

**Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Beaver High School
Beaver, UT
April 9, 2013
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 AND RULE AMENDMENTS FOR 2013

MOTION: To accept the Division's permit recommendations for OIAL species as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: To accept UBA's permit recommendations for the late elk hunt as outlined in attachment 2.

VOTE: Carried 7:3 (Clair Woodbury, Layne Torgerson and Mike Worthen opposed)

MOTION: To decrease the number of limited entry elk permits on the Monroe from 29 to 25 and to ask the Wildlife Board to add the following item to the action log: Consider decreasing spike bull permits on units that are under age objective.

VOTE: Carried 8:2 (Mack Morrell and Clair Woodbury opposed)

MOTION: To accept the remainders of elk permit recommendations as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: To issue 183 buck pronghorn permits for the Plateau unit.

VOTE: Carried 6:4 (Mack Morrell, Mike Staheli, Clair Woodbury and Dale Bagley opposed)

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

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations for buck deer permits as presented with the exception that there will be no increase in permits on the Panguitch Lake, Pine Valley, Zion and Monroe units.

VOTE: Carried 6:4 (Brian Johnson, Mack Morrell, Clair Woodbury and Dale Bagley opposed).

3. ANTLERLESS PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2013

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations on antlerless elk permits as presented.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION: To increase the season dates on the Paunsaugunt Skutumpah hunt to go until January 31, 2014

VOTE ON AMENDMENT: Unanimous (Clair Woodbury abstained)

VOTE ON MOTION: Carried 7:3 (Rusty Aiken, Mack Morrell and Layne Torgerson opposed)

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations on antlerless pronghorn permits as presented with the exception that permits on the Plateau unit be increased to 750.

VOTE: Carried 8:2. (Dave Black and Layne Torgerson opposed)

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations on antlerless deer permits as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

4. ANTLERLESS CWMU PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2013

MOTION: To accept the Division's antlerless CWMU permit recommendations as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous.

5. DEPREDATION RULE AMENDMENTS – R657-33

MOTION: To accept the Division's Depredation Rule Amendments as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous. (Dale Bagley abstained)

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 5:00 p.m.**

RAC Members Present	DWR Personnel Present	Wildlife Board Present	RAC Members Not Present
Brian Johnson Mike Staheli Mack Morrell Mike Worthen Layne Torgerson Steve Flinders Rusty Aiken Clair Woodbury Sam Carpenter Dave Black Dale Bagley	Kevin Bunnell Teresa Griffin Stephanie Rainey Lynn Chamberlain Heather Talley Anis Aoude Jason Nicholes Riley Peck Dustin Schaible Jim Lamb Vance Mumford Jake Selby Brent Farnsworth Josh Pollock Zed Broadhead Trail Kreitzer Scott McFarlane	Jake Albrecht	Cordell Pearson (excused) Harry Barber

Steve Flinders called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. There were approximately 46 interested parties in attendance in addition to RAC members, members of the Wildlife Board, and Division employees.

Steve Flinders: Let's get started. It's 5 o'clock, somebody says. Welcome to the Southern Region RAC, Bucks Bulls, Once-In-a-Lifetime, and Antlerless; the biggest agenda of the year probably. My name's Steve Flinders; I'm the Chair. I represent the Fish Lake and Dixie National Forests. I'd like to recognize Jake Albrecht from the audience with the Wildlife Board. How about we introduce the RAC and we'll start down on the end there, Brain.

Brian Johnson: Brain Johnson, non-consumptives.

Mike Staheli: Mike Staheli, non-consumptive from the Delta area.

Mack Morrell: Mack Morrell from Bicknell, agriculture.

Mike Worthen: Mike Worthen from Cedar City, public at-large.

Layne Torgerson: Layne Torgerson from Richfield. I'm a sportsman's representative.

Kevin Bunnell: I'm the regional supervisor for the Southern Region and I'll introduce myself a little more thoroughly here in a minute.

Rusty Aiken: Rusty Aiken, agriculture.

Clair Woodbury: I'm Clair Woodbury from Hurricane. I represent the public at-large.

Sam Carpenter: Sam Carpenter from Kanab. I represent the sportsman.

Dave Black: Dave Black from St. George, public at-large.

Dale Bagley: Dale Bagley from Marysvale. I represent an elected official.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. We'd like to excuse Cordell; he couldn't be with us tonight. Let me briefly go over the meeting order. For those of you that haven't been to a RAC meeting before; we'll have a presentation by the Division on the screen. So you'll want to be in a place where you can see that. I ask you to be respectful and hold your comments and questions if you would until after the presentation. I'll then ask for questions from the RAC, and then questions from the public. Feel free to ask any question but please stick to questions. And then we'll move on to comment cards. See the conservation officers in the back with those yellow cards? I you want to comment that's what we're here for. Please fill one of those out and get it up front. After comments from the public we'll then hear about comments from the RAC and move on into motions and voting.

Review and Acceptance of Agenda and Minutes (action)

Steve Flinders: With that I'm ready for an approval of the agenda and minutes from clear back in December or January. Moved by Mike. Seconded by Mack. Those in favor? It looks unanimous.

Mike Worthen made the motion to accept the minutes from previous meeting. Mack Morrell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Wildlife Board Update:

-Steve Flinders, Chairman

Steve Flinders: In terms of the Wildlife Board update, it was a nonevent; we talked about bears. And it was months and months ago and the draw has since taken place. So I'm going to move through that briefly unless somebody has a specific question. Stacy has been pretty good about sending those minutes out and if you are not receiving the Wildlife Board updates, actual motions, in an email, let me know and we can make sure that happens. It's nice to have the follow through. (Inaudible conversation from audience). Do you hear that? Talking about motions from the Wildlife Board. Let's move on to regional update, Kevin.

Regional Update:

-Kevin Bunnell, Regional Supervisor

Kevin Bunnell: Thanks Steve, well this is my second day on the job as the regional supervisor down here so my update will be pretty brief. But let me just introduce myself quickly. My name's Kevin Bunnell. I've been involved with the Division of Wildlife my whole life. My dad worked for the Division for 34 years so I'm kind of an agency brad; was raised here in the agency. So far in my career I've been the mammals coordinator, which I did for several years and then most recently was the wildlife section chief out of our Salt Lake office. Very glad, happy to be down here and looking forward to spending, you know, the next 8 to 10 or plus years in the southern region. So glad to be here and I really appreciate all the well wishes that I've got from people here in the region. As far as a regional update, just a couple of things real quick; some of you may be aware that they have found Quagga mussels in Lake Powell. That's a recent event and we're still trying to figure out what exactly that means. One thing that it will mean though is now that we know that we have Quaggas there the focus will be trying to protect the other bodies of water in the state. And so you'll see enhanced or increased surveillance for boats leaving Lake Powell so that we can, it's something that we anticipated, we've actually been surveying the boats leaving Lake Powell for several years to find out where they most often go after leaving Lake Powell. And interestingly enough the number 1 location for boats leaving Lake Powell is Utah Lake; is the place where boats from Lake Powell go most often is the next place. And so we will be putting a plan in place to try to protect the other waters in the state from Quagga mussels. Other things that have happened that a lot of you are probably have heard the news stories and are aware of the translocation study that's going on on moving deer from the Parowan Front up to the Pahvant. 102 deer, I think, were moved and you'll get a much more complete update on that in May. Actually the researchers from BYU will be coming down to give a brief presentation on that and kind of update everybody, along with the Monroe deer survival study. And so those two research projects are both progressing and we have high expectations for the results and we'll update everybody in a more thorough way on those in May. Other than that, that's all I have for a regional update.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Kevin. Any questions from the RAC for Kevin? Seeing none lets move on to the agenda. First up will be Bucks Bulls and Once-In-A-Lifetime Permit Recommendations and Rule Amendments for 2013. Anis, you're up.

Bucks Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule Amendments for 2013 (action)

-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

-Teresa Griffin, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

(See attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Steve Flinders: Thanks Anis. Any question from the RAC for Anis on Bucks and Bulls? Dave.

Dave Black: I am familiar with how you count the elk, and thanks to Dustin I had a great opportunity to go up and count elk this year. And I feel pretty confident that the areas that we flew we had a very accurate count. They're very thorough; a lot of detail goes into that. The question is is do you do something similar on each of the deer units? How are you counting the deer and especially the buck to

doe ratio?

Anis Aoude: Sure, so deer we do not do surveys like we do elk. They don't lend themselves to that type of survey and the cost to get to that point would be astronomical just because of the scale. We do our buck to doe ratios post season during the rut, and it's a ground survey. So we drive all over the unit and try to get a large enough sample size to represent that unit. So the data shows in most cases on most sized units that if you get 400 does and the associated fawns and bucks you have a high enough sample size to represent that unit; as long as your samples are equally located on the unit. So that's how we get our buck to doe ratios and fawn to doe ratios. It's a different approach than we do elk, just because, I mentioned they don't lend themselves to being counted the same way. They are much more cover related. They are not in big groups like elk are. So you would spend a lot more time and find a lot fewer deer than you would elk. Having said that, we use that information, our classification information, our harvest information and our survival data that we get from our radio collars, and put that into a computer model and that gives us a good estimate of how many deer we have. So we kind of have an idea but all of it is related to the data we collect on the ground.

Steve Flinders: Mike.

Mike Staheli: Anis, on Monroe, on deer, I just want to clarify, your buck/doe ratio three year average is 15, which is right on the bottom, right?

Anis Aoude: Right.

Mike Staheli: But yet you show it trending up.

Anis Aoude: Yeah.

Mike Staheli: And so you increase the permit numbers there, but yet we're right on the bottom of the buck/doe ratio. And I don't understand that. Why are we trying to do that?

Anis Aoude: Right, so, yeah, so this past year it was 18.3. So basically this one-year, if the trend holds we'll be above it if we leave permits the same.

Mike Staheli: Oh I see. All right.

Anis Aoude: So we not only just looked at the three-year average we looked at the trend as well and that's why we recommended that. So it kind of gives us two pieces of information to look at instead of just one.

Mike Staheli: Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Mack.

Mack Morrell: What did you say the antelope objective was on the Plateau?

Anis Aoude: Currently it's 1500.

Mack Morrell: Okay. And what was the count?

Anis Aoude: I think it was in the 1400 and change range. And with sightability it should be at or . . . what's that? Yeah, with sightability it is close to 2000.

Mack Morrell: And how many are you taking off?

Anis Aoude: Well this is just a bucks, buck harvest. Let me look. Pronghorn permits.

Steve Flinders: Yeah, we'll talk antlerless next Mack. That's the trouble with combining these meetings. Let's try to think bucks and bulls right now.

Anis Aoude: So on the Plateau we have 54 any weapon, 54 muzzleloader, and oh I mean 54 archery, 54 muzzleloader and 161 rifle permits. We've got about 200, close to 270.

Steve Flinders: Thanks, Rusty.

Rusty Aiken: Um, back to the general season deer. So on the Pine Valley, similar to the Monroe, it's got a trend up, that's why you're wanting to increase there?

Anis Aoude: Correct.

Rusty Aiken: You've probably answered this question before but remind me again. The Cache, why is it a 33 buck to doe, and you're stable?

Anis Aoude: Te Cache?

Rusty Aiken: Yeah. Or Chalk Creek.

Anis Aoude: So that's a private land unit. And on those units what we did is we basically set the permits based on the number that have historically hunted there; because if you increase permits on those units likely they won't have a place to go hunting. So there's a hunter access issue there on those units, on those private land units.

Rusty Aiken: So you set a fixed amount?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, and then eventually, you know, if we see that that, you know, satisfaction stays high we can start creeping them up slightly. But there's really, you could issue a lot of permits but people would be buying a permit and not finding a place to hunt because it is mostly private land.

Rusty Aiken: S it's a good place to maybe have some multiple hunts? Somewhere down the road?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, and there's a lot of CWMUs on those units as well, which harvest a lot. So that's why the buck to doe ratio tends to be inflated; a lot of those bucks come off of those CWMUs as well.

Steve Flinders: Sure Mike.

Mike Worthen: I've noticed on the set of information on the limited entry bull permit recommendations, the high end 5.7 to 8 average age on the bulls harvested. What, and I'm noticing they were all below objective. What impact does spike hunts have and how long does it take for the impacts of a spike hunt, unlimited spike hunts, to kick in and affect a population?

Anis Aoude: Sure, the spike hunting, you know, we've done a lot of work on this and it's been done on a lot of units. We likely won't see the affect on the ages until obviously we've had it for at least 7 years. Because, you know, they're yearlings as spikes. So we've had it now for 3 years so we shouldn't start seeing the affect on the older age classes yet. But, when you do actually harvest spikes you're reducing the bull to cow ratio, which actually increases your production. So you're actually pumping out more calves that are replacing those bulls at almost the same rate. So you shouldn't see any affect of the spike hunt I guess is what I'm trying to say.

Mike Worthen: But you would see a decrease in the average age. The average age would go lower over years if those spikes were harvested?

Anis Aoude: No the spike harvest is not included in the average age, obviously. But yeah as . . .

Mike Worthen: Over time.

Anis Aoude: Over time, over time, well no it won't because all of those age classes are being recruited. Once they stop being a spike, we're only harvesting 55 to 60 percent of the yearlings. So half of the bulls are making it into the older age class every year. So there's lots of bulls that are going to make it into that older age class. So it shouldn't have an affect because it does increase reproduction as well, so that's mitigating for that as well.

Steve Flinders: Other questions from the RAC? Sam.

Sam Carpenter: Yeah anis, looking at the Zion unit, I see where we picked that up 200 tags and the buck to doe ratio is still well above the 18 to 20. Are we going to be seeing increases like this every year until we knock that down?

Anis Aoude: No we won't. That unit as you know has a lot of private land and we probably won't be increasing it like we could on other units that are public land units. I think we'd like to see and look at, you know, but the biologists made that recommendation knowing that there could be a point where we can't increase any more because of access issues. But he seemed to think that we can at least accommodate 200 more hunters on that unit.

Sam Carpenter: But we're still not open to a third tier to manage it, at the level that it's at?

Anis Aoude: You know what we . . . No, because we have similar units in the northern region we're managing the same way. If they're above objective but we've kind of capped them at a certain number because of access issues and I think that will be one of those units that are similar. You know we could put it into it's own tier but it really is, you can't manage to it because of access issues.

Sam Carpenter: Access issues on the Zion unit?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, I mean there's quite a bit of private land on the Zion unit from what I understand.

Sam Carpenter: Well there is on East Zion up in there but there's an awful lot of it that isn't involved.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, and I think that's why he's decided to increase a little bit so see where we get to there.

Sam Carpenter: All right.

Steve Flinders: Any other questions from the RAC?

Questions from the public:

Steve Flinders: Questions from the public? This is for Bucks and Bulls, and Once-In-A-Lifetime recommendations. Questions only. Give us your name please first.

Lee Tracy: Lee Tracy, Enoch. My question is to Anis. On those reductions or in fact the increases in tags, how is that allocated per weapon?

Anis Aoude: Is that for elk?

Lee Tracy: Either.

Anis Aoude: Okay, so they are all a little bit different. But we try to have a set split for all weapon types. So the general season deer at 60/20/20. So 60 percent rifle, 20 percent muzzleloader, 20 percent archery. The elk, for limited entry it varies a little bit because it depends whether there's a late or early hunt on there. So if there's no late hunt, no late rifle hunt, the split is 50/35/25. So 50 percent rifle . . . What's that? 60/30/20. Yeah, so 60 percent rifle, 30 percent muzzleloader, and 20 percent archery. If there is a late hunt it's 65 percent goes into the rifle and then 15 and 20. So it's just a little bit different. And the reason we do that is, you know, the late hunt on most units is, has less of a success rate. So if it does have a late hunt we can put more into the rifle but if there is no late hunt we want to see in those lower or less successful weapon types to increase opportunity. So that's kind of the way it's done on elk. And everything else is fairly similar, 60/20/20.

Steve Flinders: And those numbers come out of the statewide management plans.

Anis Aoude: The statewide plan, yeah. It's fairly set. I mean we, you know, when we did the plan there was a lot of discussion about, you know, which one to do it and that's kind of how it came out.

Steve Flinders: Other questions for Anis before we move on to comment cards? Come up to the mic you guys.

Judson Tolman: I have a question, Judson Tolman by the way. I have a question that may have not been covered here. Do we have any idea of what kind of numbers of youth will take advantage of being able to buy an archery tag if they don't draw an any weapon or muzzleloader tag on their preferred unit?

Anis Aoude: Yeah so this year was the first year. I don't think there was very many that took advantage

of that. You know I don't have the exact numbers; off the top of my head I think it's around 3,000 that actually took advantage of that statewide.

Steve Flinders: Come on up.

Verland King: Verland King, I'm a member of the bison committee. My question is, our discussion in the committee was that we would hunt 102 total buffalo, 52 bulls and 50 cows. And I'm just, my question is what the change is? It's only 4 head but I . . . You know, did the model change or what?

Anis Aoude: Yeah so you are assuming all of those are on the Henrys. Actually 6 of those permits are on the Book Cliffs.

Verland King: No. My notes from our meeting (Inaudible).

Anis Aoude: Yeah, I don't know, that's the recommendations that the region recommended. So I don't know where that difference is.

Verland King: All right.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Verland.

Anis Aoude: So you guys had 102, is that what you said? Total?

Verland King: (Off mic).

Anis Aoude: Yeah, I don't . . . Right, right. Yeah but that's the recommendation the region gave us so that's (unintelligible). Yeah, the region will, I guess will be able to answer that tomorrow night at their RAC meeting. I don't know what, where the discrepancy came in.

Steve Flinders: Yes sir, come on up.

Gene Boardman: Gene Boardman Hinkley Utah..My question is the numbers given here, that's the number, is that the number that will be in the draw? And the other, the follow-up to that question, when will we ever have published the whole numbers where other permits that are not in the draw show up?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, yeah these are the numbers that will go in the draw. For general season it's the total numbers for everything. So now that dedicated hunters have to draw, they're drawing out of those as well. So that's for general season it does include those. Uh, we do publish everything in our annual report that's on our website every year. So up to 2011, from 1995, I think, is on our website currently, of all the permits of all types that were ever harvested, or issued.

Steve Flinders: Good question, thanks Gene. Other questions for Anis, before we move on to comments. I've got a pretty good stack of cards. Sure, come on up.

Jack Taylor: My name's Jack Taylor and I just need some clarification. On the Pine Valley unit last year how many tags did we add? For the Pine Valley unit, rifle deer?

Anis Aoude: There was a total of 3,600 and they're split 60/20/20.

Jack Taylor: If I was thinking right we added 200 tags last year to that unit. Is that correct? And then this year we're going to add another 200? Is that correct?

Anis Aoude: No we didn't, last year was the first year we actually had a unit-by-unit hunt so we didn't add anything, we just set the baseline. This year, yeah, we are recommending on the Pine Valley an increase of 200 permits overall, that's over all weapon types not just rifle.

Jack Taylor: And then on the Panguitch unit, the same thing, we didn't add any tags in 2009-10.

Anis Aoude: So last year was the first year we went to the unit by unit, so we set the baseline. And then this year we're kind of going up and down based on what the buck/doe ratios do. So this is the first year we've actually added or subtracted permits on a unit-by-unit basis.

Jack Taylor: And then one other question, on the elk, when you guys go out and do you counts, do you, as these elk leave one unit . . . let's say from the Boulder unit over to the Dutton unit, their winter range, how do you account for that?

Anis Aoude: So, on most units we don't, we just kind of count them where they winter and we just assume that's their wintering range. We have put some radio collars on those units specifically and now we have some more, I guess better information about how they move around those units. And we are seeing that they move around quite a bit. I think Dustin could probably address that a little bit better as far as specific numbers. But that's how we deal with it; we look at percentages that leave the unit and then figure out how many are wintering on what unit.

Steve Flinders: Any other questions from the public?

Comments from the public:

Steve Flinders: Let's move on into comment cards. I've got a pretty good stack. Let's try to stick to 3 minutes per individual, 5 minutes for a bonnfied formal representing a group. Yeah, please. Start out with Donnie Hunter, followed by Lance Roberts.

Donnie Hunter: My name is Donnie Hunter. I'm representing Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife. It's a pleasure to be able to address the chairman and the RAC. At our SFW board meeting we talked a little bit about Pine Valley Mountain and the buck permits there. We were a little bit concerned about that spike in the buck to doe ratio there in 2012; it jumped up quite a bit. We'd like to see that maybe give that a couple more years before we increase permits there. We're about at our carrying capacity there, maybe a little bit low but we'd like to see those numbers stay at the 3,600. And then for myself I'd like to talk a little bit about the Panguitch Lake deer permits, buck permits. That was one of the places that a lot of sportsman complained about over crowding. We had some, quite a few sportsman that was very unhappy about their hunt because there was too many people in those areas. And I think we talked a little bit with your people about their counts there and the buck to doe ratio on one side was quite a bit higher than the other. Is that correct? And uh, we've, anyway, so we would like to see that Panguitch Lake, or I would, like to see the buck numbers there stay at the same as it was in 2012. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank Donnie. Lance followed by Paul Niemeyer.

Lance Roberts: Lance Roberts, Monroe Utah. I guess the cards got a little out of order than what we turned them in. I'm actually going to, I'm representing myself and then also the SFW chapter in Sevier County. You'll have a couple other people stand up after me but I'd just like to say that I support the recommendations that SFW has proposed for statewide for the Bucks, Bulls, and the Once-In-A-Lifetime permits. So like Donnie talked about, Brayden is going to get up and then Troy is going to mention a few things. We would just like to say that in Sevier County we support those. And then just something else I'd like to bring up, I know we're not going to talk about it tonight but maybe just put it on the action log to bring up later on. Mike, I think you brought it up, is the spike permits on some of these units. I think if we could put that at least in the minutes or in an action log, whatever we need to do so that we can bring that up later on to talk about that on some of these specific limited entry units. I think that needs to be addressed in the future. That's everything I have. Thank you

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Paul followed by Gene Boardman.

Paul Niemeyer: Paul Niemeyer, and I appreciate you guys letting us come to speak. I'm representing SFW. The item that I want to talk about is some Monroe bulls. We got into a pretty heavy harvest on those bulls for several years. We got below the management plan. We're starting to creep up. We're still not there. What we're asking for is that the recommendation was for 29 bull tags; we'd like to go to 25, which is what it was last year. We're at about 6.2 right now and you know, we're trying to manage for 7.5 to 8 year old bulls. The other thing that we're concerned about is last year we killed 165 spikes on that Monroe. And on the Fish Lake we only killed 152 and the Fish Lake's got 3 times the elk; which demonstrates how easy this Monroe is to hunt. There's more access, uh, you know there's roads about everywhere. You don't have the real road less areas. You've got a few drainages that don't have access but it's pretty easy because you're on top of the drainage. So it is easy to hunt and you can't have many bulls here or many bull tags and have much quality. Now we're also asking for 240 antlerless tags on that, which when you throw that on there and the spike hunt on there we're not going to have much recruitment into these older age bulls. And we've been down already; we're trying to come back up so we would ask for 25 instead of 29. And the other thing Lance alluded to is we would like to see this on the action log for the Wildlife Board, the spike hunting affect on some of these units. Monroe is obviously going to be really easy to harvest a lot of spikes and we're going to see some real poor recruitment down the road on these bigger bulls if we keep uncontrolled spike hunting there. That's our recommendations. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Paul. Gene Boardman followed by Wade Heaton.

Gene Boardman: Gene Boardman. This last year we had a really enjoyable hunt on the Dutton for a bull elk. And we had an enjoyable hunt on the Panguitch Lake for deer. We didn't hurt the deer population any but we enjoyed the hunt. The first weekend it did look like a lot of traffic on Panguitch Lake. I'll note that. What I really want to address is that I think that we need to do something besides age objective on the elk. We've got two things going, one you're managing by age objective and we've got a lot of hunters that are looking for Boone and Crockett points. And sometimes the two don't match up. We've killed uh, the oldest bull that we've killed on the Dutton barely made 300 points. And this year we wrecked the age objective thing because we took a younger 6-point bull that we were just happy to take a bull and that's the way we hunt, any branched antler bull is uh, that's good enough for us. And there seems to be plenty of elk on the Dutton and to see it cut back this year I'm not sure that that's the . .

.. that's cutting back hunter's opportunities. I know that there's that want those Boone and Crockett points but I wanted to speak for those of us who just like to hunt elk. Thanks

Steve Flinders: Thanks Gene. Wade followed by Brayden Richmond

Wade Heaton: Wade Heaton representing Friends of the Paunsagaunt. They elected me to come and talk to you tonight. Just as we've done a few years in the past, wanted to give you a little update. Friends of the Paunsagaunt have continued to work with the DWR, or I should say the DWR continues to work with us. It's still a great relationship. Our local biologist, Dustin Schaible has just done wonders. You know we were able to sit down and look at a lot of the data. You know, talk about a lot of the issues and it's just been great. That working relationship's been great. We all understand how the unit operates and how the models work a lot better. So I just want to say that we really appreciate the Division for the effort that they've made to work with us. Having said that, things really do look good on the Paunsagaunt. We continue to see just a little bit of an increase in that age structure of our bucks. We are a little concerned about some population issues. We have done just about everything we can think of to help total population, including build fences, signing and all sorts of things. We're going to continue down that road but we are a little concerned in that area. But the overall age structure continues to increase. It looks really good and we're pretty pleased with where we're at. As so we support the recommendation of the Division of maintaining the trophy buck permits where they are, where they were in 2012. Also the management hunt . . . you know there were a lot of people that said that would not work . . . and you guys and the board and those that kind of took a chance on this idea have proven that it does work. You know we have accomplished our goal with that management hunt. We have brought that buck to doe ration back down. So we really appreciate you guys and we do support the Division recommendation of decreasing those permits. You know we're not done but we have kind of accomplished the goal and so to decrease those permits makes sense. And lastly, we support the idea of increasing bull elk permits. We have not made any secret of the fact that we don't want any elk on there. So any, whether it's 1 or 101, we appreciate any increase in buck tags. So appreciate you guys. Thanks. Elk tags.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Wade. Brayden followed by Deloss Christensen.

Brayden Richmond: Brayden Richmond representing the SFW state board. We've got two issues I want to talk about, is the Plateau, the antelope tags on the Plateau. We're pretty concerned about that due to the emergency closure two years ago that we're bumping that unit back up so quickly. What we'd like is to just be a little more moderate. We're requesting to keep the tag numbers the same as 2012, the bucks; and not increase those buck tags on that unit. Second one I'd like to discuss is UBA is going to come up, Utah Bow Hunters Association is going to come up with a proposal on the late elk hunts. Anis kind of already addressed this. On the elk units with the late elk hunts they're taking archery tags to give to the rifle hunts on those late elk tags. UBA is of the opinion, and we agree, that doesn't make a lot of sense to give low success primitive weapon tags to rifle holders. So . . . On one other note I also represent the Beaver Chapter, in Beaver County our chapter we just really want to thank the Division for working with us; the numbers look real good. Numbers up, numbers down, we agree with all the numbers. And thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Brayden. Deloss followed by Sergio, Deloss Scarth.

DeLoss Christensen: You don't look that tall. DeLoss Christensen, Glenwood, Utah. I'm going to

represent the SFW chapter from Sevier County, as well as the state organization and myself this evening. First of all I want to thank you for allowing us as sportsman and other interested folks for being here tonight. Thanks for your time. And especially thank you Mr. Bunnell for accepting the assignment to help us down here. Welcome to Southern Utah. I want you to know I appreciate all you've done in the past, in recent years on these predator management issues and these deer issues and all you've done before you got here. So look forward to having you; thanks for coming. I've attended the board meeting of the state organization of SFW so I know what their recommendations are. You haven't heard them all yet but you will and I'd like to go on record as supporting those. As an individual I'd like to also comment on the spike elk issue. And if you'll remember those of you that were on the RAC a few years ago, and some of you were, this RAC voted to go very slow on issuing those spike elk tags on the Monroe at the same time we were increasing the bull harvest, the big bull harvest there. And you folks voted not to do that; to go slow and not issue those spike tags; because you, I think, agreed with us that we could tip that unit over very easily. It's a small unit with a small number of elk compared to some of the other units. And as a result of the big game board, no offence Mr. Albrecht, choosing not to do that we have to meet with you again at some point in time and discuss how we're going to maintain that unit if we're going to maintain it as a quality bull unit. We just can't do what we've doing the last three or four years and take the number of bulls that we're taking off the top side and then harvest the majority of the bulls on the bottom side. And I don't need to go into that again, Mr. Niemeyer explained that to ya, but if you could make that an action item that we could address it with you as soon as possible so that we can get a suitable solution for what the management plan is on that unit. And that's all I have to say. Again, thanks for your time and I appreciate all you do.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Sergio followed by Craig Christiansen.

Sergio Scarth: Sergio Scarth from Laverkin. I have some concerns with increasing permits on the Zion unit. I did some research and according to the Division's website from 2008 to 2011 they averaged 190 muzzleloader hunters. With this option 2 we're up to 560. Increasing the permits now to approximately 600. I lease 5,000 acres on the west side of the Zion unit and this year was unbelievable, the trespassing issues we had. There's not enough land on top from Midway to Todds Junction to put 600 hunters. So a lot of those guys are getting frustrated and going over onto Kanarra Mountain, Kolob, Smiths Mesa. Trespassing is ridiculous. We kicked over 15 people off of 5,000 acres in three days. We've never seen that before. It's really frustrating. I don't think the Zion unit needs that extra pressure. A 300 percent increase on the muzzleloader hunt doesn't sound responsible to me. Thanks.

Steve Flinders: Do you want to talk about desert sheep too? Another, your other comment card?

Sergio Scarth: That was more of a question. I was just curious why they were recommending a non-resident sheep permit after they gave one away at the expo. I guess that question needs to be for Anis. When they gave the non-resident only permit at that expo I figured that was the 10 percent for non-residents.

Anis Aoude: Which unit was this? The Zion. So yeah, I mean, the way we do the draw is based on the total number going in the draw, 7 and 1. And then the one that goes in the expo, sometimes can go to a non-resident. It doesn't always. So we just have to kind of see how that goes. Yeah, it might, I realize that. But when we do the splits on the, if we have more than 5 in the drawing 1 goes to the public; that's just the way it is. Yeah, a non-resident. So anytime we get 5 or above we round up. So we had 8 and 1 went to there, even though the expo tag is a non-resident as well. It's just the way our drawing worked.

Otherwise, because the Booklet for the drawing goes out before we have to know ahead of time whether we're going to have a non-resident or not. Once that's locked in we have to have one in the drawing.

Sergio Scarth: (Comments made off mic, inaudible).

Anis Aoude: Yeah that's correct. Yeah.

Steve Flinders: Craig followed by Judson Tolman.

Craig Christiansen: Craig Christiansen I represent Utah Bowman's. (See attachment 2.) Here we go, um I was told that this was, what we were recommending was e-mailed out to you guys. I'm just going to go ahead and read it off. Hopefully you've had a chance to see it. If not hopefully it's in your boxes and you can check it out at a later time, or tonight, or tomorrow, whenever. Anyway the Utah Bowman's Association recognizes the need to add a late hunt to the Wasatch, Nebo, and Deep Creek limited entry elk units and to address crowding issues during the September rifle elk hunt. However, we take issue with decreasing archery and muzzleloader permits in order to provide late rifle permits on these units which will experience extreme high success rates. We saw these high success rates on the Wasatch unit in 2005 and 2006 during which these late hunts experienced 95 and 100 percent success rates respectively. In addition the elk plan does not call for late hunts on these units due to the expected extreme high success rates of late hunts, or the late hunt on these units. Thus we believe that these late rifle permits should come from the existing allocation of rifle permits. Utah Bowman's Association recommends and asks that this RAC recommend that the tag allocation remain the same on these 3 units as it has been in the past; that the allocation is 50 percent rifle tags, 30 percent archery tags, and 20 percent muzzleloader tags. On premium early and late rifle tags would then be distributed accordingly from the 50 percent allocation of rifle tags. I'd just like to thank you for your time and the opportunity to be here and present this recommendation.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. We have a copy of that letter. Do you have a copy you can leave with folks so we can get that in the minutes as we may have some more questions for you. Judson followed by Troy Justensen.

Judson Tolman: My name's Judson Tolman I'm here for the St. George chapter of the Mule Deer Foundation. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to address you here. The reason I got up and talked, I want to talk about the increase on the Panguitch Lake, the Pine Valley and the Zion unit. We as a chapter feel like the Division is on the right track by breaking up into the 30 units. We think that's a good thing. We like to see that. However, we want it to be noted that we're adamantly opposed to any increase in tags on any of those three units. You heard from the gentleman that was on Panguitch Lake; there seems to be a lot of overcrowding there. There seems to be still overcrowding on Zion. Also, even though Panguitch Lake is at a stable buck to doe ration and Zion is above that, we would propose as Sam Carpenter alluded to that what we need here is another tier of the objectives on the buck to doe ratios, maybe kicking Panguitch up to that 18 to 20 and then taking Pine Valley and Zion up even further than that to say, to 20 to 25. Somebody else talked about if you look at the Pine Valley unit, that spike is pretty significant, very significant from 2011 to 2012. And even though 200 permits seems an nominal increase we would rather see if that spike is actually accurate, especially based on how Anis talked about how they count deer numbers on those units. So anyways, this is a rambling on here, what we would rather see that age objective raised and we're opposed to any increase in those permits. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you, Troy followed by Nolan Gardner.

Troy Justensen: Troy Justensen, Sportsman for Fish And Wildlife. I'd just like to address what Verland brought up as far as the bison. I know it's going to be addressed in the South Eastern Region, but if the buffalo working group come up with a different number than what's on your current recommendation we'd support what that committee come up with. So then I'd also address the Oak Creek limited entry deer. Due to the fire and the disruption there and the loss of habitat we'd recommend that we cut the tags from . . . the recommendation I think from the Division is 35, we'd recommend 30. And then we'd also like to go on record of supporting UBA on their recommendation on the allocation of tags for the late hunt. There are some of these units with the late hunt that the elk are a lot more vulnerable and the success rate is a lot higher and so I think we need to look at that. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Troy. Nolan followed by Klay Philips.

Anis Aoude: Just a clarification on the bison. Now it just clicked in my head, there's conservation permits as well that do not go in the drawing. So it may have been 102 total but the conservation permits do not go in the drawing. I'll double check to make sure how many conservation permits there are but I think that's where the discrepancy is.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Anis. Sorry about that Nolan.

Nolan Gardner: Thank you. Thanks for being here tonight and all the time you donate. I had actually put on the card not come up but anyway I'll be here. I'd just like to concur with the Mule Deer Foundation and SFW on the increase at Panguitch Lake and Pine Valley. I'd sure hate to see them go up any more. And I too am concerned with the spike and the buck to doe numbers on the Pine Valley. I sure wish we could give it another year and take a look at it. The deer numbers, I think, are way down still. So anyway I think we need to be real careful. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Klay and then Verland King.

Klay Phillips: Klay Phillips. Thanks for your time. I wanted to talk about the Pine Valley unit, about keeping the tags at the 3,600 and not increasing. . . . the deer herd does not seem to increase. Over the last few years we've hunted that unit, my oldest son and I. Although we pack in on top of the mountain and we have seen more camps and not . . . the deer herd does not seem to increase. We've seen smaller bucks but nothing that uh, can I say would be worth packing off of the top of the mountain. So we'd like to see it stay at the 3,600. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Verland followed by David Brinkerhoff.

Verland King: Verland King. Member of the Bison Committee, bison working group. Last year I talked to you guys and I mentioned the study that's being done by Utah State. And I kind of got the impression that you guys didn't know a whole lot about that. So I wanted to bring it to you attention some of the things that are going on. They've got several, they've got a lot of buffalo collared out there with GPS and some other collars. And so we're keeping track of where they move and stuff like that. And it's really helped us in a couple of different situations. If you remember last year you okayed a permit hunt for 60 head. If you remember the slide said they hunted 120. Well that was due to the study that's being done. We count the buffalo the end of July, the first of August. On the last flight we found

75 head that were up 5 Canyon area that we thought were previously counted, was what we were told. And so when the DWR got back to their office and checked with Utah State there was a collared buffalo up that canyon that had been there for a couple of weeks. And so it was obvious that this herd hadn't been counted. So they had to go back to the model. Two things happened, they had to hunt twice as many buffalo as they did as they expected. Plus, they had to modify the model and decrease the mortality rate from 5 percent to 2 percent to bring the model in line with what, with this discrepancy in the count. We're hoping to get some better sightability numbers from this study too. But I wanted to point that out to you. We've been working closely together, and also if uh, why aren't those conservation permits listed on this information? I mean I could have figured that out if they had of been listed. I mean I didn't know there were four. I knew there were some. Are they secret? And also since it was mentioned the Plateau pronghorn, uh, from my notes and what I, what I heard, the objective is 1,500 there are 1,410 there now. Uh, I don't know what the buck to doe ratio is out there. Okay, high 30's so . . . bucks to doe? Okay, I figured it out at 50 percent. I live out there in the summer; I run my cattle there. There's a lot of twins going on the last two years. We did have a winterkill three years ago but a lot of twinning going on. That puts ya . . . At a 50 percent buck to doe ratio you've got 1,410 coming into the herd. So if you only hunt 300 bucks you're going to have to hunt 1,100 does. Anyway I just wanted to bring that up to ya.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Verland. David Brinkerhoff followed by Jack Taylor.

