

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting

December 3, 2020, DNR, Boardroom

Electronic Meeting

The meeting can be viewed live at <https://youtu.be/8t7rVxnl3qE>

Thursday, December 3, 2020, 9:00 am

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Approval of Agenda
– Byron Bateman, Chairman | ACTION |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
– Byron Bateman, Chairman | ACTION |
| 3. Old Business/Action Log
– Kevin Albrecht, Vice-Chairman <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update - Dedicated Hunter and General Season Deer Applications – Lindy Varney | CONTINGENT |
| 4. DWR Update
– Mike Fowlks, DWR Director | INFORMATION |
| 5. Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-9 Rule Amendments
- Blair Stringham, Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator | ACTION |
| 6. 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 7. Deer Management Plans – Population Objective Recommendations
- Regional Presentations | ACTION |
| 8. Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations
- Regional Presentations | ACTION |
| 9. CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations
- Chad Wilson, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator | ACTION |
| 10. Conservation and Expo Permit adjustments
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 11. Other Business
– Byron Bateman, Chairman <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wyoming Game and Fish Commission – Flaming Gorge Letter | CONTINGENT |

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ability of the virus to spread from person to person, the Governor has implemented a number of Executive Orders directed at controlling spread of the virus by minimizing face-to-face interactions. Public gatherings are strongly discouraged by the CDC, State of Utah, and local health departments since they facilitate face-to-face contact and pose an elevated risk for virus transmission. The Division of Wildlife Resources and the chair of this public body have determined that public gathering at Regional Advisory Council and Wildlife Board meetings presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who attend—and will conduct this meeting using a fully electronic format. This meeting format is authorized by recent amendment to the Utah Code¹ and Executive Order by Utah Governor Gary Herbert²—and will be temporarily used in place of the in-person public meetings that usually occur around the state. Anyone wishing to comment on agenda topics in future meetings or to observe this meeting may do so by logging on to the Division’s webpage at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html> where instructions and links are provided.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act - Persons needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) for this meeting, should contact Staci Coons at 801-538-4718, giving her at least five working days notice.

¹ Utah Code Section 52-4-207(4).

² Executive Order Suspending the Enforcement of Provisions of Utah Code §§ 52-4-202 and 52-4-207, and Related State Agency Orders, Rules, and Regulations, Due to Infectious Disease COVID-19 Novel, March 18, 2020.

Wildlife Board Motions

Following is a summary of Wildlife Board motions directing the Division to take action and the response to date:

Fall 2021 – Target Date – Updates in Hunting Technology

MOTION: I move that we ask the Division to look at any new hunting technology since the last update to the board and report on it. This is to be placed on the Action Log.

Motion made by: Kevin Albrecht
Assigned to: Justin Shannon/Covy Jones
Action: Under Study
Status: Pending
Placed on Action Log: August 27, 2020

**October 1, 2020
Electronic Meeting**

The Board Meeting will stream live at https://youtu.be/G_0gXs9R_BA

AGENDA

Thursday, October 1, 2020, Board Meeting 9:00 am

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Approval of Agenda
– Byron Bateman, Chairman | ACTION |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
– Byron Bateman, Chairman | ACTION |
| 3. Old Business/Action Log
– Byron Bateman, Chairman | CONTINGENT |
| 4. DWR Update
– Mike Fowlks, DWR Director | INFORMATIONAL |
| 5. 2021-2022 Fishing Recommendations and Fishing Contest Rule Amendments
– Randy Oplinger, Sportfish Coordinator | ACTION |
| 6. Angler Opportunity Assessment Update
– Craig Walker, Aquatic Section Assistant Chief | INFORMATIONAL |
| 7. Middle Provo River Update
– Jackie Watson, Blue Ribbon Fisheries Biologist | INFORMATIONAL |
| 8. R657-62 Rule Amendments – Deployed Military
– Lindy Varney, Wildlife Licensing Coordinator | ACTION |
| 9. Conservation Permit Audit
– Kenny Johnson, Administration Services Section Chief | ACTION |
| 10. Conservation Permit Annual Report
– Justin Shannon, Wildlife Section Chief | INFORMATIONAL |
| 11. Cougar Conservation and Expo Permit Request
– Darren DeBloois, Game Mammals Program Coordinator | ACTION |
| 12. Repeal Rule R657-38 Wildlife Sensitive Species
– Mike Canning, Assistant Director | ACTION |
| 13. 2021 RAC/Board Dates
– Staci Coons, Wildlife Board Coordinator | ACTION |
| 14. Other Business
– Byron Bateman, Chairman | CONTINGENT |

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act - Persons needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) for this meeting, should contact Staci Coons at 801-538-4718, giving her at least five working days notice.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ability of the virus to spread from person to person, the Governor has implemented a number of Executive Orders directed at controlling spread of the virus by minimizing face-to-face interactions. Public gatherings are strongly discouraged by the CDC, State of Utah, and local health departments since they facilitate face-to-face contact and pose an elevated risk for virus transmission. The Division of Wildlife Resources and the chair of this public body have determined that public gathering at Regional Advisory Council and Wildlife Board meetings presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who attend—and will conduct this meeting using a fully electronic format. This meeting format is authorized by recent amendment to the Utah Code¹ and Executive Order by Utah Governor Gary Herbert²—and will be temporarily used in place of the in-person public meetings that usually occur around the state. Anyone wishing to comment on agenda topics in future meetings or to observe this meeting may do so by logging on to the Division’s webpage at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html> where instructions and links are provided.

