segment of the population. This (antlerless control permits) is just another tool in the tool box. We do also have a lot of permits in the draw as well.

Fred Oswald – In Chalk Creek and East Canyon a lot of that private ground is CWMUs. Aren't you getting your antlerless harvest on your CWMUs?

Anis Aoude – We are but they tend to be resistant to hunting the cows as hard as we want them to. Elk move as a herd and if you hunt them hard they move off and then they don't have them there for their paying clients to harvest the bulls. They do want to help us out but they don't want to go overboard.

Questions from the Public

Mike Christensen – This deals with the CWMU portion but I think it will help us address the antlerless. Can you tell me how the CWMUs on the Wasatch are receiving their tags?

Craig Clyde – They are working with us pretty well. We had a lot of tags on one of them and we weren't getting the harvest we wanted. We are also working with some other private lands that don't have enough for a CWMU but they have a sanctuary. We have increased one as well and they have worked with us not only on numbers but on season dates as well.

Mike Christensen – I have a friend who is a rancher in Chalk Creek and he wanted to know why the Chalk Creek CWMU gets cow moose tags but the unit as a whole does not?

Anis Aoude – The majority of the moose are on the CWMU. There are public CWMU permits that will go in the drawing. The good habitat is on the private lands.

Don Peay – Now that you have wolves in Utah, there is at least one pack that we know of for sure in the Wasatch unit, are you going to start taking that into account?

Anis Aoude – If it becomes an issue. I don't know of any packs that are established in Utah, I am not sure what you are referring to on the Wasatch. If we have wolves in Utah that are taking elk we would reduce our elk harvest certainly.

Don Peay – It is more of a next three to four year question.

Anis Aoude – We have been proactive on this and we do have radio collars on elk to see what survival rates are and we should pick that up if that occurs.

Michael Anderson – I understand that landowners who do not have enough acreage to become a CWMU can get mitigation tags based on acreage or a cash reimbursement is that true?

Anis Aoude – Cash reimbursement is only done on crop damage.

Michael Anderson – Do you know what the total amount paid out each year is?

Anis Aoude – We are budgeted at about a quarter of a million each year and we usually pay it all out.

Michael Anderson – So would it be fair to say a reduction in doe and cow permits in areas where there is some crop damage would actually result in costing the DWR more money? If we don't give out permits to remove does and cows you would have to pay more.

Anis Aoude – Correct. Our first approach is to try to give mitigation permits or remove the animals but that is not always possible. In some instances your only option is to pay for the damages.

Paul Phillips – Numbers show consistency in population estimations for 2007, 2008 and 2009. Then we show a drastic increase in 2010. What anomaly took place?

Anis Aoude – No anomaly. The way our population estimates are derived is a combination of flight data and modeling. We fly these units every three years and a lot of times what happens is we model a population and we think we have enough permits out there to control it but when we fly it comes up above where we had estimated. This year was the turn for a couple of big units to be flown and that pushed the number over. This is not unexpected. Populations have been hovering just below that objective for a while.

Cameron Phillips – The increase was 1,900 elk. The Current Creek and Avintaquin success rates are significantly less than Wasatch and Central Mountains. Has that been taken into account?

Anis Aoude – All success rates are taken into consideration. When we set permits we look at long term average. If we need to kill 'x' amount given the percent success we need to put this many permits out there.

Cameron Phillips – Do you have any idea why there is such a difference on the success rates on the same unit?

Anis Aoude – They are very different sub units. That is why they are subunits. That is why we hunt cow elk on smaller units because it does vary quite a bit. If you are hunting them on summer range vs. winter range it makes a big difference. There are a whole lot of things that make a difference. Success varies greatly on antlerless units. Not all units are created equal.

Comments from the Public

Don Mecham – I would like to thank the Division and the RAC. It's a big deal for you to give up your time to be here. I was born and raised up South Fork on the Ercanbrack sheep farm on White River. In the late 50's I watched the elk herds from nothing grow

into a great success story. There were hundreds of days I spent on those mountains. Now with my filming career I spend months up there. I am just questioning the number. I film the elk and on those three sub units with 3,300 cow elk tags. I am out there 37 days just this year and I can tell you I can't see the numbers. I am not questioning anyone's integrity at all. I just want to know what kind of model and extrapolation went through to reach those numbers.