David Brinkerhoff: David Brinkerhoff with the Bison Committee and the Henry Mountain Grazers. I'd just like to make a comment on our, in our bison committee meeting my numbers that I had written in there was 102. So Anis I don't know whether, what the discrepancy is there but that's what was supposed to be hunted on the Henrys. In our management plan too, we have a plan in there that helps deal with the drought conditions or the things that are going on at that period of time. Now the last 2 years we've been in a pretty serious drought in the southeast part of the state. I imagine a lot of you understand that. But last year we didn't because of the numbers that uh, the way they come in when they did the helicopter counts, why they didn't take into consideration on the drought and so it's still going on, the drought is still going on. We are in a two-year cycle down there with way below normal precipitation. So I think we need to be mindful of the habitat. The habitat is the most important part of the whole equation on this. If we don't keep our habitat in place then we're not going to have buffalo, or elk, or deer or whatever we need to hunt or those kinds of things. So I think that's important that we keep that in mind, is if there's a drought going on this fall then we need to be able to take some more numbers off from that. And also I'm probably on the Henrys probably as much anybody, and I'd just like to a comment on the deer herd. To me the last year or so the deer herd is going down and yet we're still going to recommend more hunts on the deer herd. I think we need to be pretty mindful of the situation that's there with the deer herd, because the last few years they've been coming back and it's good to see deer. I like to see deer on the ranges. But to me the last couple of years they've been going down on that part of it. And I think a lot of it is due to the drought and the predators. I've noticed the predators are coming back pretty hard in that country too. So, thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Jack.

Jack Taylor: Jack Taylor again. One of the things I'm concerned about with adding, and I'm representing myself, on the Pine Valley unit having the earlier hunts, the archery and then the muzzleloader, a lot of the deer are migrating out of the areas that they used to stay in and they get out there on the west mountain and they funnel down through those ridges. And of course a lot of them have

been burned off and we've got great vegetation for them to feed, but the problem that we're having, that I think, is that we're seeing an enormous amount of people in those corridors where those deer are migrating. And the things that I'm seeing is that we're, we're having some safety issues, bullets flying over our heads and an enormous amount of people in a small area. And I don't know if there's something we can do to divide the tags up into different areas in the Pine Valley unit to try to get some of those people dispersed because the one gentleman that's hunting up on Pine Valley he's seeing a few more hunters up on top of the mountain but you've got to pack in. But then once those deer are hunting on the archery and muzzleloader they're migrating off and they're hitting those low areas and then we've got an enormous amount of roads and we've got people on every hill. And now we're talking about adding another 200 hunters. And they're going to bring a couple more guys with them, so now we've got 600 people from Veyo down to the border. And that's a lot of people and there's a lot of bullets flying around and it's not safe; and I think we need to look at that. I feel the same way about the Panguitch Lake unit. I've got some buddies that hunt that and we're seeing the same problem. As those deer are leaving the high areas once they're seeing the pressure and they're moving down into those smaller areas that there's a lot of access and then you're going to add another 200 hunters there and those hunters are all concentrated where those deer are moving through and it's a slaughter. You've got bullets flying everywhere. And I don't believe that it's safe. So I'd like to see some way that we could get those tags separated a little bit more or we've got to at least reduce the amount of tags. Anyway, that's all I have. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. We will call you again for antlerless. Nice reminder. That's all the comment I have that we interpreted for Bucks and Bulls. So if you gave me a card and I didn't you're your name I assumed you're going to be antlerless. It looks like we missed somebody. Come to the mic please, thank you.

Lee Tracy: Lee Tracy United Wildlife Cooperative. My card addressed the antlerless but we had another issue as well that I was going to address at that time and it has to do with Bucks and Bulls.

Steve Flinders: Fine Lee.

Lee Tracy: We, uh, United Wildlife Cooperative recommends or supports the recommendations from Utah Bowman's Association in returning those archery tags back to the archers rather than shifting them to the late hunt on those units with that late bull. Now do you want me to address the antlerless or do you want to wait for that?

Steve Flinders: We will call you back up if that's all right.

Lee Tracy: All right, thanks

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Anyone else that wants to speak to Bucks and Bull? Agenda item number 5? Did we miss a comment card? Oh hand it up, perfect. Jump in. Really appreciate everybody staying on topic and being brief. It sure helps the meeting flow along, thank you.

Chris Isom: My name is Chris Isom. I just represent myself. I have two items I would like to address. Number 1, I think the length, the amount of time between when we put in and how long it takes for you guys to give us draw results is a little too long. It's unacceptable. It should only be a month. It seems like a couple of years ago it was just like two months maybe, now we're pushing three months. We need

to plan our lives. We need to plan vacation time. The end of May is kind of pushing late when you're, for families. The other thing I'm concerned about, and this is just, I'm just generally concerned about the fact that every year we're losing more and more general hunting opportunities. We've lost 2/3 of our general deer hunting tags in the last 20 years and we're still going in the wrong direction. And I just hope we can find a way to do better and increase general opportunity. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Anis tell us, Bison numbers finally. There are 98 in the numbers in front of us.

Anis Aoude: Yeah. So I did check on that, there are 4 conservation permits so it does come out to 102. And the reason we don't put those in this, we're trying to streamline in the amount of information and that RAC actually happened already when we set those. So those are preset, they're not secret, they're on our website. You can easily access them. Maybe we should in the future include them. It just puts more information on the sheet that you're looking and it makes it, it may confuse some people.

Kevin Bunnell: Yeah, that kind of becomes a, you know for David and Verland, it kind of becomes a damned if you do, damned if you don't, because if we put them on here and then 98 show up in the proclamation for the draw then people question it that way. And so you know it's, either way there's some confusion.

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Steve Flinders: So guys, this is ours to deal with now. Would anyone be opposed to breaking these down by species? We've heard lots of comments tonight. I'd rather not get muddled in our discussion here about different things if it will help us stay on point. There seems to be a little controversy with Once-In-A-Lifetime species. If we tackle those first and then let's move into elk, deer and pronghorn. Will that work? So

Rusty Aiken: I will make a motion to accept the Once-In-A-Lifetime recommendations of the Division.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Motioned by Rusty. Any second? Seconded by Mike Staheli. Discussion on that motion? Seeing none, those in favor? Any opposed? Passes unanimous.

Rusty Aiken made the motion to accept Once-In-A-Lifetime permits as presented by the Division. Mike Staheli seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Steve Flinders: Let's jump into, anybody have any druthers? Elk? We've got a recommendation in front of us from UBA; it relates to the units up north, late season elk tags.

Rusty Aiken: Can we deal with UBA separate?

Steve Flinders: Yeah sure, you can make a motion.

Rusty Aiken: I would like to make a motion from the board to accept UBA's recommendations.

Steve Flinders: Second to that motion? Rusty made a motion to support UBA's recommendations as presented on the Wasatch Front, late elk. Seconded by Brian. Discussion on that motion? That's just

the recommendations from UBA on late elk.

Rusty Aiken: Do we have a copy of that?

Steve Flinders: Yeah, we got one at the table up here.

Dale Bagley: On those permits, they're saying that we're taking them away from the archery but when you did away with that late hunt weren't those tags originally any weapon tags?

Anis Aoude: Yeah we were. We're not actually taking them away from anything. It's just that we deal with thing differently when there's a late and an early hunt than we do when there's only an early hunt. And in the statewide plan it says that if there is a late hunt we will do a certain split and if there is no late hunt we'll do a certain split. So that's why we recommended it. I guess we were recommending to what the plan says. Agreed you know there are some circumstances on that unit that make the late hunt a little bit higher success and probably higher than most units and we may harvest some more animals because of that. Having said that that will adjust over time because we do manage on ages of bulls. So you know, I'm just clarifying why we made the recommendation not whether it, you know . . .

Kevin Bunnell: In a nut shell for the member of the RACs, and Craig correct me if I'm wrong, the recommendation from UBA is to keep the split at 60 percent rifle whether there's a late hunt or not.

Anis Aoude: No they actually have it at 50% rifle.

Kevin Bunnell: Okay 50% rifle whether or not, regardless of whether there's a late hunt.

Anis Aoude: Right, correct.

Kevin Bunnell: So that's probably the simplest way to think about it. Which would actually be a change to the statewide plan is what they would be recommending; to amend the statewide plan to be different than it is right now. That's what that recommendation would do.

Anis Aoude: Or just to go against what the statewide plan does.

Brian Johnson: I just have one thing.

Steve Flinders: Brian

Brian Johnson: I know UBA brought this up but it seems that there are some muzzleloader hunters that are affected with this too. With the UBA proposal we would be giving muzzleloader hunters some more tags too it looks like. I mean it's not a ton of tags but if you're a muzzleloader hunter it can be a big deal if you're the guy that doesn't get to draw. So I don't know, I support it. I understand it's not the same as the statewide plan but that's why we have the RAC system and that's why we have, I don't know, there's one, I don't know there's like 8 people that got up and talked about it. So I think it's something that if people are going to come out and talk it we at least, I'm appreciative that we're at least discussing it now, but I'm definitely in support of it.

Steve Flinders: So, to clarify the motion on the table, Rusty I don't want to put words in your mouth,

Wasatch, Central Mountains, Nebo, West Desert, Deep Creek, there are hard numbers on there proposal as part of your motion. I'm not sure how to show this to everybody on the RAC. If somebody questions what they're voting for now is the time to tell me and let me hand you this so you see what you're voting for. We've only got one copy of that.

Clair Woodbury: Steve, a question, to reiterate being asked to amend the statewide plan for these three units? Or to make a recommendation?

Steve Flinders: Just for tonight. Just for tonight, this year.

Clair Woodbury: Because if we want to amend the statewide plan we need a whole bunch more discussion and information.

Steve Flinders: Yeah, agreed. Anybody else want to look at it? I realize these units are outside of our region but there are lots more RAC meetings to come. Anybody else? Are we ready to vote then? Those in favor of Rusty's motion, seconded by Brian, please vote. Those in favor? See the count? Those against? It looked like it passed. 7 to 3?

Rusty Aiken made the motion to accept UBA's permit recommendations for the late elk hunt as outlined in attachment 2. Brian Johnson seconded. Motion passed 7:3 (Clair Woodbury, Layne Torgerson and Mike Worthen opposed)

Steve Flinders: Okay that doesn't deal with everything in elk. We still need to pass the balance. We don't want to confuse the note taker. Want to vote again. She's good. Okay, we've got the balance of the elk recommendation the Division's proposing. Anybody care to make a motion.

Mike Staheli: Steve, I would like to address the Monroe separately, and make a motion on the Monroe.

Steve Flinders: We can do that.

Mike Staheli: We did this last year. The Big Game Board shot us down but I think it's a good recommendation and I think we ought to send it back. And that was to limit the elk, the spike elk hunt on Monroe and so that we can get this age class of bulls coming back. So my motion is that we stop the spike bull hunt on Monroe, there's no reason we can't.

Steve Flinders: Well it's in the proclamation for this year. We did that last fall, the Wildlife Board did.

Mike Staheli: Yeah I know. What about antlerless then? We've got 250 antlerless.

Steve Flinders: We'll get to that in the next agenda item. Right now you can certainly make a motion to the number of limited entry elk tags.

Mike Staheli: All right, if we can't change the spike bull hunt then we ought to make it an action item to have them address that.

Steve Flinders: You can absolutely make that as part of your motion. Love to see that happen.

Mike Staheli: Okay, so my motion is that we accept these numbers as they're put forth by the Division but have an action item on these units that are below objective to limit the spike bull hunt on those units. Does that sound right? Okay, I make that motion.

Steve Flinders. Anybody second? Seconded by Mike Worthen. Discussion on that motion?

Rusty Aiken: Can I, make an amendment? I would like to see the Monroe numbers the same on the bull permits. 25 and 30, is it 30 total?

Steve Flinders: The same as last year?

Rusty Aiken: Correct, yes. Because of the decline in the age class.

Anis Aoude: I think there is some confusion. There were 35 permits last year. I think some people seem to think there were 25 but there were 35 last year. We are decreasing right now.

Rusty Aiken: So they are reducing?

Anis Aoude: We are, yes.

Steve Flinders: We're going from 35 to 29 this year. The numbers . . .

Rusty Aiken: Okay. I'd like to make a motion at 25.

Steve Flinders: We've got a motion on the table Rusty, hang on. Mike please restate your motion.

Mike Staheli: My motion on Monroe then is that we accept, er, we want to reduce the bull harvest there from 29 to 25, bull permits; also, an action item to limit the spike bull hunt on the Monroe.

Steve Flinders: Mike, you still second that motion? That's the motion on the table. You guys catch that motion. So it's to reduce the tags from 29 to 25 and to ask the Division to look at an action log item of spikes, not just on the Monroe but any unit under objective, age objective. That's how I understood it. Further discussion. Are we ready to vote? Clair.

Clair Woodbury: As a representative of the general public I have listened to a lot of the comments tonight, most of it from sportsman's groups. We had one gentleman here from the general public. And most of it is calling, most people are calling for reduction, reduction, reduction. We want trophy hunts is what we're seeing. As a representative of the general public I can't agree with that; and specifically on the Monroe Mountain. And I'll talk with Paul later. We seem to be under the premises that cutting tags is the only way to control the numbers and the ratios and that's not true. There's other ways that we can think outside of the box. Many years ago I lived in Oregon as a young man. And they run a program of limited access. Road closures, temporary road closures and it worked marvelous. I think Montana still does, I'm not sure if Oregon does or not. Technology we can address. Is the rifle that we use today the same as we used fifty years ago? Not even close. We have highly efficient killing weapons, killing machines. It's not the guns that our fathers and us used. So I, I would, I understand what Paul is saying on the wide-open areas. But maybe temporary road closures would work better. It's a proven fact that

90 percent of hunters won't walk more than 1 mile from a road. Something to look at.

Steve Flinders: Good comment. Still a motion on the table. Other comments or discussion on the motion? Dale.

Dale Bagley: I've just got, can I get Vance up to the mic? I've got a question on, you just flew that, how many mature bulls did you count, how many spike bulls, do you have a break down of that, cow bull ratios?

Vance Mumford: Yeah sure. We just flew all 4 of those units near Monroe, the Monroe, Mt. Dutton, the Boulder and the Fish Lake. When we flew the Monroe we estimated the population at 1,400 animals, which is actually one of the better counts in the last decade or so. The actual count on the big bulls was a little under 80; I think about 87 mature bulls. We, and keep in mind that our sightability on big bulls is low compared to a large cow herd. These bulls winter on high ridges, some of them in thick cover, and so as a biologist I know there's a lot more than 87 bulls up there but about 87 big bulls. I counted I believe a little over 20 rag horn bulls and 32 spikes were the actual counts. Now the actual population of bulls is higher, the number of those is higher.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Vance. Other discussion items on this motion?

Mike Staheli: I'd like to say one thing and that is the main reason I made that proposal is because we're under objective on that unit. We're under objective, not big bulls, not spikes, not anything; we're under objective on total elk. And we're increasing tags, well we're not entirely, we're decreasing the big bulls down to 29 but still that's not going to help get our objective where we want it.

Steve Flinders: I don't want to muddy the water; I'll add a couple of comments. We're going to hear about antlerless recommendations and where some of the elk off the Monroe may winter. There's also been some talk this week about the age objective on Monroe and Beaver and some of the others. Though it's under objective hunter satisfaction is quite high. So it may be time to look at that objective again when the statewide elk plan is reexamined. Any other discussion? We've got a motion on the table. Are we ready to vote? It looks like we're ready to vote. Those in favor of decreasing the limited entry permits on Monroe to 25 and adding spikes to the action log, please show you're in favor. Those against? I got 2. So that passed.

Mike Staheli made the motion to decrease the number of limited entry elk permits on the Monroe from 29 to 25 and to ask the Wildlife Board to add the following item to the action log: Consider decreasing spike bull permits on units that are under age objective. Mike Worthen seconded. Motion passed 8:2 (Mack Morrell and Clair Woodbury opposed)

Steve Flinders: We still have the balance of the elk recommendations.

Clair Woodbury: I'd make motion that we accept the balance of the elk recommendations as proposed by the Division.

Steve Flinders: Motioned by Clair. Is there a second? Seconded by Rusty. Any discussion on that motion? Seeing none, those in favor? Any against? Looks unanimous.

Clair Woodbury made the motion to accept the remainder of elk permit recommendations as presented. Rusty Aiken seconded. Motion passed unanimously

Steve Flinders: And we want to move on to Pronghorn. These are just buck permits. We didn't hear a lot of controversy about buck permits. Brayden were you talking about bucks or antlerless pronghorn permits, same as 2012? Okay, that's what I had in my notes.

Sam Carpenter: Teresa, what happened on that unit? I mean what's the explosion in population?

Steve Flinders: You talking about the Plateau specifically or?

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, the Plateau specifically. I just want to speak to that a little bit. Brayden Richmond. We haven't got to the antlerless yet but this does relate to the antlerless because what we're talking about is the Division would like to take X amount of antelope off of that unit to meet objective. We understand that. And actually we're going to support taking the 500 does off of there. What we don't want to do is take too many bucks all in one lump sum. So we are not trying to limit the animals drastically just our bucks.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. More discussion about pronghorn? I heard a ruckus down there, it sounded like a motion.

Brian Johnson: No, I'm just trying to figure out how many, what the increase, the actual number was. We're just rustling through papers here. From 96-269? That's impressive guys. Wow. Where's the biologist? I'm just wondering where's the biologist? Is he here? He's over there smiling. Talk to us please.

Steve Flinders: That's a good count it sounds like Jim.

Brian Johnson: That's a good jaunt.

Jim Lamb: When your average production on the Parker is 70 fawns per 100 does, and that's after all the mortality takes place, you can do some amazing things with a population in a really short time frame.

Brian Johnson: Yeah, I can see killing the does. I'm just kind of, I get scared when I see a 200 buck antelope increase. And two years ago didn't we like shut that down? Wow. I'd feel better about meeting in the middle somewhere guys. I don't know.

Steve Flinders: What's the buck to doe ratio? What does the plan ask for?

Jim Lamb: The plan asks for 40 and we're at 37.

Brian Johnson: So we are actually under and we are going to increase by 200 antelope,

Jim Lamb: Just barely. We are going to make roughly 350 bucks this year, just this year.

Steve Flinders: Are you getting ready for a motion Brian?

Brian Johnson: I'm still trying to stomach it. It's kind of freaking me out.

Steve Flinders: Sam.

Sam Carpenter: What do we contribute this growth to? I mean did we do something with predators? Any exceptional habitat projects?

Jim Lamb: We didn't hunt very many for 2 years, that's all. We didn't trap for 2 years. We just let the antelope grow like they want to. And we didn't do anything about it.

Sam Carpenter: Won't the deer do that too?

Mack Morrell: Ready for a motion or comments?

Steve Flinders: Ready for a motion.

Mack Morrell: I make a motion that we accept the recommendation of the DWR for the pronghorn buck permits.

Steve Flinders: Motioned by Mack. Do I hear a second? Seconded by Dale. Discussion on the motion?

Brian Johnson: I'm just wondering amongst the RAC members if we want to taper it down just a hair or if we want to just go with this and see what happens? What's the RAC think?

Steve Flinders: We are about to find out when we vote. Any other discussion. Brian thinks it's too many. Those in favor of the motion? Hold them up. Those against? Looked like it failed. New motion.

Dave Black: I want to make the motion that we reduce the recommended increase by one half and so that would be 100, would be the number.

Steve Flinders: That 50% reduction.

DAVE Black: By 140? 139?

Steve Flinders: Is that 50% of the increase?

Dave Black: Yes 50% of the increase.

Steve Flinders: Motioned by Dave to reduce the increase in buck pronghorn tags on the Plateau by 50%. Second? Reduce the increase by 50%, just on the Plateau. You guys can do that math better than we can. Is there a second to that motion? Seconded by Rusty. Discussion? Clair.

Clair Woodbury: As a representative of the general public that's 139 people that won't get to hunt antelope this year where there's... The only reasoning I've heard is it doesn't feel good in my stomach. I've got to have more than that.

Rusty Aiken: Wasn't it two years ago, didn't we have an emergency closure on that unit? And then you went to what, about 100 tags? 58 rifle, 20 muzzleloader92. I think it's safe to, you know, tone it down just a hair. It's good to see an increase but we don't want to have to have an emergency closure again.

Steve Flinders: Kevin's done some math here.

Mack Morrell: So, you guys on the RAC don't work with these antelope every day like I do. Okay? They counted 2,000, approximately 2,000 head, 1,900 head. And for bucks, those little yearlings that's got horns that long they counted them as does. So the bucks are going to be there. And 2 years ago when they shut down the hunt, 4 or 5 years ago when there were 3,500 or 4,000 we had to kill them, the objective was 1,500. And everybody was used to hunting by drive-by shooting; and so when they couldn't drive-by shoot and you had to get out and hunt they complained. And that's why they closed that one hunt down. The antelope are there. I can guarantee ya. And the bucks are there.

Steve Flinders: Okay, do we understand the motion on the table? The number is 183. Kevin crunches it. Does that sound right Dave? Further discussion? Call for a vote then. Those in favor? Those against? Passed 6:4

Dave Black made a motion to issue 183 buck pronghorn permits for the Plateau unit. Rusty Aiken seconded. Motion passed 6:4 (Brian Johnson, Mack Morrell, Clair Woodbury and Dale Bagley opposed).

Steve Flinders: Moving on to the deer. We heard about the Zion, Pine Valley, Panguitch Lake, Oak Creek. Anybody have a motion in mind? Wait a second before we leave pronghorn we need to pass the balance of the pronghorn recommendations.

Clair Woodbury: I propose that we pass the balance of the pronghorn proposition as listed by the DWR.

Steve Flinders: Motioned by Clair. Seconded by Layne. Any discussion? Those in favor? Any against? There was some discussion, I'm not sure everybody voted. Mack this is just for the balance for the buck pronghorn tags. Let's vote again. Those in favor? It's unanimous.

Clair Woodbury made a motion to accept the remainder of the buck pronghorn permit recommendations as presented. Layne Torgerson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Steve Flinders: Okay, moving on into deer.

Dave Black: I'll make a motion that we accept the proposed changes in the deer tags with the exception that there be no increases in tags on the 4 recommend units including Panguitch Lake, Pine Valley, Zion and the Monroe.

Steve Flinders: Motion by Dave. Any seconds? Seconded by Mike Staheli. Discussion on that motion? Clair.

Clair Woodbury: I am going to reiterate the statement I made on the elk; we're going the wrong way. IT has been a steady stream of people that want trophy hunters up here. And my fellow RAC members that

represent the general public we represent the general public. And like the fellow over there said that we dropped by 2/3 in our tags in the last 20 years. There used to be 200 to 225,000. We are down to 84 and change. We are going the wrong way. There are other ways besides limiting tags to limit the kill. Do we have the courage to do it?

Steve Flinders: Good point. Dave

Dave Black: I was one of those hunters on the Panguitch Lake unit this last year. I've hunted there for many years in the past. It was very frustrating; there were way too many hunters in the field the opening weekend. Not only our party, I talked to a number of people had bullets flying over their heads. A number of people turned to fishing that day instead of hunting because they didn't feel it was safe to be out there with their families with the amount of hunters that there were. There are a number of areas on the Panguitch Lake unit, particularly around Panguitch Lake where the deer congregate. And you can get around these areas 360 degrees. And when the first morning comes and all you can see is orange when the light comes up that's not a safe place to be. There's another area called the Box, and there's a stream that runs through the middle of it. The deer like to be down on the stream, first morning. And you can get on both sides of the box and within 300 yards you have hunters that are facing each other in opposite directions; and it's not a safe place to be. There was more hunters there than there has been in the last several years and it would compare to the time that we were selling tags over the counter and half of southern California came to Panguitch Lake to hunt. We are moving in the wrong direction. I hope that that's not the direction that we want. That was frustrating, it wasn't safe, there was way too many people in the field that first day. That's the wrong direction. I hope that's not where we're trying to go and put so many hunters in the field that it's not safe and it's very frustrating to be out there in that type of condition.

Steve Flinders: Further discussion on the motion? It looks like we're ready to vote. Are we clear on the motion? Clair.

Clair Woodbury: One more thing, let me remind my fellow RAC members who represent the general public of the demise of the Utah family deer hunt. Let's fix it, let's go the other way.

Steve Flinders: Sam.

Sam Carpenter: In answer to Clair's proposition here closing roads. One of the things that happens, they did this a lot on the Kaibab, and what you end up with is if you're recommending increasing the tags using road closures and things of that nature to increase the population, yes it may work but what you're going to end up with is the bulk of the people, by increasing the tags now don't have access to the land. Very few people will hike that mile you're talking about and you end up with so many people in these little areas that it is a dangerous situation to be hunting with these weapons when you have the over crowding that exists as it is today.

Clair Woodbury: Second half of my recommendation was primitive weapons, maybe adjusting our formula of 60/20/20.

Steve Flinders: That's a good discussion. We've got a motion on the table. Are we ready to vote?

Brian Johnson: I know you guys probably want this over with but I am just thinking, the way this plan's

set up is as we get more bucks to does we're inherently going to have this discussion. And so I don't know, I'm just thinking, and I'm not opposed to changing the plan, I mean we talked about it with the elk, if it's not making sense let's maneuver. But the one thing that I'm just thinking about is as these herds get better, and this is the point, this was the point of the 30 units was to make the herds better, but as the buck to doe ratio gets better we're forced to give more tags because of the plan and so I just don't . . . It sounds like, I don't know, it just, it just, I'm confused by that because this whole RAC unanimously voted 3 years ago about, well not unanimously but it was pretty lop sided, to vote for this new management plan and now that we've got it and this is what I'm hearing. And so I just don't, I'm just confused . So I just wanted to throw that out there if anybody can un-muddy that.

Steve Flinders: Good point, remember the plans. Other comments? Discussion on the motion? Let's vote on the motion on the table. Those in favor please? One request to restate the motion. Accept the deer proposal except no permit increases on Pine Valley, Panguitch, Zion and Monroe. Okay, those in favor please vote. Hold them up. Those against please vote. 6-4.

Dave Black made a motion to accept the Division's recommendations for buck deer permits as presented with the exception that there will be no increase in permits on the Panguitch Lake, Pine Valley, Zion and Monroe units. Mike Staheli seconded. Motion passed 6:4 (Brian Johnson, Mack Morrell, Clair Woodbury and Dale Bagley opposed).

Steve Flinders: Did we leave anything out? It looks to me like we covered Bucks and Bulls. Let's take a ten-minute break. Start at 10 after, thank you.

Steve Flinders: Can we ask everybody to take their seats, let's keep moving. Please, please. Is Anis in here? Anis, we're ready to jump into number 6. Lynn, you know how to run that thing don't ya? We can't start with you we decided.

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2013 (action) 2:04:09 to 2:11:20 of 4:09:14

-Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

-Teresa Griffin, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

(See attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Steve Flinders: Thanks Anis. Questions from the RAC? Any questions on . . . Dave.

Dave Black: When we have an increase in the antlerless permits, do the CWMUs also get an increase that's proportional?

Anis Aoude: Usually they do, a lot of it depends and Scott may chime in if you'd like, a lot of times we've put as many permits on CWMUs as we can on units where there are CWMUs so we're kind of saturated that. So often times, yeah, they do but not always I guess is the answer. We try to have a proportional increase but sometimes they can only handle so many hunters on those CWMUs.

Dave Black: So are there increases this year with the CWMUs?

Anis Aoude: Uh I don't . . . Scott? Yeah, there are some but it is not; it's not proportional to what we're

recommending. And most of the units where the increases are are public land units. So that's why it's not proportional.

Steve Flinders: Other questions from the RAC? Rusty.

Rusty Aiken: Populations, we've been, the trend of deer populations is kind of stagnant and then yet elk just are skyrocketing. We've had a lot of cow elk, very few does. What's your opinion on what the difference in that is, why this big change?

Anis Aoude: Sure, uh, I mean you need a why, why are elk doing well and deer are doing poorly? Sure, it's fairly simple; elk can eat a lot more types of foods than mule deer can. Mule deer are concentrate feeders; they need really high quality forage to make babies. Elk can eat grass and process it easily, along with all the forbs and the other things that deer eat. So they are able to make babies on a lot more course forage so they're able to use habitats that mule deer can't. And that's the dirtiest . . . What's that?

Rusty Aiken: They're more adaptive.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, they're more adept. They're more of a generalist, plus they don't winterkill, generally Utah winters they don't winterkill, and then their reproduction is fairly steady. I mean they're pumping out 55 to 60 calves every year per 100 cows. You know that's, different animal, larger animal, they survive winters better, all the above reasons.

Rusty Aiken: Do you think elk displace deer?

Anis Aoude: I am sure in some instances they do but overall there is, you know, there is some different habitats that they use that deer don't. So in some areas they may but I'm sure it's not across the ranges.

Steve Flinders: Layne.

Layne Torgerson: Anis, the 300 doe deer tags that are recommended, it's my understanding those are mainly depredation tags, is that right?

Anis Aoude: They are so uh, . . . I think there is one or two hunts that are on the Parowan front that are not and then the rest are all depredation. Yeah, and most of our hunts for does, for doe deer are geared towards depredation. Yeah, I think it was only 150 permits that are on the Parowan front and then the rest are all depredation related, yeah.

Steve Flinders: Sam.

Sam Carpenter: So, it's my understanding that we are no longer using population objective to determine doe hunts and that's into the future or where are we at on that?

Anis Aoude: Uh, yeah, so, we do, we do and we don't; population objectives when they were set were not set on habitat, in most areas were not based on habitat availability. They were set based on harvest at the time which was, in some areas elevated and in some areas probably below what it should be. So what we're trying to do now is modify the unit plans that set these objectives based on current data, based on range trend, based on utilization, on both annual and on a five year cycle. So we're, the way

we've approached it is don't recommend doe permits unless you have habitat damage, or if you're having depredation issues. Those are the two. And as we move forward we hope, as our population estimates get better we can tie that into the where and when we have damage and then we can kind of figure out a better way to set new population objectives that are based more on habitats.

Sam Carpenter: Okay, now on modeling, I understand we are moving to a different model, something a little more complex.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, it's really no more complex; it's actually simpler to be honest. It's simpler to use but it takes into account a lot more variables. So what it does it balances multiple models and picks the best one that the data you have fits. And it's one that Colorado's been using for, oh I don't know, almost 10 years now. And we didn't use it in the past because we didn't have the specific survival data that we have now. And we needed at least three years of data before that model can be even started to use. So we just started using it this year. There are some units that don't fit well in that model still because we don't have enough survival data. So that's one that we will start using and it will improve over time.

Steve Flinders: Clair.

Clair Woodbury: I know we touched a little bit earlier on the Parowan Front. I know we had 150 tags last year; we got that again this year. And we also transplanted how many last year?

Anis Aoude: 102.

Clair Woodbury: 102? And we have no data on survivability on that yet?

Anis Aoude: Uh we do. I don't know if I have it off the top of my head. I think about, of the ones that we moved?

Clair Woodbury: 11 out of the 102 survived?

Anis Aoude: No, have died. So the majority are still alive.

Clair Woodbury: Oh they were poached?

Anis Aoude: I believe you guys are going to get an update the next RAC on the . . .

Clair Woodbury: Well the reason I ask is because we're going to approve this 150 tags tonight and if it is feasible why not transplant that 150 we're going to kill because that's, you know that's 100 percent mortality.

Anis Aoude: Right.

Clair Woodbury: And I've noticed the west desert just out the road is 1,700 and we want 3,200.

Anis Aoude: Sure.

Clair Woodbury: Anyway, I was just asking on the survivability. That's what I need to know before I

could vote.

Anis Aoude: Sure.

Steve Flinders: Other questions?

Questions from the public:

Steve Flinders: Let's transition to questions from the public? Questions right now? Any questions for Anis? Yes sir, come on up.

David Brinkerhoff: Dave Brinkerhoff, Henry Mountain Grazers. I guess I've got a couple of questions. On the elk on the Fish Lake and the Boulder, what was the total count on that? Maybe you can help Jim? I don't know, has anybody got the total count on what was counted on those units? I want when they done the flying is what I'd . . .

Anis Aoude: These are based on (off mic).

David Brinkerhoff: Well that still doesn't answer my question. Another question is, Anis, how many elk were killed on the Henry's last year?

Anis Aoude: I don't have that number; it wasn't very many.

David Brinkerhoff: There was some?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, I think 2 to 4 or something like that.

David Brinkerhoff: Okay, one other question, on the pronghorn issuing on the Henry Mountain unit, what's the boundary line on it? Is it the road or?

Anis Aoude: We have it in the packet; it takes in, uh yeah. Which road?

David Brinkerhoff: (Inaudible).

Anis Aoude: I don't know the boundary. I'll have to look at it and get back with you. It's in that packet I believe. These guys have it . . .

Steve Flinders: Here you can have my map. Somebody probably ought to go through that flight data this year for Plateau and Boulder. I think we're going to get into that.

David Brinkerhoff: Okay, well I just wondered where the boundaries were.

Steve Flinders: Now or later, whenever. To answer his question and for information later I'm certain we're going to want to know the subtleties of those recommendations. All right. Dustin are you prepared to talk about those in a minute? Go ahead sir and we'll . . .

Craig Laub: Craig Laub, Iron County Farm Bureau. I just, the only question I had was on this 17, 18,000

cow tags, how, what's our success rate been over the years?

Anis Aoude: Yeah, so our antlerless success rate varies from 40 to 60 percent. So you can say it's around 50 percent overall. It just depends on the unit and time of year and all that. But overall it's about half.

Craig Laub: Well is that statewide or Southern Utah?

Anis Aoude: It's about the same; it averages out about 50%.

Verland King: Verland King. I'm wondering on these boundary changes on the Boulder Plateau, maybe you can tell us why your changing it and does one of those include like Salt Gulch and over around Boulder town?

Jim Lamb: Yes, we'll keep our Salt Gulch depredation hunts, both of them. We also have a Circle Cliffs depredation hunt. And then we've got, and what we're going to try to do, and Dustin will talk about this in a few minutes, is we're going to try and kill elk where they want to be at the time of year that we're trying to kill them to alleviate some problems on all of those units that are concerned. So there's a fairly high number of permits on the Boulder. And what we're trying to do is kill some Boulder elk and some Dutton elk kind of at the same time. So we've kind of cut the unit up to where we can tailor the hunts better to meet our population objectives for the different units.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? Come on up, sure, you don't need a card.

Deloss Christensen: Okay, Anis, I didn't see a number for the total population of deer in Utah. Was it on there?

Anis Aoude: It's 318,000.

Deloss Christensen: 318, okay. That's what I need, thanks.

Steve Flinders: Any other questions before moving to comments?

Comments from the public:

Steve Flinders: Brayden Richmond followed by Wade Heaton. We'll follow the same time constraints as previously.

Brayden Richmond: Brayden Richmond representing the state SFW board. We just want to support the Division's recommendation on the Plateau. There's a lot of concern on that and some discussion that we might be increasing that too much. We do acknowledge that we do want to keep it objective and trust the Division's counts. What we do want to ask there, however, is to only have tags for 250 and transplant the other 250. So we take 500 off of the unit as the Division's requested but 250 of those be transplanted and supplement other units. One additional comment I want to make representing the Beaver committee chapter of SFW, we've put in a lot of work in, a lot of effort in on that Parowan Front doe transplant. We acknowledge there's depredation down that and we aren't asking to decrease those tags on that doe hunt. What we do want to look at is just put an action item in to look at other options for getting those deer off that front. One that we think would be very successful, put a fence on Highway 20 to keep those deer

coming off the Beaver unit onto that to winter, which there is a large migration there. And any other options, we'd be open to any and all options to try to quit shooting does on that Parowan Front, but we do acknowledge the depredation that's currently there. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you Brayden. Wade followed by Gib Yardley.

Wade Heaton: Wade Heaton, I'm representing the Kane and Garfield chapter of SFW. We just want to support the Division's recommendation for the Paunsagaunt antlerless numbers. Um, uh, like I mentioned earlier, we're having some issues and some concerns with the total population on the Paunsagaunt with the deer. And so uh, the Division has chosen not to have any antlerless permits on there. We really appreciate that and we want to stay with that recommendation. Also, they're increasing cow permits this year for the Paunsagaunt and we support that recommendation as well. I think we're getting some better data as far as our total elk population. I think we're finally coming up to reality, just a little bit. We've always been a little over objective. It's just been very hard to count them in the winter because they leave. And uh, so we've finally got a few that have started to stay. So it's been a good thing now that we've got this cow hunt and we're increasing permits. I believe there's 75 this year, so we support that recommendation. And as a chapter we also support the other recommendations from the state SFW board.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Wade. Gib Yardley followed by Cameron Hallows.