¹ Utah Code Section 52-4-207(4).

² Executive Order Suspending the Enforcement of Provisions of Utah Code §§ 52-4-202 and 52-4-207, and Related State Agency Orders, Rules, and Regulations, Due to Infectious Disease COVID-19 Novel, March 18, 2020.

Wildlife Board Motions

Following is a summary of Wildlife Board motions directing the Division to take action and the response to date:

Fall 2020 – Target Date – Premium Fishing Areas

MOTION: To have the division look into the possibility of designating premium fishing areas - that allow artificial flies and lures only- to have increased license requirements and fees and to bring the information back during the next recommendation cycle.

Motion made by:
Byron Batemen
Assigned to:
Randy Oplinger
Action: Under
Study
Status: Pending
Placed on Action Log: September 27, 2018

DRAFT

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
October 1, 2020, DNR Auditorium
Electronic Meeting
Summary of Motions

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

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda for the October 1, 2020 Wildlife Board Meeting.

2) Approval of Minutes (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the September 16, 2020 Wildlife Board Work Session Meeting.

3) 2021-2022 Fishing Recommendations and Fishing Contest Rule Amendments (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that the Wildlife Board write a letter to the State of Wyoming Game and Fish Commission requesting true reciprocity of state fishing licenses between the State of Utah and the State of Wyoming on the Flaming Gorge interstate waters.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth. The motion was not seconded, and the motion failed.

MOTION: I move that we allow filleting in the field of harvested kokanee salmon at Strawberry Reservoir as long as the skin is left intact.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Randy Dearth, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented, with the addition that anglers return tagged Northern Pike on Utah Lake, but that the catch and kill order for the non-tagged Northern Pike remains in place.

4) R657-62 Rule Amendments – Deployed Military (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Donnie Hunter and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the rule amendment with a modification in the

wording that states that in order to be eligible for this benefit the individual requesting the benefit must be on active duty and be deployed outside the State of Utah.

5) Conservation Permit Audit (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Conservation Permit Audit.

6) Cougar Conservation and Expo Permit Request (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the request as presented.

7) Repeal Rule R657-38 Wildlife Sensitive Species (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we repeal Rule R657-38.

8) 2021 RAC/Board Dates (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the proposed 2021 RAC and Board meeting dates.

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
October 1, 2020, DNR Auditorium
Electronic Meeting
Attendance

Wildlife Board

Byron Bateman – Chairman	Karl Hirst
Kevin Albrecht – Vice-Chairman	Donnie Hunter
Mike Fowlks – Exec Secretary	Randy Dearth
	Wade Heaton

RAC Chairs

Central – Brock McMillan
Southern – Brayden Richmond
Southeastern – Chris Wood
Northeastern – Brett Prevedel
Northern – Justin Oliver

Division Personnel

Mike Canning	Darren DeBloois	Jackie Watson
Marty Bushman	Craig Walker	Phil Tuttle
Greg Hansen	Randy Oplinger	Chris Crockett
Kevin Bunnell	Russell Norvell	James Christensen
Miles Hanberg	Lindy Varney	Chris Penne
Jason Vernon	J. Shirley	Staci Coons
Kenny Johnson	David Beveridge	Paige Wiren
Justin Shannon	Torrey Chistophersen	Paul Gedge
	Paul Washburn	Mike Christensen
	Matt Briggs	

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
October 1, 2020, DNR Auditorium
Electronic Meeting
https://youtu.be/G_0gXs9R_BA

- 00:01:00** Chairman Bateman called the meeting to order, read a statement from the State of Utah regarding COVID-19 and public meetings, and took a roll call. Wildlife board member Bret Selman was not present, and Chris Wood sat in for Trisha Hedin as the Southeastern RAC chair.
- 00:04:16** **1) Approval of Agenda (Action)**
The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda for the October 1, 2020 meeting.
- 00:05:01** **2) Approval of Minutes (Action)**
The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the August 27, 2020 Wildlife Board Meeting and the September 16, 2020 Wildlife Board Work Session Meeting.
- 3) Old Business/Action Log (Contingent)**
The Action Log item was addressed in agenda item 6) Angler Opportunity Assessment Update.
- 00:05:47** **4) DWR Update (Informational)**
Director Mike Fowlks gave Habitat, Law Enforcement and Administrative Services Section updates. The Director announced the transfer of Attorney General Martin Bushman from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to the Utah Division of Water Rights.
- 5) 2021-2022 Fishing Recommendations and Fishing Contest Rule Amendments (Action)**
Randy Oplinger gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.
- 00:09:28** **DWR Clarification**
Randy Oplinger explained an adjustment to the proposed Fish Lake spearfishing closure date.
- 00:10:29** **Board Questions**
The Board asked about a proposed tagged Northern Pike fish regulation at Utah Lake.

00:12:25 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentation, and requested clarification on how the Board should present their motion on the 2021-2022 Fishing Recommendations.

00:14:11 Board/RAC Questions

The Northeastern RAC expressed the desire to communicate a request for true reciprocity between Utah and Wyoming fishing licenses on Flaming Gorge interstate waters. Director Fowlks suggested that the Utah Wildlife Board draft a letter of request to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission.