Ben Lowder – Utah Bowman's Association – We support the antlerless permit recommendations as presented. In addition, when the elk committee met part of the management plan was that the Division was tasked to form local committees to address elk populations and the possibility of increasing the population objectives on a unit to unit basis. We look forward to seeing the result of those committees as they are formed. Thank you.

Dave Woodhouse – SFW – Our biggest caution on this is with the cow tags on the Wasatch. There is quite an increase this year. Personally on the areas I am familiar with, Diamond Fork, Sheep Creek, the waters, I haven't seen the elk we saw ten years ago. Cattlemen also haven't seen them. We don't want them to over run things either. There may be places like the Heber area that may have too many animals. We met with Craig and John and they made some changes. We also want to bring to attention the dates on some of these antlerless hunts that go into late December and January. Those hunters chase animals off the winter range, elk as well as the deer which are struggling. If we have to hunt them hunt them earlier. We urge caution on the amount of antlerless tags.

Craig Clyde – It really comes down to numbers and when we fly we fly every canyon, every draw and count as many elk as we can find. Then we have a sight ability index that we go by so we add 20 percent to that number to compensate for elk that we wouldn't see. For instance the bulls are really hard to find that time of year. We felt like we came up with a pretty good number. On the west Manti we were 1,000 elk over objective. We have that number as well as the production we are going to be getting. On the Wasatch we have good production. On that unit it is around 63 percent. We use the success rate from the year before. From that we come up with the number of permits. Then we divide the permit numbers into areas like in Heber where we want to decrease numbers. When we look at the hunts we also look at the success rates for each hunt depending on what time of year it is. We tried to move some of the hunts out of the late hunts like Dave was talking about but when we do that we have to have a few more permits because the success rate is lower. We had to keep some of those late hunts to address landowner interests.

Paul Phillips – Opportunity has been talked about a lot tonight. With this number proposed you are talking about taking away opportunity in the future. If you take away your opportunity producers which are the cows you are going to take away that opportunity long term.

Cameron Phillips – I spend a lot of time on Wasatch. I live at Strawberry and I think is unwise for such a large number on an anomaly. When I look at the numbers and the increase and I come up with a number that puts us 1,100 elk below objective not counting the incoming calves. To take that many elk out of a herd is unwise. My opinion is that

there are not that many elk. Large antlerless elk tag numbers have never been healthy for a herd. I want to state that this proposal is not right for the unit nor will it help.

John Phillips – Thank you for being here and listening to us. My comment is about the Wasatch and the cows that are projected at 1,140 just on the Current Creek area. How do we get a count for just that part of the unit?

Craig Clyde – As I mentioned earlier we do that with a helicopter. We fly every area of the winter range and count every elk we can find. That takes into consideration the western portion of the Wasatch unit and then the northeastern region will do the same thing on their side on the winter range.

John Phillips – On this part of the unit there are no elk there in the winter time. The migration back to private lands on the east part is a lot.

Craig Clyde – We don't distinguish private or public land when we are counting. Those elk will be counted in other region.

John Phillips – I guide on this area and the number of elk are not there on the hunt. 1,140 tags is a lot when it is hard to find a herd in the areas to hunt. It seems a little high. I appreciate your time.

Don Peay – It is important to set a number and then do the best we can to live with it. But I think there is a lot of interesting data to look at. The number of elk on the Wasatch unit compared to the last five years seems to be down. The landowners in Hobble Creek are upset the numbers are way down. If the Division has 85 percent sight ability, or 80 percent, and this year because of the deep snow you went to 90 percent. That is 700 elk more that aren't there and if you issue two tags for every elk that is 1,400 tags. The one other number we are going to start talking to the RACs and Board about is the number wolves are taking. The Yellowstone elk herd is down from 20,000 to 4,600 and the Lolo herd has gone from 16,000 to 2,000. If there are just ten wolves on the Wasatch unit they are going to kill 210 elk plus and at a 50 percent success rate that is 420 tags. Between sight ability and a handful of wolves that is a difference of 1,800 elk tags. The notion that these elk herds are indestructible and we don't have to be careful with them is not real based on data. We need to live with the numbers but we also need to be really careful with these herds because they are valuable and they can go away fairly quickly. When we grew up we loved to hunt because it was easier than working on the farm. Today's kids have a lot to do and success is very important.