Gib Yardley: I am Gib Yardley a cattleman from here in Beaver and I winter cattle on the, out on the southwest desert and summer over south of Panguitch and on the Cedar Mountain east of Cedar Breaks and Brianhead. Uh, I don't think that the counts on these elk are entirely accurate. I think we should have a cattleman represented when they go to count them and I know that there were some cattleman volunteered and they said that they'd take them up and they never did. We think we need to have some other people on some of these counts. We have to keep, to stay in the business we have to keep selling a lot of heifer calves all the time. We're not taking near the elk off to take care of the increase. You take, he just told us 50 to 60 percent calf crop, so that's 500 new elk every year. We're going to be over run if we don't take more of these cows off. And you think elk was in the mountains, golly they're just getting thicker all the time out on these west deserts. And I want to say one more thing on the west desert before I forget it right now, any of you people that like to hunt on the west desert if you're serious about keeping them hunting rights you better put all the pressure you can on the BLM to take out more of these wild horses because they're destroying those ranges and we've got to get rid of some of them or none of us are going to have any ranges left out there. It's a serious problem so encourage the BLM to take some of them off. And it just, it gets worse all the time. On the southwest desert I was glad to see an increase there but it's below what it has been a few years before and I'd like to recommend, or we'd like to recommend 250 out there and 200 taken off, that's cow elk, and 200 off of the Panguitch Lake unit. Thank you very much. I appreciate your interest.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Cameron Hallows followed by Troy Justensen.

Cameron Hallows: I am Cameron Hallows; I represent the Utah Cattleman's Association and cattleman across the state. Members of the board and parts of the Division might be aware that in February Congressman Bishop sent out a letter to various groups in the state; one of the groups was the Utah Cattleman's Association. And in that letter he asked us to present him with public land issues that ranchers across the state were facing. And so we met with ranchers across the state, quite a variety of

them, and a lot of them had various different public land issues. But the one common public land issue they all had was wildlife numbers, elk numbers, antelope and how to deal with it and how to address it. For example common issues are being pulled off an allotment early because there's lack of feed, but the cow come off and the elk stay there. Not being able to go on an allotment in the springtime because there's not enough feed but the elk are already there. Or as Mack stated, you know, not being to go on the (unintelligible) permit because the antelope are there. And then you guys just voted to not even decrease it. They're really worried about what these animals are doing to the ranges, just like Gib said. You cannot pound land year round and expect it to sustain a herd of cattle, and a herd of elk, and a herd of sheep, or whatever else is out there; it's just not going to do it. And any good rancher knows that if you don't rest something once in a while it's not going to come back. It can snow like hell but it's not going to come back. It can snow like hell but it's not going to come back if you never rest it. And so you have to rest certain allotments and if you're not doing that it's not going to do any good. A lot of their worries were we can control our animals, the Forest Service can control our animals but we can't control the wildlife so we need some help there. And we don't, we feel like we can't wait until it's almost too late, I guess so to speak, until we actually do something. . . we need to . . . It's just like good management, you've got to pick your management plan and stick to it instead of ups and downs. And so the Cattleman's Association supports the proposal on the elk permits, cow elk permits from 1,4000 to 1,700. We also support the antelope permits. And it's no common secret that we're the first people that get up and complain and bellyache when we have a problem with ya. But on that same token we'd like to be the first ones that get up and thank the Division for proposing this, for a step in the right direction. We all like to hunt. We all like to be out there. We're not wanting to take all the wildlife off but at the same time we've got to have good management and it's not really an animal issue it's a range issue. And so just like John Keeler from the Farm Bureau said last year at this meeting that if we don't work together eventually in the end the environmental groups and going to win and we'll all be home twiddling our thumbs. And so if you want to hunt, if you want to run cows, we've got to do this together because it's a range issue not an animal issue. And then on a personal note, Clair Woodbury, I didn't know who he was before tonight but you're a pretty good guy I think. Because I, my personal opinion this limited deer programs and stuff like that have killed the family of deer hunt, killed family hunting all together and I think it sucks to be honest with ya. I'd like to get a deer tag, that would be great if I could draw one but I can't draw one. And I hunted my butt off on the spike hunt last year on the Monroe and I didn't see a spike. So, anyway thank you for your time.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Troy followed by Jack Taylor.

Troy Justensen: Troy Justensen Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife. I'd just like to go on the record saying we support what Gib proposed. We're all in favor of removing a lot more wild horses off the desert. He's exactly right. They're probably the most, do the most damage of anything, you know, cattle, wildlife or whatever. Those horses that are running rampant and we'd support removal, as many as possible. The deal with the antelope issue, I know that we recommended that we decrease the buck permits as Brayden proposed, that we'd like to support the Division in the 500 does. We'd ask that 250 of them be transplanted. I know that some of the units the antelope are below objective and struggling. We'd like to see those does transplanted to those units. And we'd even support the idea of taking additional does, you know the number that we reduced the buck permits to, taking those does and putting them in other units as well. And as far as representing our Delta chapter up there, they'd like to recommend on the Pahvant up there that we decrease the cow permits from 180, the recommendation from the Division, to 100 cow elk. And then we would support otherwise what the Division has proposed. Thank you

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Jack followed by Lee Tracy.

Jack Taylor: I hunted out on the west desert with a coworker for elk, archery elk this year. I hadn't been out there for almost 10 years and I'd spent an awful lot of time out there before that every year. And we saw quite a few horses. But when I went out there this year I could not believe the amount of horses in that area. It was absolutely unbelievable. I mean just trail after trail after trail of horses. And I couldn't believe how they had cut up and tore up the hillsides. It was amazing to me. I could not believe there were that many horses out there. We've got a serious problem and we need to do something about it. I'd also like to see those does on the Parowan Front moved to another area, maybe the west desert or wherever the Fish and Game feel like that would be the best area. But I'd like to see them moved if we can't leave them there. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Lee followed by Stanton Gleeve.

Lee Tracy: I'm short. Lee Tracy, United Wildlife Cooperative. I guess I'm going to step into the fire. United Wildlife Cooperative not only recommends that we accept that 150 doe deer hunt on the Parowan Front but that we actually add to it. The reason for this, and I'll give you some background. Rusty can verify this. We went on a range ride some time ago and with the Division of Wildlife Resources, BLM, NCRS and Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife and viewed that habitat and saw the damage. The reason we were able to see the damage because they had some enclosures there that kept not only the cattle out but the deer and the rabbits and everything else out as well. And just to look at the range flat out you would think that it was the same but when you look at the enclosures it ain't even close. That range out there is in real bad shape. The Division recommended 150 tags because those tags are the number of deer recruited into the herd that uses that unit. So what we're saying is if we take 150 does out of that we will maintain the rate or decline. We're not going to maintain the habitat because it's declining every year. We're going to maintain the rate of decline and that habitat will eventually fold up. The reason we're recommending the tags is because another part of the background, the Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife stepped up and financed that deer transplant, at the cost of \$2,500 per doe, picked up. So we're talking over a quarter of a million dollars that it has cost to move those 102 does. That's pretty expensive. The Division couldn't justify that because that's public money they're spending and so we asked Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife to step up which they did. We've lost 11 of those does so far but we're just barely started. That's a three-year study. And even if we lose the number of does that have been in the past and the survival rate in the past has been in the single digits, even if more of them survive than have been in the past we're still talking quite a bit of money per doe moving. And that doesn't mean necessarily that the place we're moving to is going to increase. That just gives more fodder for the coyotes and the cougars as well. So there's a lot of things you have to think about when you talk about transplanting deer. They don't have the survival rate that the other animals do; not anywhere near the survival rate. In any case we recommend that we not only take those 150 does but we add a youth hunt of another 150. I know it's a sore point and a lot of people will complain about it but those deer need to come off, at least 300 a year need to come off of that range. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you Lee. Stanton followed by Deloss.

Stanton Gleeve: Hello, I'm Stanton Gleeve. Most of you probably know me. I'm here representing the Monroe Mountain Ranchers Association. I'm the president of that. And a lot of Piute County ranchers, and we run sheep on Mt. Dutton so I'm here regarding that too. Our biggest concern as ranchers, we're

in constant conflict in Piute County with elk. Everyday somebody's . . . what they're basically doing is taking our feed. You as ranchers we own grazing rights. That's no different than mineral rights, or water rights. We figure we own that feed on them mountains; our ranches is tied to it, base property. That's what we make our living at. When elk are on there like they are right now and that grass is about this high and 1,500 elk on your unit it makes us a little bit mad. And up to date like last year, we come here and talked to no avail and then we went up and preached to the Wildlife Board, right up to the state trying to stop and increase and we never got that done. They still voted for an increase on those elk. This year it does look a little better. It looks like you are at least starting in the right direction. But it's a serious matter. Like Gilbert said, if you don't do something pretty quick those ranges won't handle this herd of elk you've got on em. What this southern Utah is it's deer and sheep country. And you've let your sheep herd, or your deer herd has been annihilated just as bad as my sheep herd. I've come to you before preaching are you ever going to do anything . . . or I don't know whether it's you guys or who we need to preach to but those predators right there that's ate all their sage hens and all of our deer; you've got to do something with them. Then you could get some deer back and you could control this herd of elk. This country can't run a herd of elk like you're trying to run in it. These ranches won't support em. With that being said I want to add one more thing, these elk counts are not, you just as well throw them out to the wind, they don't count those elk. On Mt Dutton either me, or Paul Hatch, or Darrell Spencer was supposed to ride in that helicopter. And the biologist, Dustin Schaible flew three days without any one of us. When I finally got wind of it we got a hold of Darrell Spencer, he rode on the fourth day. So I don't trust that elk count at all. I can count more than 2,100 head of elk up there in two creeks. So that count is bogus. On the Monroe Mountain the two guys that did fly, the two ranchers told me that they did not fly between Angle and Box Creek, on the east side. The one figured the other one did and the other one figured the other one did. But anyway so, so what they're saying in elk here I'd have to say is way under what's actually there. And I guess about all I have to say is just that you are headed in the right direction but you ought to, you need to control that herd of elk, big time. Thank you.

Steve: Thank you. DeLoss followed by Amy Barker.

DeLoss Christensen: DeLoss Christensen, Glenwood, Utah. Thank you for the opportunity again. I'd just like to reiterate that I support the SFW recommendations that support the DWR recommendations on these antlerless animal harvests. However, I'd like to make two comments. I'd like to point out the support that the cattlemen have from us on issues that they've asked about this evening. And I think, you saw and our friends in the cattle industry saw our reaction to their request for us helping them do something about wild horses. Now I'd just like to say this personally, my name is DeLoss Christensen. I live in Glenwood, Utah. If you ever need anybody from the sportsman's community to help you remove wild horses you call me. I am your Huckleberry. All right? I'm with you. Now, I expect the same in return. Can we agree on that? We'll work together to win this battle to keep these mountains open for those things that we love. We'll work with you and we'll expect the same. Now, there's been quite a bit of discussion this evening about opportunity and the loss of it. Anis just told us that there are 318,000 deer in the state of Utah today. And we know that's the best estimate they can give us. And I'm willing to accept that. But if you accept that number you have to also accept this number, in 1993 we had one million two deer in this state. Now do you wonder why some of us ask for restriction on deer harvest? A million two to three hundred thousand. Now I haven't applied, I haven't even applied for a deer tag in 7 years. I have 7 general season deer hunt preferences. Nobody likes to hunt deer better than I do or wants to; with a bow, with a muzzleloader, with a rifle. I want every single day a field hunting that I can get. But when we have a situation where we've lost nearly 80 percent of our deer in this state you ask why do some of us in some groups ask for reduction of opportunity. Well my question is then, when do

you want to do that? When we get two hundred thousand? When we get one hundred thousand? When we get fifty? Where is the line you draw when you start saying like I do, let's not kill any more deer. We've got cattlemen here who when I used to come to these meetings in 1975 the room was filled with sheepmen and cattlemen asking to reduce deer. Now they're saying we ought to have some. That's why we ask for reductions. Not because we don't want opportunity. We want more opportunity. But we know you can't kill a dairy cow and then milk it tomorrow. Clair, you want to know other things we can do. Mr. Niemeyer in 1983 and I spent hundreds of dollars surveying sportsmen on what could we do to help a predicted deer collapse in the state of Utah. We had ten items on that list people could pick from. One of them was road closures. Another was limiting rifle hunters so more archers could go. Another was closing units entirely. Another one was reducing tag sales. I have a personal meeting with Director Day, who was the director of the Division at that time and he said, DeLoss please do not push us to do something that will reduce our revenue. We have to let people buy tags, whatever we do. That's where three-point or better came from Clair. That meeting with the director because it let everyone hunt but not harvest. That's the kind of the out of the box thinking you want. Now I guarantee you, if you listed that list, and I'm sure Paul's still got that list, of those out of the box things . . . See road closures nobody in this room can make that decision. That's a Forest Service decision. They're not here today to make that choice. It's pointless to talk about things we can't do as the RAC committee. But I'll sit down with you and you tell me out of all the possibilities that there are which one can help deer and still provide opportunity; and I defy you to find one. As good as your heart is for the general hunter, and that's what I am, I'm a general hunter that's quit hunting because there's nothing left to hunt if we keep doing what we're doing.

Steve Flinders: We need to keep moving on DeLoss.

DeLoss Christensen: Thank you sir. Thanks Mr. Chairman.

Steve Flinders: Thank you.

Amy Barker: I am the district ranger in Beaver. Um, and I'm reading these comments on behalf of Allen Rowley the forest supervisor for the Fish Lake National Forest. We would like to take this opportunity to offer comments from the Fish Lake National Forest on the proposed harvest level of elk for the 2013 hunting season. We support the UDWR proposals. The proposal addresses the concerns we have had with the site-specific natural resource conditions on the Monroe Mountain. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and we thank the UDWR for their engagement with the forest and multiple projects to benefit wildlife. Thank you. (Attachment 3)

Steve: Karen Schroyer followed by Paul Niemeyer.

Karen Schroyer: My name is Karen Schroyer. I'm the district ranger on the Powell Ranger District on the Dixie National Forest and I appreciate the opportunity to comment this evening. The Dixie National Forest has already sent you a letter in support of the 2013 elk management plan. The Powell Ranger District concurs with that letter and I'm here this evening to just give you some more specific comments on the Mt Dutton unit. The Mt Dutton unit is the habitat that the Powell Ranger District manages. And I'll just read from my letter and then Steve I'll just give you a copy of the letter. The district supports the boundary changes and strategies proposed to hunt Mt Dutton elk on both the Monroe and the Mt Dutton units and encourages the Division to take aggressive actions to bring elk population numbers in line with plan objectives. The Mt. Dutton unit is currently 650 head over it's winter objective of 1,500 and has

historically remained over objective. Please consider historical harvest success and mortality rates while evaluating current recommendations as well as natality rates in your proposed harvest levels. And our specific recommendation for you folks tonight is per the March 25th memorandum from Anis Aoude. The Division is recommending on ten units that hunters who have an antlered big game permit they can also purchase an antlerless elk control permit. The district recommends adding the Mt Dutton unit to this list based on the historic inability to bring elk numbers within the established objectives. And in closing we just want to thank you for the opportunity to comment. I personally want to thank both Teresa and Dustin for the working relationship they have with my wildlife biologist. And Kevin we look forward to meeting with you in the future and building a strong working relationship. Thank you. (Attachment 4)

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Paul followed by Mark Wintch.

Paul Niemeyer: Paul Niemeyer for Sportsman Fish and Wildlife for the Wayne and Sevier area. This Monroe elk herd, I'm back up here again, you're probably going to be tired of that. I grew up when there was no elk on it at all. Layne probably did too he just doesn't want to admit it. But at any rate we've watched those grow to the premier unit in Utah at one time. I mean that was what everybody talked about. Now it's Pahvant, or Beaver, or something like that. But at any rate that Monroe we talked about it the access, you know how it can't take a lot of pressure. We've been harvesting . . . Now one thing that's kind of a missing target for all of us is we never disclose the mitigation and depredation tags in these meetings. So we're sitting here talking about bull tags, and antlerless tags, but that's not in the mix that we can ever see. And so that's a harvest factor on these antlerless animals that we need to think about. I don't know how much it is, probably only the DWR does. But at any rate the Monroe, and I could be wrong, but I think they've been doing about 20 antlerless tags over on Greenwich. That's over south of Koosharem on the east side of the mountain. There's been a bunch of elk coming in those fields for a while. And I talked to one of the landowners over the other day and he said that, and he's not mad at elk or cattle or anything else, he's just got his own farm. But he felt like that when we started hunting spikes is when we started pushing these elk off the mountain. And I can see that on the west side too when you start looking at it. We always had a few over there but now there's more of them coming off on both sides. You see them south of Greenwich; you see them south of Monroe. That's probably from pressure because you can put a lot of pressure on them up there. But on uh, we had about 20 tags on there plus whatever mitigation and depredation tags were on there. Now the proposal is for 100, which is basically on the top. And we've heard uh, depending on who you talk to, some of the guys say well it's because we're trying to rejuvenate aspen. And then some of the people in some of the other agencies talk about, you know, we're trying to kill these elk before they go to the Dutton and winter. So somewhere in there there's the justification for that. On the west side of the Monroe, in about the middle of the mountain, there's a lot of elk coming off. One of the primary landowners has been in my office twice in the last week for about an hour each time. He likes those elk. That's kind of, to have that many would surprise me but he does. About, what's it been, ten or fifteen years ago when we had that big fire along that front there? It's been right in there. They had a spring fire that was a real hot, hot fire. In fact we had a guy get killed in that fire. But when that fire burned DWR and BLM and everybody, the private landowners all got together and reseeded that. And that is probably one of the most successful reseeds I've ever seen. I mean that grass is you know, that high. The BLM has let two of those permittees there put almost twice as many elk on that as their permits are for just because of that feed in that area. But in that these elk have started to pull in there too. And these elk aren't going to the Dutton. They're staying there, the feeds good there, there's no reason to leave. The proposal's for 130 tags there. And I talked to this landowner and he said 20 would be a lot better. But it is 130 and the way

it's proposed is that would open on the opening day of the spike hunt. Now last year out of his fields they killed 11 spikes at daylight the first morning. They come out it's really open where they are, I mean really open. And then they go up; as they go up on the mountain to get into any cover they're really in jeopardy for quite a ways there. And if they go south or west they haven't got a prayer. So to put these elk permits on top of all the spike hunters that's something I don't think any of us want to see. I got into a deal like that in Wyoming one year and I'm just glad to get me and that horse out of there alive before that was all over. So, you know we don't want to do that. But our recommendation on that hunt, and that hunt is on the west side of the Monroe, it's 4052. We're recommending 75 tags, instead of 130. And do three hunts of 25. Now I think it would be best to leave that up to the local biologist to decide when he wants to do those three hunts. But then you don't have these, everybody chasing these elk around in trucks and shooting at them. I mean that's just not a good site for anybody. That's. . . The other thing is on the Dutton we've got actually . . . see on the Monroe you've got like 240 proposed tags right now. And like I say we're trying to get that one down to 75. But on the Dutton on that north end that would border Kingston Canyon, where the elk do cross back and forth from the Monroe to the Dutton, they've proposed 600 tags there. On that, you know they're different hunts but that's a lot of tags. On hunt number 4062 the division recommended recommendation was for 100 cows and that's a December hunt. We would like that reduced to 50. And when you go from, especially on that Monroe from 20 to 240 in a year, we don't know what's going to really happen here; what that's going to do to these elk. Where it's going to displace them, how many are we really going to kill? And so I think we need to approach that with some caution with the same idea of trying to get along with the other agencies and the cattle people. But we would like to make those two recommendations, cut that 4052 to 75: do three hunts of 25. And on the 4062 hunt, 50 cow tags. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Paul. Mark followed by Craig Laub.

Mark Wintch: Thanks for being here tonight. I appreciate that the board gets together and I appreciate the hunters and the hunting association. My name's Mark Wintch. I live in Wah Wah Valley in the west desert. I'll support what Gib said, we're over run with horses. The sad part is we're being overrun with wildlife as well on the elk herd side. When you're talking about 11,000 head of elk out there and the proposed management is at 975 there's not a cattleman in here or anyone else that can overrun the allotted amount of numbers. We question why you can and why you do. That's a problem. Secondly, it's been great to work with several of the dedicated hunter groups in doing some water work projects that they've helped me with on my permit. The last thing I would like to say is in regards to your management plan, with Brian I think was saying that he was a little confused because you all voted on it three years ago. Three years isn't long enough to start changing your plan. You've got to stick with the plan for a period of time in order to see what the results are. And if you start changing it because this year you didn't get exactly what you wanted or planned on exactly, if you believe in your plan stick to it, don't start adjusting it because you'll make mistakes. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Craig followed by another Craig, Christiansen.

Craig Laub: Craig Laub with the Farm Bureau. We are also concerned about the elk numbers and being over the objectives on most of the units. Southern Utah units are much better than others. I really wished that the state board would take more into account what the RACs suggest because you guys are the ones that hear the recommendations and hear the input from those involved. The other thing, I was at a meeting a couple of weeks ago on these horses out in Iron County. NRCS, BLM was there with this budget cuts you're not going to see any, we've got to do something to take this horse management plan

into our own hands because with all the corrals and everything full where they take them and no money to round up anymore, they're going to destroy the west desert country for cows, and elk, and deer, all three.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Craig and then Verland King, and the last card I have is Gene Boardman.

Craig Christianson: Craig Christiansen representing UBA, Utah Bowman's Association. I just want to go on record as showing support for the recommendations that the Division has made on these antlerless permits. And again, I'd really like to thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak.

Steve Flinders: Thank you.

Verland King: Verland King representing the Dark Valley Grazers. Uh, I want to echo the comments by Gib Yardley and Stanton Gleeve about the ability to count wildlife; you just can't do it. When you're managing it you need to manage with that in mind, that there's more there than what you count. I was going to get up and say as far as the boundary changes on the Boulder, I would rather you stay with the old one but I haven't heard really what they are so I'm willing to wait and see what happens. I've got a background in science; I've got a BS in biology and a doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. It appalls me when the comment that, you know, let's cut on the antelope the bucks, well let's just pick a number out of the air and go with it because this other one sounds too high. Jim Lamb here our biologist in Wayne County, I've got a lot of faith in him and the numbers that he's given, as far as the bucks, I think are right. I did some quick math with what he told me as far as the buck to doe ration and 70 percent fawn crop. To hunt 500 head of does isn't going to take care of the recruitment. You're going to have 612 fawns coming in. We need to increase that with the thought that you can't count them all. And the reason I have quite a lot of faith in Jim is because we work with him and we've got a producer that has his own plane and he has a lot of interest in the elk herd and in the antelope in this area. And so besides what DWR counts we have our own count and we know that theirs is probably a little low. The objective there is a certain amount; it's 1,500 head. If you increase that the habitat takes a hit. And what's happened in the past is we've been up into the thousands over the objective and it hasn't worked. And we've tried to hunt them down and a few years ago the numbers were brought more in line because of a severe winterkill. If we can keep this herd in check we won't have that severe winterkill. Those animals can find feed where they're at unless they get snowed in heavily they won't die off like they did three years ago. These antelope can produce and if you get a good season it only has to be right when they're bucking up, when they're breeding and you'll get twins and triplets. We see them all the time. We ride that range; we're out there all summer starting the middle of April, the end of April. So we kind of know what's going on and we've been counting them. So I think you need to take into account that if you do not hunt, probably 750 to 800 female antelope this year that you're going to be hunting 1,000 next year. That's the way it is with antelope. If you've been around a sheep herd, a goat herd, that's, they're prolific. They will produce given the chance. The other comment I wanted to make on this Henry Mountain antelope herd that you're trying to remove, why do you have a doe hunt? Why don't you have an either sex hunt? And that would be my recommendation to that. I'd recommend that you'd have either sex hunt down there. I recommend that you have probably 800 doe antelope hunt on that Parker Mountain. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Verland. Gene.

Gene Boardman: Gene Boardman. I have been hearing about how prolific those Parker Mountain

antelope were and I wish we had half that problem on the west desert; we'd sure enjoy them. But our antelope there seem to be pretty stagnant as far as I can tell. What I really wanted to talk about was on these uh, I see the total numbers of the antlerless hunts. On the elk, since we're probably not going to draw deer tags this year the cow elk hunts what we've got in mind for our family hunt. And so we'd like to see a number of permits earlier in the season. The late hunts, that might be a good time to kill elk but the days are short, you've got limited access and I don't like to camp in the winter any more. So I'd just like to say we'd sure like to see a good number of those permits in the October time frame or somewhere close by. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. That's all the comment cards I have. We could have missed some from the previous agenda topic if people made notes. Did I miss anybody? Fantastic.

RAC discussion and vote:

Steve Flinders: Well it's ours to deal with up here. We had a pretty balanced discussion tonight. I'm trying to think of how to proceed; if we want to go species by species or . . . I see a lot of nodding heads. Let's tackle elk. Would it be helpful if I have Dustin and Vance talk about the counts this year relative to the Monroe recommendation? How many elk with collars? Are you guys prepared to speak to that briefly? That would probably be very helpful. You came very prepared to speak to that.

Dustin Schaible: (See attachment 5) I kind of anticipated it. A lot of our recommendations at least for the Monroe Boulder and Fish Lake, and Dutton were based off of the census flight that we did and this collar data. 2011 we started a telemetry study on elk. And we've got 23 GPS collars. And what these collars are designed to do is take 6 locations a day. And so they'll do that for 3 years and then they'll drop off. And we have to wait to get those points. But at the end of it when we're able to recover the collars we'll have over 6,000 locations for each individual. And so we have 23 of those out and then we also have 21 just simple VHF collars. We can look at all 44 of these elk at any time just through aerial surveys and just get a location aurally. But what I've got plotted here is over 500 points that we've collected aurally just off of these locations. Dutton is in the middle but basically what I wanted, my point in saying there's over 500 locations plotted here is there's some areas that are really dense. These elk are really concentrated in a few areas and the majority of elk that we collared, over 60 percent of them, leave the unit for the summer. So basically what we're finding out is elk from pretty much every unit adjacent to Dutton comes to winter on Dutton. And it's probably, it's one of the reasons that we're chronically over objective. So what we're trying to do is we changed the way we're thinking about flying our units. Historically we just flew by biologist district. And you know I covered Dutton and south but I wouldn't cover Monroe and Boulder; that's Jim and Vance. And so what we decided to do based off of this movement that we were seeing is we were going to census these units, the Monroe, Dutton, Boulder, and Fish Lake all together. And in fact we used two helicopters at once because we recognize these elk cross pretty frequently even during the night. And so we'd run two helicopters simultaneously in these areas just to make sure we weren't missing or double counting. And for the four units as a whole we're pretty close to objective. We're only slightly over the objective if you add up all four units objectives. But the Dutton was way over, there were more elk standing on the Dutton when we counted. Let me talk about the percents, like where they move. Again, 44 collars are out; about a third of them go to the Monroe. So it's about 33 percent go to the Monroe. 37 percent stay on the Dutton. About 20 percent go to the Boulder. And then the other individuals include on the Fish Lake, the Paunsaugant, and the Panguitch Lake. So basically again, they're using pretty much every unit. The only unit that we haven't seen any movement over to is on the Beaver. Based off of the high movement onto

the Monroe, that's the premise for trying to get Dutton back into objective is there's better access on the Monroe than there is on Dutton. Dutton historically has had 30 percent antlerless harvest success and in order for us to increase that we're going to have to kill elk where we can, when we can. And since we have proof now, we have evidence that these elk are definitely on Monroe where we can access them we'd like to try to start introducing harvest up there to help Dutton's winter objective out, if that makes sense. We also did this on the Boulder, increased tags based off of that movement. But I do have an example here of one cow that was harvested on the Greenwich depredation hunt. Basically, again, when we're surveying if they were counted on the Dutton it went towards the Dutton count. And so here's an example of a cow that was collared in Kingston Canyon, on the Dutton side, and this is all of her locations in February. This was a GPS collar that again was harvested. But this is where she was in February, in March, still spending a lot of time down there in Kingston, April started moving up, May, June, July, August, September, October. And she was harvested on October, in about the middle of October on that Greenwich hunt. So you can see she spent the majority of her time on the Monroe but has been counted as a Dutton elk. So that's why we're trying to include a little bit of harvest up that way. The other thing that I've done differently, this is my flight path for Dutton. And the red dots are where the elk were at. The bigger the dot the more elk were there. So that's why you see my recommendation on the Dutton too stop hunting unit wide. Basically I feel that there's better access on the west and there's a lot of guys spending too much time over there when I'm trying to force them over into the higher density elk areas to try to increase harvest that way. But you can see they definitely like that east central side, it's the most inaccessible part of the unit. It's basically designated foot and horse traffic only. So this is, and here's a map of all of our flight tracks. Kind of again we flew these four units as a mega-complex and just, you can see how much effort we spent where, where we're at. A lot was based off of snow conditions, you know, we basically keep going as high as we possible can until there are no more elk and then we turn around. So the vacant spots are based off of that. And this slide, probably if you guys can see it, same thing, this is where the elk were standing. So you can see the high areas where they are wintering. And so basically what we're doing is taking this, the combination of the telemetry data, and our census data, and that's what our premise is for all of our antlerless recommendations on these four units.

Steve Flinders: Very helpful. Does anybody have any questions for Dustin? Mack.

Mack Morrell: When did you find that the cow elk, the antlerless elk were moving, starting to move onto the Dutton? Was it when the hunting pressure started to be put on them in November when most of the antlerless hunts are?

Dustin Schaible: So to get really specific data on how they respond to a specific hunt or weather event or whatever it is we have to wait for those collars to fall off. What we have here is just basically a window in time, like one day in the month is when I get to go out. So I can tell you where they standing on September 24th, and where they were standing on October 30th. You know and how far they moved in between. But I can't tell you exactly what caused them to move. But the majority of them leave Monroe and come to winter on the Dutton starting in September. They start in September and are definitely they are in full swing in October I would say. When they go back it's kind of, it's usually about this time when they start heading back. But we will have very specific data but we won't have that for one more year when those collars drop off.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? Rusty.

Rusty Aiken: Is there a way we can get these guys up there in a helicopter next year, your cattle guys?

Dustin Schaible: Oh yeah. There, there we had a representative from various constituents that, there was only one other Division guy and me in the helicopter. And then I took RAC members, sportsman members, or sportsman representative and then cattleman representatives. And so we do our best to try to get everybody in on it, at least a (unintelligible).

Steve Flinders: I have a question. You have been talking about this research for the last few years and so now having flown all of them the struggles with having a target winter herd size for a unit like Monroe, it's the summer range for a different unit, is there a different strategy?

Dustin Schaible: It's definitely has given evidence to start looking at elk on a bigger level. But we can't do that until we revisit the statewide plan, if I'm right on that. Is that what you're asking?

Steve Flinders: Yeah, or how would you approach that? In other words how many elk would winter on Dutton if you were to have the objective wintering on Monroe? Yeah the flip side of that question is how many elk are on Monroe in the summer? Anybody estimated that now with your?

Dustin Schaible: Well again, estimating in the summer is pretty difficult. But all we've got, the best data we've got right now is 30 percent of my collars go up there. Let's see you extrapolate that onto a population of 2,100, it's quite a few elk that are traveling north.

Steve Flinders: Thanks. Sam.

Sam Carpenter: Hey Dustin, while you are still up there, I am going to shift gears a little bit and go to the dates of these hunts. And I know we discussed this earlier in our (unintelligible) meeting. I just want to bring it up while you're up there so that we don't have to recall ya. But I'm going to ask that the hunt number 4087, the Paunsagaunt Skutumpah hunt, that we extend the dates of that hunt as we discussed later. Many of the hunts that you will see in here that have the same criteria, very difficult, low success, private property, and you know, very limited public land to hunt these elk on. And where this herd of elk is fairly limited, less than 100 I think is what we think we're hunting there, you've got 75 tags and 100 elk that we're trying to find there, is to ask if you have any objections to us extending that hunt to go into January 31, 2014 like you've got with the other hunts with similar criteria. Are you okay with that to make a recommendation as we get into that?

Dustin Schaible: Yeah, as I told you on that hunt, I am not opposed to doing something like that. My rationale this year was to increase their opportunity because we are hunting one cohesive group of elk that if somebody shoots, just like we talked, and they hop the fence on the CWMU, 74 other people, I mean, they're out of their time being out there. So what we did was try and increase their opportunity and allow them to hunt in August and November. And the reason I didn't originally recommend a longer season date at the latter part of that was just because in my experience on Dutton longer time frames don't necessarily mean increased harvest. But I'm not opposed to it if that's what you decide...

Steve Flinders: Layne.

Layne Torgerson: Anis, I know that last year if you drew a cow tag, it didn't matter which hunt, and you were, say you drew a November cow tag on the Boulder and you were there on the spike hunt the first of

October you could go ahead and harvest that cow at that time.

Anis Aoude: Correct.

Layne Torgerson: With these new hunts, and maybe this needs to go to Jim and Vance, with these new hunts and dates that are coinciding with those, the spike hunt and some of those other hunts, if you drew a late cow tag could you still harvest your cow while you were spike hunting?

Anis Aoude: Yes you can, as long as it's in the same area that you drew your tag on, yes. It's still in place.

Layne Torgerson: Because I know I'll get asked that somewhere down the road.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? More discussion on elk?

Anis Aoude: Just one thing to touch upon on extended seasons; what we've seen a lot of times when we extend seasons into the, later into the year, people seem to think that hunting is better later so they wait. And then often time when that time comes they either have access problems or so what so ever. So keep, like Dustin said, longer hunts don't always mean higher success.

Sam Carpenter: Yeah, I understand that. But this particular area the roads are limited anyway. It's all private. I mean you've got a strip there that runs for about 12 miles up towards Alton to the border and that's where those elk are. And

Anis Aoude: Yeah, and that may work just fine.

Sam Carpenter: And you've got 75 hunters in there for 15 days and it's a mess.

Anis Aoude: Sure, no I think that might work just fine. I just wanted to reiterate that.

Steve Flinders: You guys got a motion down there? Keep it friendly. It boils down to we're staring at what the Division proposes unless you see a strong enough reason to make a motion outside of that from what you've heard here tonight. Mack.

Mack Morrell: I would like to make a motion to accept the Division's recommendations on antlerless elk, with exception of southwest desert to increase of 100 to 250, and Mt Dutton to increase 200, from 550 to 750.

Steve Flinders: Motion by Mack. Anyone second that? Seconded by Mike

Sam Carpenter: Can we have him repeat that please?

Steve Flinders: Restate that Mack, I think I got it.

Mack Morrell: I move that we accept the DWR's recommendation on antlerless for elk with the exception of, Southwest Desert, to increase from 150 to 250, and Mt. Dutton to increase from 550 to 750.

Steve Flinders: Seconded by Mike Worthen. Discussion on that motion? Clair.

Clair Woodbury: I was just listening to Dustin. Haven't we increased the Mt. Dutton elk hunt by that amount by putting those over on the Monroe? It seems to me like that's just what we've done.

Steve Flinders: Good point. Other topics? Well they're the same group of elk. Sam.

Sam Carpenter: And I would like to add to that that we change those dates on that Skutumpah hunt to going till the 31st of January, 2014 if he's doing a proposal for the entire antlerless.

Steve Flinders: Is that an amendment?

Sam Carpenter: Yes Please.

Steve Flinders: Repeat that amendment.

Sam Carpenter: That we increase the time of the Paunsagaunt Skutumpah hunt to go up to January 31, 2014.

Steve Flinders: Is there a second on that amendment? Seconded by Rusty. Lets focus on the amended motion that Sam made. Just think about that motion. Any discussion on that? We're going to vote on that first. We're voting on the amendment. The amendment as it stands along. No discussion? Let's vote on the amendment, on the extended season dates for the Paunsagaunt Skutumpah hunt. Those in favor? Any against? 9 in favor, 1 abstained (Clair) That looked unanimous. One abstention by Clair.

AMENDMENT: Sam Carpenter made an amendment to the motion to increase the season dates on the Paunsaugunt Skutumpah hunt to go until January 31, 2014. Rusty Aiken seconded. Motion to amendment passed unanimously (Clair Woodbury abstained)

Steve Flinders: Okay, we're back to the original motion. The balance of the elk recommendation, expect for the two changes. Further discussion? Sam.

Sam Carpenter: I heard several recommendations from sportsmen out there about transplanting elk, and antelope. I'd like to ask Anis what's the feasibility . . .

Steve Flinders: I don't think we're moving elk, just antelope and deer.

Sam Carpenter: Okay, we're just elk right now, right?

Steve Flinders: Yeah.

Sam Carpenter: Okay, there was a recommendation of transplanting 250 elk. Is that . . .

Steve Flinders: No, antelope. Nobody asked to move elk that I heard.

Anis Aoude: There's really no place we can put elk. We're pretty much maxed out everywhere.

Sam Carpenter: I apologize for disrupting all this.

Steve Flinders: Further discussion on the motion on the table? Brian.

Brian Johnson: I just had a question, because you guys like to ask questions. But on Dutton, if the population estimate is 1,100 and we are over objective why isn't the Division recommending a larger antlerless? Why are we only recommending 150 when we're already over objective and we're going to have a calf crop? I just don't understand.

Anis Aoude: Which unit?

Brian Johnson: Southwest Desert. We're over objective and we're only doing 150. So just clarify that for me so that I can understand.

Jason Nicholes: The Southwest Desert also has quite a high bull to cow ratio. And we are, we will be taking somewhere around 250 to 300 bulls this year. That along with the proposed antlerless will bring us below objective. There's also the antlerless harvest that we will have on the spike archery, or the any elk archery.

Brian Johnson: Are we, you're figuring the 300 with the spikes, the limited entries?

Jason Nicholes: Correct, correct.