00:20:46 RAC Recommendations

All RACs unanimously passed the recommendations. The Northern, Central and Southern RACs also agreed to support a true reciprocity letter of request to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission.

00:23:11 Board Discussion

There was discussion from the Board about whether or not filleting of kokanee salmon in the field at Fish Lake would be a valuable rule change.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that the Wildlife Board write a letter to the State of Wyoming Game and Fish Commission requesting true reciprocity of state fishing licenses between the State of Utah and the State of Wyoming on the Flaming Gorge interstate waters.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth. The motion was not seconded, and the motion failed.

MOTION: I move that we allow filleting in the field of harvested kokanee salmon at Strawberry Reservoir as long as the skin is left intact.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Randy Dearth and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented, with the addition that anglers return tagged Northern Pike on Utah Lake, but that the catch and kill order for the non-tagged Northern Pike remains in place.

00:36:22 6) Angler Opportunity Assessment Update (Informational)

Craig Walker provided an update on the limited entry fishing action item.

7) Middle Provo River Update

Jackie Watson gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.

00:39:06 Board/RAC Questions

There were no questions from the Board or RACs.

8) R657-62 Rule Amendments – Deployed Military (Action)

Lindy Varney gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.

00:39:51 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentation.

00:40:06 Board/RAC Questions

There were no questions from the Board or RACs.

00:30:43 RAC Recommendations

The Central, Northeastern, Southern and Southeastern RACs unanimously passed the rule amendment as presented. The Northern RAC made a motion to accept the rule change as presented with the removal of the words “outside the continental U.S. and its territories.” That motion passed unanimously.

00:39:57 Board Discussion

The Board asked for clarification of the legal scope of the definition of “resident deployed military members” as presented in the rule amendment proposal. Director Fowlks suggested that the motion could be expressed to define “deployment” as outside of the State of Utah.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Donnie Hunter and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the rule amendment with a modification in the wording that states that in order to be eligible for this benefit the individual requesting the benefit must be on active duty and be deployed outside the State of Utah.

9) Conservation Permit Audit (Action)

Kenny Johnson gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.

00:47:07 Public Comments

There were no public comments received.

00:47:17 Board Questions

There were no questions from the Board.

00:47:37 Board Discussion

The Board praised the Division for its management of program funds accountability. The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Conservation Permit Audit.

10) Conservation Permit Annual Report (Informational)

Justin Shannon gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.

00:49:19 Board Questions

There were no questions from the Board.

00:49:37 Public Comments

There were no public comments received.

00:49:46 Board Discussion

The Board thanked the Division for the presentation.

11) Cougar Conservation and Expo Permit Request (Action)

Darren Debloois gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.

00:51:07 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentation.

00:51:22 Board/RAC Questions

There were no questions from the Board or the RACs.

00:51:34 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the request as presented.

12) Repeal Rule R657-38 Wildlife Sensitive Species (Action)

00:52:43 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the September 16, 2020 Wildlife Board Work Session Meeting.

00:53:16 Board Questions

The Board asked for clarification on the difference between the Wildlife Sensitive Species list and the species of greatest conservation concern and need listed in the Wildlife Action Plan, and also commented on the ostensible redundancy of the Sensitive Species list.

00:54:48 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we repeal Rule R657-38.

13) 2021 RAC/Board Dates (Action)

Staci Coons gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.

00:56:00 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentation.

00:56:11 Board/RAC Questions

There were no questions from the Board.

00:56:49 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Kevin Donnie and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the proposed 2021 RAC and Board meeting dates.

00:57:35 12) Other Business (Contingent)

The Board thanked Division of Wildlife Resources Attorney General Martin Bushman for all the work that he has done for the Division, the State of Utah and the public, and for the support that he provided to the Wildlife Board.

01:00:46 Meeting adjourned.

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
November 2020
Summary of Motions**

1) - Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-Amendments (Action)

CR

MOTION: Strike 657-9-34 3(a) and do not allow the placement of new blinds
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: Strike R657-9-30 3(a)(iv)(D) and do not create a retrieval zone around
the Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area rest area
MOTION PASSES: 7-2

MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

NR

MOTION: I move to strike line one as written. Allow existing identified permanent
blinds, but prohibit the construction of new blinds and prohibit any maintenance,
replacement or reconstruction of existing blinds. All existing blinds, when they are
no longer usable, will be retired or removed.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

SR

MOTION: I move that we strike the language in rule R657-9-343(a) where it indicates
the placement of any new permanent blind will require written permission from Utah
Division of Wildlife Resources and F.S.S.L. and accept the remainder of the Division's
recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

SER

MOTION: Allow existing blinds but disallowing any new blinds.
MOTION PASSES: 11-1

MOTION: Accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

NER

MOTION: To allow existing identified permanent blinds but prohibit construction of
new blinds
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: To approve the remainder of the Waterfowl agenda as proposed.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

2) 2021 Big Game Season Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments (Action)