Anis Aoude – On sight ability, there has never been a study with 90 percent sight ability. If anything this is an underestimate. They went with 85 instead of 80 so they are saying they saw more than they probably did and I am sure they miss a lot of the animals. We never see 90 percent of the animals. I don't want people to think we don't have the elk we have. If we make the mistake of not hunting them this year we are going to be back in future years trying to get twice the permits and so on and so forth. We have been managing elk long enough to know if you don't stay on top of them they do get out of control.

Wade Hanks – How do we get such an extreme increase in populations? There was a 16 percent increase on Wasatch although the increase in tags was 241 percent. If you take 425 antlerless permits in 2010 and put that to 1,450 that is a 241 percent increase. I can do numbers but I don't understand why the numbers need to go up so much.

Craig Clyde – It has to do with the success rates and the time of year we have those hunts. You'll notice that most of those tags were given during the general season when the success rate is lower so you have to give more tags to harvest the number you need to take.

Wade Hanks – That would leave me to believe success rates are down around the two to four percent range.

Craig Clyde – Actually the general season is around 60 percent. You can get as high as 90 percent with the later hunts.

Wade Hanks – That still seems extreme.

George Holmes – You can't add percent you have to add numbers.

Anis Aoude – You can't just compare with last years numbers. You have to compare it with the number you actually have to kill. You have to know how many you have, how many you are producing and how many you have to kill. As I mentioned when we were modeling it we thought we had a lot fewer elk than we had. When we counted them we found we had a whole lot more. It takes a lot fewer permits to maintain a population than to bring it back to objective. You basically have to harvest everything that it is over objective plus everything it is going to produce.

Don Peay – The point I was making, I didn't say you did 95 percent, I was merely pointing out that a ten percent difference is a lot of elk.

Anis Aoude – We found there were more elk than what we thought were there so we are above objective.

RAC Discussion

Gary Nielsen – You mentioned in areas with large numbers of tags a lot of times it was to deal with depredation issues. Is it possible to put some of that in the guide book? If you told people which areas you needed to take elk in maybe they would hunt where you need them.

Craig Clyde – We are strategic with our boundaries. We have identified where we need hunters and have hunts to direct them to those areas. Sometimes if you have too small of an area you will push the elk out.

Richard Hansen – On the San Pitch Mountains from Salt Creek south we are concerned because you rarely see elk there anymore. Can we leave that portion out of the hunt for a while?

Craig Clyde – If you look at our recommendations on that unit we have moved all of the hunts to the general season. Another thing to keep in mind is that elk move themselves a lot based on habitat changes, whether it is weather or over grazing or themselves over grazing or hunting pressure. You don't always see elk the same place year after year.

Byron Gunderson – I thought deer were in trouble yet we are deliberating over elk. Aren't we 5,500 elk above the objective? I am not a cattle rancher but isn't there something called an AUM where a cow and a calf is equal to so many sheep. If we remove some elk we would have more room for deer. Give the deer a break and take a few more elk.

John Bair – So the number of tags on the Wasatch went up because the hunt was moved to the general season with a lower success rate?

Craig Clyde – That is correct.

VOTING

**Motion was made by Jay Price to approve the Division’s recommendations as presented
Seconded by Byron Gunderson**

**In Favor: Gary Nielsen, Richard Hansen, Larry Fitzgerald, Byron Gunderson,
Sarah Flinders, Duane Smith, Allan Stevens, Matt Clark, Michael Gates, George
Holmes, Jay Price**

Opposed: John Bair

Motion passed 11 to 1

- 5) **Big Game Rule Amendments R657-5 (Action)**
- **Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator**

Questions from the Public

Mike Christensen – Is it possible by allowing a range finder to be attached to a rifle that we are using technology to increase harvest of the animals that we are fighting over trying to protect?
Anis Aoude – If an animal is out there far enough that you need to use a range finder with a rifle I think you are going to have time to look at it through a regular range finder as well and I don’t think it is going to increase success a whole lot. If people are going to make those long distance shots I would rather they have all the tools and not wound an animal. It could go both ways.

RAC Discussion

Allan Stevens – On the muzzleloader section in our packet it says you may not carry a side arm, is that correct?

Anis Aoude – That was miswritten. Shawn just pointed that out when to me when I came in tonight.

Allan Stevens – So it is the way you stated it.

Anis Aoude – Right.

VOTING

**Motion was made by Duane Smith to accept the recommendations as presented
Seconded by John Bair**

In Favor: All

Motion passed unanimously

- 6) **Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2011 (Action)**
- **Craig Clyde, Regional Wildlife Manger**

Questions from the RAC

Fred Oswald – When the CWMUs request something do the biologist ever say that is not a good idea and deny it?