Brian Johnson: So you feel that you are in line with what you've already?

Jason Nicholes: I do.

Brian Johnson: And we can't just dress up any horses as elk.

Jason Nicholes: I wish.

Steve Flinders: Good discussion, anymore? Are we ready to vote on that motion or? Clair.

Clair Woodbury: No. I can't go with killing that many more elk out on the Southwest Desert or the Dutton. I'm sorry. We're killing 500 anyway with that increased bull kill; that makes no sense to add another 100 cows there. I just, it makes no sense at all. It doesn't add up.

Steve Flinders: I think I know how you are going to vote. We ready to vote? Mack, you ready to vote? All right, those in favor of your motion, please show. And those against? Looks like that motion fails.

Mack Morrell made a motion to accept the Divisions recommendations of the antlerless elk recommendations with the exceptions that the permits on the Southwest Desert be increased from 150 to 250 and permits on Mt. Dutton be increased from 550 to 750. 3:6 in favor (Dale, Mack and Mike Worthen). Motion fails. Rusty abstained.

Steve Flinders: So much for getting through with elk. Make a new motion.

Sam Carpenter: Do I need to do another amendment on this?

Steve Flinders: No, start over. All that we passed was the Skutumpah extension.

Sam Carpenter: But that extension failed because it was attached to that other motion.

Steve Flinders: No, the amendment stands. It passed.

Clair Woodbury: Okay, if the amendment stands I make a proposal that we accept the Division's recommendations for the antlerless elk hunt as stated along with Sam's amendment.

Steve Flinders: Second to that motion? Seconded by Brian. That motion was to pass as presented by the Division, yeah, carrying our amendment that we already passed. Seconded by Brian. Thanks. Any discussion on that motion? Let's vote. Those in favor please show. Those against? That passed.

Clair Woodbury made the motion to accept the Division's recommendations on antlerless elk permits as presented. Brian Johnson seconded. Motion passed 7:3 (Rusty Aiken, Mack Morrell and Layne Torgerson opposed)

Steve Flinders: Let's move on to pronghorn. Discussion surrounded Henry's being either sex instead of just antlerless and the Plateau unit.

Brian Johnson: I have a question.

Steve Flinders: Brian.

Brian Johnson: Are you guys planning on trapping an antelopes off of that Plateau unit this year?

Anis Aoude: We don't have plans to trap any. If we do trap some we actually would be on top of what we hunt because we need to remove actually more than what we've recommended. So I guess if you guys recommend we trap them instead we would probably end up trapping more on top of that. But there are no plans yet to trap this year but we could certainly still do it. I mean, yeah, it's one that always leaves us scratching our heads as well. That population is just really productive especially where we're holding it at a certain level where it wants to grow. And within a year or two pronghorn are known to double and triple their populations because they are set up that way. When things are bad they don't drop babies. When things are good they can have twins and triplets. So . . .

Steve Flinders: Other points of discussion? Looking for motion on pronghorn. Mack you know that neck of the woods.

Mack Morrell: Just to comment on pronghorn. Out there wintering out there with the pronghorn the deer's affected, the elk is out there wintering. Now they had 900 elk that they counted out on that winter range. In the summertime there's three sheeppers out there and they keep the predator guy and DWR busy killing coyotes. And I'm one of a few ranchers who have suspended AUMs because of antelope. So my recommendation is we accept the DWR's recommendation on antlerless pronghorn with the

exception of the Plateau, to increase that from 500 to 750.

Steve Flinders: Is there a second? Seconded by Brian. Discussion on that motion. Dave.

Dave Black: I was wondering with, if SFW has any funds or plans to move antelope off of the Plateau like they did the deer? Have they made any commitments? I would be in favor of removing 750 does if a portion of those, or total, ideally some of those would be removed by the SFW.

Steve Flinders: Okay, we heard there maybe plans in the works to move antelope on top of those recommended to be harvested.

Dave Black: So the total removal would be 750?

Steve Flinders: It could be. If the motion on the table is what Mack stated, then there would be 750 permits. No it's 750 permits.

Dave Black: So if we wanted to do 500 permits and 250 removal then we need to vote against the motion on the table.

Steve Flinders: Yeah, it's a whole different motion. The motion on the table is permits.

Dave Black: 750 total.

Steve Flinders: Further discussion? Mack.

Mack Morrell: I was going to say if you were going to transplant some have you got a cost of doing it and then where are you going to put them?

Steve Flinders: Clair.

Clair Woodbury: Sounds like the Southwest Desert needs some of those super bucks up there.

Mack Morrell: Yeah, I think the Southwest Desert's got enough problems.

Steve Flinders: Motion on the table. Are we ready to vote? Those in favor of Mack's recommendation please vote. Those against? It looks like we increased the antlerless antelope tags, hornless. (8 in favor, 2 against: Dave Black and Layne Torgerson against. Motion passed.)

Mack Morrell made the motion to accept the Division's recommendations on antlerless pronghorn permits as presented with the exception that permits on the Plateau unit be increased to 750. Rusty Aiken seconded. Motion passed 8:2 (Dave Black and Layne Torgerson opposed).

Steve Flinders: Okay, deer. That brings us to the Parowan Front.

Rusty Aiken: I'll make a motion to accept the Division's recommendations on the antlerless deer permits.

Steve Flinders: Motion by Rusty. Seconded by Sam. Any discussion? I think we're ready to go home. Mike.

Mike Staheli: Well I think that this transplant deal has worked pretty good and I don't know why we can't still continue that, if we can get funding. I don't think it is \$2100 per animal, is it? I think that's completely out of range.

Steve Flinders: The opportunity for additional deer is there. So the motion on the table is to approve the Division's recommendations. Further discussion? Those in favor? Any against? That looked unanimous. Vote: unanimous.

Rusty Aiken made the motion to accept the Division's recommendations on antlerless deer permits as presented. Sam Carpenter seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Steve Flinders: Scott, we're ready for you if you're ready.

Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2013 (action) 3:43:39 to 3:49:38 of 4:09:14
-Scott McFarlane, Private Lands/ Public Wildlife Coordinator
(See attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Steve Flinders: Nice picture. Questions first? Questions about CWMUs for Scott. Rusty.

Rusty Aiken: Um, we were in the meeting up north, and I may get some of these units wrong, but the Morgan, I think, the East Canyon, Chalk Creek, got huge objectives. Those elk are apparently hiding in those CWMUs and the pressure is on the public. Is there a way that we can fix that thing? Do you have any solutions at all?

Scott McFarlane: I couldn't hear you really well but I think what you're saying is these units are over objective and the CWMUs . . .

Rusty Aiken: (Inaudible) hunting within the CWMUs, the public (inaudible).

Scott McFarlane: Yeah, what we do is we try to make the CWMUs design the hunts on the CWMUs, to fit the CWMU. Sometimes it's a point of no return where you issue so many permits, the harvest rates actually go down. CWMUs basically, it's not like having a great big unit where your elk have a place to escape. Once they run off the CWMU you have to wait for them to come back on. And so we try to design the hunts so that we have a fair success rate with the CWMUs and yet the timing of the hunts also probably, we encourage the CWMU operators to hunt at the same time as the antlerless permits for the rest of the unit so that they don't have a refuge on the CWMU. Does that answer your question? Okay

Steve Flinders: Other questions?

Questions from the public:

Steve Flinders: Other questions?

None.

Comments from the public:

Steve Flinders: Seeing none, I have one comment card from Wade. He's Johnny on the spot

Wade Heaton: I promise I'll be fast. Just with regard to the cow tags on the CWMU. We do support, Alton CWMU does support the recommendation of the DWR. As much as we would like more, we they did increase on the Paunsagaunt, and this is one of those CWMUs that they didn't increase on, when to be perfectly fair we really should. But we'll save that for another meeting and another day. But right now it is 4, it's listed at 4 or 5 permits for the CWMU, and we do support that recommendation. Also, per our agreement with Friends of the Paunsagaunt, the CWMUs changed it so there's no antlerless deer harvest on the CWMU, so we support that recommendation as well. Thanks.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Wade

RAC discussion and vote:

Steve Flinders: Thanks Wade. Motions, discussion? No controversy. Rusty

Rusty Aiken: I'll make a motion to accept the recommendations of the Division.

Steve Flinders: Seconded by Layne. Any discussion? Those in favor? Any opposed? That looked unanimous.

Rusty Aiken made the motion to accept the Division's recommendations for antlerless CWMU permit numbers as presented. Layne Torgerson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Steve Flinders: We get to move on to number 8.

Depredation Rule Amendments – R657-33 (action) 3:53:10 of 3:59:46 of 4:09:14
-Scott McFarlane, Private Lands/ Public Wildlife Coordinator
(See attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Steve Flinders: You guys caught me. Thank you. Questions from the RAC?

Questions from the public:

Steve Flinders: Questions from the audience. One comment card. Lee's got a question.

Lee Tracy: Lee Tracy. I guess I'm way behind the times or something. Can you explain a little bit what the buffer zone is? Is that inside the landowner's property or outside?

Scott McFarlane: Yeah a buffer zone is the area that will be surrounding, it will be outside the

landowner's property. What a buffer zone is designed to do is to target the offending animals, the animals that are doing damage to the agricultural fields or agricultural property. It's, we haven't set a set distance for a buffer; we wanted to leave that up to the judgment of the biologist. And it would have to go through a law enforcement review also, but the biologist and the landowner both. What it's designed to do is target the offending animals. Sometimes, you know, if you give a landowner a mitigation voucher and he has somebody come hunt these offending animals yet they may only come into his property at night and go off onto public or private land. So what it does is it gives us the ability to extend his unit, I guess so to say, to extend that beyond his private property to target those offending animals. So he is able to use the voucher in many cases where he wouldn't be without the buffer zone.

Lee Tracy: Thus the voucher is more valuable.

Scott McFarlane: Yes it should be, yeah. It would be more valuable and it's valuable in removing the offending animal and it should be more valuable to the landowner too. It is, what it is it's a mitigation permit for damages on his property.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? Craig.

Comments from the public:

Craig Laub: Craig Laub, Iron County Farm Bureau. We'd like to speak in favor of this buffer zone. And I can give you a personal experience why. 18 years ago we bought the Buckhorn Farm over here and at that time there was no deer fence around it. We had a nice herd of elk there and they gave us 5 cow tags, vouchers, and we soon learned that they were just about worthless because the elk were there at night and then gone by daylight. And I argued with the fellow at the time, it was Kendall Bagley, we've got to have a buffer zone we can't, you know. So we had to get creative to keep those elk inside there until daylight so we could get them. But anyway, we need that uh buffer zone so that we can get those elk because uh, they're, particularly on agricultural cultivated land they're not there during the daylight hours, they're just there at night. So we'd like to see this go through.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Further discussion?

RAC discussion and vote:

Steve Flinders: Comment, motion? Go ahead.

Rusty Aiken: I'll make a motion to accept the Division's recommendations.

Steve Flinders: Motion by Rusty. Seconded by Sam. Discussion on the motion? All those in favor? Any opposed? 9 in favor, 1 abstained

Rusty Aiken made the motion to accept the Division's Depredation Rule Amendments as presented. Sam Carpenter seconded. Motion passed unanimously (Dale Bagley abstained)

Other Business

-Steve Flinders, Chairman

Steve Flinders: Kevin has a couple of quick other business items, maybe one.

Sam Carpenter: This is while we've still got Anis, Dustin, Teresa and everybody here. Something that hasn't come up and we haven't really thought about yet is right now as we speak they're putting that high fence up along US 89, on the way to Page and putting those underpasses in. That will be completed prior to October for the winter migration. And what you're going to have there is you're going to have that entire Paunsagaunt herd migrating through there during that hunt. They're going to hit that fence for the first time and what we're afraid of is those deer are going to be stacked up along those fences in the morning during that hunt and it's going to be a pretty fish in the barrel type thing for it to be picking these bucks off. And I'm wondering if we can go some kind of a buffer zone or something to prevent something like that from happening. Or if we need to maybe delay it and discuss it later, but we need to get something done before the hunt starts in October on that unit. Because those deer, that's the first time they're going to see that fence and you can bet that early in the morning they're, it's going to be pretty confused bunch of animals.

Kevin Bunnell: Sam, I'll address that quick. I think it's a valid, you know, it's going to be something new and something that's going to have to be watched. But with boundaries already printed and in the proclamations and all that stuff that went out, because that went out in the earlier, in the November stuff. It would be very difficult to change anything this year. But something to keep an eye on if it develops that way we can address it in the years to follow, the coming years.

Sam Carpenter: So what you are saying is we're not really going to be able to do anything about it.

Kevin Bunnell: It would be pretty difficult because, you know, the way the process works and having those boundaries and everything and everybody has already applied and to make a change now.

Sam Carpenter: Okay, but we're not supposed to be shooting off the highway anyway, isn't that true?

Kevin Bunnell: Say that again.

Sam Carpenter: We're not supposed to be shooting from the highway?

Kevin Bunnell: Oh yeah, from a law enforcement standpoint it can be patrolled. Yeah.

Sam Carpenter: Right. Okay. Well that maybe what, you know, we just may need to watch it.

Kevin Bunnell: That's a good point. I hadn't thought about that. So we can, I can express that concern to the law enforcement guys.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, that was going to be my suggestion is just increase patrolling on that area.

Kevin Bunnell: Increase the patrol. So I'll bring that up with Scott and we'll talk about it.

Rusty Aiken: I think we've talked about that. It's a 90 percent harvest anyway. We didn't think it was going to change the overall harvest on the unit.

Brian Johnson: One quick question or comment. I would like to make an action item to send to the board

about considering a fence on Highway 20. I just think that that might alleviate some of the doe problem on the Parowan Front. I know I'm a little late talking about it. I think that if we were to make an action item the board could talk about it, kick it back to these groups that pay for these projects to get done and maybe get it on a list if one of these groups like SFW wants to take that on they could do it. But it's got to get on that list first.

Kevin Bunnell: Brian, something like that probably doesn't need to be on the action log. I can ask the staff in the southern region to look at that and evaluate it and see if it makes sense. So we can do that without.

Brian Johnson: Perfect, thank you.

Kevin Bunnell: So we can take care of that easily. Are you ready for me? So the other business is just the make up of this RAC. We have Steve, who is at the end of his second term and so he'll be leaving the RAC. The Forest Service has already nominated Sean Kelly to replace Steve. And so that will happen. There are 3 other of the RAC members that are at the first of your first term, and that's Dale, Mack and Layne. And so I need to hear from the 3 of you on whether you are interested in another 4-year term in participating on this council. And so if the 3 of you would please, if you're ready to make a decision tonight that would be great; if not please contact me within the next week or so and let me know.

Kevin Bunnell: Oh yes, and then at the next RAC meeting will be Steve's final RAC meeting as the Chairman and so we will need to do nominations and elections for the Chair for the next, well as long as the term of whoever gets elected will be. So we'll need you to think about who might be, who you might be interested as members of this RAC to act as the Chair and come ready to make nominations and do elections at the next RAC meeting in May. Any questions? I think that's it.

Layne Torgerson: Do you want to adjourn us?

Steve Flinders: Motion to adjourn by Layne. Let's go home. Thanks everyone.

Meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

The Utah Bowmen’s Association recognizes the need to add a late hunt to the Wasatch, Nebo, and Deep Creek limited entry elk units to address crowding issues during the September rifle elk hunt. However, we take issue with decreasing archery and muzzleloader permits in order to provide late rifle permits on these units, which will experience extreme high success rates. We saw these high success rates on the Wasatch unit in 2005 and 2006, during which these late hunts experienced 95% and 100% success rates, respectively. In addition, the elk plan does not call for late hunts on these units due to the expected extreme high success rates of a late hunt on these units. Thus, we believe that these late rifle permits should come from the existing allocation of rifle permits. The Utah Bowmen’s Association recommends, and asks that this RAC recommend, that the tag allocation remain the same on these three units as it has been in the past. That allocation is 50% rifle tags, 30% archery tags, and 20% muzzleloader tags. The premium, early, and late rifle tags would then be distributed accordingly from the 50% allocation of rifle tags. This is reflected in the tables below:

Wasatch Mountains:

	2012:	DWR Recommendation:	UBA Recommendation:
Premium:	20	20	20
Early Rifle:	306	242	200
Late Rifle:	0	131	108
Archery:	196	164	196
Muzzleloader:	130	98	131
Total:	652	655	655

Central Mountains, Nebo:

	2012:	DWR Recommendation:	UBA Recommendation:
Premium:	3	2	2
Early Rifle:	47	31	25
Late Rifle:	0	16	14
Archery:	30	21	25
Muzzleloader:	20	12	16
Total:	100	82	82

West Desert, Deep Creek:

	2012:	DWR Recommendation:	UBA Recommendation:
Premium:	0	1	1
Early Rifle:	18	15	12
Late Rifle:	0	8	7
Archery:	11	10	12
Muzzleloader:	7	6	8
Total:	36	40	40



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 8, 2013

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 National Forests on the proposed harvest levels of elk for the 2013 hunting season.

We support the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources proposals. The proposal addresses the concerns we have had with site specific natural resource conditions on the Monroe Mountain.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments; and we thank the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources for their engagement with the Forest in multiple projects to benefit wildlife.

Sincerely,

ALLEN ROWLEY
Forest Supervisor, Fishlake National Forest





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Dixie National Forest
Powell Ranger District

225 East Center Street
P.O. Box 80
Panguitch, UT 84759-0080
435-676-9300

File Code: 1560

Date: April 9, 2013

Mr. Steve Flinders, Chairman
Southern Region Resource Advisory Committee (RAC)
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
575 South Main Street
P.O. Box E
Beaver, UT 84713

Dear Mr. Flinders:

The Dixie National Forest has previously submitted to the RAC a letter of support for the 2013 UDWR Elk Management Plan. The Powell Ranger District concurs with the Forest's position and would like to take this opportunity to provide more specific comments on the proposed harvest levels of bucks, bulls, and antlerless deer and elk for the 2013 hunting season.

The District supports the boundary changes and strategies proposed to hunt Mount Dutton elk on both the Monroe and Mount Dutton units, and encourages the Division to take aggressive actions to bring elk population numbers in line with plan objectives.

The District appreciates the provided telemetry data collected by the Division over that past few years on elk from the Mount Dutton unit and supports the strategy of increasing antlerless harvest on the Boulder unit in an attempt to lower the number of elk on Mount Dutton.

The Mount Dutton unit is currently 650 head over its winter objective of 1,500 and has historically remained over objective. Please consider historical harvest success and mortality rates while evaluating current recommendations, as well as natality rates in your proposed harvest levels. Harvest success is currently averaging less than 50% for cows and approximately 80% for bulls.

Per page 2, number 15, of the March 25th memorandum from Anis Aoude, the Division is recommending on 10 units that hunters who have any antlered big game permit can also purchase an antlerless elk control permit. The District recommends adding the Mount Dutton unit to this list based on the historic inability to bring elk numbers within established objectives.

The District appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and thanks the Division and its staffs for the continuing partnership and support of Forest Service habitat improvement projects benefiting wildlife. If you have questions, please contact E. Jakob Schoppe, District Wildlife Biologist, at 435-676-9341.

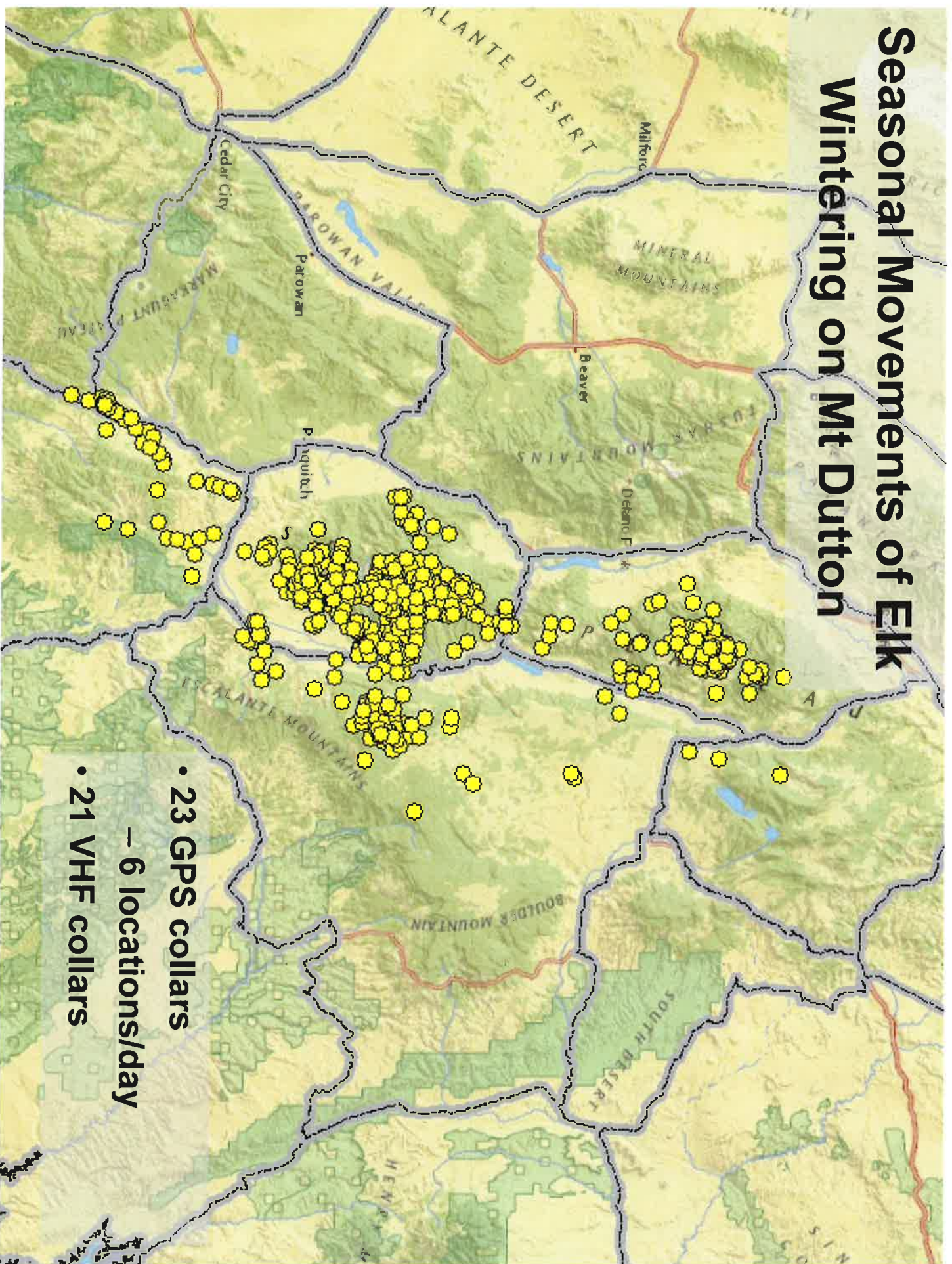
Sincerely,

KAREN SCHROYER
District Ranger

cc: Angelita S. Bullets, Kevin Schulkoski, Ron Rodriguez, E. Jakob Schoppe



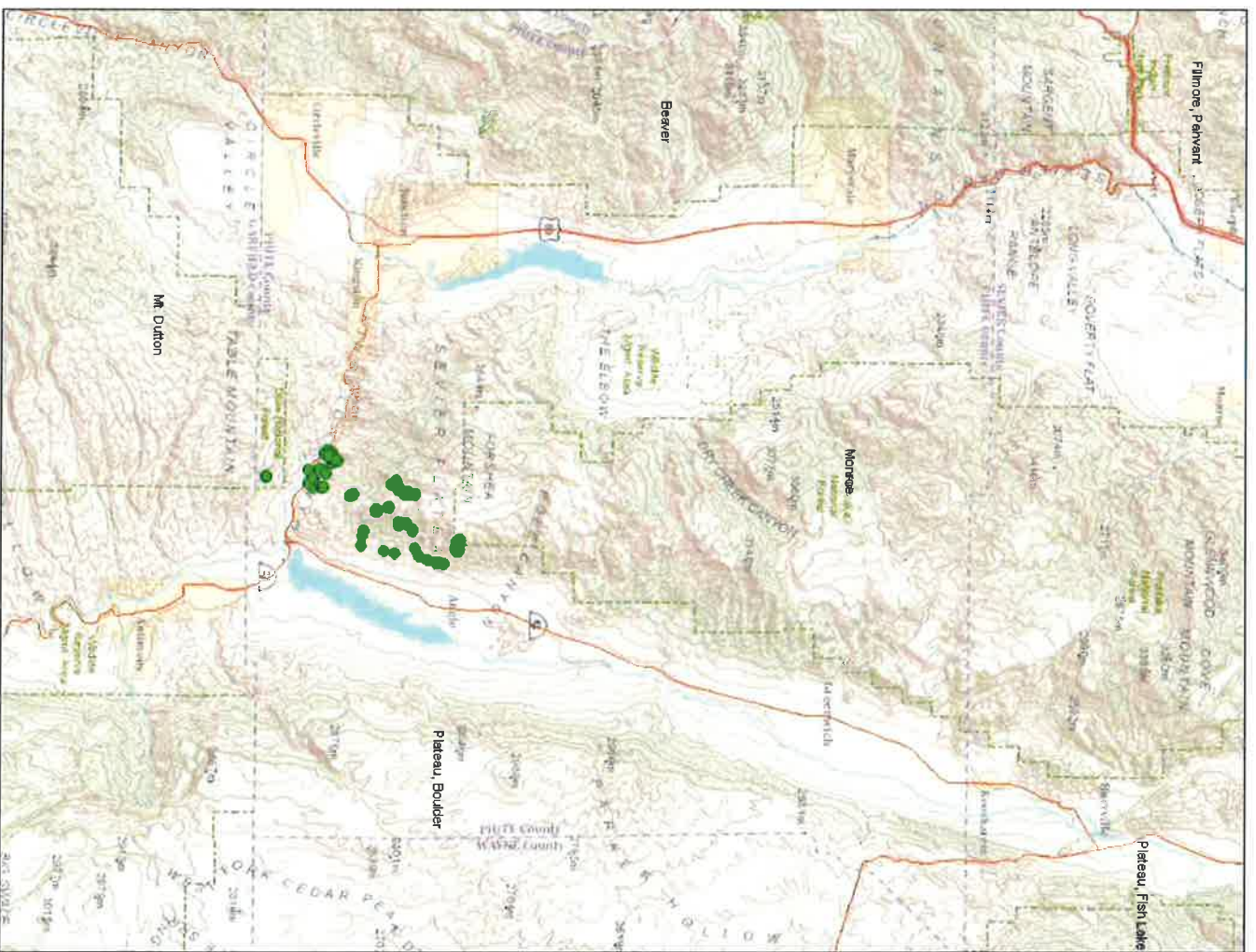
Seasonal Movements of Elk Wintering on Mt Dutton



- 23 GPS collars
— 6 locations/day
- 21 VHF collars

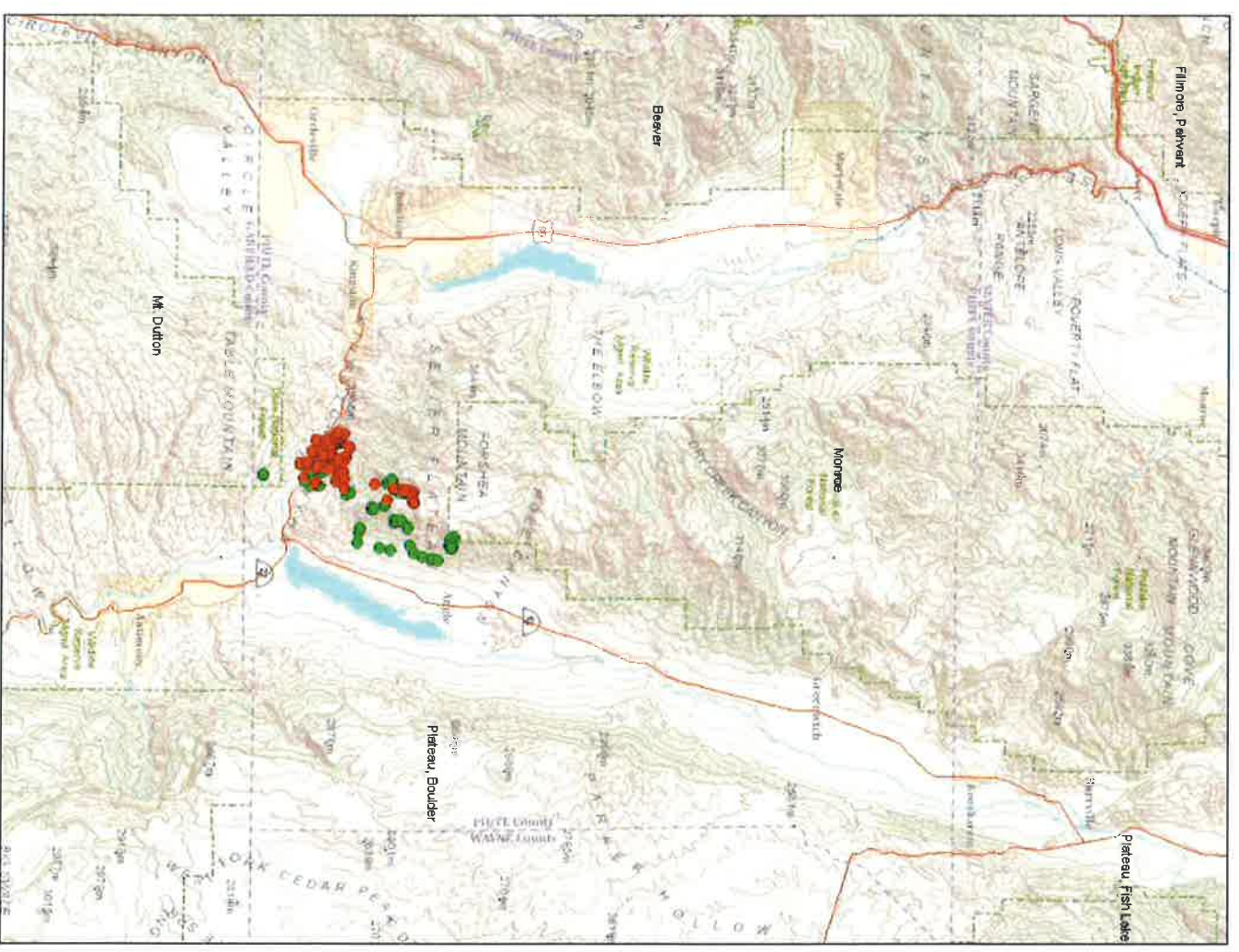
FEB 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



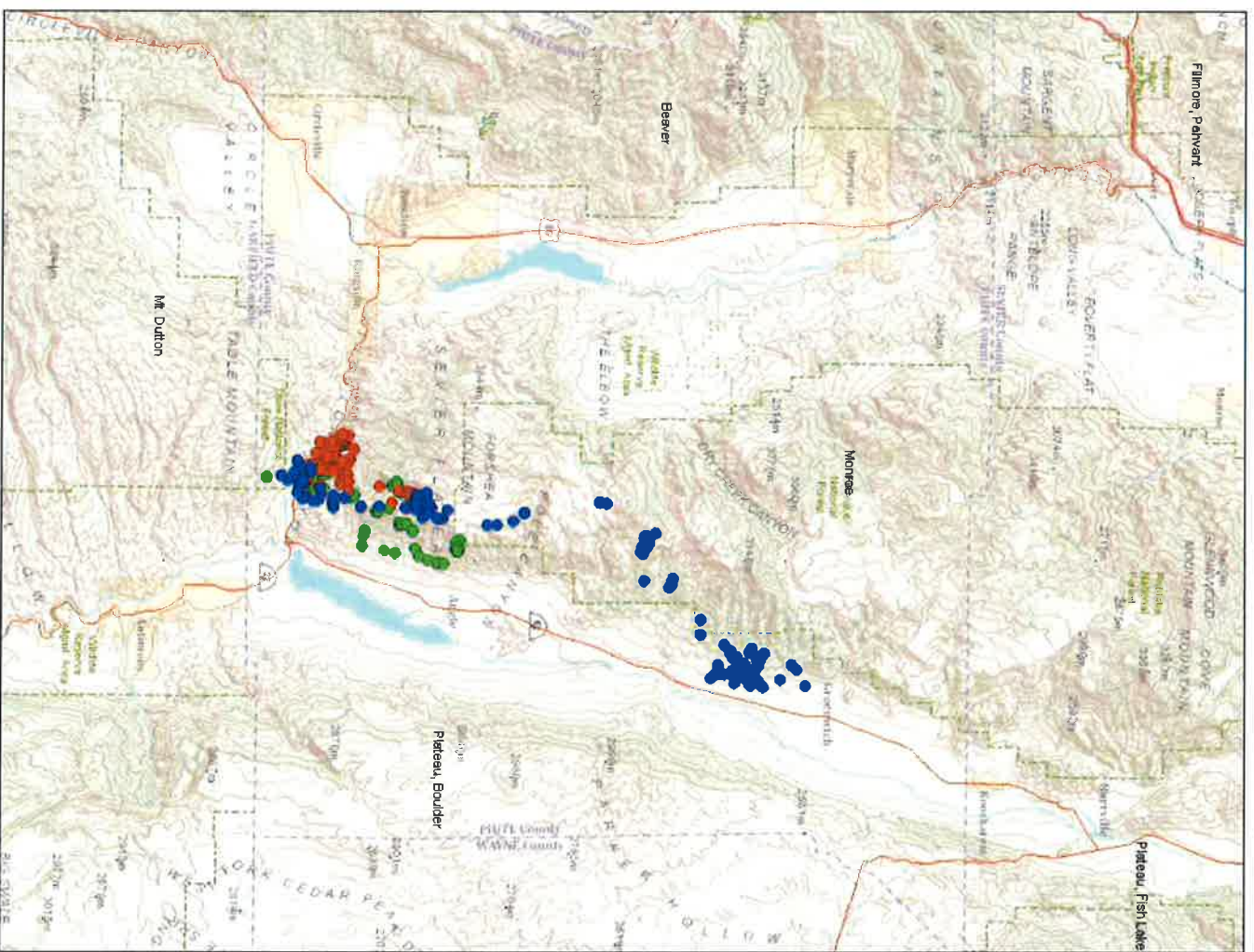
MAR 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



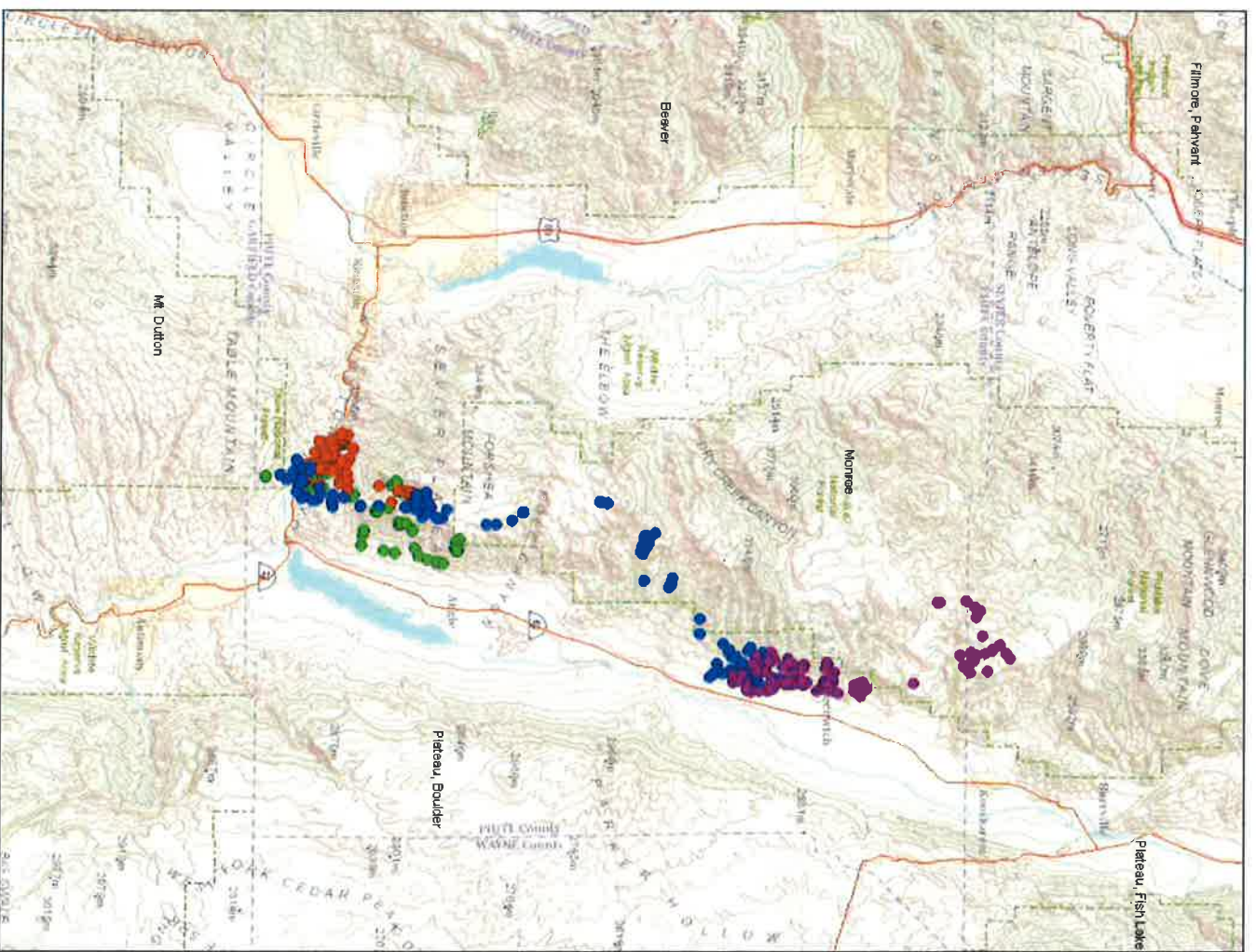
APR 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