Elk

Any Bull Permits

- CR MOTION: Increase the any bull permits cap to 20,000, allow unlimited youth permits that do not count against cap and recommend the elk committee review this recommendations again in 2 years when they renew the plan.
MOTION PASSES: 7-2
- NR MOTION: I move to strike 7a from the line, increase the any bull cap to 20,000 and include unlimited youth elk permits on the general any bull permits and they not go towards the cap. Recommend the elk committee revisit the unlimited tags recommendation when they review the plan in 2 years.
MOTION Passes: 11-1
- SR MOTION: I move that we limit the number of any bull to 15,000, but have unlimited youth tags.
MOTION PASSES: 9-3
- SR MOTION: I move that we increase the any bull permits from 15,000 to 20,000.
MOTION PASSES: 6-5
- SER MOTION: regarding general season any bull tag to increase the number to an objective of 20,000 with an unlimited number for youth.
MOTION PASSES: 8-3
- NER MOTION: To reject the increase in general season bull elk quota. Ask the division to complete surveys and repackage the proposal and bring it back next year.
MOTION PASSES: 8-2
- NER MOTION: To withdraw the multi-season hunt from the general and spike hunt for adults and only allow youth under the age of 18 to purchase those permits.
MOTION PASSES: 7-2

Elk Archery and HAMS hunt

- CR MOTION: Extend the archery hunt on any bull units by nine days
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously
- NR MOTION: I move to extend archery any bull dates from Aug 21 to Sept 26.
MOTION PASSES: 11-1
- SR MOTION: I move that we accept the archery and HAMS hunts as presented, but change the season dates on the HAMS hunt to November 1st through the 15th.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously
- SR MOTION: I move that we extend the archery any bull season dates by nine (9) days.
MOTION PASSES: 11-1
- NER MOTION: To leave the General Archery hunt as is and not extend the season.
MOTION PASSES: 9-1

Elk Age Objectives and Limited Entry

- SER MOTION: Keep the age objective on Little Creek and the Central Mts Nebo as is, disregarding the DWR recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: 9-3
- NER MOTION: TO keep the current objective of 7.5-8 year old bulls for Book Cliffs/Little Creek unit that as it is currently being managed.
MOTION PASSES: 7-3
- NER MOTION: To keep Deep Creek as is in its current management structure as limited entry hunt opportunity.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously
- NER MOTION: TO leave Nine Mile Anthro a limited entry unit.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously
- NER MOTION: TO suspend the Book Cliff spike hunt until more research can be completed.
MOTION PASSES: 9-1

Bison

- CR MOTION: Recommend keeping Henry's bison archery only permit with 2 options on the season dates - 2 weeks before rifle hunt or a January hunt
MOTION PASSES: 8-1
- NR MOTION: I move not to discontinue the Bison Hunt, but move the Henry Mountain Bison Archery hunt dates to January.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously
- SR MOTION: I move that we approve the recommendation to keep the Henry's Bison archery only permit with two options on the season dates – to be between the hunter's choice ALW and cow only hunts.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously
- SER MOTION: To continue the bison hunters' choice hunt on the Henry Mtns at available dates in January.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

Bighorn Sheep

- CR MOTION: Maintain the desert bighorn sheep archery hunt somewhere in the state.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously
- SR MOTION: I move that we maintain a Desert Bighorn Sheep archery hunt opportunity somewhere in the State as determined by the Division of Wildlife Resources.
MOTION PASSES: 8-2
- SER MOTION: To create another archery bighorn sheep hunt to replace the Zion unit hunt.
MOTION PASS: Unanimously

NER MOTION: To maintain the archery tag for Desert Bighorn sheep on a unit at the discretion of the Division.
MOTION PASSES: 9 with one abstaining

Dedicated Hunter

CR MOTION: Change the number of dedicated hunter permits from 1 to 5 for units that are over the 15% cap. 4 resident and 1 non-resident.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

Remaining Motions

CR MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

NR MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of 2021 Big Game Season Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments proposals as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

SR MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the division's proposals as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

SER MOTION: Motion to accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

NER MOTION: To accept the rest of the 2021 Big Game Season, Dates, Changes and Amendments packet as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

3) Deer Management Plans-Population Objective Recommendations (Action)

CR MOTION: Accept the DWR's recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: 8-1

NR, SR, NER

MOTION: I move to accept Deer Management Plans-Population Objective Recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

SER MOTION: Increase the population objective on Elk Ridge from 1,000 to 2,000.
MOTION PASSES: 10-1

MOTION: To accept the remainder of the proposal as presented by the DWR.
MOTION PASSES: 10-1

4) Deer Management Plans- Unit Plan Revision Recommendations (Action)

ALL RACs

MOTION: Accept the DWR's recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

5) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations (Action)

CR MOTION: Not accept recommendation of cactus buck permits for the Alton CWMU.
MOTION PASSES: 7-2

MOTION: Ask the Wildlife Board to direct the DWR to reassess the inclusion of accessible lands within CWMU's.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

NR MOTION: I move to request the Wildlife Board and CWMU Advisory Committee to review accessible public land within a CWMU, to determine if it should be removed.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of the presentation as presented, but to exclude the Cactus Buck Hunt on the Alton CWMU.

MOTION PASSES: 8-4

SR MOTION: The Southern RAC recommends taking a generous approach to land owner tags.

MOTION PASSES: 8-4

MOTION: To accept the rest of the Divisions recommendations as presented.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

SER MOTION: To approve one tag per year to the San Juan Landowners.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: To accepted the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

NER MOTION: To accept CWMU recommendations as presented.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: To increase North Slope/Three corners from 2-5 tags as requested by LOA.

MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

MOTION: To leave numbers as is in the Book Cliff unit Elk – 6, Pronghorn -2, Deer -10

MOTION PASSES: 6-4

MOTION: To increase deer tags to 53 and the elk tags to 31 on the South Slope Diamond Mountain LOA permits

MOTION PASSES: 7 with 3 abstaining

MOTION: To require Diamond Mountain LOA to allow access of at least 25% of the public draw hunters to private DMLA enrolled lands.

MOTION PASSES: 6-1 with 2 abstaining

Central Region RAC Meeting

Video Conference

November 10, 2020

The meeting streamed live at <https://youtu.be/geUBXZ014Kk>

Tuesday, November 20, 2020, 6:00 pm

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Approval of Agenda
– Brock McMillan, RAC chair | ACTION |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
– Brock McMillan, RAC chair | ACTION |
| 3. Wildlife Board Meeting Update
– Brock McMillan, RAC chair | INFORMATIONAL |
| 4. Regional Update
– Jason Vernon, Regional Supervisor | INFORMATIONAL |
| 5. Waterfowl Recommendations and R657- Amendments
– Blair Stringham, Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator | ACTION |
| 6. 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments
– Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 7. Deer Management Plans – Population Objective Recommendations
– Regional Presentations | ACTION |
| 8. Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations
– Regional Presentations | ACTION |
| 9. CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations
– Chad Wilson, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator | ACTION |

Details of the specific recommendations can be found at www.wildlife.utah.gov
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act - Persons needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) for this meeting, should contact Staci Coons at 801-538-4718, giving her at least five working days notice.

Central Region RAC Meeting
Video Conference
November 10, 2020
Summary of Motions

1) Approval of Agenda

The following motion was made by Scott, seconded by Mike and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: To approve the agenda.

2) Approval of Minutes

The following motion was made by Scott, seconded by Mike and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the September 1, 2020 Central Region RAC meeting.

3) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657- Amendments

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by Josh and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: Strike 657-9-34 3(a) and do not allow the placement of new blinds

The following motion was made by Scott, seconded by Josh and passed 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Ben, Ken).

MOTION: Strike R657-9-30 3(a)(iv)(D) and do not create a retrieval zone around the Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area rest area

The following motion was made by Scott, seconded by Ben and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.

4) 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Scott and passed 8 in favor and 1 opposed (Mike).

MOTION: Recommend keeping Henry's bison archery only permit with 2 options on the season dates - 2 weeks before rifle hunt or a January hunt.

The following motion was made by Scott and failed for lack of second.

MOTION: Accept the remainder of bison recommendations

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Josh and passed 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Luke, Scott).

MOTION: Increase the any bull permits cap to 20,000, allow unlimited youth permits that do not count against cap and recommend the elk committee review this recommendations again in 2 years when they renew the plan.

The following motion was made by Ken and failed for lack of second.

MOTION: Change the HAMS hunt season dates to Nov 1 – Nov 15.

The following motion was made by Mike and failed for lack of second.

MOTION: Recommend to the Wildlife Board to discontinue multi season elk permits.

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Josh and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: Extend the archery hunt on any bull units by nine days.

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by Ben and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: Maintain the desert bighorn sheep archery hunt somewhere in the state.

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Scott and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: Change the number of dedicated hunter permits from 1 to 5 for units that are over the 15% cap. 4 resident and 1 non-resident.

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Mike and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.

5) Deer Management Plans – Population Objective Recommendations

The following motion was made by Mike, seconded by Christine and passed 8 in favor and 1 opposed (Ken).

MOTION: Accept the DWR's recommendations as presented.

6) Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations

The following motion was made by Josh, seconded by Scott and passed unanimously 9 in favor.

MOTION: Accept the DWR’s recommendations as presented.

7) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations

The following motion was made by Mike, seconded by Josh and passed 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Christine, Ken).

MOTION: Not accept recommendation of cactus buck permits for the Alton CWMU.

The following motion was made by Ken and failed for lack of second. Second was withdrawn by Scott.

MOTION: Not recommend acceptance of Skull Valley CWMU due to the inclusion of public land.

The following motion was made by Scott and then withdrawn.

MOTION: Do not accept CWMU and LOA recommendations as presented by the Division.

The following motion was made by Josh, seconded by Scott and failed 4 in favor and 5 opposed (Ben, Christine, Ken, Mike, Brock). Chair voted to break tie.

MOTION: Not approve CWMU's with accessible public land.

The following motion was made by Mike, seconded by Scott and passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ask the Wildlife Board to direct the DWR to reassess the inclusion of accessible lands within CWMU's.

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Ken and passed unanimously.

MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division’s recommendations as presented.