Craig Clyde – They would work with the biologist. It goes both ways. We also ask them to change numbers as well.

Fred Oswald – Were there any disagreements this year?

Craig Clyde – Three C was hesitant to take twice the permits they have had because they like to guide each hunter so that would create more work for them yet we needed the numbers to help control the populations in the Heber valley. We were also working with

them with some of the hunt dates because we wanted them to start the hunts during their bull season. They like to hunt the bulls earlier and not have the interference with cow hunters. Once they get that out of the way and their money made they bring in the cow hunters. But in order for us to get harvest we need we needed them to start those hunts earlier and end them sooner so we could solve some depredation problems in the valley. They were hesitant but they were willing to work with us and there was no split recommendation.

VOTING

Motion was made by John Bair to accept the recommendations as presented

Seconded by Michael Gates

In Favor: All

Motion passed unanimously

7) Other Business

- Fred Oswald, RAC Chair

Kenneth Vaughn – I want to let the Board know that we have started a chapter of chair-bound hunters. It is an organization out of Wyoming that is ten years old. My grandson and I have hunted with them for the last five years. He has taken five antelope and one nice deer. We know quite a few people in wheelchairs who want to hunt. Our organization is all volunteers. We are trying to help these young men hunt. (Handout given)

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

50 in attendance; 25 public, 12 DWR employees, 13 RAC members

Next board meeting May 4th & 5th at the DNR Salt Lake office auditorium @ 9:00 a.m.

Next RAC meeting May 17th at the Springville City Civic Center Multi-purpose room, 110 South Main Street, Springville @ 6:30 p.m.

Northern Regional Advisory Council

April 20, 2011

6:00 P.M.

Place: Weber State University

RAC Present

Robert Bynes –At Large
John Cavitt- Noncon.
Paul Cowley-Forest Service
Joel Ferry- Agric
James Gaskill- At Large
Rus Lawrence- At Large
Jon Leonard- Sportsman
Ann Neville-Noncon.
Bret Selman- Agric
Brad Slater- Chair
Craig Van Tassell- Sportsman
John Wall- At Large

DWR Present

Jodie Anderson
Randy Wood
Anis Aoude
Ron Hodson
Darren Debloois
Kent Hershey
Kevin Bunnell
Dave Rich
Scott Davis
Mitch Lane
Kirt Enright
Scott McFarlane
Rustin Nielsen

Wildlife Board

Bill Fenimore

RAC Unexcused

Shawn Groll- At Large

Meeting Begins: 6:00 p.m.

Number of Pages: 9

Introduction: Brad Slater-chair

Agenda:

Review of Agenda and Dec 15, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Wildlife Board Meeting Update

Regional Update

Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2011

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2011

Big Game Rule Amendments – R657-5

Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2011

Election of RAC Chair and Vice Chair

Item 1. Welcome and Introductions

Introduction of RAC Members

Item 2. Review and Acceptance of Agenda and Dec 15, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Gaskill- Approve both.

Second: Neville

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Item 3. Wildlife Board Update

Nothing to report.

Item 4. Regional Update

- Ron Hodson, Regional Supervisor

Hired a new C.O. Wyatt Buback. Sergeant Rick Olson took a job in the Salt Lake Office. Keith Fullenkamp is the new Sergeant to replace Rick Olson.

Few habitat projects. Millville Face- Fighting invasive grasses. Planted 2500 bitter brush

seedlings. Dedicated Hunters helped with a seedling planting on the Henefer WMA. Middle

Fork- scalp and seed and planted 300 seedlings. Summer range burn on Curtis range plateau.

PJ chaining in Box Elder County on private property for deer winter range. Open house last

Thursday at the Cache Valley Public shooting Range for deer management. Unfortunately only

had 20 people show but the public was able to talk to the biologists. Another one planned at

South Ogden City Hall tomorrow night from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Give the public face time with our

biologists.

Gaskill- Commend the division for the habitat projects.

Neville- Second that.

Item 5. Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations for 2011

- Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

See Handout

Public Questions

Eli Long- Explain the reduction in bison permits.

Anis Aoude- We were over objective on the Henry Mountains unit so we had a lot of permits to bring it back down to objective which was 275. We had to get to that objective before we could increase it to the new objective that will ultimately be 325 adults. Right now, we are at 305 adults with the permits we had last year. To grow the population, we would have to reduce permits from the ones we have last year to come up from 305.