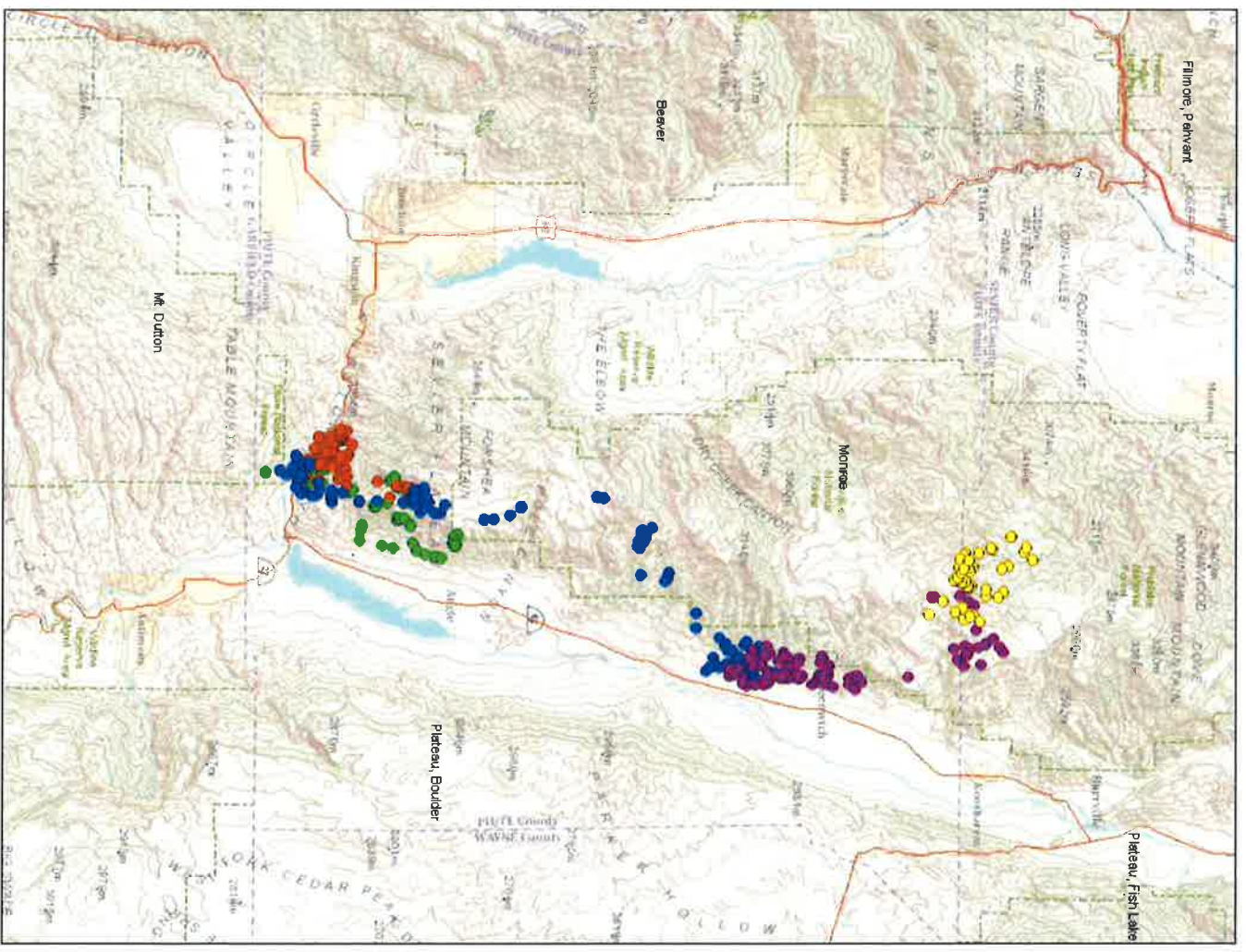
MAY 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



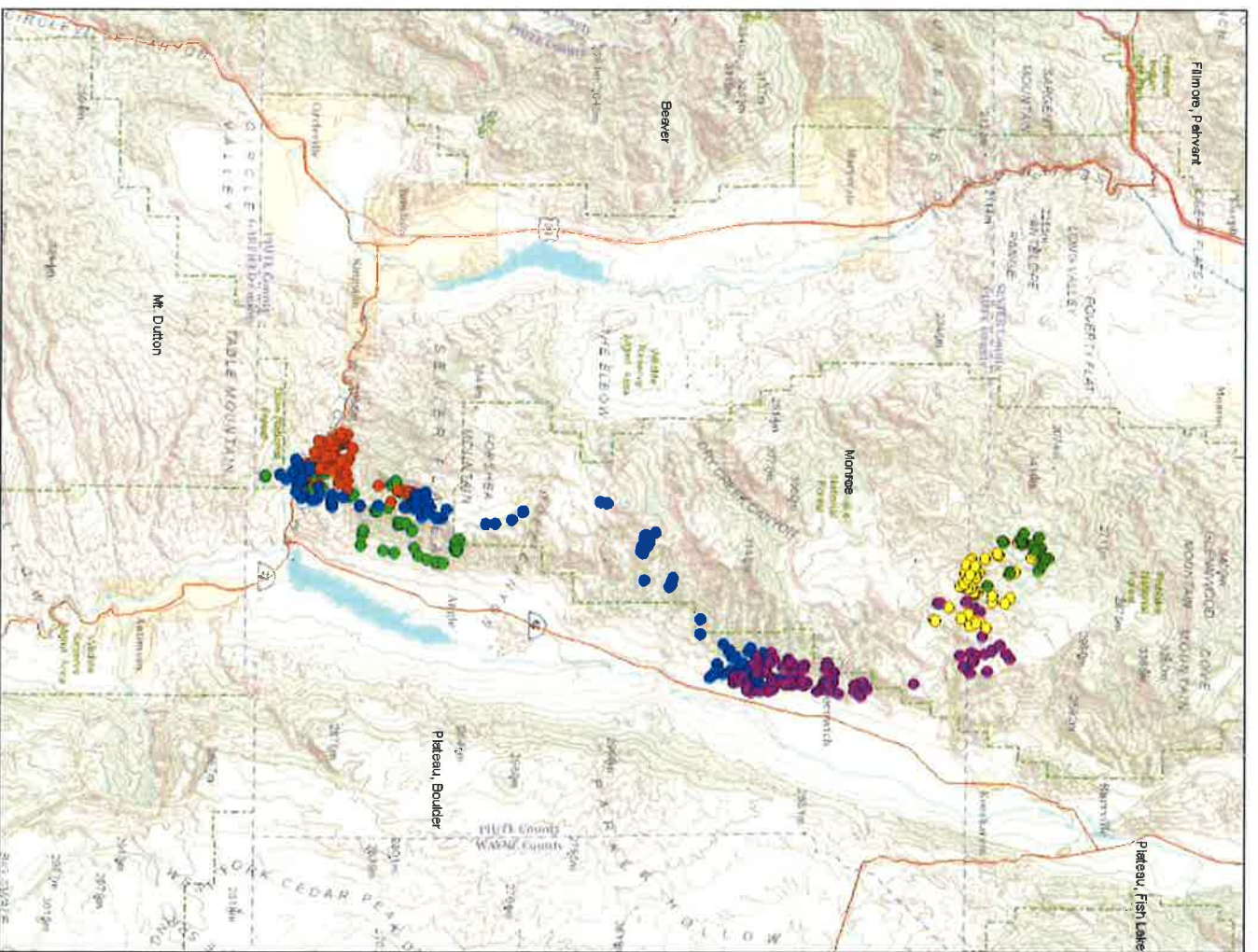
JUN 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



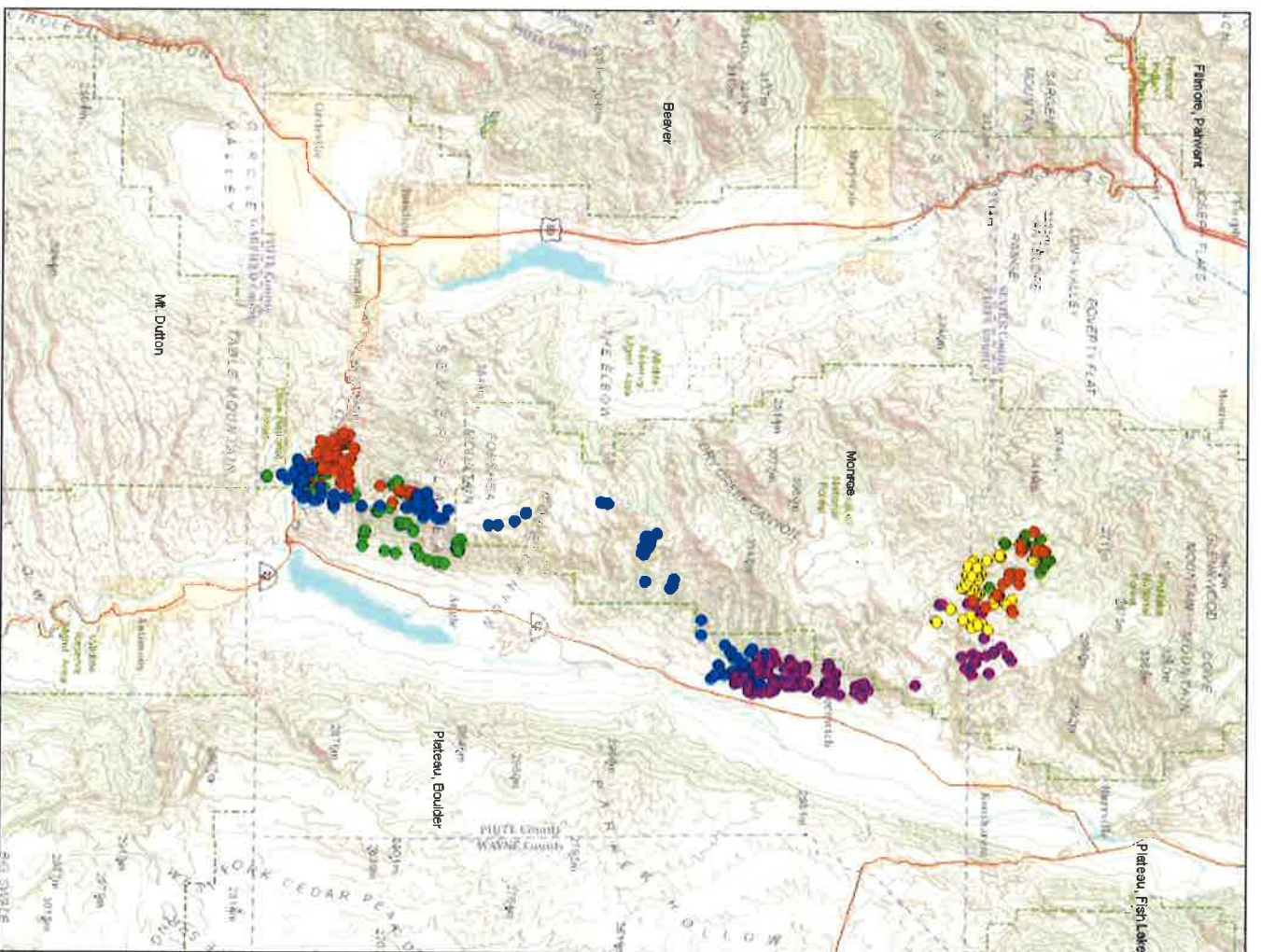
JUL 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



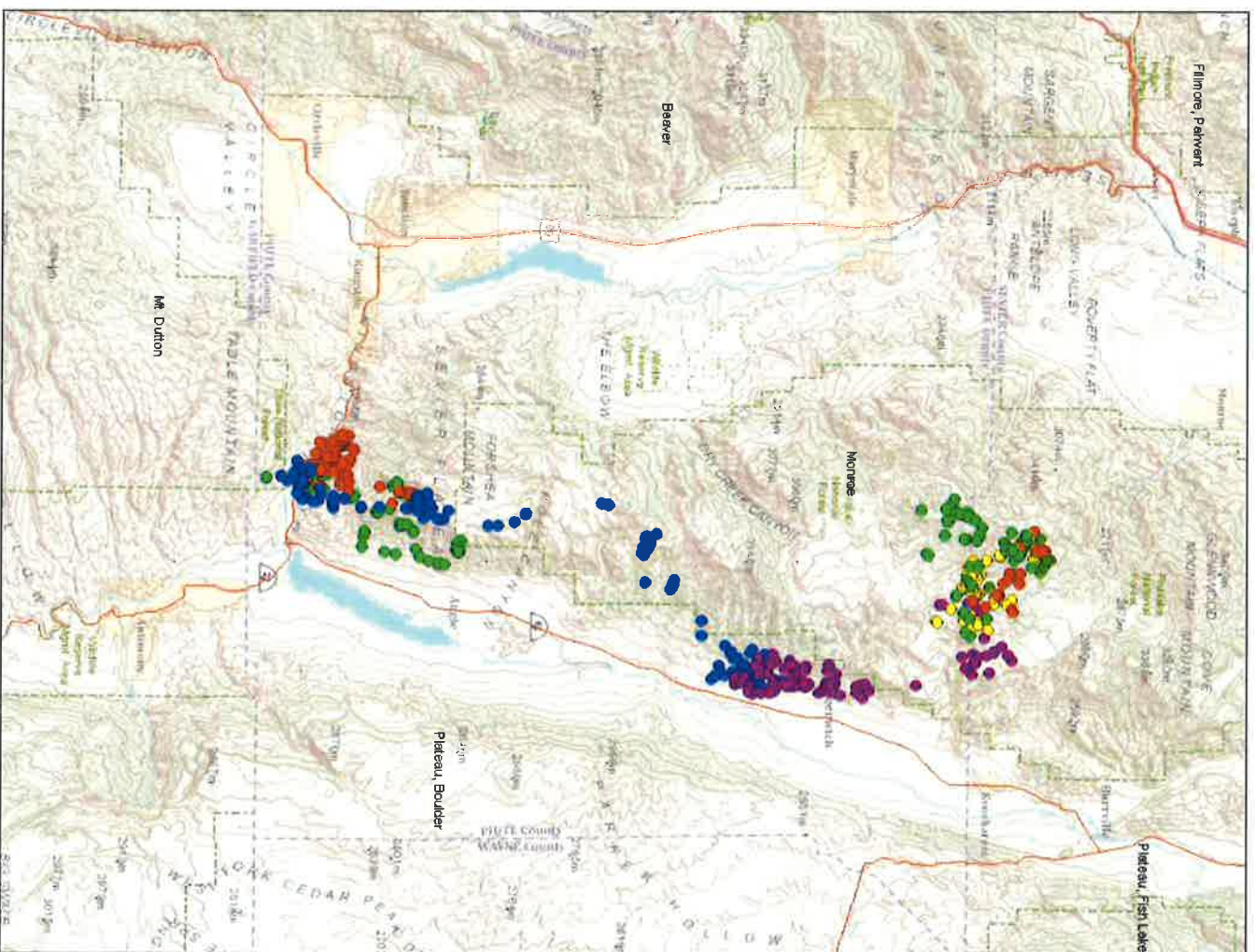
AUG 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



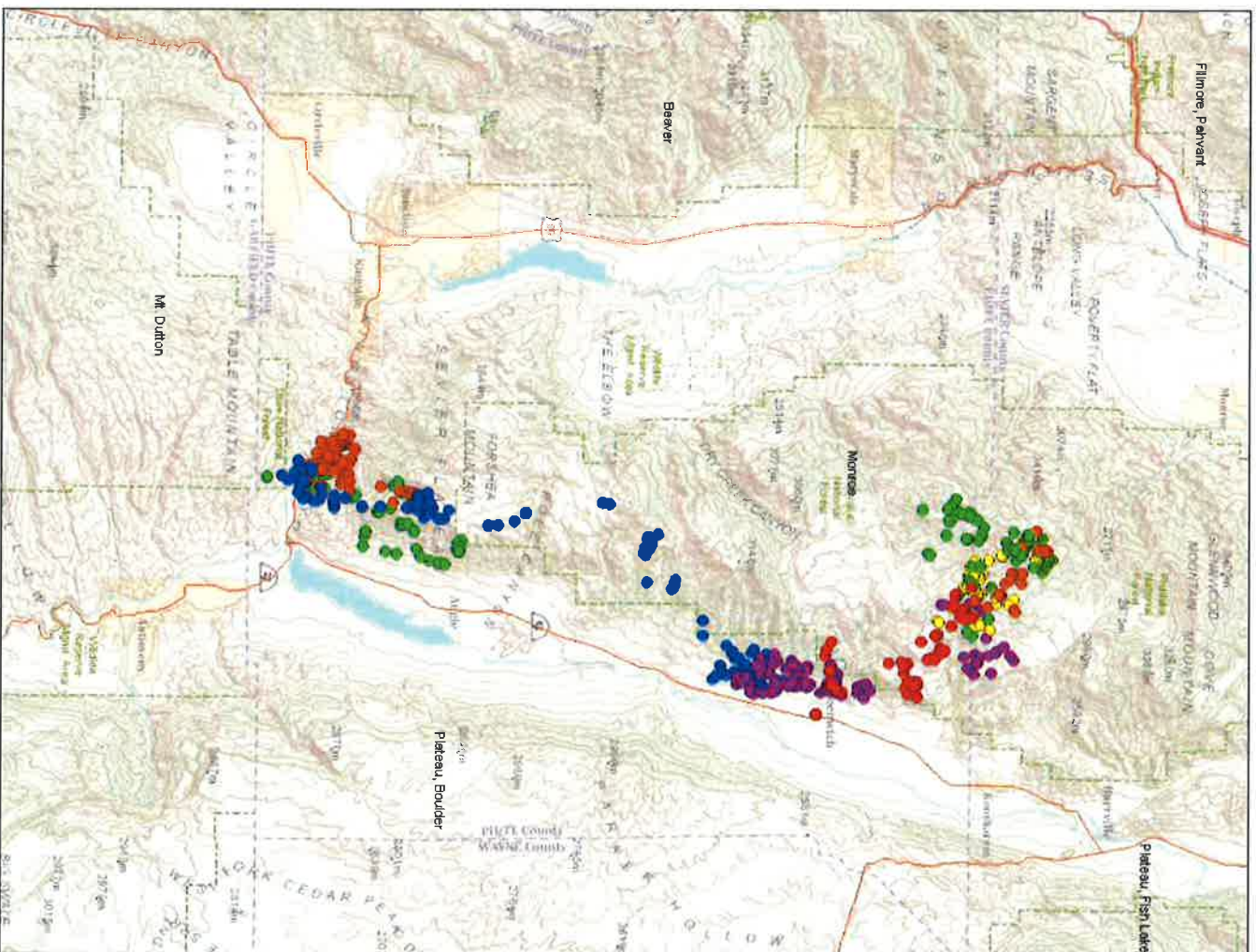
SEP 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



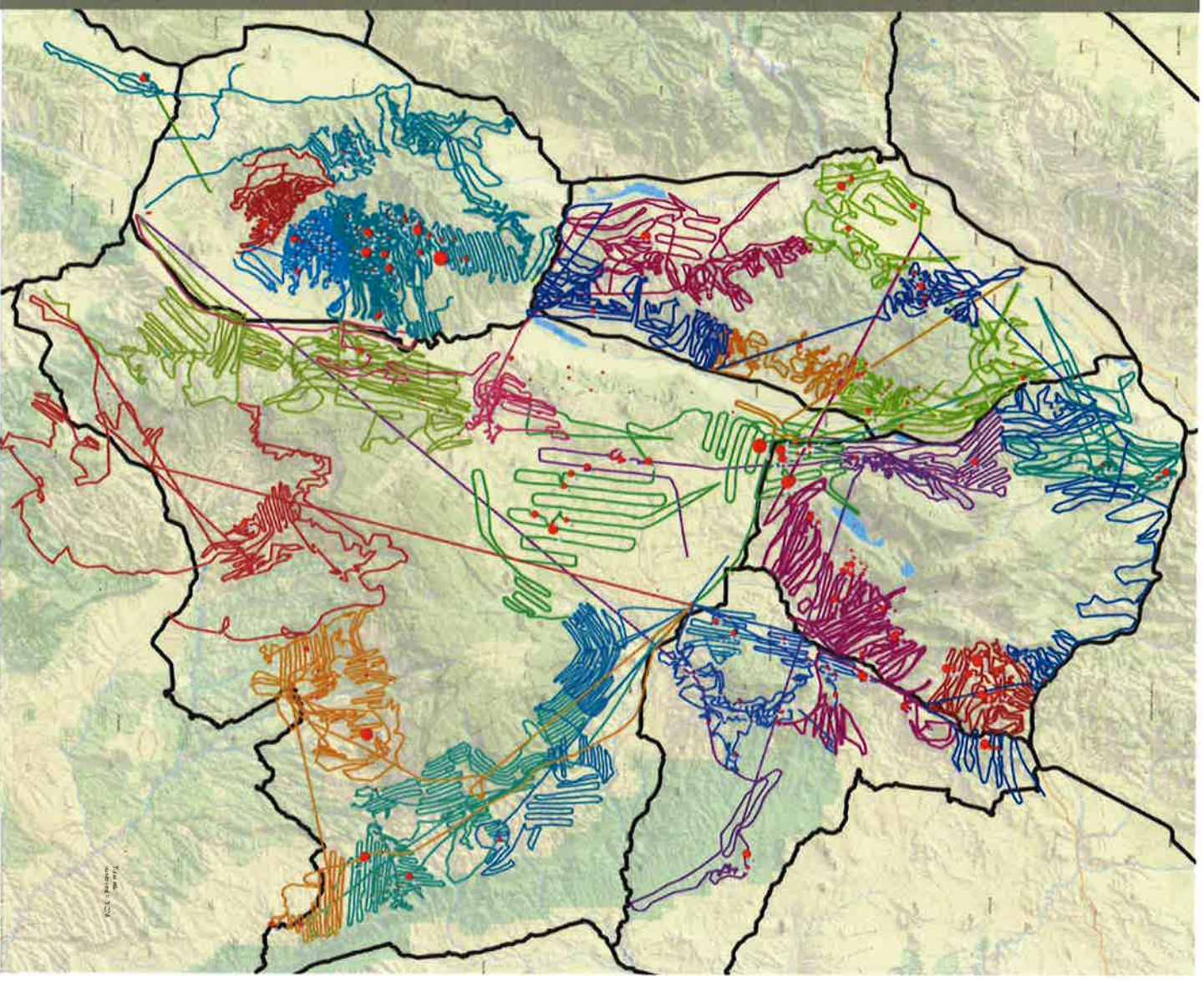
OCT 2011

- Mt Dutton cow
elk harvested
on Monroe



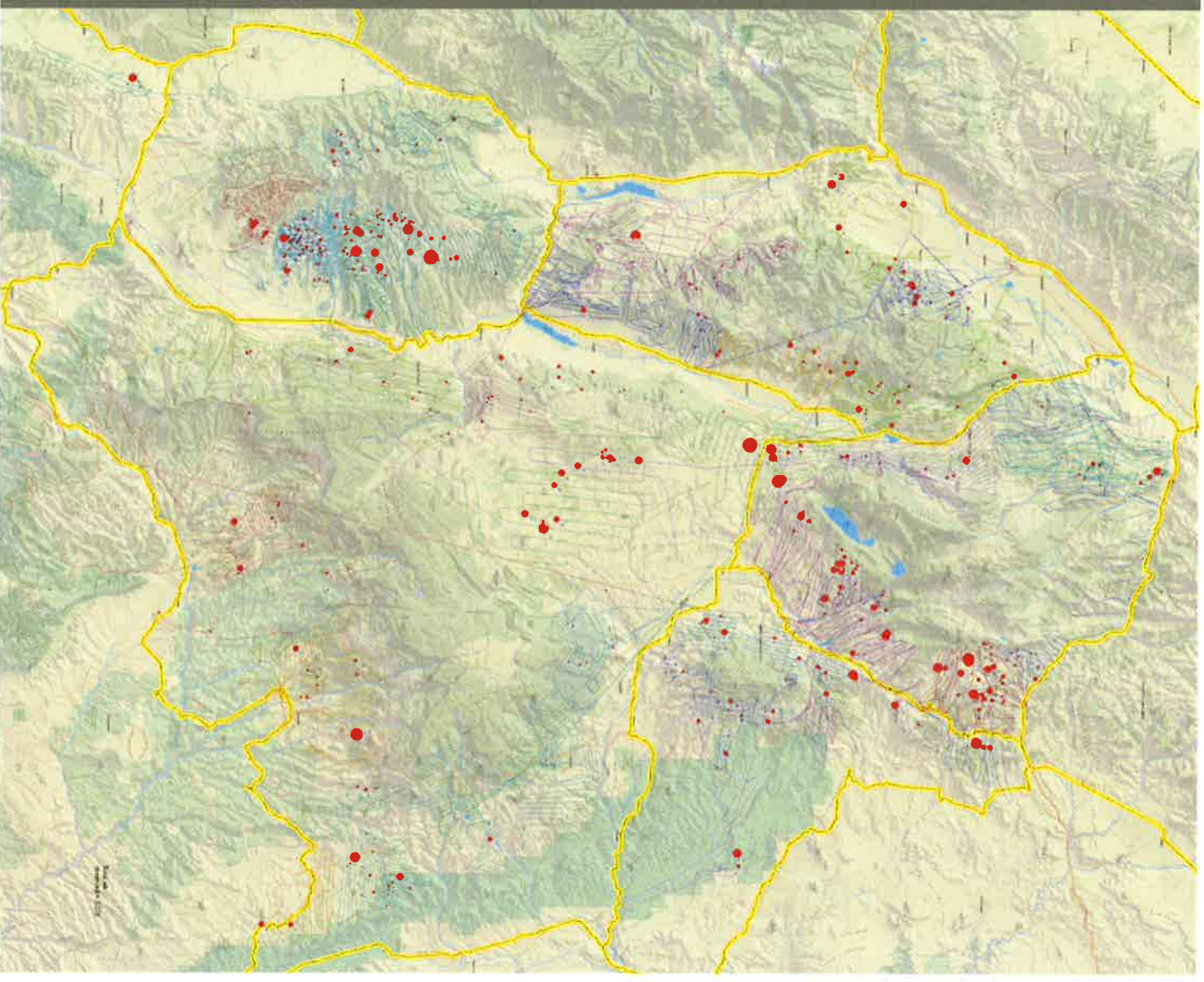
Southern Region Elk Census – Flight Paths

- Monroe #23
- Mt Dutton #24
- Plateau #25
 - Fishlake
 - Thousand Lakes
 - Boulder



Southern Region Elk Census – Elk Locations

- Monroe #23
- Mt Dutton #24
- Plateau #25
 - Fishlake
 - Thousand Lakes
 - Boulder



NORTHEASTERN RAC MEETING - MOTIONS PASSED
Vernal Northeastern Region Office
April 11, 2013

5. BUCKS, BULLS AND OIAL PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULE AMENDMENTS FOR 2013

MOTION to accept the Division's recommendations as presented.
4-4 split with one abstention.

Why opposed?

- I would accept it except for the numbers in the Book Cliffs because I feel we should make deeper cuts in the Book Cliffs cuts. 35% is better.
- I agree but 35% of tags wouldn't pass, so I suggest 25%.
- I understand cuts in the Book Cliffs but I don't want to cut another 75 tags.

RAC Chair voted "No" on the motion. The reason I voted "no" is because if DWR gets the word from the RAC that we're not satisfied with the numbers, maybe the split in the Book Cliffs unit will progress a little faster. The groups would like to see that split.
Motion Failed.

MOTION: to go with the Division's recommendation except 25% reduction in Book Cliff deer permits.
Passed 5-4

6. ANTLERLESS PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2013

MOTION: to accept as presented
Passed unanimously

7. ANTLERLESS CWMU PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2013

MOTION: to accept the plan as presented
Passed unanimously

8. R657-33 DEPREDATION RULE AMENDMENTS

MOTION: to accept as presented
Passed unanimously

NORTHEASTERN RAC MEETING SUMMARY
318 N Vernal Avenue, Vernal
April 11, 2013

RAC MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brandon McDonald, BLM
Bob Christensen, Forest Service
Floyd Briggs, RAC Chair
Boyde Blackwell, NER Regional Supervisor
Wayne McAllister, At Large
Rod Morrison, Sportsmen
Kirk Woodward, Sportsmen
Andrea Merrell, Non-Consumptive
Carrie Messerly, At Large
Mitch Hacking, Agriculture

UDWR PERSONNEL PRESENT:

Gayle Allred, NER Office Manager
Ron Stewart, NER Conservation Outreach
John Owen, NER Law Enforcement
Dax Mangus, NER Wildlife Manager
Derrick Ewell, NER Wildlife Biologist
Clint Sampson, NER Wildlife Biologist
Randall Thacker, NER Wildlife Biologist
Amy VandeVoort, NER Wildlife Biologist
Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator
Scott McFarlane, Pvt Lands/Public Wildlife

RAC MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Ron Winterton, Elected Official

WILDLIFE BOARD MEMB PRESENT

Del Brady

1. WELCOME, RAC INTRODUCTIONS AND RAC PROCEDURE - Floyd Briggs

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES - Floyd Briggs

MOTION by Bob Christensen to approve agenda and minutes
Second Carrie Messerly
Passed unanimously

3. WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING UPDATE - Floyd Briggs

Last meeting was in January. Everything approved

4. REGIONAL UPDATE - Boyde Blackwell

RAC Changes:

At our next RAC meeting we will be nominating a new chairman and vice-chair. We will have changes on the RAC at our next meeting as well. Floyd Briggs will be leaving as the agricultural representative and RAC Chair, and Bob Christensen will be leaving as the Forest Service representative. Our elected Official Ron Winterton has just become the chairman of the Duchesne County Commission now, so he will need to be replaced. Also, Brandon McDonald from BLM is going to be replaced.

REGIONAL UPDATE

Habitat:

- Several upland game projects have been finished, including planting trees and shrubs at Kevin Conway and Montez Creek WMA. This is intended to improve habitat for pheasants, quail and turkey.
- We have just begun construction on 12 guzzler aprons in the greater natural buttes area. There were eight tanks previously installed, with four additional tanks.
- We are currently reviewing wildlife impacts from transmission line projects going through the Uintah Basin.
- Work has started on Little Jim bull hog projects in the Book Cliffs, 700 acres have been worked on to improve habitat for deer, elk and bison.

Wildlife:

- We flew 2/3 of the region this year for counts.
- The bear denning is finished. We are down to two dens. They both had cubs. One den had a set of yearling cubs another one had a set of triplets.
- We are starting lek counts for sage grouse. Things are looking fairly good so far.
- We are starting an internal review of statewide plans for bighorn sheep and mountain goats. - Many of our wildlife biologists attended the State chapter of Wildlife Society meetings to get additional training.
- As of April 1st, 6,151 coyotes have been turned in for that program. They've paid \$307,000. NER turned in 330 coyotes of the 6000 coyotes.

Aquatics:

Went to professional meetings. Presented papers. Cool project at Pelican to remove carp. to try and build habitat for more game species. Removed approx. 352 carp ranging from 3 to 12 pounds, weighed out to roughly 2,400 pounds of carp so far.

Law Enforcement:

We had two conservations officers from this region who were honored by DWR because of outstanding efforts. Ben Wolford of Manila received the "Officer of the Year" award. Randy Scheetz of Vernal received the "Damn Good Job" award, which is the second highest division award.

T & E:

We've started T & E work, sampling at the Duchesne River, Red Creek, Strawberry, Lake Canyon, looking for flannel mouth suckers, blue head suckers and monitoring them to see how they're coming. We will be starting Monday, electro fishing on Green River below the dam and

5. BUCKS, BULLS AND OIAL PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULE AMENDMENTS FOR 2013 - Anis Aoude

General Season Buck harvest increased 34% last year.

We are recommending issuing 84,600 permits, instead of 86,500 permits for 2014, which is a 1900 permit decrease of 2.2%. We are recommending a decrease of permits in 11 units, no change for 14, and increased permits in 5. The South Slope/Vernal/Bonanza buck general season has a three-year buck to doe average of 12 in a 15-17 area, so we recommend going from 1800 to 1450 permits. For the Book Cliffs limited entry deer the post-season buck to doe ratio has gone from 38 in 2010, to 35 in 2011 to 30 in 2012 for an average of 34 bucks in a 25-35 area.

We recommend for spike elk permits to remain at 15,000 as long as hunt success rate is below 20%. In 2012, the success rate was 16%.

We recommend no change to the general any bull permit numbers

-14,300

-300 youth any bull

-Maintain 20 late youth any bull permits

We recommend increasing pronghorn permits from 665 to 853.

OIAL

Moose - reduce permits from 76 to 71

Bison - reduce permits from 120 to 104

Desert bighorn - reduce permits from 41 to 37

Rocky Mtn. Bighorn - increase permits from 34 - 40

Mountain Goat - reduce permits from 165 - 162

Questions from RAC:

Wayne McAllister: On the Plateau antelope, why did the figures jump up 100?

Anis Aoude: That unit is a very productive unit. Two years ago there was winter mortality and over reaction in the number of permits that were cut, but when they flew it this year it's back up.

Kirk Woodward: The Book Cliffs has me concerned. I really like this idea of separating the north and south into separate units. J.C. Brewer presented that months ago. I know that in the north end of the Book Cliffs the buck/doe ratio has been declining steadily. It's hard to try to fix

them both because they are harvested differently. I think the 15% drop is unit wide, but I'm still worried that the north end is going to suffer because the north is showing declines every year.

Bob Christensen: What's the difference between north and south buck/doe ratio?

Dax Mangus: On the north, 45 bucks per 100 does since 2008. On the south, they were consistently fairly high from mid 30-s to low 40s. Last year the north was 31.

Kirk Woodward: Unit wide it's 34.

Anis Aoude: it's 27 and 25's the objective, but I'll wait till the comment period.

Rod Morrison: What's the hunter satisfaction in the Book Cliffs?

Dax Mangus: Satisfaction has decreased a little bit over the last three to four years, and antler width. Four years ago the antler width averaged 23.5 this year averaged a 22.5 spread. But you also have to remember in 2007-8 on the north end the buck/doe ratio was above the 34% range. We raised permits the same year we had winter losses, bad timing.

Clint Sampson: Muzzleloader and Archery hunters are staying satisfied. Rifle hunters are seeing some dissatisfaction.

Rod Morrison: Hunters who have contacted me are dissatisfied with the quality of the deer.

Questions from Audience:

None

Comments from RAC:

Kirk Woodward: *First Comment:* To follow-up my question to add to Rod's comment. From the sportsmen I've heard that they're dissatisfied with both the quantity and quality of bucks. I've been out there twice looking for antlers, talking to others looking for antlers. There were at least 12 antler gatherers that were struggling to find a quantity of antlers out there and the quality is certainly down.

Second comment: If the buck/doe ratio is declining every year on the north side and we're able to deal with it at other units by cutting permits. The South Slope is managed at 15-17 and we're at 12 but we only cut back by 350 permits, which is 20%. We as a RAC need to make a recommendation for deeper cuts on those two units.

Brandon McDonald: The Daniel D. Gurr Foundation approached us with a Disabled Veterans letter. We met with Congressman John Mathis. A bill was in the file to be looked at. Since then,

DWR had a conversation with the Foundation in Salt Lake and persuaded them to drop the bill and in place, Camp Williams, Hill Air Force Base and others would give wounded warriors more tags and give one or two to the public. So the Foundation decided to go with it so wounded warriors got tags, and nothing was heard from again. Yesterday afternoon Mike Fowlks responded and stated that the commanders wanted to utilize the tags for their benefit and excluded wounded warriors. The Foundation is concerned DWR has dropped the ball. And now they don't have a bill in place. The DWR was supposed to have this presented in this RAC and it didn't even make it that far. Can DWR follow-up and see where this was left? They were just looking for a couple permits. The Foundation contacted me a day earlier and so I told them I'd bring it to the Wildlife Board, and the Wildlife Board said it would have to go through the Legislature.

Anis Aoude: I wasn't involved with this. I haven't heard what direction they're going since.

Brandon McDonald: The public view of DWR is not looking good in response to this.

Floyd Briggs: For tonight's meeting this is a non-agenda item. On the North Slope unit I don't think we're taking into account every year the bucks in the meadows and fields in the Manila area. Wyoming has had a three-point or better on their side on Henry's Fork. The biggest population of the antlerless deer are in the hay fields on the Utah side. If you would go from Sheep Creek south and do your buck/doe ratios instead of Sheep Creek north.