Central Region RAC Meeting
November 10, 2020
Online Attendance

Wildlife Board Members

Karl Hirst

Randy Dearth

RAC Members

Brock McMillan – Chair
A J Mower - excused
Joshua Lenart
Eric Reid
Steve Lund - absent
Christine Schmitz
Jacob Steele – absent

Ben Lowder – Co Chair
Michael Christensen
Luke Decker
Scott Jensen
Danny Potts
Ken Strong

DWR Personnel

Jason Vernon
Covy Jones
Greg Hansen
Blair Stringham
Lindy Varney
Chad Wilson
Riley Peck
Kent Hersey

Scott Root
Jason Robinson
Staci Coons
Dax Mangus
Guy Wallace
Teresa Griffin
James Christensen

Public invited to join online:
<https://youtu.be/qeUBXZ0I4Kk>
Central Region RAC Meeting
 November 10, 2020
 Springville, Utah

00:00:20	RAC Chair Brock McMillan called the meeting to order. He called the roll of RAC members and indicated which UDWR personnel were present on the broadcast. He explained the process that there will be no live presentations or public comments taken during the meeting.
00:13:27	<p>1) Approval of Agenda (Action)</p> <p>The following motion was made by Scott Jensen, and seconded by Ben Lowder and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: To approve the agenda for the Central Region RAC meeting.</p>
00:13:27	<p>2) Approval of Minutes (Action)</p> <p>The following motion was made by Scott Jensen, and seconded by Ben Lowder and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: To approve the minutes of September 1, 2020 Central Region RAC meeting.</p>
00:14:15	<p>3) Wildlife Board Meeting (Informational)</p> <p>RAC Chair Brock McMillan updated the RAC.</p>
00:16:25	<p>4) DWR Update (Informational)</p> <p>Jason Vernon updated the RAC on all regional activities.</p>
00:25:25	<p>5) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657- Amendments</p> <p>– Blair Stringham, Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator (Action)</p> <p>A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html</p>
00:26:10	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Jason Vernon summarized public comments received from the online presentation</p>
00:26:52	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC members asked questions regarding permanent blinds on the Willard Spur and the possibility of new blinds. Who would have the liability associated with these blinds? Is there a map of the current locations for the public to use? If no ownership of the blinds, is it on a first come basis for usage. If the division issues a permit, does that give them usage over someone that does not have a permit? Are there problems with the groups that built them feeling as if they retain ownership? Is this setting a precedent for people wanting permanent blinds on other WMA's?</p>

<p>00:40:45</p>	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>It was felt that there is a safety issue with adding more blinds. They were concerned that some blinds may be built randomly. There needs to be an informational aspect to this that the public know where the current blinds are located.</p>
<p>00:42:10</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Ken Strong, and seconded by Josh Lenart and passed unanimously, 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Strike 657-9-34 3(a) and do not allow the placement of new blinds on the Willard Spur WMA.</p>
<p>00:47:38</p>	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>Questions about creating a retrieval zone around Farmington Bay WMA rest area. How large is the rest area? Can someone enter it in a boat to harass the waterfowl, would there be a physical boundary separating the retrieval zone and where no one could trespass? Do people hunt with dogs in this area? Are there other retrieval zones on WMA's because of the same issues?</p>
<p>00:50:05</p>	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>There were concerns people entering to flush the ducks for their friends, and boundaries within boundaries can be confusing. Would the area be very obviously marked, and should we not be leaning to more consistency throughout the state.</p>
<p>00:51:53</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Scott Jensen, seconded by Josh Lenart and passed 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Ben Lowder, Ken Strong).</p> <p>MOTION: Strike R657-9-30 3(a)(iv)(D) and do not create a retrieval zone around the Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area rest area.</p>
<p>00:58:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Scott Jensen, seconded by Ben Lowder and passed unanimously 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.</p>
<p>00:59:30</p>	<p>6) 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments (action)</p> <p>– Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator</p> <p>A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html</p>
<p>00:59:50</p>	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Jason Vernon summarized public comments received from the online presentation.</p>
<p>01:00:35</p>	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC members asked about eliminating the Henry's bison archery only hunts. Is it possible to change the season dates and not cancel? How do we know it is archery hunters causing the movement on the unit, are there actual dates or target dates to</p>

	<p>keep the bison on the summer range? Would reducing the tag numbers stop the bison from moving, and questions regarding drawing odds, would moving the hunt to January work, or moving the archery hunt back, what was the success rates for the archery hunts, compared to the any legal weapon. How much rest do the bison get between the different weapon hunts?</p>
01:15:30	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>There was discussion about keeping the archery hunts and just move the dates. The concern was regarding the success rate, which is higher for archery, than anticipated, and would pushing back the hunt dates to two weeks before the any legal weapon hunt work. There may be frustration if the archery overlaps with the any legal weapon hunts.</p>
01:21:15	<p>The following motion was made by Ben Lowder, seconded by Scott Jensen and passed unanimously 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Recommend keeping Henry's bison archery only permit with 2 options on the season dates - 2 weeks before rifle hunt or a January hunt.</p>
01:25:00	<p>The following motion was made by Scott Jensen and failed for lack of second.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the remainder of bison recommendations</p>
01:25:30	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC asked questions regarding the recommendations on the any bull hunts. They asked about the HAMS hunts and the use of scopes on muzzleloaders. Is it possible to allow youth tags be unlimited, or that the pandemic caused this problem? When the multi-season permits became available, did very many archery hunters switch to the multi-season permits? Can we increase the opportunity but without going unlimited?</p>
01:47:05	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>The comments from the public that responded to this proposal were discussed. The possibility to increase to 20,000 any bull tags, or to just make the youth tags unlimited, and should the multi-season tags be limited.</p>
01:58:18	<p>The following motion was made by Ben Lowder, seconded by Josh Lenart and passed 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Luke Decker, Scott Jensen).</p> <p>MOTION: Increase the any bull permits cap to 20,000, allow unlimited youth permits that do not count against cap and recommend the elk committee review this recommendations again in 2 years when they renew the plan.</p>
02:04:57	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC was questioning the Deep Creeks changing to a HAMS hunt and the difficulty of hunting in the area. How long are these HAMS hunt? Would these hunts help with the points creep problem? There were questions on the changes with age on the Nebo unit for bull elk. What was the problem with the Dedicated Hunter</p>