Eli Long- Was the bison permits just for Henry Mountains? Did that include Antelope Island?

Anis Aoude- That is Henry Mountains. Antelope Island has the same number of 6. They never change.

RAC Questions

Paul Cowley- When we look at the 5,000 permit cut, I am wondering how that was decided? It didn't look like any of those cuts were coming out of the northern or central region even though they had the lowest success.

Anis Aoude- As you know, we do not base our permit numbers on success rate. We base them on buck to doe ratio. We asked our regions to look on a unit by unit basis what their buck to doe ratios are and what they would need to cut between this year and next year to bridge the gap. When northern region did their calculations, they did not feel we needed any cuts to bridge the gap because we are already right around 17-18 bucks per hundred does in the northern region?

Bret Selman- It is hard to talk to you when

Anis Aoude- I can come out front.

Bret Selman- We had that shortened season on the Cache to 3 days and 4-5 days in other places in most of the northern region. Now, we have an increased buck to doe ratio post hunt. How much of that reduced hunting pressure do you think showed up in our buck to doe count?

Anis Aoude- I think it contributed to it a little bit but the harvest wasn't a whole lot less than we have seen in the past in the northern region on the Cache and Ogden. It did reduce harvest a little bit but it did not show up that much of a reduction in harvest.

Public Comment

Jack Ray- Oppose proposal to reduce general deer tags. The state is reducing opportunity. Tired of having to take kids out of state to go hunting. Consider the generations of young hunters.

Byron Bateman- Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife- Commend division for looking at bull elk and reducing some of those units. Ask that you keep spike bull hunt at 13,750.

Jeremy. Hanson-(Comment on Blue Comment Card) - Opposed to increasing buck to doe ratio for no biological reason. I am also opposed to cutting tags this year ahead of schedule.

Jerry Hill- United Wildlife Cooperative- Opposes all management strategies and practices that support blanket managing Utah's general deer herds to and 18 to 100 buck to doe ratio.

Raising the buck to doe ratio will not increase the number of deer in our state. Submitted UWC permit recommendations by email to board and RAC.

Douglas Namba- Agree with Jack Ray. A cut of tags will be a large detriment to hunter recruitment and will reduce opportunity. Distributing more tags.

RAC Discussion

Motion

Motion- Selman- Take Byron Batemans recommendation and keep the spike elk permits at 13,750.

Second- Van Tassell

Discussion

Gaskill- I am an opportunity guy. I am opposed to any cuts or reduction in the number of opportunities for people to go hunting.

Ferry- What would the total harvest be if those were included?

Aoude- You would reduce the harvest by about 200 animals.

Ferry- What is the likelihood that they could all be harvested in one or two areas?

Aoude- Not likely at all. That has not been the trend and I do not see it happening.

Ferry- Is it likely they would be harvested throughout the state?

Aoude- Yes, not all hunters are going to go to one unit. We have seen less hunting pressure on any individual unit, not more.

Selman- I have to disagree with James. There are a lot of antlerless permits if we want them.

Gaskill- The more the merrier.

Selman- I would like to see these bulls grow up. They don't register until they are 4 ½ or 5 on these limited entry. Let's let them get there and we can hunt more big bulls. You get to kill the same amount of bulls; you just have to wait a couple of years.

Gaskill- That's not exactly true. The limited entry for the big bulls is a significantly smaller number than the spike bull opportunity.

Selman- The increase will come.

Gaskill- I doubt we will ever get to the point that we have 13,500 large antler bull opportunities.

Motion Fails- For: 3 Against: 8

Motion

Motion-Gaskill- Accept the recommendation as presented.

Second-Neville

Motion Passes: For: 8 Against: 3

Cowley- I recognize that the way the management plan is set up is on the bucks per doe ratio. I still find myself a bit concerned when we look at low harvest rates and then we look at the amount of public land for opportunity. You are seeing that in the southern region. It has the greatest amount of public lands. You are seeing the highest harvest success rate. It seems there should be more opportunity down in that region than the northern and central. It is a

concern and as we talk about opportunity for the public in that area, maybe reduce fewer tags down south.

Aoude- It is true that there is more public land in that area but production of those herds are a lot less. We can grow more deer up north with less land than down south.

Lawrence- Why is that?

Aoude- Because precipitation mostly.

Lawrence- There is endless winter range down there.