Another comment is, now that we've gone to the 30 units, instead of looking at a three-year average, look at one or two years because I think it's going to be interesting to see how these smaller units are going to help long-term.

Boyd Blackwell: I would like to take Brandon's request and visit with Robin Cahoon on it and the Director's office and make sure I get all of the particulars and bring it back to the RAC. Because it was an issue that was done in this region, I would like to follow-up so we know both sides and see what happened and where we're at.

Floyd Briggs: Do we need to amend a motion to include this?

Kirk Woodward: Can't we just make it separate?

Anis Aoude: If Boyd's committed to do it there won't need to be a motion.

Kirk Woodward: They spoke about Hill Field at the Wildlife Board meeting and if I remember, the Wildlife Board said it needed to go through the Legislature.

Boyde Blackwell: I will have something for the RAC at our next meeting. I know it went through as a Legislative action and then we were going to approach it from a different angle. But I want our RAC to know what happened and why.

Kirk Woodward: Can we take that back to the Gurr's?

Rod Morrison: On our limited entry elk hunts I still feel we've got too many hunts. We're taking too many bulls and we need to slow that down a little bit. I would like to see going to every other year on the Book Cliffs on the spike hunt so we're not taking too many bulls. The quality is dropping every year on our bulls across the state.

Comments from RAC:

Bob Christensen: I've always been one to follow the plan once it's been established. That's why last year we talked about reductions for deer permits and buck/doe ratios. I argued against cutting permits last year. Since 2010 I think there was a 50-deer cut and then kept that through last year and another 75 permits if we go off the Division's recommendation. That's 125 permits from the Book Cliffs since 2010. I understand the issue between the north and the south with buck/doe ratios. The 50 permit cut doesn't sound like we saw much of an effect in the buck/doe ratio. So do we cut permits a little more? I have a concern about cutting too far on one end and then next year wanting to bump them back up. Is there a committee?

Kirk Woodward: They're putting together a committee between the northeastern and southeastern region to look at this.

Anis Aoude: The reason we didn't do it this year was because by the November RAC we didn't have enough information and it requires a lot of interaction with landowners.

Floyd Briggs: I have a comment to the quality of elk. I feel that Utah's in the forefront of being the best elk hunting in the United States. When you give one place you have to take from another. If we're going to have a better opportunity for limited entry, I don't know about decreasing tags in general because I want to have the opportunity to hunt.

I think even our deer and elk, sportsmen will have to take it upon themselves to have higher standards.

Rod Morrison: I would like to say five or six years ago I would agree that we were the best state for elk but it's declining and we're taking too many bulls on limited entry. I think we need to leave the opportunity there for the general season.

Floyd Briggs: If we have the data to support it I don't know how we can change it.

Comments from Public:

Lee Tracy (United Wildlife Cooperative): We support the DWR's recommendations for the number of tags and hunts on the bucks/bulls proposal and we urge you to pass that. On a couple of notes regarding the quality of hunts, the United Wildlife Coop represents the average hunter, not the sportsmen. Someone took a survey of people who went out and were hunting sheds. I'm almost 72 and I've been hunting deer since I was 16. I have never been shed hunting so he would never have met me. The average hunter wants opportunity. They're not concerned about the size or quality of the deer, just the opportunity. Having said that, we do have limited entry hunts for those who want better quality. If we need to do something about those like increasing/decreasing tags, then we have that opportunity but for the general hunter, the survey shows that they just want to hunt. As far as the spike elk tags, I agree with that proposal that we need to reduce some of the spike elk hunters. During the archery hunt, we've got archery spike elk hunters out there with the limited entry hunters and they're scaring everything out. We need to reduce the tags or reduce the time they're out there.

Troy Justensen (Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife): It's been our experience that there's a declining quality in the Book Cliffs. We're excited about this committee to manage as two units to fix the plan. Possibly have management hunts.

-On Plateau Antelope, two to three years ago we had an emergency closure. We'd like to cut the buck tags. It is currently 269. We recommend 135. That was passed in the Southern RAC.

-We ask to support the Southeastern Region's recommendations on Central Manti on bull tags staying with last year's numbers.

-Regarding the late hunt on the Wasatch Unit, because those elk are so vulnerable, we recommend that they stay with the percentages that don't have late hunts or put too much pressure on elk hunt. Tag numbers are fine but allocations based on units that don't have late hunt.

Anis Aoude: In the statewide plan it states if there is no late hunt, 50 rifle, 30 archery, 20 muzzleloader. When we do have a late hunt we bump up the rifle to 65, 20 ml, 15 archery.

Floyd Briggs: What are we trying to accomplish on the late hunt?

Anis Aoude: To split out the rifle hunters and not have as many during the rut, and create more opportunity late. On Wasatch, Nebo, initially we didn't have many permits; now the early hunt is becoming crowded so we need to split it out.

Jesse McKee (Main Canyon Ranch on behalf of Burt DeLambert and Clay McKeachnie): They feel the quality of bucks in the Book Cliffs has declined dramatically. We have customers looking elsewhere to go hunting. You mentioned doing a split between the north and south and Clay would be in favor of that. Their main concern was the deer quality. It doesn't seem to be getting any better over the last years.

Kirk Woodward: How long has Burt lived there?

Jesse McKee: 30 years. They say decline is from over-hunting, Clay says the window is too big when they're fawning.

Kirk Woodward: We need to increase the buck population so you have more bucks breeding does a lot quicker.

Lee Tracy (United Wildlife Cooperative): I appreciate the motion made by the SFW. I was hoping they would be here. We don't always agree with UBA and SFW but we do now. The problem with the SER RAC last night was we have to change the elk management plan to accommodate that and they are reluctant to make that proposal. I don't know why we couldn't make this proposal as well.

Josh Horrocks (written comment): Members would like to see higher quality of buck deer in the Book Cliffs. Support tag cuts. We also have concerns about decreasing elk numbers on Diamond Mountain and cow tags.

Kirk Woodward: Josh runs the biggest hunting operation on Diamond Mountain and is concerned about declining elk. Landowners on Diamond and Josh are concerned that there is a decline of elk on Diamond Mountain.

Floyd Briggs: When we're talking quality and age of elk. How much of a bearing does an eight-year bull have?

Anis Aoude: That's why we didn't go with antler quality, because it varies so much. On good years, they grow good antlers, on bad years, they have bad antlers. If you manage for an older age class they'll be there and when the potential is there they'll grow big antlers.

Mitch Hacking: I haven't heard too much about the resources, winter, spring, fall feed. It's easy to say we want more elk on Diamond but have you got the resources in the fall with the drought? I represent agriculture and you're not going to have me say there's not enough elk on Diamond Mountain. I think they mainly want the higher quality. I know DWR's trying to get cattle into

Browns Park for deer. I don't hear enough about resources, I just hear opportunity. If opportunity's going to hurt the resource or the land, that's a big concern.

Kirk Woodward: With the age objective we're okay, but the feeling I understood from Josh's comment was they didn't think they had enough elk.

Mitch Hacking: We've had some pretty good drought on that mountain. The bigger animals may not be there, but there's not a shortage.

Kirk Woodward: What's the quality of feed?

Mitch Hacking: Right now, none. If we get some good spring storms, maybe more.

Floyd Briggs: All my life I've seen deer eating alfalfa, and I've been told that deer can't survive on alfalfa. Last fall I got an education. In the fields, I was dragging three to four fawns a day and there wasn't a reason. The alfalfa was good and Ben came and said they're not getting enough browse, but too much alfalfa.

***BETH MOTION to accept the Divisions recommendations as presented.
Second by Carrie Messerly.***

Favor: Andrea Merrell, Brandon McDonald, Beth Hamann, Carrie Mair

Opposed: Kirk Woodward, Rod Morrison, Wayne McAllister, Bob Christensen

Abstain: Mitch Hacking

Why opposed?

Kirk Woodward: I would accept it except for the numbers in the Book Cliffs because I feel we should make deeper cuts in the Book Cliffs cuts. 35% is better.

Rod Morrison: I agree but 35 wouldn't pass, so I suggest 25%.

Mitch Hacking: How much did the drought affect the Book Cliffs?

Jesse McKee: Pretty bad but the opinion given tonight comes from the last five years.

Wayne McAllister: I'm feeling the numbers are down, the resources are down, but we have the same number of tags and it concerns me.

Bob Christensen: I understand cuts in the Book Cliffs but it's another 75 tags.

Carrie Messerly: There's science behind what tags are cut and not cut. Let's let the plan go through without a knee jerk reaction.

Floyd Briggs: I'm going to vote "No" on the motion.

Motion Failed.

Bob Christensen: I've been a stickler for the plan and I thought that was too many permits proposed. I see a difference in the north and south but even on the south side it's within the buck/doe plan. I get concerned when we go too far and then have to bump back up.

Floyd Briggs: The reason I voted "no" is because if DWR gets the word from the RAC that we're not satisfied with the numbers, maybe the split in the unit will progress a little faster. The groups would like to see that split.

Call for another motion.

Rod Morrison: MOTION to go with the Division's recommendation except 25% reduction in Book Cliff deer permits and no late elk hunt on the Wasatch unit.

Anis Aoude: That's already been set in the November RAC. You could cut numbers only.

AMEND: as presented with 25% reduction in Book Cliffs deer

Kirk Woodward Second

Anis Aoude: Let's leave it as a percentage and we'll figure out the numbers later.

Favor: Andrea Merrell, Kirk Woodward, Rod Morrison, Wayne McAllister

Opposed: Brandon McDonald, Beth Hamann, Carrie Messerly, Bob Christensen

Abstain: Mitch Hacking

Tie.

Floyd Briggs: for

Motion passes 5-4.

6. ANTLERLESS PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR R2013 - Anis Aoude

Elk are about 9000 above objective.

Elk control permits in NERO:

(See Elk Control Permits slide)

Questions from RAC:

Kirk Woodward: Have we got numbers on the three units that aren't supposed to have any at all?

Anis Aoude: Henries 20, San Juan has quite a few, San Rafael 20-40

Wayne McAllister: Wildlife refuge had a wildlife refuge elk control hunt. What happened?

Dax Mangus: In the Ouray Valley area? We had a lot of hunts, proclamation hunts, landowner permits and vouchers. \$100,000 damage was done to corn. In February and early March, the Division did some removal and removed 23 elk. We're going to continue to address the local elk herd.

Boyde Blackwell: What happened to the elk the Division removed?

Dax Mangus: It was donated to locals who signed up with a list from the public.

Kirk Woodward: Is there progress in communicating with the Tribe in cooperative efforts for the elk herd?

Dax Mangus: The Tribe harvested 20 bulls this year, We've tried to coordinate with Karen and Roland, and that's one of many areas where we have elk moving back and forth. They're working with us. We'd like to see more cooperation and more effort.

Mitch Hacking: Fish and game officers came last fall and went through the corn and helped us get elk out of our corn and my hat's off to them. They're really trying to help the people in Ouray. They're doing one heck of a job. I saw some wet fellers there on a weekend.

Boyde Blackwell: I want to commend my folks for the effort they're putting in with the Tribe in trying to coordinate on different issues.

Questions from Public:

Mitch Hacking: On hunters and getting them there. Are people using the tags?

Anis Aoude: The tags always sell out. It's just success rates aren't always super high. People buy them but success rates vary quite a bit. State wide the success rate is 50%.

Floyd Briggs: Anis, on the North Slope Three Corners unit, how many landowner antlerless tags did you hand out there?

Amy VandeVoort: Last year 20 and they harvested three or four. It wasn't good.

Floyd Briggs: Were there not enough cows on their place or they couldn't get the hunters there?

Amy VandeVoort: A little bit of both.

Floyd Briggs: You dropped antlerless tags from 75 to 50. When you're that far below objective, why still have 40 antlerless tags on the Three Corners unit?

Amy VandeVoort: We're working with Wyoming and Colorado. We need to see some hunts. We've cut permits from 180 to 50. We're in maintenance mode to show the people that we're working with them.

Floyd Briggs: What was the success rate?

Amy VandeVoort: 18%

Comments from RACs:

Several years ago there were several elk on Three Corners and I was there last year with somebody who couldn't find a cow. I went with them on horseback and we could not find a cow elk. Did the elk move?

Amy VandeVoort: Colorado and Wyoming have different hunts than we do. We've put out radio collars this past winter to see which state they're moving between and where they're spending their time. There is a fairly big herd; they're in Colorado right now.

Comments from Public:

Lee Tracy: United Wildlife Coop would recommend that you pass the recommendations from the DWR. We support them in this.

Troy Justensen (Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife): Regarding the doe permits on Plateau. Several antelope units on West Desert are under-objective. We suggest transplants beyond shooting the antelope.

Floyd Briggs: Do you know Josh's concern on the cow tags?

Kirk Woodward: No. but I think he's worried about the numbers on Diamond Mountain.

Wayne McAllister: I'm curious on numbers. The elk move over a broad range. We have a lot of elk in the Book Cliffs, coming off the Tribe into Ouray Valley, North Slope going to the South Slope, or into Yellowstone. Their home range is huge. That's just common.

Kirk Woodward: That's why you're collaring them, right?

Amy VandeVoort: Right.

Floyd Briggs: Was the hunter success on the Three Corners unit good?

Amy VandeVoort: Yes. Satisfaction was good, age was good, just cows.

Floyd Briggs: What effect is that going to have on the herd if the cows are gone?

Amy: They're there.

Kirk Woodward: Do you have any idea what it costs to transplant a doe antelope, and will they survive?

Dax Mangus: A few years ago when we were transplanting antelope, we were asked that and we didn't have regional data. After that, we put ear tags in the antelope that we transplanted, and radio collars. It's not a huge sample size, but last week we saw antelope with red and pink ear tags that we transplanted. It looks like it's more fawn recruitment issues than adult survival issues. I think we have the habitat. I don't think we're just bringing them here to die. I think we could have good conditions for fawn survival.

Beth Hamann: Did they put guzzlers in?

Dax Mangus: We've repaired old guzzlers and are putting new guzzlers in. 12 in on the Book Cliffs area. We're working cooperatively with sportsmen and land management agencies. to make sure the habitat is there. Predator control efforts might help with fawn survival.

Kirk Woodward: Apparently we need to do a better job at getting coyotes in this region. 330 were taken here and 6000 in the state.

Anis Aoude: It costs about \$200 per antelope to transplant. They do survive well, but just because adults survive, doesn't mean they will do well. We haven't seen populations going through the roof because they're in arid areas. The Plateau does well because it's not in an arid area.

Antelope have a higher survival rate.

Comments from Public:

None

Beth Hamann: MOTION to accept as presented

Wayne McAllister second

Passed unanimously

Kirk Woodward: I would like to recommend we continue to look at transplanting antelope.

Anis Aoude: We have done it every year except the last two years. We will continue to look at it.

7. ANTLERLESS CWMU PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2013 - Scott McFarlane

Questions from RAC:

None

Questions from Public:

None

Comments from RAC:

Floyd Briggs: Why would the RAC or Wildlife Board want to change any of the numbers?

Scott McFarlane: Occasionally someone from the public will have a bad experience and say they didn't see any antlerless animals, or antlered animals. If there's enough evidence they can make a change. Usually it's done by the CWMU itself.

Comments from Public:

None

**MOTION by Beth Hamann to accept the plan as presented
Brandon McDonald second**

Passed unanimously

8. R657-33 DEPREDAATION RULE AMENDMENTS - Scot McFarlane

We want to put together a depredation plan to bring to the RACs. In the mean time to get us through this hunting season, the following is proposed:

Mitigation permit - issued to landowners for immediate family to mitigate for agricultural damage - for landowners' private property only - may include a buffer zone.

Mitigation permit voucher - given to landowners to mitigate for agricultural damage - may be redeemed for a permit - for landowners' private property only - no buffer zone included.

Recommended Change

The change would allow buffer zones for mitigation permit vouchers. In many cases a landowner wants permits to help damage on property but the animals will only come in at night, and they can't use the permit because they can't hunt at night. It gives a value to the permit for the landowner for reducing the damages and also vouchers can be sold by landowner for monetary gain.

Mitigation permits and mitigation permit vouchers for bucks and bulls

-the Division director may approve mitigation permits or mitigation permit vouchers issued for antlered animals.

Mitigation permit

-a mitigation permit may be issued to a landowner or lessee to take big game for personal use, provided the Division and the landowner or lessee's desire the animals to be permanently removed.

Mitigation permit voucher.

-May be issued to the landowner or lessee provided:

1. The Division determines that the big game animals in the geographic area significantly contribute to the wildlife management units.

2. The landowner or lessee agrees to perpetuate the animals on the land; and
3. The damage, or expected damage to the cultivated crop equals or exceeds the expected value of the mitigation permit voucher.

Recommended Change

Would add wording to include:

or

1. The big game damage occurs on the landowner or lessee's cleared and planted land
2. The Division and affected landowner desire the animals to be permanently removed and
3. The damage or expected damage equals or exceeds the expected value of the mitigation permit voucher on that private land within the WMU
4. May include a buffer zone.

Questions from RAC:

Carrie Messerly: Is there a limit on this buffer?

Scott McFarlane: Yes. The vouchers are to target animals. It will have to be a mutual agreement between the landowner and the Division to target the animal. It may be a 1/4 mile... This will have to go through a review with law enforcement, etc

Carrie Messerly: I foresee a problem with one landowner who gets four miles, and another landowner who gets two miles.

Scott McFarlane: Before it goes into place there will be a policies and procedures that goes with it.

Mitch Hacking: In some situations animals sit on a stream, or on BLM, and a guy somewhere else will have a problem. You can see where the animals are at. The Fish and Game are right there working with you. They know where these animals are during the day .

Carrie Messerly: I just think they need to be consistent. and not selling permits for the profit of landowners.

Scott McFarlane: This is to target offending animals. It can include public or private lands, but must need permission from other private landowners. We've never had any problems with using buffer zones.

Mitch Hacking: My experience is it's worked real good both ways. The Division goes out of their way to help landowners. When we have meetings on this, the sportsmen are invited. In our meeting on Ouray, the community is invited, including sportsmen.

Scott McFarlane: We don't want to limit it to only 1/4 mile buffer zone when it might take more than that but we want to do what the permits are meant for.

Mitch Hacking: I think a lot of people think the landowner gets a permit and he's taken care of. It doesn't always solve the problem if corn silage is gone, it's gone, you can't get more, but it helps for the damage done.

Floyd Briggs: Is the antlered part a change?

Scott McFarlane: Yes. The change is the landowner and the Division or lessee have to desire that the animal be permanently removed. They're a nuisance animal and we want them permanently removed. We don't want them to agree to perpetuate the animals when we want them permanently removed.

Dax Mangus: Some examples: On Beaver, limited entry elk, a landowner's having depredation problems and kills a bunch of bulls in his fields. If you could offer that landowner a mitigation voucher that he could sell to help compensate for the damages and not kill animals and leave them in his fields he would be willing to contribute. In Ouray, it's surrounded by general season and surrounded by agriculture. We don't want landowners to perpetuate animals in that area. We need to issue mitigation vouchers on a case-by-case basis.

Floyd Briggs: The permit goes to the landowners. The voucher can be sold. It is designed to be mitigation for damages. It gives us another tool to be able to deal with depredation damages.

Carrie Messerly: Is that information for how much they sell vouchers for have to be made public?

Scott McFarlane: No. We're looking at the estimated value of that. If the landowner can sell it for more or less, for anticipated damage to the crop.

Mitch Hacking: If landowners don't have these options, their final option is a 72-hour notice.

Carrie Messerly: I know what that's like. 92 deer shot and left in a field over a weekend, so I'm for mitigation.

Questions from Public:

None

Comments from Public:

Garrick Hall (Utah Farm Bureau): We are supportive of this. We have submitted letters to state our approval. We see these problems statewide and are looking for any help we can get.

Lee Tracy: We agree with the proposal from the DWR. We are interested in not only this as a part of working with the public but we have a Walk-In Access program that we would like to expand too. This gives ranchers and farmers the opportunity to get rid of animals on their land with some restrictions. Also, I need to thank you for your efforts. We really appreciate that, RAC members, along with the work that the Division does.

Comments from RAC:

**MOTION by Carrie Messerly to accept
Second by Andrea Merrell**

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm

Next meeting: May 9, 2013

**Southeast Region Advisory Council
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main
Green River, Utah
April 10, 2013**

Motion Summary

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

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

Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule, Amendments for 2013.

MOTION: To accept the Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule Amendments as presented, except that the number of mature bull permits on the Manti unit be left at 406.

Passed 7 to 1 with the opposing vote by Charlie Tracy

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2013

MOTION: To accept the Antlerless Addendum as presented

Passed unanimously

Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2013

MOTION: To accept Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2010 as presented

Passed unanimously

Depredation Rule Amendments

MOTION: To Depredation Rule Amendments as presented

Passed unanimously

Selection of a new chairman and vice chairman

MOTION: To choose Kevin Albrecht as the new RAC chairman

Passed unanimously

MOTION: To choose Todd Huntington as the new vice chairman

Passed unanimously

**Southeast Region Advisory Council
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main
Green River, Utah**

April 10, 2013 @ 6:30 p.m.

Members Present

Members Absent

**Kevin Albrecht, USFS
Seth Allred, At Large
Bill Bates, Regional Supervisor**

Sue Bellagamba, Environmental

Blair Eastman, Agriculture

Wayne Hoskisson, Environmental

**Jeff Horrocks, Elected Official
Todd Huntington, At Large
Derris Jones, Chairman**

Kenneth Maryboy, Navajo Rep.

Darrel Mecham, Sportsmen

**Christine Micoz, At Large
Travis Pehrson, Sportsmen**

**Pam Riddle, BLM
Charlie Tracy, Agriculture**

Others Present

Mike King

- 1) **Welcome, RAC introductions and RAC Procedure**
-Derris Jones, Chairman

Derris Jones- Ok, I would like to welcome everybody to RAC meeting tonight. If we could take our seats we'll get started.

Bill Bates-We are just barely going to have a quorum tonight.

Derris Jones - How many do we have?

Bill Bates- Six so far and seven with you and if Todd makes it that will give us eight, so that is enough.

Derris Jones - I would like to welcome everybody tonight. Looks like we will go ahead and get started and by the time we get to the action items maybe Todd will be here. We will just barely have a quorum tonight so we will need Todd to do any official business.

2) Approval of the Agenda and Minutes (Action)

-Derris Jones, Chairman

Derris Jones - I guess approval of agenda and minutes. I am sure everybody has had an opportunity to read through those and it was only like four months ago or something.

Bill Bates- It's been awhile.

Derris Jones - But if no one as a problem then I will entertain a motion.

VOTING

Motion was made by Kevin Albrecht to accept the agenda and minutes as written
Seconded by Seth Allred

Motion passed unanimously

3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update

-by Derris Jones, Bill Bates and Justin Shannon

Derris Jones – The next item is the wildlife board meeting update and that was back in January. That was how long it has been since we've had the opportunity. So it was like Christmas when we got together last. The director's report is going to be kind of out dated but I will run through it very quickly.

The brine shrimp population appeared like it was going to be very high and they were looking into possible season extensions to try and prevent a crash in the Brine Shrimp populations.

They did a deer translocation fifty one deer from the Pahvant to the holding area. It will be part of a three survival study. They put radio collars on all of those deer and try to determine whether it is a feasible method of reducing antlerless deer.

The legislative session was just beginning. There was a concern about the wasting wildlife amendment. The division supported this bill to allow fish that are caught to be killed. It is mandatory that you can't turn those species back in like burbot.

There was some people that didn't feel that they wanted to eat everything that they had to catch, so they've changed the wasting wildlife to allow fish that are not allowed to be released, you don't have to utilize those fish. You are welcome to utilize them but you won't be cited if you just take them and plant them in your garden.

Bill Bates- That would include things like carp, also we have a kill order on Northern Pike and small mouth bass in some waters, although anybody that would waste a smallmouth bass, I would have to question. Why would you do that.

Derris Jones - Cover the bills that have passed. I don't if this one passed or not, but there was a bill that a grandparent who draws a limited entry tag can give an immediate family member that is under 18? his tag. How old does that youth have to be?

Anis Aoude - It's under eighteen so up to the age of eighteen of when the hunt starts.

Bill Bates- And we really have come up with the rules yet but we are looking at maybe making that a shared permit instead of giving it to the person.

Anis Aoude- Yes. We have had one meeting since that legislation was passed. We are working through the particulars, I guess.

Derris Jones - So the older person and the youth would be hunting side by side and so either one could pull the trigger.

Anis Aoude - That is what we are looking at now because that does simplify a lot of things, because if you transfer it, then there is all kinds of complications, if they for some reason have to return the tag. Who gets the points back? So if it is shared then it is tied to that person that drew it initially.

Derris Jones - And that way the youth can maintain his bonus points?

Anis Aoude – Correct.

Anis Aoude - I guess we are still working through it but that is what it is looking like right now.

Derris Jones - Ok

Anis Aoude - It may still change.

Derris Jones -The announcement of the two new assistant directors was made at the board meeting. It was Mike Canning and Rory Reynolds. They are the two assistant directors. Mike Fowlkes is the deputy director and the new director is Greg Sheehan and that’s been announced for quite awhile.

The items that we last talked about at the last RAC meeting was the Falconry Guidebook and Rule. It passed the board as presented just as we recommended. The hunters with disabilities passed. We had an individual at our RAC meeting, Lloyd Nielsen that asked that the division looked at a companion hunter recommendation. He takes a lot of paraplegic and quadriplegic type people out and if an animal is wounded it comes to how do you get that guy in the wheel chair to follow that blood trail and get that animal finished off. The wildlife board gave it a lot of consideration and they actually put it on the action log for the division to look in to and report back to the board. And when it usually makes the action log it usually gets a good hearing and I wouldn’t be surprised if something has changed to accommodate that.

I think that the crossbows will be legal for carp this year. Is this correct?

Bill Bates- I think you are right.

Derris Jones -They also asked for the division to look at the crossbow to be legal for an “any legal weapon” hunt as well.

Anis Aoude - Yes and we will be discussing that at this coming board work session and we will make some recommendation and the recommendations won’t take place until the following hunting season. So it won’t be 2013 season but the 2014 season.

Derris Jones - Ok , thanks.

Derris Jones - And one organization came in and requested a season variance in the form of a date extension on the bighorn sheep conservation permits and evidently that is something that has always occurred on conservation bighorn sheep permits but it was overlooked so the board went ahead and approved that season extension date and so bighorn conservation permits are actually good from other than the statewide permits. They are good from the opening day through the end of the year December 31.

So they actually get a little bit longer on the tail end than the people that just draw the tags. And that’s pretty much all I have from the board.

Questions from the RAC

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

4) Regional Update -Bill Bates, Regional Supervisor

Bill Bates- Derris has covered a lot of things and it has been a long time since we have met and the changes that we have had in the division has been plentiful since last November when Jim Karpowits retired and I just wanted to add that I have been pleased and excited about some of the changes that we have been seeing. We have a director's office with Greg Sheehan, Mike Fowlkes and Mike Canning along with Rory Reynolds, who have been very responsive and quick to act on things and that's been very appreciated and we have done quite a bit with our stake holders since the transition and the one thing that we did that I don't know if we have on the program tonight is that we did meet with a group and discussed bighorn sheep issues and I will talk a little bit about that.

Bill Bates- First off, I would like to start off with our aquatic's section. I would just like to mention that Scofield is red hot with ice-fishing this year. Last year, if you recall, we had a state record tiger trout that was caught and that was about 16 lbs. as I recall, Brent? And this year that was beaten. We had one that was caught and it was 32" or just over 32" and weighed just over 18 lbs. and it has been just phenomenal, the change that has taken place up there. Some bad news to report is that we have Quagga mussels that have been documented at Lake Powell. We've found three different life stages. They have not been plentiful and they haven't found an active colony. But when you have all three life stages present we probably do have a breeding population. So Greg Sheehan issued a decontamination order so any boat that is used at Lake Powell will have to be decontaminated before it is put on any other water. We will have some administrative check points or check stations where we will be pulling boats over and checking to see if they have been cleaned and drained and they will have to be dried before they are able to launch on water. Any questions on that? Hopefully with increased vigilance, we can stop the expansion of mussels.

Bill Bates- Gill netting is planned for Joe's Valley and Huntington North and Scofield in May and as always we would like to invite all RAC members or members of the public to come out to that. That has been something that is really exciting to

go see. Last year when we gill netted at Joe's Valley we caught a couple of splake, one was 12 lbs. the other one was 11 lbs. We caught some tiger muskies. I think we caught over 20 tiger muskies and the average length was about 29-27 inches or in that range. We are hearing of people catching tiger muskies around 34-36" so we are getting to the point now that in just a few years people will starting to be able to keep, and also I would like to mention that on May 14th the aquatics section is going to have an open house at our office in Price. It will be at 6:30 pm and what we will discuss is upcoming potential changes to fishery management in the region in preparation for the RAC and Board meetings coming up this next year. Some of the things we are talking about would include Scofield. At Scofield we are just finding better growth in production on cutthroat trout and tiger trout than we are on rainbows, so want to see how the public feels which has always been a segment of the public that has been very vocal about maintaining a rainbow fishery there but the cutthroat and the tigers are just out performing the rainbow. So that is something that we wanted to get some public input there. And also we are talking about Electric Lake and introducing kokanee this fall. So we like to get some input on that as well. I don't how many of you like to fish for kokanee at the Gorge or at different places. They are a fun fish to go after, so those are the kinds of things or issues we are going to be looking at.

Brent has been very busy, well just not him, but he has involved almost everybody in the region and a very new wildlife recreation program that we are trying to roll out and Brent has grabbed that by both antlers and is going full bore on it. We appreciate that very much. We had our Gunnison Sage Grouse watch just a couple weekends ago and again this weekend and I think about 13 people went out and observed birds down there and we will have a greater sage grouse watch this Saturday isn't it? Up in the Emma Park area.

Brent, like I have said, has been really busy. He has had archery shoots down in Castle Dale at the recreation center. We have also had a couple of .22 shoots. Those have been free to the public. We have been trying to get interest in shooting sports with the youth and it has been very successful.

Bill Bates- The habitat section has been in the planning process. We have gone through the UPCD process, had projects approved, now Pam and Kevin are very involved in that and now we have got a list of our approved projects for this year. Right now, they are preparing on carrying out some of those projects including some planting at Gordon Creek and Huntington Game farm and Desert Lake. We have a prescribed burn that is planned up at Cold Springs on the WMA up there. In March they went down to Monticello in 30 mph winds and 4 degree temps. They went out and planted 5,000 sage brush seedlings on that new property that The Nature Conservancy just picked up.

Bill Bates- Law Enforcement has been very busy as always. They have had a couple of lion or cougar cases. We have had a very interesting one in Emery County and also another one in San Juan County. It has been interesting that Facebook has been one of our tools that we can use. We have even joined social media from a law enforcement perspective and our officers have been very good using information that they have found there. We have had poaching going on down on the Henry's again and also an elk that was poached down on the San Juan unit. Those are some

of the investigations that we are looking at. Shed horn hunters are starting to be out and about and we have had a couple of people that have been lost in other regions or people stuck in our region as well. It is keeping everybody busy. We have had some major personnel changes. You are probably aware that Carl Gramlich, our lieutenant retired in December, and he has been replaced by J. Shirley. J. was the sergeant in Monticello. We actually have had a fantastic applicant pool. We had eight people from within the division apply. Very qualified people and it was one of the best interview processes that I have ever been involved in and it was just exciting to see the talent in our law enforcement section and how well everybody did. We have also replaced J. In his sergeant position we have selected Ben Wolford from Manila. He has been very active as a trainer up there and involved with the sheriff's office. So Darrell, we would like to encourage you to work closely with Ben, but we don't encourage you to steal him from us. But Ben ought to be really good for you to work with down there. We will have a fallen officer's trail walk on April 20th that will be down in Moab.

Stacy Jones- It is an OHV trail ride not a trail walk.

Bill Bates- Ok, sorry your right. But Devin you will be on that as well. Is that right? And so we will be participating that. Also that same weekend we have what we call the Youth Hunter Education Challenge which is going to be held up at the North Springs gun range in or near Price, just south of Price. Brent do you want to tell us a little about that?

Brent Stettler- we have a hundred kids participating and these are exceptional kids from around the state, who have shown a lot of or are very good shooters. So we are going to have a number of event s that these hundred kids will participate in, including shot guns, rifle shooting, muzzle loader shooting, and archery. They are going to have a safety trail where they will practice going over a fences, and in and out boats, cars, trucks. We are also going to have a wildlife identification trail. We are going to have a written exam as well as a banquet. We have a lot of volunteers helping so we expect into be a real fun event.

Bill Bates- And I would encourage any of you that are interested in serving as a volunteer to get with Brent. This would be a really exhilarating experience to be able to work with the youth and be able to give back to them.

Bill Bates- Moving on to the Wildlife Section which has been very busy. In February they did a bighorn Sheep transplant at the Big Bend Area where they have trapped sixteen bighorn sheep as I recall and moved those down to the John's Canyon area in San Juan County area. We were concerned that these bighorns moved across the river from the Arches National Park side and they had the potential to move up into the Castle Valley area and come in contact with domestic sheep up there. So we were concerned so we have moved those down to supplement a growing population down in John's Canyon. We have also collared more does as part of the ongoing survival study. And I don't know how many if you have questions we can talk about the specifics. Right now the sage grouse counts and spring deer classifications are

just starting. We will also be holding our spring range rides in May I would guess, isn't that right Justin?

Justin Shannon- Yes

Bill Bates- but we would really encourage all of you to come out with us at least for one day. You know the real purpose of these range rides is to take you out there or anybody from the public and actually talk on the ground about issues concerning the deer and elk management and that is a great opportunity to kick dirt around and talk about the nitty gritty of things. Derris had already mentioned the deer transplant on the Pahvant range and we also have got a project up on the Monroe Mountain where we are looking at if or trying to evaluate the effects of the cougar. I'm sorry I meant the coyote program and to just quickly mention so far we have had people bring in just over 6,000 coyotes statewide. We are hoping to get 10,000 so it has been fairly effective. So any ways, is there any questions?

Questions from the RAC

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

Justin Shannon—There will be an open house in Moab on April 30 from 6-8 p.m. at the Grand Center in Moab to collect public input about using the LaSal Mountains as a potential release site for Rocky Mountain goats. All RAC members are invited.
Bill Bates- It will be interesting. We have a lot of people in support of it but we have had some people that are questioning or are a little worried about the goats following them around. So, if there no questions?

Derris Jones - Bill when we get into the Bucks and bulls stuff I think the doe survival stuff might be interesting if that is not part of the presentation could we maybe get 5 minutes worth of how things went this year compared to last year. Last year we had great survival and this year I understand that it might be a little different.

Anis Aoude - We are talking statewide survival stuff?

Derris Jones - Yes

Anis Aoude -We do our survival study from December to December. So what we have is basically last year's survival rates. It's not looking so bad for this year but we really haven't looked at the latest overwinter survival yet for this coming year. It doesn't look like it's that much different than last year. Adult survival is fairly high and in most units fawn survival is high as well so. Unfortunately we won't know

annual survival until we get to next December from this one but last year's was really good. It was a really high adult and fawn survival.

Derris Jones - And it was 80's and 90's?

Anis Aoude - As far as survival?

Derris Jones - Yes

Anis Aoude-So adult survival is usually right around 85 and that is kind of where it ended up being and then fawn survival is usually around 65 and it was around 66 or so statewide. It varies greatly from one unit to the next and I don't have those numbers with me right now. I can dig them out if you would like.

Justin Shannon-I have local stuff

Derris Jones- Yes, why don't you give us local stuff, Justin.

Justin Shannon - Anis is right for 2012. So four months removed from last year but the Manti adult survival rates were .8 which was low but the three year average on that has been .86, and then for the San Juan we also saw a dip. Adult survival was .75 but then again the three year average on that has been .86 as well. So we have had when you compare to the state we are right at the adult survival. Then for fawns we actually have higher survival rates last year. Manti we were 56% survival and the three year average is 50% and the San Juan was 83% survival for fawns which is exceptional and our three year average is 71%.

Derris Jones- Thanks, Justin. Ok I guess we are ready to move into the meat of the agenda

Derris Jones—Derris provided ground rules to audience about the procedure followed by the RAC for audience participation.

5) Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Rec. and Rule Amendments for 2013 (Action)
-Anis Aoude, Wildlife Program Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Todd Huntington- The Manti three year averages were 6.2 and we are recommending a 33 permit increase? The La Sal's was 6.4 and we are recommending no increase? Just curious why the difference there?

Justin Shannon - I looked at that too, Todd. The reason is on the La Sal's two years ago our average age was 6.7 and this year it dropped to 6.0 and so even though our three year average is 6.3, that is a drastic drop in one year for average age so we want to let it play out a bit and see what happens. And as far as the Manti goes, it's the parameters that are 5.5 to 6 and last year it was 6.1 and this year we bumped it up to 6.2 so we have to make recommendations in the direction of the parameters of the plan. So that is the justification.

Todd Huntington - On the management buck tags? On the Henry's we are going from 30-40. The buck to doe ratio went from 61-52. That's a pretty good drop in one year. And then the Paunsagunt we went from 50-22. That is a pretty good decrease so I am curious why the big decrease there?