	<p>this year and the reason for the rule change? Is the Dedicated Hunter program set at 15% or can it be changed?</p>
02:10:00	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>These hunts were designed to give anyone an opportunity to hunt, but on the Deep Creeks it is rugged and a difficult area to hunt. The season dates are too long on the HAMS hunts. There was discussion on eliminating the multi-season elk tags or reduce the number of multi-season tags available, and extend the archery any bull season by adding nine days, going further into the rut. Is it possible to maintain the Zion archery desert big horn sheep hunt and possibly rotate through a couple other units?</p>
02:11:25	<p>The following motion was made by Ken Strong and failed for lack of second.</p> <p>MOTION: Change the HAMS hunt season dates to Nov 1 – Nov 15.</p>
02:15:25	<p>The following motion was made by Mike Christensen and failed for lack of second.</p> <p>MOTION: Recommend to the Wildlife Board to discontinue multi season elk permits.</p>
02:25:45	<p>The following motion was made by Ben Lowder, seconded by Josh Lenart and passed unanimously 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Extend the archery hunt on any bull units by nine days.</p>
02:30:30	<p>The following motion was made by Ken Strong, seconded by Ben Lowder and passed unanimously 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Maintain the desert bighorn sheep archery hunt somewhere in the state.</p>
02:42:30	<p>The following motion was made by Ben Lowder, seconded by Scott Jensen and passed unanimously 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Change the number of dedicated hunter permits from 1 to 5 for units that are over the 15% cap. 4 resident and 1 non-resident.</p>
02:45:20	<p>The following motion was made by Ben Lowder, seconded by Mike Christensen and passed unanimously 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division’s recommendations as presented.</p>
02:46:15	<p>7) Deer Management Plans – Population Objective Recommendations (Action) – Regional Presentations</p> <p>A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html</p>
02:47:00	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Jason Vernon summarized public comments received from the online presentation</p>

<p>02:49:00</p>	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC asked to table these discussions when in person meetings would be and the purpose of pushing this through now. Is predator management a part of the plan, and does carrying capacity taken into account for the fluctuation of numbers due other reasons? Shouldn't the perception of the public be important? Is it possible to put together a note that explains the plan, its purpose, and objectives? Is there a point where we could reach objective and then begin issuing doe tags, even if they have healthy body conditioning?</p>
<p>02:58:10</p>	<p>RAC Discussions</p> <p>The population objectives are the biological sideboards and social issues are not a factor. We have to adjust and need to move on realizing this situation is not ideal but it is the present day situation. If we have had these objectives in place, on the Monroe unit five years ago, it would not be a decimated the herd with overpopulation. We do not want to get into a problem where we are having to harvest does on a healthy population. Knowing that these objectives will be addressed every five years help alleviate the concerns expressed.</p>
<p>03:13:20</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Mike Christensen, seconded by Christine Schmitz and passed 8 in favor and 1 opposed (Ken Strong).</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the DWR's recommendations as presented.</p>
<p>03:15:05</p>	<p>8) Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations (Action) - Regional Presentations</p> <p>A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html</p>
<p>03:15:17</p>	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Jason Vernon summarized public comments received from the online presentation</p>
<p>03:15:55</p>	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC members asked about the reasoning for moving the San Juan from 15-17 to an 18-20, how does it affect permit numbers?</p>
<p>03:17:05</p>	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>No discussion</p>
<p>03:17:53</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Josh Lenart, seconded by Scott Jensen and passed unanimously 9 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the DWR's recommendations as presented.</p>
<p>03:19:00</p>	<p>9) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations (Action) – Chad Wilson, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator</p>

	<p>A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html</p>
03:19:07	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Jason Vernon summarized public comments received from the online presentation</p>
03:19:28	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC members asked if the public is under-informed about the dedicated hunter program. Information about the permit allocation between bucks, bulls, and antlerless, hunter access, and how public lands within the areas are dealt with. The status of the Coyote Little Pool CWMU, and questions about the cactus buck tags proposed be given to the Alton CWMU and what are the hunt dates for that hunt? If the hunt is early, who determines which would be considered cactus bucks when all bucks are still in the velvet? What are the dates for the cactus hunt and how many permits? If they need more tags, ask for more CWMU tags not get special tags. When will the CWMU committee be convened and review the rule?</p>
03:41:00	<p>RAC Discussions</p> <p>Is there a reason to target these cactus deer on the ranch, not later after they leave, and what is considered a disproportionate number of cactus bucks? How many other CWMU's would ask for the same opportunity and this would set a precedent we may not want. They discussed public land that has public accessibility be removed from the CWMU's. Commercial activities on federal lands require permits how many CWMU's have obtained these permits. Concerned that a blanket disapproval is not a good idea, and understand that the state has issues with checkerboard land that is completely within the CWMU to be included in that CWMU.</p>
03:47:19	<p>The following motion was made by Mike Christensen, seconded by Josh Lenart and passed 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Christine Schmitz, Ken Strong).</p> <p>MOTION: Not accept recommendation of cactus buck permits for the Alton CWMU.</p>
03:52:42	<p>The following motion was made by Ken Strong and failed for lack of second. Second was withdrawn by Scott Jensen.</p> <p>MOTION: Not recommend acceptance of Skull Valley CWMU due to the inclusion of public land.</p>
03:59:20	<p>The following motion was made by Scott Jensen and then withdrawn.</p> <p>MOTION: Do not accept CWMU and LOA recommendations as presented by the Division.</p>
04:10:00	<p>The following motion was made by Josh Lenart, seconded by Scott Jensen and failed 4 in favor and 5 opposed (Ben Lowder, Christine Schmitz, Ken Strong, Mike Christensen, Brock McMullin). Chair voted to break tie.</p> <p>MOTION: Not approve CWMU's with accessible public land.</p>