Aoude- But it is not winter range limited just summer range limited. They are just not producing the fawns on the summer range.

Leonard- I had a lot of folks contact me who are concerned about not reducing tags in the northern region, especially where public opportunity seems to be concentrated on a few units where a lot of the land and opportunity in the northern region is CWMU and/or private land. Especially on the Cache, there is concern from a lot of folks about low deer numbers. It bothers me that you are willing to put that many more hunters up there. It bothers me that we are cutting in other areas and still leaving the northern region to bear the brunt along with the public lands.

Selman- I was happy with the 3 day hunt on the Cache last season. I thought we were going in the right direction. The complaint I hear is that we need more deer and we have too many people and not enough deer. That is the problem. We have to get our deer numbers up and buck numbers as well, especially in a place like the Cache. We have to do something.

Byrnes- Address some of the public comments. We are not really here tonight to change how the proclamation was ~~said~~ set in November and December. We are here tonight to set the permit numbers. We cannot really change what was set then. There will be an information meeting this summer for what is coming up. We will be setting 2012's proclamation in November or December.

Aoude- Actually, the next RAC meeting that will be coming up in May will have some of the particulars. We will have dedicated hunter permits, lifetime license holder permits and what the units will be with boundaries. We won't actually set the proclamation until that following November as far as season dates.

Byrnes- Make sure you try and stay involved and know what is going on and you can be part of the process. Hopefully you can get your voice in before setting permit numbers.

Gaskill- Robert and I are friends but I am going to disagree. I think they are taking the opportunity to tell us what they want. They took that opportunity before what I consider to be an ill-conceived decision by the wildlife board to not follow the division's recommendations. We are not going to stop speaking out because a decision has been made. We get another election and get to vote these guys out maybe. Over the years, it seems we have reduced the number of hunters and deer. I believe the number of hunters is relatively unimportant in deer production and that is what the division has told us. We ought to believe what the division tells us. I am still going to disagree with the wildlife board. We want more opportunity and that is what the public told us, that is what the division told us and I think we ought to do whatever we can to make opportunity.

Motion

Motion-Byrnes- Adopt the remainder of the permit numbers with the exception of the spike permits.

Second- Cavitt

Discussion on the Motion

Gaskill- I am going to oppose this motion because I think we ought to not reduce the number of deer tags in the southern or southeastern region. Maybe even talk about the other permit numbers.

Leonard- It seems kind of contradictory. I know how important opportunity is to recruitment. Notwithstanding, I think we have some serious problems with deer management in the state that needs to be addressed. I am going to defer to the expertise of the division that if they feel like it is important enough to reduce numbers in other regions, that I would support that. Especially given the dramatic changes that are going to occur in 2012. I would feel better if the northern region was reduced somewhat too because I think it bears the impact of the shortages in the other region.

Gaskill- the situation is that the division recommendations are based on an attempt to reach the buck to doe ratios, not on their best science of how to increase the deer herd. The science of increasing the deer herd and the recommendations of buck to doe may not be coincidental. We could find other ways to increase the deer herd. Big game animals are responsive to ATV trails and if we wanted to increase the deer herd, one of the best things we could do would be to reduce the number of ATV's in the field. They have the problem of only being able to manage hunters, not being able to manage deer.

Motion Passes- For: 8 Against: 3

Item 6. Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2011

- Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

See Handout

RAC Questions

Selman- What are we doing on the Ogden and Cache on antlerless elk?

Randy Wood- If you look at your recommendation, there is zero antlerless elk permits. The Ogden is below objective. On the Cache, there are about 200 antlerless permits recommended. Looking at dealing with some problems of congregation of elk. It is under objective but we do have permits there to address some issues.

Selman- Thank You.

Byrnes- Are you going to keep existing boundaries from existing control permits from last year?

Aoude- Yes, it is basically those unit boundaries. There is a little bit of a change to the antlerless elk permits that I forgot to address. We did move a lot of those permits out of the late season into the general season.

Motion

Motion-Gaskill- Accept the recommendations presented by the division.

Second- Lawrence

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Item 7. Big Game Rule Amendments – R657-5

- Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

See Handout

RAC Questions

Gaskill- The loosening of the restriction on carrying weapons does not just apply to hand guns. In my understanding, you can carry a rifle or shotgun around also. Am I incorrect?

Slater- I think if I understand, you are correct. Loaded would be different.