Anis Aoude - So basically what we have said is not really in the plan but the parameters that we have set is there will be a base number of permits and on the Paunsagunt. It is 30 so the 22 plus the land owners association plus the CMWU permits will add up to 30 and that's why we went down to that so we will stay at that 30 and see how and if it maintains that 47 or between 40 and 50. And on the Henry's

you know the trend even though it dropped in one year, we are still pretty well above our buck to doe ratio, and we believe it will just go back up if we don't issue 40 permits. Production has been pretty good the last few years on that unit.

Darrel Mecham- I have one question about the Book Cliffs and the buffalo. Are you keeping track of your herd that's in Thompson Canyon every winter? The trend on it? Because there is more in there every year. I mean they were down the canyon this year. Most of the winter.

Brad Crompton- There is a few radio collars on some of those. They have tracked them that way. I wasn't aware that there was as many this year as there was two years ago.

Darrel Mecham- There was more this year in the canyon. People were seeing them along with a group of bulls as far down as the Indian writings this year.

Brad Crompton - Yes there was that group, But several years ago there was 150 down there so there was quite a bit less than that this year.

Darrel Mecham- Well maybe up by the canyon they were up by the old coal mine. I don't know if your trending that in there or not.

Brad Crompton - Yes we are keeping an eye on them. Luckily each year about this time they go up and each year they come down for the winter and they haven't got into too much trouble yet.

So we are hoping it stays that way.

Derris Jones - How far off are we from looking at hunt on The Book Cliffs? Looking at a bison hunt on the Book Cliffs?

Anis Aoude - Well obviously we already have that one on the North. I think they will recommend a hunt for the 2014 season on the rest of the Book Cliffs. At least that is the way it is looking right now.

Bill Bates- Any idea on numbers of the population?

Anis Aoude - Number of total permits?

Bill Bates- No number of bison.

Anis Aoude -It is a tough one. But we have probably got about 200-250 animals right now.

Anis Aoude - Not including the Bison that are on the tribe.

Blair Eastman - Why was there a reduction in the overall bison tags on the Henry Mountains and I ask that question because it seems like we visit this all the time and there is always more complaints that there is too many bison, then the opposite.

Justin Shannon - There is a reduction. But we did go from a 120 to 102 I think public permits were 96. Is that what the sheet says?

Blair Eastman - There is two different stories here. One of them said that we went from 120 to 104 and the other said that we went from 116 to 98.

Justin Shannon - Ok

Blair Eastman - Depending on where you read the information, there is two different versions.

Justin Shannon -And it does get tough because a guy can draw a permit and turn it in at the last minute. So last year we issued 120 permits to the public and I think of those 116 actually ended up hunting.

Anis Aoude - The discrepancy that you are seeing is the four conservation permits. They don't go into the drawing, so we don't put them in the packets, so we are not confused. So those are the permits going into the draw.

Blair Eastman - Ok. But we still have a decrease in the bison tags. And I have been here for 4-5 years now. And it looks like the bison are going to be a continued battle.
Justin Shannon - Bison are a tough one. Generally we do our counts or our surveys and things like this before the RAC process. But bison and mountain goats are unique because we survey those in the summer and so you actually verify your model after your recommendations have already gone through the RAC and Board process and last year when we took our flight we had great sightability on our bison. In fact we saw every collared animal that we had. And that is exceptional and if we are over, then I would like to know that we are over. We had an emergency board meeting last year to double the number of permits. And so based on the best information that we have, we are at that objective right now. And in fact if you look at it we only need something like 76 permits to get to 325. But we are actually throwing another 28 permits at that population this year. Part of that has to do with drought. Part of it is to make sure that we're under objective and that is the goal of the division is to be at or below objective. You can't round them up every year and see, but we make these models and we verify it with the flight and Blair we do the best that we can.

Blair Eastman - I know, but based on your model you had greatest sightability last year, and based on the model, you don't think that you should leave the tags where they are?

Justin Shannon - No

Blair Eastman - You don't think that next year we are going to have two or three landowners in here or permittees that are going to be pissed off?

Justin Shannon - You will have that potential. But at some point you have the management objective at 325 animals and we have got to manage to that. And there is years that we are over that. This year when the hunt is all said and done I hope to be at about 305-307 bison, if we have the harvest success rates that we want.

Blair Eastman - I don't know I could be off on this a little bit but my gut feeling tells me that we reduce these tags and bison are hot in the Henry Mountains and we all know that. So we knock off 16 tags and next year we will be 50 bison over-objective. And that tends to happen with these bison, especially on the Henry Mountains.

Justin Shannon - And Blair you're right. I mean it's not by intention at all. I mean you have to look at it from our perspective.

Blair Eastman - No. I am looking at it from your perspective. I really am. But what I am saying is we do visit this bison thing regularly in this RAC meeting and it's always the Henry Mountain bison and that's always because we are over objective. So we move some bison out, we have a good hunt year. My question to both of you is a good decision to reduce the tag numbers based on to where we have been with this in the past.

Justin Shannon - And my answer would be yes.

Blair Eastman - So now you have answered my question. So I am going to trust you on that.

Justin Shannon - And Blair please recognize if we survey it this summer and we're over, it's not the division's intention to be over so we would call for more permits to be at or below objective.

Blair Eastman - And I believe that we would respect that.

Justin Shannon - Given the situation on the Henry Mountains, we're reducing permits, extremely liberal on the amount of permits given out this year. Really on a

normal year we could come in here with 75-80 permits and say this will get us to 325 but we are trying to get to 305 this year. We are really trying to be aggressive.

Blair Eastman - We have traditionally always been over objective and there has been a couple of changes. Is it a wise decision to cut those tags back?

Justin Shannon - My answer would be yes. I think we are in a good spot.

Bill Bates- The sightability study that will be going on will give us a chance to tweak that model and we are learning. But I think we will get it.

Blair Eastman - Now don't get me wrong. But the reason I am picking on this a little bit is because I believe that we have meetings, special meetings for bison and every time that bison are brought up we are over the objective.

Bill Bates- We haven't come in here and said that we are way over.

Blair Eastman - No, or we come in here and say man we are like 200 head under and we have got to decrease that... (laughing) we have never heard that.

Justin Shannon - Blair, just to make one last point. I agree with you. I mean we don't want to be over and based on some preliminary findings from that study we have done some things to tweak our model. We have done some of that stuff. We are getting better.

Derris Jones - Justin did you meet with the Henry Mountains livestock folks with this recommendation?

Justin Shannon - Yes, we did we meet with the Henry Mountain Bison committee and it was well received.

Derris Jones - They are in agreement with the model and the recommendation for this year?

Justin Shannon - We broke down the entire recommendation and let them know where we are at and where we intend on being this next year and the number of permits that we would like to get there and we went through harvest success and everything. We spend a good chunk of our time with them every spring prior to this meeting going over these numbers and it went ok.

Bill Bates- I would like to add that there is one thing that is lost in this discussion right here is to meet the model we probably would have recommended only about 75 -80 permits. But due to the impacts of drought, especially on the south end, we increased that up to the 104 -102 or whatever it is intentionally to reduce the population below the objective.

Anis Aoude - The folks from the committee was at the meeting last night and I think only the sportsman's rep. is here tonight and they support the recommendations.

Blair Eastman - Great. So my next question in this is that we see that there is Henry Mountain and Book Cliff bison. What about Horse Bench bison, Sam's Wash bison, and Rock Creek bison? My question on that is, where those bison are because they are hunt able bison now. They are being managed that way. Where do they fit into this equation?

Brad Crompton- Well as far as the Henry Mountain bison, absolutely not. Book cliff bison I am assuming you're asking? The way that we have to treat that is that there is not a management plan for the Nine Mile unit. Hence the population objective is zero. So what we will do is what we have done in the past and use that Book Cliffs hunter pool and call a depredation hunt if the bison show up on the Nine Mile side.

Blair Eastman - I can't remember what we called that, Brad? But it seems like when that was agreed upon, that was going to some kind of emergency hunt or whatever it was. Is that going to continue to in place?

Brad Crompton- Yes, we had a four year plan? Or something like that. We will have to renew it. But that will continue.

Blair Eastman - So just that I am clear. That anybody that doesn't kill a bison on this would be able to.. no?

Brad Crompton- Typically what we will do is call alternates that didn't draw a tag to give them an opportunity to hunt here. That is what we have done in the past. We could explore that avenue as well but that is a late hunt. Late January hunt on the Book Cliffs.

Blair Eastman - So when would the bison on the west side of the river be hunt able?

Brad Crompton- We have that flexibility from August first to January 31st so .

Blair Eastman -But we can't start until August?

Brad Crompton- Yes, by state law

Blair Eastman - I am not picking on you guys. Bison is a pretty hot topic though. And we do have a lot of them.

Blair Eastman- I guess the question is, should we have a bison management plan for Nine Mile unit ?

Bill Bates - Derris? Could you weigh in on this because you had a definite opinion on this a couple of years ago?

Charlie Tracy- Is that right?

Derris Jones - I had an opinion? (Laughing) My opinion changes a lot. Remind me what my opinion was?

Blair Eastman - I would just like you to make a comment on this ok. And I need to make a comment on this right now just while it is fresh on my mind. I do believe at this point in time if we continue to see as many bison as what we are seeing on the west side of the river we need to start looking at a way to manage those bison.

Because we don't have it right now and I appreciate that August – January hunt. But the problem with those bison is that they are super mobile over a zillion acres and we can't kill them and we have tried hard to kill them. We have tried really hard as landowner's and private landowners to accommodate those public hunters, taking them in there and trying to help them . And yet we can't get these bison killed and I think that we need to look at some kind of permanent plan to do that.

Charlie Tracy- Are they not supposed to be on the west side of the river?

Blair Eastman - Correct. They are not.

Bill Bates- And I should mention that what happened this year. Brad, tell us what you did down on the Green River.

Brad Crompton- We encouraged some bison to swim the river. We had very large group or an isolated group of bison on the Range Creek portion of the Nine-Mile unit. Large groups have crossed on the Anthro. And they have done similar things. But this year down in Desolation Canyon we had a group of over a hundred bison that were fairly close to the river so we took a little bit of time and had them go back home. And I had a flight a couple of weeks later and they hadn't come back. So it did work.

Blair Eastman - The Indians should be appreciating us for that too.

Bill Bates-They actually sent us a letter, thanking us for bringing bison back.

Anis Aoude - I would encourage both regions the Northeast and the Southeast to get together to come up with some ideas. Because this sounds like a problem that may not go away

Bill Bates- It might be advantageous to have some permits or some people who are actually out scouting and we could have a long season from Aug. 1st –

Anis Aoude - Unfortunately we can't deal with a fixed hunt because it is not a management unit for bison so we have to deal with it with the Nuisance Rule right now and then however else in the future.

Blair Eastman - Brad and Justin have been doing the best that they could. I think it is just going to get away from us.

Darrel Mecham- I think you are going to have to address Thompson sooner or later too. Bob Holloway bought that property in there and he comes to our office about the buffalo walking through his fences and I said to call you guys. And we have had a lot of people that have encountered them up all of the forks of Thompson everywhere so they are utilizing it more every year. So I think you're going to run into landowner issues down there and I don't know if you have that in your future plans or not. But it's coming quick.

Derris Jones - Does the Book Cliffs management plan recognize bison on the south side of the Book cliffs?

Derris Jones - It is a zero objective on the south side as well?

Bill Bates- Well I think that would be from the desert floor. Isn't that right?

Brad Crompton – Well, the intent of it was to keep the bison north of the divide. The writing on it is the entire Book Cliffs Unit; In fact I think it says the Greater Book Cliffs area. So it is the whole unit boundary. With that said you know we would have to address it, or if it becomes a depredation issue or on private lands we will have to address that. But the intent was to keep the bison north of the divide.

Derris Jones - Any other bison or any other big game questions?

Kevin Albrecht- I have a question for Anis. You mention that there is a trigger on the spike elk that the harvest was below 20% so there was no increase. The question that I have is the trigger that if the harvest is at a below 20% for any period of time is there or does it trigger a reduction in permits?

Anis Aoude -If it goes above 20% we would reduce permits. So if harvest success goes above 20%, we would reduce permits. Does that make sense? So we are harvesting too many spikes. We would be reducing permits but as long as we are harvesting up to 20% we feel that's not too many spikes being taken out the population.

Blair Eastman - So that's 20% of the total tags that are issued?

Anis Aoude - 20% success. Yes, so long as it stays below 20%, we maintain 15,000. If it goes above 20 we would reduce permits.

Kevin Albrecht- And then that limit increases to 17?

Anis Aoude – No, we hit the limit at 15,000. It has been that for a couple of years now. We slowly went up to it and now we have been there for a couple of years now.

Derris Jones - Any other questions?

Blair Eastman - One more. This is kind of a general question. How is it that you determine what constitutes a limited entry unit.? And I am talking specifically for elk. For bull elk.

Anis Aoude - So these were set through the statewide plan and both the limited entry units and the objectives on those units were set through the statewide plans that came through this RAC.

Blair Eastman - That part I understand.

Anis Aoude - The committee sat down and said these will be the limited entry units.

Blair Eastman - So it was just an arbitrary decision based on some committee of chosen people.

Anis Aoude - We try to have them be mostly public lands. The units that are mostly private lands end up being an any bull or are usually an any bull unit, so that's kind of a loose way of figuring out which ones end up in one. A similar one that has gone from limited entry to any bull was the Fillmore Oak Creek south. That was limited entry up till last year. But because of private land issues we decided to move it to an any bull unit.

Blair Eastman - Ok (laughing) I think we better just ignore this question now.

Bill Bates- You're probably talking about Range Creek.

Blair Eastman - Well this is what confuses me about it. I go through these numbers and you know that these areas are arbitrary areas. They may and may not have a good elk population. Some of them do and some of them don't. Age objectives run anywhere from 4 ½ years to almost 8 years. Most of them are actually running a little bit high on their age objective from what I can see. And I am glancing at it again. I studied it better earlier and some of these have good opportunity for the general public and some of them don't. And so what I am trying to figure out is why is that we put certain units in limited entry and not others. Are we trying to build that? Look if you wanted to provide really great opportunity to the general public for elk hunting, let's open the Manti to general elk.

Anis Aoude - It actually is general elk for spike. So do we have two categories of general season? We offer more general season spike than we do any bull permits

Blair Eastman - Right I understand that. What I am trying to in my head to determine is how do you determine it? Because these areas that are limited entry and it might work this way and I am going to study this and try and to figure it out. As far as the deer go and the antelope, we have relatively low populations and I think it needs to be a limited entry and not a general season. You know deer I think we can protect them more by having a limited entry areas. On these elk is there some specific plan or some specific reason that we identify certain areas as limited entry vs. general season?

Bill Bates- Anis, if you don't mind I might be able to throw some light on that. You know as a division our mission is to serve the state as a guardian and trustee of wildlife for the citizens of the State of Utah. And yes we could manage elk a multitude of different ways but what we have heard from the public over several decades, you know maybe 25-30 years, is that the combination of spike elk/ limited entry is what the public wants and that is what our role is--to find out what the public wants and these different age objectives have become or evolved from public input when people say they want a combination of opportunity or a chance to have a quality bull or quality experience somewhere, and that is why the elk plan ended up in this multitude of variations. I mean on the San Juan we could also manage that or the LaSals for any of the age objectives. But I guess what our role is, is to find out what the public wants and to do it.

Anis Aoude - And the general criteria we use is public land or mostly public land. No unit is going to be exactly all public. But if it is public land or non wilderness then we can manage it for limited entry and spike. Because usually that provides the opportunity. So the only time that we manage for any bull is to limit harvest of any bull because you can over harvest if you just open it up. And we limit that by having those on units that primarily on private lands or have lots of wilderness which

limits harvest that way so that is the criteria that we've used for what goes into limited entry vs. what goes into any bull.

Derris Jones - Any other questions? If not we will open it up to the public.

Emphasize questions and then when the questions are done then we will get to comments. Come up to the Microphone and state your name please?

Questions from the Public

Randy Quayle of the Utah Bowmen's Association—I hope I didn't miss something. I don't think that I did but are there still recommendations open for late season limited entry elk hunts in Utah coming up? I haven't heard it mentioned

Anis Aoude - Actually those season dates were set in November. So they are already set, so now all that we are doing is setting permits to those seasons.

Randy Quayle – Ok, thank you.

Derris Jones - Any other questions from the audience? Ok, again if we have comments I appreciate your filling out a yellow card

Comments from the Public

Randy Quayle of the Utah Bowmen's Association

(The statement read by Randy Quayle from the Utah Bowmen's Association will be available upon request by Brent Stettler.)

Derris Jones –Randy, I have quick question for you. Was there a formula you used to plug in to what the division's recommendations were? Or did you guys just sit down as a group and go through each unit?

Randy Quayle - I think Brent Louder, the Vice President of the UBA, got these or this information from the DWR.

Derris Jones - But for the UBA changes, was it a set percent that you went on and you just...?

Randy Quayle - We went by figuring out from the last year: 50% rifle hunter tags, 30% archery and 20% muzzleloader tags. We went back to that. The new proposal for this year on the late season would take tags from both the archery and the muzzleloader and add to the rifle hunters. So they would be taking tags from the archery and muzzleloader to give them for the late hunt.

Derris Jones - So you just went on last year's formula. Anis, what did the division do or how did they switch that formula around?

Anis Aoude - So the way that the statewide plan reads is if a unit has a late hunt we have a certain split and if it does not have a late hunt we have a certain split. So if it does not have a late hunt the split would be 50% rifle, 30% archery, 20 % muzzleloader. If it does have a late hunt which is meant to basically deal with opportunities, so if it does have a late hunt in most cases, and I agree with these guys in this case, that it probably isn't true that the late hunt usually has a lower success rate. So we put more into the rifle. So 65% go into rifle, 25% archery, and 15% are muzzleloader when you do have a late hunt. So that's where our split comes from. It is just based on our statewide plan and how it lays out the program. So basically what you guys are suggesting is leave the old split even though we have early and late hunts. And their rational is because the late hunt has a high success rate.

Derris Jones - And in your experience, is it normal for the late hunt to be a higher percent success?

Anis Aoude -It's not normal but the Wasatch in specific did have a high success. We only had it for two years and there were very few permits. But it did have a high success rate. I am not sure if that is how it would play out now where we have more permits. So it's kind of hard. It's not comparing the same things. So it could have a high success rate on that late hunt, but then we may not. I just don't know.

Derris Jones - But the division recommendation is based on a formula that is in the elk management plan?

Anis Aoude - Correct.

Derris Jones - Ok, thank you.

Kevin Albrecht- Anis, my question is wasn't that harvest high for a couple of years and as those elk kind of got used to that pressure that harvest number decreased?

Anis Aoude - On some units that was the case, so yes. On the Wasatch we didn't go that far, we had two years then we shut it down. And the reason is we didn't have a ton of permits back then. But now we are getting to the level that where we have got so many permits on that unit it makes sense to split into an early and a late. And that is the reason we did it.

Blair Eastman - I think I have got an easy question this time, believe it or not.

Usually it just seems to me and this is why I am asking the question that most archery tags are not used up. Seems like there is always extra archery tags.

Anis Aoude - Not for limited entry.

Blair Eastman - Not for limited entry, then ok. So then on the general season elk and deer hunts there is typically extra tags?

Anis Aoude - Actually on general season elk there is unlimited tags.

Blair Eastman - Awe, ok so we can have as many tags as we want.

Anis Aoude - Yes, we usually sell between 10,000 and 11,000.

Blair Eastman- How about on the deer hunts?

Anis Aoude - On deer, we often have leftovers on four units.

Blair Eastman - Thanks.

Derris Jones - Ok, next we will have Lee Tracy.

Lee Tracy of the United Wildlife Cooperative— We appreciate the RAC and all of the work that you guys go through. I know it's tough trying to make some of these decisions when you get so many opinions and stuff. We appreciate that. The United Wildlife Cooperative supports the division's recommendations on the hunt numbers. And we also support the Utah Bowmen's Association on their proposal that you just heard. Thank You.

Derris Jones - Thank you, Lee.

Jeff Hunt- I would like to recommend that the Nine-Mile area be turned into a four point or better only area. If not the whole area, maybe just the management unit area up there on Cold Springs. Thank you.

Derris Jones - Thanks Jeff.

Troy Justensen of SFW—Just note that on the Henry Mountain grazers. We are a part of that association and they did back recommendations of the 104 bison permits on that, so the grazers are the ones that you talked about and being upset about it, did support those permit numbers. Dealing with your bison up the river for the last two years, we were actively involved with the tribe and their sheep hunting. In flying that country, we counted almost 20 bison and about 1200 head of wild horses. I really believe that's your problem. And the bison coming across the river. As those bison continue to move across . And as those bison continue to move into

that country, they are going to by natural migration. They have stiff competition with those wild horses. And those bison have just got smarter and crossed the river. So I think it's going to be an ongoing problem until something is done with those wild horses. And we are starting to see that all over the State of Utah. But just some interest there. Dealing with the permit numbers, we appreciate what the division has done. Relating to the pronghorn as many of you that are familiar with the plateau, a couple of years ago it was shut down on an emergency closure due to a bad winter kill and due to over harvest. This year there is a dramatic spike in permits. The permits have gone through the roof. We would just like to recommend that we came to a consensus that at the Southern RAC last night to lower the permit numbers from the division recommendation at 269 to 135.

Bill Bates- What unit was this?

Jeff Hunt—The Plateau antelope. Last year there was 96 total buck permits. This year they are recommending 269. We would just like to just move a little bit slow into this to make sure we are headed in the right direction. And so the RAC voted to approve 135 buck permits as a recommendation of the southern RAC. As far as the SFW recommendation on the Manti, I know we are still a little a bit off objective at the age class of 6.2. But we would like to recommend that we keep the bull permit numbers the same as what we had last year. I believe it was 406 or whatever is right there. Other than that we support the division's recommendations on the limited entry and once-in a lifetime permits and the rest of the general season and elk permits. Thank you.

Derris Jones – Ok, that's all of the cards that I have. If anybody else has comments we will go ahead and get a card filled out and we will give one last opportunity. Ok, at this point then we will close the public discussion and go to the RAC to decide what they are going to do.

RAC Discussion

Derris Jones - We had the UBA recommendation for sticking with the single formula where there is a late season bull season or not. We had a recommendation for four point or better on the Nine-mile Range creek. Reducing Plateau antelope buck permits from 269 to 135 and keeping the Manti permits at the same level as last year. Did I miss? The United Wildlife Cooperative supported UBA recommendations. That's where we are sitting.

Kevin Albrecht - I have a comment. Anis alluded to it a little bit, but on some of these units the number of elk permits increase on these limited entry units. The number of permits on this early season units can be a lot of pressure and I think the division's proposal to add some late hunts on those units are a good idea. I believe where it's been done in the past, it may take a couple of years for those elk to get accustomed to those late hunts. But I think it has happened and I am supportive of the division's proposal on what they have gone with.

Todd Huntington - I would like to thank the division that that's what we wanted to see when we went to the 30 units—that individual units can be adjusted. That is fantastic work I think. That's exactly what I believe we wanted to see there. So, kudos for that. Um, I would agree with the Manti bull, leaving those at 406. I don't want to increase that and have that get too low. I also get a little nervous about the Henry's tags going up both management and limited entry, I don't want to see that special spot of the world or corner of the world get over hunted and lastly I think

the reason on a couple of the units from the Bowmen's Association is we are actually over the age objective and we actually need to increase the harvest so if their logic holds and the success rates are higher, that actually helps us out.

Derris Jones – Ok. SFW just handed me a note that they support UBA's proposal as well so that the RAC knows that SFW does support that, which is fairly monumental that those three organizations all like the same thing.

Todd Huntington - I almost found myself agreeing with the UBA's so that is fairly monumental too. I thought that they have done some or that I understand what they're trying to do there. I don't know (laughing)

Derris Jones - I also agree and my only concern about that is that maybe the place to change that would be when the elk plan management is opened up and that formula is addressed at that time instead of deviating from a plan that was approved.

Charlie Tracy- Or what they are suggesting would mean that we would deviate from the plan completely? Or?

Derris Jones – Well, what I understand is that the formula that they want to use is the same formula that would be used on a unit that does not have a late season bull hunt on it. The formula that the division used is the formula that's used whenever there is a late season bull hunt on it. So there are actually two formulas one for a late season bull hunt and one for a unit without a late season bull hunt. And UBA has just requested to use the one formula.

Pam Riddle- Well, isn't part of the question if you have a late season you have low harvest during that late season? And it seems to be that they feel there's a high harvest for the late season, so don't we want to wait and see if that changes over time? To figure out what percentage we want to go with? Or which is more appropriate?

Anis Aoude - Yes. so typically the late season has lower rate of success. On those units the two years we had that hunt they were similar or higher than your early hunt. Again there were a few permits so we don't know what it's going to play out this time. Because when you have more hunters, success rates usually go down. So it's a tough one. I can't say or I can't predict where it's going to go if we have it. But that's kind of what is in our statewide plan and we would like to stick with it and see where it plays out. Either way we're not going to over harvest because were over objective. We'll harvest the number of permits that we have out there and that will get us to objective if we do.

Derris Jones - How far are we in to the current elk management plan?

Anis Aoude - It's two years into it

Derris Jones - Two years into a five year plan? This will be the second hunting season or the third?

Anis Aoude - This will be the third hunting season.

Derris Jones - Is there any questions on any of these issues? Anyone want to try for a motion? Take a bite at a time?

Kevin Albrecht - I was going to say how are we going to break that out?

Derris Jones - One great big bite? Or how do you want to do it?

Kevin Albrecht - I have a question for Justin. If we go with the recommendation to stay at the 406 what is your feeling on how that would or how that number would get to objective?

Justin Shannon - It probably won't. We will probably stay above. In fact this is a slight increase. You know we could have been more aggressive with it and said the three year average is to between 5 1/2 to 6 . We could be really aggressive with it. But we made a recommendation that took us in the direction of getting to the 5 1/2 to 6 year old side boards of the plan. And by increasing 33 permits where are talking about maybe killing 25-26 more total bulls. It is a slight increase but we are slightly over. And so we just feel that it is very appropriate recommendation.

Derris Jones - Let's make simple short ones. Let's start with UBA's. Can I get a motion for how to handle the UBA's request to not take bow hunter opportunities a way from units that have late season bull hunts?

Derris Jones - Ok, then anybody want to handle the four points or better on the Nine-Mile Range creek?

Blair Eastman -I have a comment on that. And Jeff we had talked about that once before. And Anis, I think you had addressed the four point or better like a year ago maybe two years ago. But maybe can you talk about that again for us?

Anis Aoude – Sure, you bet. Actually I address this issue almost on a weekly basis with hunters from all over the state. Basically on its face a four point or better seems like the way to go, but what it ends up doing and we have research that shows that we have tried it back in the 80's on several units. What it ends up doing is putting undue hunting pressure on the older age class animals. And really all it does is delay harvest of the yearlings from usually being harvested as yearlings to two year-olds. So it really doesn't improve the buck to doe ratio a whole lot. And it ends up harvesting, if you don't reduce the number of hunters, it ends up harvesting disproportionately older age classes. This is the opposite of what you want to do in a population. So logically it's not a sound way to manage. Even though on its face value it would seem like that is the way to go. Because you're allowing them to grow up. But you're not actually letting them grow up your actually harvesting them at a little bit higher rate. Because you're concentrating pressure on it.

Anis Aoude - Brad knows that area more than I do specifically so maybe I'll have him address the specifics.

Blair Eastman - One other comment on that and if I am wrong, correct me here. But it seems like when we were having this conversation before, if we went to a four point or better, we forgot about our three point bucks. We allowed them to grow and mature and then we get a bunch of three point bucks that are breeding the does rather than mature bucks.

Anis Aoude - There is always that as well. So you are putting that undue pressure on the bucks that you want to keep in the population instead of the bucks that you want to remove.

Blair Eastman - Does that make sense Jeff? Because I am with you.

Jeff Hunt -My concern is I think they do their survey and they consider the Preston-Nutter area, the Roan Cliffs area and all of the private property areas at a 22:100 ratio. And if you can go up there and go into a management unit area and they are killing almost all the bucks there, there are a few big bucks coming out of the management area, but it's not like it used to be. Dry canyon, I know of a few bucks that were killed in Dry canyon last year.

Blair Eastman - I am there with you all 100% Jeff. If we could figure out a way to manage those bucks in that wildlife management area somehow in that unit. And maybe Brad has got some ideas. I just remember this conversation before on the

four points or better and it didn't seem like the way to go. And I hope you understand that.

Jeff Hunt- You know you go towards Pappas on the public land over towards Pappus and you might see maybe one or two deer the whole hunt season long. And you know it don't get that much pressure up there because there is no deer up there anymore.

Blair Eastman - Right. But we do or it does seem like there is a lot of pressure in that whole wildlife management unit right there as well as the Pappas Ridge and the Dry Canyon stuff. It just is an open unit and it does get hammered.

Jeff Hunt- It does and it kills all of the small bucks out of there. They are shooting all of the bucks that are right off of the road because nobody wants to walk in there to hunt the big bucks. You can go in there and hunt all day long and the only people that you're going to see are the people that you're in there with. I just thought that maybe they could do something to maybe get the deer herd back on the public land up there.

Brad Crompton- Just to address your question, on all units you try to get a spread of where you classify the deer. On the Nine-Mile unit most of the deer inhabit private land. We do collect data on private land which does skew that ratio up a little bit. But with that said, where deer winter and where they come from you really don't know in all of the cases. We try to get the buck to doe ratios both on public lands outside of Price as well as Cold Springs and on the Nutter Ranch as well. So it's a mix of public and private lands. And it is just the nature of a unit of where probably 80-90% of it is huntable. You know the October deer habitat is on private land that the few public lands will get hunted really hard. You know that is just the nature of things. I don't know how to quite avoid that. It's up to you guys.

Brad Crompton- the way it stands right now, we manage our deer herds on a little bit bigger scale. Where the mode for fixing that is cutting or adding permits or cutting season lengths or something like that on the whole Nine-Mile unit. And how it stands right now, we are meeting and exceeding our buck to doe ratios. And I realize that on public land that's probably not completely the case. But is difficult to carve out little mini units or things like that. Or restricting access somehow. On a unit that already has very restricted access I would hesitate doing that.

Todd Huntington - I think that to have the Bowmen's Association or the Wildlife Cooperative, and SFW agree on a proposal right? That's what's giving me heartburn here. However, it's in the middle of the plan and I want to stick to the plans. That being said I am going to drop my Henry's buck thing because that's not in the plan. That's a change in plan. We have got to stick to the plan. So I would move to accept the proposals as presented except for the bulls on the Manti to leave at 406. Because I believe we are coming in for a nice soft landing there, where we will be right at the objective, which is 6.0. I don't think we are that far above. That's my motion.

VOTING

Motion was made by Todd Huntington to accept the Bucks and Bulls and OIAL proposals as presented, except that the number of mature bull permits on the Central Mountains-Manti Unit be 406.

Seconded by Jeff Horrocks

Motion passed 7 to 1 with an opposing vote cast by Charlie Tracy

Blair Eastman - Can I make a comment real quick. Now this is just a comment. I think and maybe Brad you can work with us on this just a little bit. But I think to help Jeff and his group and I know there is a bunch of hunters that are hunting Cold Springs and that area, the wildlife management area or unit there, that are really concerned about the deer herd on the public lands. And on the private lands, we do have a better opportunity and better bucks there. I think that is a given. But I do think that with the division maybe with Brad and Justin that we ought to sit down with a couple of guys that hunt up there and look at what we can do to help those bucks grow just a little bit bigger. Because we are just hunting the heck out of them. And I don't think that is asking too much.

Kevin Albrecht – Jeff, we appreciate those comments and I don't think those fell on deaf ears here at the meeting. But the last couple of years that has been a big topic and Anis and the division has done very well in educating the RAC on what the antler restriction does and especially what it does to fawn recruitment. And so not that I don't think there isn't answers for maybe something that can be done up in that unit, but with the divisions help, I think maybe that antler point restrictions may not be the answer. But there is probably answers out there.

Derris Jones - Is that ok with the division?

Bill Bates- Yes, I think absolutely. That will be Justin's responsibility. I am just passing the buck right now.

Derris Jones - Ok. Let's move on to the antlerless permit recommendations for 2013.

**6) Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2013
-Anis Aoude-Wildlife Program Manager**

Questions from the RAC

Derris Jones - Questions from the RAC?

Todd Huntington - What type of success do we have on antlerless elk hunts?

Anis Aoude - You know they vary quite a bit but overall if you lump them all together your about 50% they go from about 40-60.

Todd Huntington - Really? Ok so on the Manti?

Anis Aoude - Because there is different seasonal hunts they vary quite a bit.

Justin Shannon- Anis said it pretty good. It is 50% exactly.

Anis Aoude - Throughout the state the average ends up being pretty close.

Todd Huntington - Last year on the Manti we really jumped those cow tags up from 860 to 2,075. Did all of those sell last year or do we know?

Anis Aoude - Oh yeah, we almost crashed the system.

Bill Bates- We ended up issuing extra. We had a late season depredation hunt. What did we have about 30 permits? Close to 50 permits.

Derris Jones - Any other questions from the RAC?

Kevin Albrecht - You can yell at me if you want, but this is a compliment. Anis' shoulders are going to get sore tonight with all of the kudos, about the way that they recommended to break up the Fish Lake or Boulder units. I have said for years after growing up hunting those units and then moving here and seeing how the

southeast region manages such a large unit with the Manti and how they break those units up and how smoothly hunting that many elk goes. I have said that would work very well over there and I would like to give the division kudos for doing that, because I think that they will find that works very smoothly.

Anis Aoude - I will pass that along to the southern region.

Todd Huntington - Hey what does a cow tag cost?

Anis Aoude - They are \$50.00 I think.

Bill Bates- \$50.00

Todd Huntington - If you're a meat hunter that is probably the one hunt that actually does pay to buy a tag and get meat in the freezer.

Bill Bates- It is cheaper than buying beef after my experience last year.

Derris Jones- Just remember the success is only about 50% so you have to buy two tags. (Laughing)

Anis Aoude - You can buy two cow tags.

Derris Jones -Any other questions? Ok we will open it up to public. And please keep it to questions from the audience.

Questions from the Public

Derris Jones - No questions from the audience then.

I have one card for antlerless, anyone else have a comment for antlerless?

Comments from the Public

Randy Quayle of the Utah Bowmen's Association— We agree with the DWR's recommendations for the antlerless hunts.

Derris Jones - Thank you.

Troy Justensen of SFW— We would like the RAC to at least ponder or think about the recommendation for 500 doe tags on the Plateau for antelope. We support the division on that. But we proposed last night that 250 of those tags to removed. We look at transplanting 250 of those does. We have some units out in the southwest desert and other places that are below objective and rather than just kill those pronghorns, we would like to see them transplanted if possible. Then we would support the division's recommendations otherwise on the antlerless in this region. Thank you.

Derris Jones – Thanks, Troy. Was there any or did the division respond to the transplant request or is that an option?

Anis Aoude - It certainly is an option. We actually recommended these permits hoping to do a transplant on top of them. So again it is an option and it's not one that we have in place currently but we guess we would still recommend the same number of permits even if we did transplant.

Derris Jones - Ok. Thanks Anis. Are there any other comments from the public?

Lee Tracy of the United Wildlife Cooperative—We support the DWR's recommendations on the antlerless hunts. I know that the Parowan Front hunt is quite a controversy. We had quite a discussion about it last night in the southern RAC. And we appreciate all of the work the DWR goes through to plan these things. We recommend that you pass these recommendations.

Derris Jones - Thanks Lee. I apologize. Did I miss anybody else?

Derris Jones - Ok we will close up to public comment and open it up to RAC for discussion. And then a motion.

RAC Discussion

Kevin Albrecht - I would just like to mention that on the Central Mountain-Manti on the antlerless that at a brief glance, it does look like a lot of antlerless elk. But I would just like to mention the division has worked very closely with the Forest Service and on those units we had a very large fire on the Manti last year. And we have a lot of effects from that fire. A lot of landowner's and livestock permittees that we have been working with that will be impacted, especially with drought and fire, they won't be going with full permit numbers. So we have worked very closely with the division on those recommendations for the antlerless and support them in those recommendations.

Bill Bates- Thanks Kevin. And Jeff, I just hope that you could carry that message back to Emery County that we have tried to accommodate the needs there and also we are working with the CRP Program right now to let some of the grazers in some of those burn areas to graze on our wildlife management area there in Gordon Creek. So we are trying to help out there.

Derris Jones - Does anybody want to take a stab at a motion?

Charlie Tracy- Motion to accept the division's recommendations as presented.

Kevin Albrecht - One comment to that. Or do we have to see if there is a second?

Bill Bates- Second first

Pam Riddle- I second that

Derris Jones - seconded by Pam . Now discussion.

Kevin Albrecht - The only discussion that I have is that there was a recommendation on there for moving antelope. Do we want to entertain that at all?

Derris Jones - That's on the Parker Mountain.

Charlie Tracy- If I understood the response on that from the division was that was already in consideration. Even though that number of tags were being offered for harvest. And I would definitely support that if they want. If the division wants to go ahead and do that.

Anis Aoude - So the only difference would be they would harvest the 500 and the proposal is to take 250 of those and transplant them instead of harvesting them.

Derris Jones - The division was planning on transplant. They didn't specify how many but to do a transplant in addition to the 500 or so. But the division feels like you need more than 500 decreased.

Anis Aoude - We feel like we need more. But we are not sure if we are going to do a transplant this year to kind of see what the harvest success looks like before we move forward. So we weren't planning on doing a transplant this year.

Charlie Tracy- So the recommendation that you want is to just kill the 500 and then see how it goes from there.

Anis Aoude – Right.

Derris Jones - Now this is 500 over what was last year?

Anis Aoude - No, total is 500

Pam Riddle- Do you foresee all permits being sold? And what would the success rate be?

Anis Aoude - All permits will sell. And the success rates on those pronghorn are a little higher. They are usually in the 80%. They are just an open country animal so hunters can get a lot of cracks at them.

Derris Jones - Ok, so we have a motion and a second. And a discussion. And I assume since Charlie didn't respond, Charlie isn't ready to amend his motion. Let's vote on the motion then and see if it passes.

VOTING

Motion was made by Charlie Tracy to accept the Antlerless permit recommendations as presented.

Seconded by Pam Riddle

Motion passed unanimously

7) Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2012 -Scott McFarland, Wildlife Program Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Derris Jones - Any questions from the RAC?

Blair Eastman - I have a question. At Desert Land and Livestock, why were they asking for that change in the numbers of their tags? Why were they doing that?

Scott McFarland - We had a change in personnel at the Desert Land and Livestock ranch on the desert CWMU. We have a new biologist. We also had a change with the district biologist up there. And I think it was just a lack of communication with the division and the CWMU when the recommendation was made. The new people were just a little bit worried that they were over harvesting. When the region sat down with the CWMU operators, after the fact, after the split recommendation was requested, they went over the total objective of the unit. The unit is over objective. And basically that CWMU has about half of the elk population and so they needed to make up the difference to bring that elk population down. Or even to just keep it. So they decided that it wouldn't be a good idea to reduce permit numbers on that CWMU.

Blair Eastman - So the new biologist at the Desert, this was his recommendation?

Scott McFarland - Pardon Me?

Blair Eastman - Desert's new biologist. This was his recommendation? Or this is what he wanted to do?

Scott McFarland - He wanted to reduce originally, or reduce the permits by 80 total elk permits. It was resolved and they decided to stay with the 260 total permits and not reduce them by 80.

Blair Eastman - So it was just the matter of new management at this point then?

Scott McFarland - yes that is correct.

Blair Eastman - Thanks

Derris Jones - Any other Questions from the RAC?

Derris Jones - Any questions from the audience?

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

Kevin Albrecht - I make the motion that we accept the division proposal as presented.

VOTING

Motion was made by Kevin Albrecht to accept the Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations as presented.

Seconded by Jeff Horrocks

Motion passed unanimously

8) Depredation Rule Amendments R657-33

-Scott McFarland, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Derris Jones - Any Questions from the RAC?

Charlie Tracy- How do you determine a buffer zone? Is that just case by case?

Scott McFarland - It has to be case by case. Because what the mitigation permit voucher is designed to do is to for mitigating damages and another things it is designed for targeting the offending animals. So it would have to be in agreement for the landowner and the division representative that is dealing with the damage with the landowner what an appropriate buffer zone would be. It might be a ¼ of a mile or it might be a 1 mile or might be 200 yards. But it goes beyond the private property. But it is designed to target the animals that are doing the damage, so if we issued it for the entire unit that would be for example that would be counter-productive because we wouldn't be targeting the animals that are doing the damage.

Bill Bates- So it's not against buffer zone so it would primarily be focused on public land or adjoining landowners that can agree?

Scott McFarland - Right. It would have to be if there were public lands involved, they would be a distance from the landowners land. If it's private land it could include other people's property that is joining him that may be experiencing the same damage too.

Charlie Tracy- Mainly elk damage or deer?

Scott McFarland -It would mainly target elk damage. But it could be used for deer also in some circumstances.

Kevin Albrecht - It doesn't happen a lot but here in this RAC, we have had some landowners that have come in that haven't always been in agreement with the depredation on their land that the division sees. And I just wonder where this permit can be a voucher that can be sold, if that will open a can of worms to where the division doesn't agree with the amount of damage, but because there is dollar signs, if that will cause any problems?

Scott McFarland - Are you talking about antlerless or both?

Kevin Albrecht - Antlered

Scott McFarland - With this is going to come a policy designed to target specific situations. For example, if we have a population of elk for example that are a

nuisance, which means that they have moved out designated areas where we want them in to an area to where we don't want them, and we determine that we have a zero tolerance for these elk; this would be used probably in a situation like that. We couldn't use it before because the rule said that would have to agree to perpetuate the animals on their property. One of the systems of checks and balances I guess is that we can say that it has or the agreed amount of damage that is being sustained or that anticipated has to equal or exceed the value of the anticipated value of the permit. And if it is in a limited entry unit it might not or if there is large animals involved it might a higher value than if it's all just cows and calves and a few small bulls or something like that. So it just gives us an additional tool to deal with damage situations.

Bill Bates- Those kinds of situations have come before our RAC and have been revolved and we have another rule that deals with our director's ability to issue a stop kill order and those have gone through . We actually have had a panel that is put together that represent the Department of Agriculture and the Division of Wildlife, and those that have been contending that have gone to that panel and we have up held those, and I would imagine that we would have the same process going forward?

Scott McFarland - Yes that is correct.

Kevin Albrecht - And that was my question. Just that this wouldn't create additional problems with that.

Bill Bates- I don't see it creating more.

Scott McFarland – No, and actually you know there is a lot of landowners and we have had this in the past that would gladly take permits that they could sell to mitigate for their damages and waive their damage claims, which would have the effect of making more in the damage. The pot of money would be for the damages that are available for other landowners that may not have this opportunity too, so I think it had a lot of positive effects, you know it's used only very select situations. But it does give us an additional tool.

Bill Bates- On a limited entry unit for example in San Juan County, we used the value of \$10,000.00. The damage had to exceed that amount. That's for bull elk.

Derris Jones - Any other questions?

Derris Jones - Any questions from the public tonight?

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

Lee Tracy of the United Wildlife Cooperative—Again the United Wildlife Cooperative recommends that you accept the rule on the mitigation. I asked quite a few questions or at least one major question last night in the southern RAC about the buffer zone because I didn't understand it, but once it was explained to me, this rule makes sense some of those animals don't even come into the landowners property until after dark and so we can't shoot animals at night time, why even with spot lights we have to figure out a way to get rid of those animals otherwise. Thanks.

RAC Discussion

Jeff Horrocks- I make a motion that we accept Rule R657-33 Depredation Rule amendments.

VOTING

Motion was made by Horrocks to accept the Depredation Rule Amendments as presented.

Seconded by Blair Eastman

Motion passed unanimously

9) Election of a new Chairman and Vice Chairman

-Derris Jones, Chairman

RAC Discussion

Derris Jones - It has been a quick two years, but I have been RAC chair for two years now and they like you to open the opportunity up for other RAC chairs. I know Kevin had an interest before. I don't know whether your work situation has changed or not. But if you guys want to open the floor for nominations for RAC chair...

Charlie Tracy- Looks like Blair is running. (Laughing)

Blair Eastman - There is no way that I would do it.

Jeff Horrocks- We will nominate Kevin.

Derris Jones - Is there a second? Kevin is nominated by Tracy and seconded by Jeff. All in favor?

Todd Huntington - Wait, Wait. I have a question. Kevin, do to your work issues allow that? What's the situation?

Kevin Albrecht -I can do that.

Todd Huntington – Derris, do you still want to be the chairman?

Derris Jones - Not if someone else wants the opportunity. You have got to share the fun you know.

Derris Jones - Will this take effect in the next RAC.

Bill Bates- No, this will take place in the July RAC.

VOTING

Motion was made by Charlie Tracy to adopt Kevin Albrecht as the new RAC chairman.

Seconded by Jeff Horrocks

Motion passed unanimously

Bill Bates- I would just like to mention we've got one more RAC member with expiring terms--Pam who has over eight years. I think she came in on a temporary basis, and then fulfilled two full terms since then. We really appreciate her efforts and she has done a great job. And also Travis Pehrson, he has declined. He has decided that he is too busy at work to go on. So we are actually going through the interview process right now, trying to replace his position as a sportsman

representative. Then I have decided also that we do have Kenneth Maryboy who has served on the RAC and his term is expiring and I think we are just going to leave that one vacant, because that gave us 14 and made it very difficult to get to a quorum and I think if we keep it at 13, I feel better about getting a quorum. So I think we are just going to leave that one vacant. I appreciate Pam and Travis for the good job that they did and we've got one more meeting to put you to work. So I appreciate that. Do you want to do a vice chair? Or do you want to wait on that? Todd has been the vice chair.

Blair Eastman - Don't you just want to stay right there Todd?

Derris Jones - I nominate Todd to be vice chair again.

Blair Eastman - I will second that

VOTING

Motion was made by Derris Jones to adopt Todd Huntington as the RAC vice chairman.

Seconded by Blair Eastman

Motion passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Public in attendance: 20

The next Wildlife Board meeting will take place on May 1-2 at 9 a.m. at the DNR Board Room at 1594 W. North Temple, SLC

The next southeast regional RAC meeting will take place on May 8 at 6:30 p.m. at the John Wesley Powell Museum in Green River.

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Public Library
45 S Main Street, Springville
April 16, 2013 @ 6:30 p.m.

Motion Summary

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

MOTION: To accept the agenda and minutes as written
Passed unanimously

Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule Amendments for 2013

MOTION: To accept the proposal from UBA for the limited entry elk Wasatch Mountains, Central Mountains/Nebo, and the West Desert, Deep Creek units permit allocation to remain at 50/30/20 (rifle/archery/muzzleloader)
Passed 6 to 2

MOTION: To accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2013

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2013

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

R657-33 Depredation Rule Amendments

MOTION: To accept the recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Public Library
45 S Main Street, Springville
April 16, 2013 @ 6:30 p.m.

Members Present

Matt Clark, Sportsmen
Timothy Fehr, At large
Sarah Flinders, Forest Service
Richard Hansen, At large
George Holmes, Agriculture
Kristofer Marble, At large
Gary Nielson, Sportsmen, Vice Chair
Jay Price, Elected
Duane Smith, Non-consumptive

Members Absent

Larry Fitzgerald, Agriculture
Karl Hirst, Sportsmen
Michael Gates, BLM
Fred Oswald, Non-consumptive, Chair

Others Present

Greg Sheehan, Division Director
John Bair, Wildlife Board Member
Calvin Crandall, Wildlife Board Member

-
- 1) **Approval of the Agenda and Minutes (Action)**
- Fred Oswald, RAC Chair

VOTING

Motion was made by Kristofer Marble to accept the agenda and minutes as written
Seconded by Tim Fehr
Motion passed unanimously

- 2) **Wildlife Board Meeting Update (Information)**
- Fred Oswald, RAC Chair
- 3) **Regional Update (Information)**
- John Fairchild, Central Regional Supervisor
- 4) **Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule Amendments for 2013 (Action)**
- Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Kristofer Marble – I'm assuming these general season deer numbers include lifetime license holders and dedicated hunters.

Anis Aoude – Yes they do.

Kristofer Marble – I know last year there was concern over the Plateau, Thousand Lakes. I noticed you reduced that to 200. Don't you have more dedicated hunters and lifetime license holders than 200?

Anis Aoude – No. The lifetime license folks can still pick that but they haven't. Half of the dedicated hunters are out so there is only one group of dedicated hunters that can still pick a unit.

Kristofer Marble – Do you know approximately how many public tags there will be then?
Anis Aoude – I don't off the top of my head. It won't be very many again but then after this year all the dedicated hunters will have to draw for their unit and there could be no more than 15 percent given to dedicated hunters. We may be able to start creeping back up but we didn't want to over harvest it.

Matt Clark – Of the 15,000 spike and 14,300 any bull tags do they typically sell out every year?

Anis Aoude – Yes.

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

Ben Lowder – Representing Utah Bowman's Association (UBA) First of all I want to thank you for your presence here tonight and for everything you do. We recognize you do a lot of work for the management of our wildlife in the state. Tonight UBA would like to support the Division's recommendations on the big game permit numbers with three exceptions. Those exceptions are the three limited entry elk units that are gaining a late hunt this year. I handed out a copy of my recommendation. I will explain it. Before I explain my recommendation I would like to read a short excerpt from the current elk management plan. In the recreation management goal one of the strategies reads as follows, 'on appropriate limited entry units provide a late season rifle elk hunting opportunity that will reduce harvest rates and help increase future hunting opportunity'. On these three units, the Wasatch Mountains, the Nebo and the Deep Creek unit we know that is not going to be the case. They will not have a reduced harvest rate. In fact, if we look at the Wasatch unit in 2005 and 2006 we had a late hunt and the success rates were 95 percent in 2005 and 100 percent in 2006. The reason that I bring this up is the tag allocation is different on units that have a late hunt versus units that don't have a late hunt. What we are recommending tonight and what we are asking this RAC to recommend to the board is that tag allocation stay the same as it has been in past years. If you look at my recommendation you will notice we are not recommending any additional tags. We are simply recommending that the tag allocation stay the same as what it has been without the late hunt. That tag allocation is 50 percent rifle, 30 percent archery and 20 percent muzzleloader tags. You can see by adding those numbers that by adding that late hunt by default reduces both archery and muzzleloader tags by 5 percent in order to provide those extra tags for the late hunt. To reiterate, we expect a high success rate on that late hunt and that doesn't quite fall in the theory behind the late hunt. We recognize that the late hunt is necessary to address some hunter satisfaction and some crowding issues that are happening on those units in September but we would like to see the allocation stay the same at 50 percent rifle, 30 percent archery and 20 percent muzzleloader. If you have any questions I would be happy to answer any. Thank you.

Brian Robbins – United Wildlife Cooperative – I would like to thank the RAC for their time and effort for the sportsmen here in Utah. I would simply like to echo the sentiments of Ben and the Utah Bowmen's Association in the late season elk hunts. We support the Division's recommendations with the exception of the UBA proposal that those tags remain at the 50/30/20 allocation. Thank you.

Dave Woodhouse – I do support Ben’s proposal with UBA. When we did have that late rifle hunt on the Wasatch a few years ago success rates were astronomical and they were taking large bulls too. We don’t want to see the archers lose opportunity just to move the tags around. The archers and muzzleloaders would lose opportunity. We would like it to stay at 50/30/20. On the Oak Creek deer unit Anis talked about rolling it into the general and the limited entry together but as you look at those permit numbers I would ask that you look at decreasing the number of limited entry tags on the Oak Creek because a lot of that unit due to the fire is off limits and hunters will have to hunt one end. Where it is burned off the Forest Service has restricted access to it and that will put a lot of pressure on it and crowding will be an issue. It is already limited by private lands. Thanks.

Randy Quayle – Representing Timpanogos Archery Club – I would like to thank all of you for putting in your time and being here and taking care of business as you do. We are in support of the Utah Bowman’s Association’s recommendation for the three late season elk hunts. We would also like to see them stay with the 50 rifle, 30 archery and 20 muzzleloader tags. Thank you.

Pat O’Kelley – I want to make some comments concerning the cow elk.

Gary Nielson – Would you consider coming back when we talk about the antlerless? It is the next agenda item.

Troy Justensen – Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife – We would like to echo our support for UBA’s recommendation on the Wasatch. Also we would like to encourage the RAC to take action on a few things that have gone through some other RAC committees. One of which has been mentioned here tonight and that is cutting the trophy tags on the Oak Creeks from the Division’s recommendation of 35 to 30 due to the fire and what has gone on there and until we can decide what we are going to do with that unit, general season versus limited entry. The other thing we would like you to take action on is in the northeast region RAC they voted to decrease the permits to 25 on the book cliffs. We would also like to address the Plateau antelope situation. We understand the counts have gone up but it was just a few short years ago we had to have an emergency closing on that. We would like to ease into that a little slower than what the Division is recommending. I think they are recommending 269 total permits. We would recommend the buck permits on that unit be 135. Also relating to the Manti, Central Mountains unit we ask that we leave the bull permits at 406 and not increase them to 439. Thank you.

RAC Discussion

Kristofer Marble – On Oak Creek, Anis maybe you can confirm this. I did some quick math and it looks like you are reducing 5 permits from 2012 to 2013 already. Is that right?

Anis Aoude – I have the summary and not the specific unit information. If that is what it says in the packet, that’s what it is.

Kristofer Marble – Maybe Troy can help me out here, why a further reduction? Why is five not enough?

Troy Justensen – Our local chapter that is familiar with that unit recommended that.

Anis Aoude – That unit is a little bit funny because we manage part of it for limited entry and part of it for general season and it does make it difficult to manage.

Matt Clark – There is obviously overwhelming support to go back to the 50/30/20 split, what is your rebuttal to that?

Anis Aoude – We have set things in the statewide plan to deal with units that have a late hunt one way and the ones that don't have a late hunt another way. The reason it is 50/30/20 now is because it did not have a late hunt. Once you add a late hunt on it makes more opportunity for rifle available. That is in the statewide plan. I don't have a problem with it going the other way for these units. The success was higher traditionally but we only had the late hunt for two years but it was higher back then. I'm not sure if it would be higher now because there are more permits and when you put more permits the success is usually lower. It could be just as high as when we had it before. The rationale for that is historically or on most units the late is a lower success rates so we increase the rifle permits knowing you will have less success. That may not be the case on these units. The rationale for our recommendation is we are following the statewide plan.

VOTING

Motion was made by Richard Hansen to accept the proposal from UBA for the limited entry elk Wasatch Mountains, Central Mountains/Nebo, and the West Desert, Deep Creek units permit allocation to remain at 50/30/20 (rifle/archery/muzzleloader)

Seconded by Kristofer Marble

In Favor: Sarah Flinders, Kristofer Marble, Matt Clark, Duane Smith, Richard Hansen, Tim Fehr

Opposed: George Holmes, Jay Price

Motion passed 6 to 2

Motion was made by Kristofer Marble to accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented

Seconded by Richard Hansen

In Favor: All

Motion passed unanimously

5) Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2013 (Action)

- Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Questions from the Public

Brian Robbins – Do the antelope compete with the bison on the Henrys?

Anis Aoude – They don't compete with the bison. There is a perception that they compete with the livestock.

Ben Lowder – Could you explain how the season dates work with the antlerless elk control permit?

Anis Aoude – It goes along with whatever tag you already have so if you have a general deer tag you have to hunt it during the general deer season.

Dave Woodhouse – On the antlerless elk on the Wasatch, they were flown this year, right?

Anis Aoude – Correct.

Dave Woodhouse – What were the counts on the south end? Hobble Creek, Diamond Fork, Sheep Creek and Tie Fork area.

Dale Liechty – When we fly the elk the cows tend to be on the face from the mouth of Spanish Fork canyon over to Hobble Creek. We usually don't find too many cows at that time up the canyons; it's mostly the bulls we find. We found basically normal amounts of elk on the face. I couldn't give you exact numbers but there were probably 600 to 700 between Hobble Creek and the mouth of Spanish Fork canyon.

Dave Woodhouse – When did you fly it?

Dale Liechty – We flew it the later part of January.

Anis Aoude – It may have been the early part of February.

Comments from the Public

Pat O’Kelley – My concern is on Plateau, Fish Lake. I see you are recommending 550 permits again this year. I have hunted that area for 20 years and it is tough to find a cow elk there. It has been decimated the last few years. Thousands and thousands of cow permits have been put out over the years. I don’t understand when you are under objective but are going to put out another 550 cow permits. My other concern is are we going to do the same thing to the Manti herd? Last year you put out thousands and this year you are putting out thousands. It seems like every time we get a good elk herd it gets wiped out. I don’t understand how you are coming up with these recommendations. I am concerned that we are wiping the elk herds out. I have seen it happen on Fish Lake.

Ben Lowder – UBA – We would like to support the Division’s recommendations on the antlerless permit numbers.

Mike Christensen – Thanks for your time. I am not here to dispute the Division’s tag numbers and number of antlerless animals that needs to be killed but I think we have to start thinking outside the box on where we are going to kill these elk especially and how we are going to kill them in areas that aren’t accessible to the public. What’s occurring right now and I have seen it on the Nebo and on the Wasatch is the public elk herds are getting hammered yet the elk that live on private lands are not getting hammered they are flourishing and when we fly these elk in the winter to count them we don’t specify where they live so we increase more tags and that hammers the elk on the public land even further. We’ve got to have a way to incentivize landowners to kill the elk on their lands so we can stop pounding the elk on the public lands. There are areas on the Nebo where we would ride our horses in and see quite a few elk in the summer and during the hunts and then on our ranch we have a lot of elk and the public land elk just got hammered and the public lands herds aren’t as strong and the private land herds are more strong. I know you aren’t going to deal with that issue tonight. I understand that but it’s time to start thinking how are we going to kill elk that aren’t accessible to the public so we can stop putting the pressure on the public’s accessible elk.

Gary Nielsen – You are a private landowner and you have watched the same thing we have watched on the backside of Nebo where the area that is accessible gets pounded and the places where the actual elk are causing the trouble and the numbers are high they’re inaccessible to the public. You are a landowner, what would you suggest?

Mike Christensen – I don’t want to suggest anything in public because I would probably get strung up. As a private landowner who holds a lot of elk on their ranch, we love the elk. We view them as an incredible opportunity. Some people say why don’t we share them more. We do have friends and family that hunt them the problem is when you get the general public to come on you take on liability issues and there are a lot of privacy issues and things like that. Like George, he has a herd of elk that lives up around his place. You can incentivize it by having public land tags and private land tags. Elk on private lands are not accessible to the public anyway. Why not allow unlimited tags for private lands in specific areas where the elk are an issue.

Audience - Who will profit from that?

Mike Christensen – Maybe the private landowner might make some profit off it. But what does that matter? Instead of killing ten elk on the public lands they are going to kill those ten elk on the private land so you can have ten more elk on the public land. It needs to be looked at a little bit harder. I don't have a problem with the elk on our place. I know on the Wasatch I see lots of elk out on traverse ridge where you can't hunt. They don't winter above Alpine anymore because they have been pressured so much and they are inaccessible to the public. I think there are ways we can incentivize landowners to kill the elk on their lands so we stop counting them as the public's elk and issuing all these tags the public draws and can't find a cow to kill because that cow lives down on private property.

John Fairchild – You might want to look at, and I'm not proposing it, the landowner appreciation tags that Idaho has. They have a system in place to do that and it's a special draw for private landowners. You could go online and see if that makes any sense. That is something that started out with a lot of public support. I have talked with their guy up there and it seems every other year they have to modify that because there is so much concern about the money the private landowners are making on the public elk. They are behind us on whether or not it's okay to commercialize the public's wildlife. That's what they have. I'm not sure it's the answer but it's what you're asking for.

Mike Christensen – I'm not even asking for the private landowners to be reimbursed. I'm just saying we are killing a lot of elk on the face of Timp because we are counting a lot of elk that live in Traverse Ridge. How do we balance that so I can go up on Timp and hunt elk that now live on Traverse Ridge and we can't hunt?

Dave Woodhouse – Utah County SFW – I would really like to echo what Mike said here. We do have a big problem and it shows on the Wasatch. We have counted a couple thousand head over objective on the Wasatch but from meetings with the Division the last couple of years we know that the vast majority come from above Heber. We are hunting these elk from Spanish Fork canyon to highway 40 and beyond and that's one herd and we are just hammering these elk because they are way over objective. We are killing a lot of elk out of Diamond Fork, Tie Fork and White River where we don't need to be killing them. They are not wintering in there and there are not as many elk there now. I spend a lot of time in an airplane. I fly for ranchers and find their lost sheep and lost cattle. We fly Diamond Fork, Hobble Creek every year and we know where the elk are. 15 years ago there were too many elk now they are not there. From the Division's web site it shows that in 2011 the success rates for the late Diamond Fork hunt was a 9.8 success rate. The next hunt in December to January when the elk should be down and be the most accessible they are the success rate was 4.9 percent. Hobble Creek was similar. Guys I know that put in for those used to put in for Nebo but there are none left on the face of Nebo above Woodland Hills. That herd is gone. The guys that used to put in they don't anymore because they can't find the elk. They are not going up there for a camping trip. They want to shoot an elk to fill a freezer. We don't need to manage those cows the same as we manage the cow elk that are causing our problems on the private land above Heber. We have talked about different ways to get into those elk with Craig. Nothing

has happened. We need to work on that but in the meantime I would ask you, this RAC to recommend; personally I would ask you to completely close those late hunts. We still have the early cow hunts that coincide with the general spike hunts. The late season hunts I would ask that you close them in Diamond Fork and Hobble Creek or at the very least drastically reduce the tag numbers. Its success rate is very low because the elk aren't there. What is there we want to keep. We do have to figure out how to manage this elk herd and get the numbers right but at the same time I hate to see them disappearing over here.

Troy Justensen – SFW – Relating to the 500 doe antelope permits on the Parker. We support the Division recommendation but we would ask that only 250 of those be harvested and we look at transplanting the other 250 to some of our units that are below objective and struggling. Thank you.

RAC Discussion

George Holmes – How does an elk choose where it winters and does it generally winter in the same area?

Anis Aoude – Elk winter where it has safety from hunting and where there is plentiful forage. They are really sensitive to disturbance, especially by hunters and can be moved easily by hunting pressure.

Matt Clark – Are these elk always on private land?

Anis Aoude – No.

Matt Clark – So is there a different time of year we could harvest them? In June?

Mike Christensen – You can't because the calves are on the ground.

Matt Clark – Could you harvest them in August?

Dave Woodhouse – We are hunting them during the spike elk hunts.

Matt Clark – So are the spike elk hunters getting a good crack at these elk?

Anis Aoude – They are harvesting some but success rate with archery is fairly low overall. It think it's under ten percent. Half of the harvest is cows. We have about 11,000 archers with seven or eight percent success and half of that harvest is cows, it's not limiting population growth. Really the only effective way to kill cow elk is with a rifle and usually it's the late season where you have the highest success rates. Obviously there are going to be years when we don't get weather and the animals are way high and the hunters can't get to them but three out of five years you'll get that weather and are able to harvest them. It's not an easy situation. You guys are only starting to see the tip of it here in the central region. The northern region has been dealing with these issues for ten plus years. We are open to any suggestions. We do want to be thinking outside the box for sure.

Kristofer Marble – Dave mentioned the low success rates in Hobble Creek and Diamond Fork late last year. Are you saying you feel like that's an anomaly due to weather conditions?

Anis Aoude – It may not be. I can't really say. It doesn't worry me when we don't have a high success rate. It means the elk weren't there and when the elk aren't there you can't harvest them so you can't over harvest them either. If they are there one year, you'll get the harvest. We can never tell where the elk are going to be because we are hunting them so many places. We are pushing them around, no doubt about it. We have seen it on the southern region units. Everyone talks about Fish Lake. They think we slaughtered all the elk. I think all we did was move them from one unit to the next and two years later they were back on that unit. They move around a lot especially when you hunt them. They know hunting really well. When you hunt elk you move them and we have seen that now with radio collar data. They will move many many miles to avoid harvest.

Kristofer Marble – Another question, this gentleman mentioned the Fish Lake and even though we are under objective there are tags.

Anis Aoude – On Fish Lake we just raised the objective and we will probably be at objective even with the numbers we are recommending given that population. It's at 5,100 currently.

Kristofer Marble – If for nothing else but for education for those that are here tonight can you explain the methodology behind that.

Anis Aoude – Yeah. You look at bull to cow ratios out of a population of 5,100 animals probably 3,000 of those are going to be cows. So 3,000 cows produce roughly 1,500 calves and half of those are going to be females. So to even level the population you need to harvest 700 animals. That's to keep it stable. With an average success rate of 50 percent you have to issue 1,400 permits to kill 700 elk.

Kristofer Marble – So you are planning on with 550 tags roughly killing 275 elk.

Anis Aoude – Right. That population will grow given those permit numbers because you won't harvest 500. It's basic math. Even though its science, it's not rocket science.

Richard Hansen – Does the Division have any latitude being able to count elk that they know are on private land and not include them in the population?

Anis Aoude – No we don't because those elk don't stay on private land. They may be on private land when we count them and a day later they may be on public land.

Richard Hansen – But isn't there a way, you use averages all the time. On any one unit you are going to know from year to year there are going to be a certain amount of animals on private grounds that are not accessible to public hunters. Couldn't you factor that in on some of these units?

John Fairchild – State law doesn't see the difference. These are elk units and we have an objective on each unit that we have to meet.

Anis Aoude – And not all private land is created equal either so some private landowners will want to kill every elk that is on them and some private landowners want to love every elk that is on them. You can't make that generalization.

Richard Hansen – You know every elk unit and you could have a standard apply to each elk unit.

Anis Aoude - I wish it were that simple. It's a lot more complex than something we are probably going to solve here tonight but I'm open to suggestions.

Richard Hansen – I hope the Division or someone can come up with something even if it does profit private landowners. If it can help push the majority of the pressure off the public lands and include the private lands and keep those numbers and make it so it's possible for public hunters to access all the elk instead of 90 percent of them.

Jay Price – We are trying a little bit in Heber to accomplish that. For instance, Wolf Creek Ranch has been closed forever. This year I went to a dialysis center fundraiser and I think they auctioned off six tags there plus they have others besides that. So we are trying to do that but the problem is access onto that private land. It is exactly what you are talking about. The elk go there where there is safety but if we can get some more hunting and some more pressure that is going to push some out so they are going to be able to be killed by the public land hunters. We are approaching it. I think we have talked to Christensen's and they have increased their cow tags there. The more we can work that way the more there will be more elk down here where we would hope to see them.

George Holmes – The last two years and weather has made it more difficult.

Jay Price - We are making small strides in the right direction thanks to the Division and thanks to John.

VOTING

Motion was made by Kristofer Marble to accept the Division's recommendations as presented

Seconded by George Holmes

In Favor: All

Motion passed unanimously

6) Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2013 (Action)

- **Scott McFarlane, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator**

Questions from the RAC

Questions from the Public

Mike Christensen – When I served on the CWMU committee some of the biologists were having a problem with getting CWMU operators to set times for the public to come in and harvest the elk at an opportune time which was causing some of the northern region issues that we heard about a little earlier. Are you finding that the operators are working better with your biologists to get the elk killed that you are issuing the permits for?

Scott McFarlane – Yes, they are working better with us. It's not perfect; we still have room for improvement. What we do have in our management plans for CWMUs is a part that is built into it that every year the biologist should review each of their CWMUs and look at their management goals are being reached. For antlerless elk we have a target number over the three year period that they should be harvesting and if they aren't meeting that those harvest objectives it should go to the committee to review and find out why that is not being met. It might not be the CWMUs fault, however if somebody is just avoiding the elk harvest because of the cost or for whatever reason it needs to be looked at and they would be put on probation. The cooperative part of the cooperative wildlife management units is cooperating with the Division on management for these units and we'd like to keep it that way.

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

Jay Price – When we give 80 percent of the tags for CWMU is there any way to allow horn hunters on 20 percent of the time? We have 20 percent of the tags; couldn't they go on 20 percent of the time?

Scott McFarlane – I'm not sure how to answer that. I think what we are dealing with is private property rights. They enter into a contract with the Division that says they will allow public hunters on for the purpose of hunting, not necessarily antlers. I don't know that we could push that.

VOTING

Motion was made by Jay Price to accept the Division's recommendations as presented

Seconded by Timothy Fehr

In Favor: All

Motion passed unanimously

7) R657-33 Depredation Rule Amendments (Action)

- **Scott McFarlane, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator**

Questions from the RAC

Kristofer Marble – When you talk about a buffer zone, how far are we talking about?

Scott McFarlane – These permits are designed to target the offending animals, the animals living in fields. We want to make sure it's left variable enough that we can target those animals but go beyond that. If we wanted to just make a permit for a private landowner to have a lot of value to him we would make it for the whole unit but then it defeats the purpose of the mitigation permits. A buffer zone around these areas would be determined by the landowner and biologist who would be negotiating on the damages keeping in mind that we need to target the animals that are doing the damage and it should not go beyond that.

Kristofer Marble – What is typical, are we talking a quarter mile or two miles?

Scott McFarlane – Normally we don't see a buffer zone that is more than a couple miles. It might go up on forest land or it might go on another piece of private property. Normally they are from a quarter mile to two miles. With this will come a policy so it's not abused. We would have a sign off so there is a law enforcement review. We don't want to cause law enforcement problems with these. Probably a regional supervisor would have to sign off on this so there is a system of checks and balances so it not just an arbitrary distance.

Kristofer Marble – The way it is written it seems like it could easily be abused. None of what you talked about is in the proposed changes that I see as far as getting a sign off.

Scott McFarlane – That is something we would put into a policy and procedure internally. We share the same concerns. We don't want this abused.

Duane Smith – How are you going to define a buffer zone on private property unless they too are experiencing mitigation?

Scott McFarlane – Currently landowners for the purpose of antlerless permits have the ability to go into a landowner association. For example if three or four landowners that are experiencing damage whether it be crop damage or rangeland damage they can pool together and put their properties together and go into a landowner association and the permits are good for all those pieces of property. They may include a buffer zone beyond that on public or private land. What they would have to do in order to have a buffer zone on private land is have the signature approving them to use that land for those vouchers. If it was signed into it, it would basically be signed into a landowner association. The buffer zone on public lands would have a definite distance.

George Holmes – Are you worried about the depredating animals taking advantage of the buffer zone or people?

Kristofer Marble – Of course not.

George Holmes – Just a little joke.

Sarah Flinders – When you are setting up a buffer zone that affects federal lands are those biologists and land managers involved? I haven't heard of any of this going on.

Scott McFarlane – They could be. I don't think it's any different than setting up an antlerless hunt on federal lands. If the biologist felt there was a need to consult with the federal land agency then we definitely should do that. That could be written into our policy. Normally a federal agency for a quarter mile buffer or something they usually don't want to be involved in that. If it involves an entire forest or something then normally I think that would be a requirement.

Sarah Flinders – I guess it depends on how these folks are accessing that land. I'm sure by foot and horse there probably is not a concern but any other mode they should be involved to determine if they are meeting forest standards.

George Holmes – Didn't the regional supervisor need to approve these buffer zones and couldn't that be part of the process?

Scott McFarlane – For bucks and bulls it has to have the Director's approval, for the antlerless it needs regional approval.

Richard Hansen – In that situation the rules still apply on federal lands. Just because a landowner has permits doesn't mean he doesn't have to follow the rules.

Sarah Flinders – I guess the concern comes where if we don't know there is a buffer set up accessing land then we don't know to watch it, law enforcement wise or habitat wise.
John Fairchild – A lot of these involve seasons that are quite protracted so they are going to overlap hunts that are taking place anyway. It's not much different than any other hunt.
Scott McFarlane – It shouldn't be. Bottom line is they have to comply with any regulations on the federal lands. If there is a public road through it and the public can hunt it obviously the ones with the private permits should be able to also. If that is a concern we could build that into the policy and procedure.

John Fairchild – We summarize those hunts for law enforcement and it would be very easy to make that available.

Scott McFarlane – That is one thing we will have is our law enforcement sign off on this. In theory they should be coordinating with the federal agencies on this.

Questions from the Public

Mike Christensen – To meet the threshold for a buck or bull permit they have to meet that and then they have to want the animals to be permanently removed, correct?

Scott McFarlane – For the vouchers yes.

Mike Christensen – How do you define permanently removed with a wild herd of elk?

Scott McFarlane – They just have to desire them to be permanently removed. Basically what we are saying is they are a nuisance animal on agriculture. This is to deal with croplands and normally this is to deal with croplands with high dollar amount damages.

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

VOTING

Motion was made by Kris to accept the recommendations as presented

Seconded by George Holmes

In Favor: All

Motion passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

45 in attendance

Next board meeting May 2, 2013 at the DNR boardroom, Salt Lake

Next RAC meeting May 14, 2013 at Springville Public Library

Northern Regional Advisory Council Meeting Motions
Thursday April 18, 2012
Brigham City Community Center

Meeting Begins: 6:05 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Motion: Approve agenda for tonight's meetings.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Review and Acceptance of Dec 05, 2012 Minutes

Motion: Approve the meeting minutes of Dec 5, 2012 council meeting.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule Amendments for 2013

Motion: Support UBA's limited entry elk recommendation for the Wasatch Mountains, Central Mountains Nebo and West Desert Deep Creek permit allocations, 50% any weapon, 30% archery and 20% muzzleloader.

Motion Passes: For: 11 Against: 1

Motion: Lawrence- Limited Entry Elk, South Cache permit numbers to remain at the 2012 level and North Cache reduced to 70 permits.

Motion Passes: For: 11 Against: 1

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board approve the remainder of the Division's presentation.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Motion- Request the Wildlife Board look at the once in a life time permit allocations and rounding for nonresident bighorn sheep permits.

Motion Passes: For: 10 Against: 2

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2013

Motion: Keep the antlerless elk permit numbers for the Cache unit at the 2012 level.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2013

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board approve the remainder as presented.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2013

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board approve as presented.

Motion Carries: Unanimous

R657-33 Depredation Rule Amendments

Motion: Recommend the Wildlife Board approve the Depredation Rule Recommendations for 2013 as presented.

Motion Passes: For: 11 Abstention: 1

Meeting Ends: 9:15 p.m.