Gaskill- Are we overstepping our bounds by saying you cannot have a rifle with you when you are bowhunting? The same logic seems to apply.

Aoude- I think the new state law says you could have a loaded gun in your vehicle but it was changed that you could not have a loaded rifle or shotgun.

Gaskill- I am not talking about in a car, I am talking about while you are walking around.

Aoude- Most of these deal with the vehicle part of it. We did change some things to loosen the rest of it up but I guess theoretically, you probably could carry a rifle.

Gaskill- If I am carrying a rifle when I am bowhunting, which I would not do, but if I were are we going to be able to successfully prosecute that?

Slater- What will be an issue for the 2012 legislative session. That is really what we are talking about. We are talking about legislative changes that have occurred to handgun rules and now hunting rules need to change.

Aoude- Theoretically, you could carry a rifle and we probably can't prosecute it but you just can't kill the animal.

Gaskill- We can vote on anything we want, it just won't make a difference.

Neville- Your bitter today aren't you?

Gaskill- It is simply a question, not something that ought to change. It just did not make much logic to me.

Scott Davis- Jim asked me prior to the meeting why it was people could carry a handgun during the archery hunts as proposed by Anis and our division. I called the chief who was on the committee that came up with these recommendations and he informed me that it was a compromise with a lot of the gun rights advocates. They felt it was a second amendment right to bear arms and rather than say that they could have all weapons, they said you could have a pistol on your body when you are hunting archery. If you read the proposal, you cannot have a shotgun or rifle but you can have a pistol.

Byrnes- You said limited entry hunting area but in reality, this applies to all areas?

Aoude- Yes, pretty much all of our hunting areas are.

Byrnes- Grammatical correction under spotlighting. It should probably say locate instead of located.

Aoude- O.k. I can certainly change that.

Motion

Motion- Neville- Move to accept the rule changes as presented.

Second-Selman

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Item 8. Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2011

- Randy Wood, Regional Wildlife Coordinator

See Handout

Neville- Needs to recues from the vote.

Selman- Me too.

Motion

Motion- Leonard- Accept the divisions proposal as presented.

Second-Gaskill-

Discussion on the Motion

Cavitt- Question regarding Stillman Ranch grass valley proposed inclusion of antlerless moose. Was the division's recommendation to allow no antlerless moose?

Wood- We are recommending, for the general draw, no antlerless moose permits. That does not include the Chalk Creek CWMU's.

Motion Carries- For: 9 Recues: 2

Item 9. Election of RAC Chair and Vice Chair

- Ron Hodson, Regional Supervisor

Slater- There will be three of us going off the board. That will be Shawn Groll, Bret and I.

Gaskill- could you briefly go over the rules and how we are going to do this.

Ron Hodson- I am curious about whether you cast a vote in this? You don't cast a vote in all other actions of the RAC but I am unclear whether you cast a vote in this action or not. I would throw that out and get some feedback from the RAC. I don't know what is proper.

Gaskill- It would seem that probably the same rules ought to apply that he would break a tie.

Cowley-Moves that Slater has full voting rights in the election.

Second-Gaskill

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Motion-Leonard-Nominate Robert Byrnes as Chairman.

Second- Neville

Motion-Gaskill- Nomination Cease.
Second- Selman

Discussion on the Motion

Lawrence- Robert has done a fantastic job filling in and he conducts a great meeting. I think we are all on board with that.

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Motion-Neville-Accept Robert Byrnes as Chair by acclamation.

Second-Gaskill

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Motion-Wall- Nominate John Cavitt for vice-chair.

Paul Cowley- Nominate James Gaskill as vice-chair.

Paul Ferry- Nominate Jon Leonard as vice-chair.

Motion

Motion- Neville -Nomination cease

Second- Gaskill

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Public individual who helped Ron Hodson count votes: Bryce Thurgood.

Slater- This assignment has been a wonderful opportunity and I will miss it in a fond way. I will miss associating with the people that I have come to know.

Ron Hodson- The council has elected Jon Cavitt as vice-chair.

Ron Hodson- The division sincerely appreciates your service over the last two terms and especially your service as chairman. You have done a great job and we really do appreciate your service.

Byrnes- All of the RAC members really appreciate your service. We hope to see you out in the audience. Thank the RAC members for electing me as chair and ~~Jon~~ John as vice-chair.

Selman- Invite everyone to sharptail grouse day on April 30th. Anyone is welcome to come.

Meeting Ends: 8:10p.m.