04:17:41	The following motion was made by Mike Christensen, seconded by Scott Jensen and passed unanimously. MOTION: Ask the Wildlife Board to direct the DWR to reassess the inclusion of accessible lands within CWMU's.
04:19:36	The following motion was made by Ben Lowder, seconded by Ken Strong and passed unanimously. MOTION: Accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.
04:21:50	Meeting adjourned.

RAC AGENDA – November 12, 2020
Electronic Meetings Only

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Welcome, RAC Introductions and RAC Procedure
- RAC Chair | |
| 2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes
- RAC Chair | ACTION |
| 3. Wildlife Board Meeting Update
- RAC Chair | INFORMATIONAL |
| 4. Regional Update
- Ben Nadolski, Northern Regional Supervisor | INFORMATIONAL |
| 5. Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-Amendments
- Blair Stringham, Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator | ACTION |
| 6. 2021 Big Game Season Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments
- Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator | ACTION |
| 7. Deer Management Plans-Population Objective Recommendations
- Regional Presentations | ACTION |
| 8. Deer Management Plans- Unit Plan Revision Recommendations
- Regional Presentations | ACTION |
| 9. CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations
-Chad Wilson, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator | ACTION |

Meeting Locations

CR RAC – Nov. 10th 6:00 PM
<https://youtu.be/qeUBXZ014Kk>

SER RAC – Nov. 18th 6:30 PM
<https://youtu.be/9QSBVivMV0E>

NR RAC – Nov. 12th Thursday 6:00 PM
<https://youtu.be/TxVcQBVPacA>

SR RAC – Nov. 17th 6:00 PM
<https://youtu.be/rTD0u0d7FJw>

NER RAC – Nov. 19th 6:30 PM
<https://youtu.be/8t7rVxnl3qE>

Board Meeting – December 3rd 9:00 AM
<https://youtu.be/8t7rVxnl3qE>

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ability of the virus to spread from person to person, the Governor has implemented a number of Executive Orders directed at controlling spread of the virus by minimizing face-to-face interactions. Public gatherings are strongly discouraged by the CDC, State of Utah, and local health departments since they facilitate face-to-face contact and pose an elevated risk for virus transmission. The Division of Wildlife Resources and the chair of this public body have determined that public gathering at Regional Advisory Council and Wildlife Board meetings presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who attend—and will conduct this meeting using a fully electronic format. This meeting format is authorized by recent amendment to the Utah Code¹ and Executive Order by Utah Governor Gary Herbert²—and will be temporarily used in place of the in-person public meetings that usually occur around the state. Anyone wishing to comment on agenda topics in future meetings or to observe this meeting may do so by logging on to the Division’s webpage at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html> where instructions and links are provided. ¹ Utah Code Section 52-4-207(4). ² Executive Order Suspending the Enforcement of Provisions of Utah Code §§ 52-4-202 and 52-4-207, and Related State Agency Orders, Rules, and Regulations, Due to Infectious Disease COVID-19 Novel, March 18, 2020.

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Summary of Motions**

1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes **(Action)**

The following motion was made by Matt Klar, seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to approve the Agenda and the Minutes.

2) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-Amendments **(Action)**

The following motion was made by Casey Snider, seconded by Matt Klar and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to strike line one as written. Allow existing identified permanent blinds, but prohibit the construction of new blinds and prohibit any maintenance, replacement or reconstruction of existing blinds. All existing blinds, when they are no longer usable, will be retired or removed.

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Ryan Brown and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented.

3) 2021 Big Game Season Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments **(Action)**

The following motion was made by Casey Snider, seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed For: 11 Against:1 Ryan Brown

MOTION: I move to strike 7a from the line, increase the any bull cap to 20,000 and include unlimited youth elk permits on the general any bull permits and they not go towards the cap. Recommend the elk committee revisit the unlimited tags recommendation when they review the plan in 2 years.

The following motion was made by Aaron Johnson, seconded by Chris Hoagstrom and passed
For: 11 Against: 1. Paul Chase

MOTION: I move to extend archery Any bull dates from Aug 21 to Sept 26.

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Aaron Johnson and passed
unanimously.

**MOTION: I move not to discontinue the Bison Hunt, but move the Henry
Mountain Bison Archery hunt dates to January.**

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Matt Klar and passed
unanimously.

**MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of 2021 Big Game Season Key
Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments proposals as presented.**

- 4) Deer Management Plans-Population Objective Recommendations (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Kevin McLeod, seconded by Ryan Brown and passed
unanimously.

**MOTION: I move to accept Deer Management Plans-Population Objective
Recommendations as presented.**

- 5) Deer Management Plans- Unit Plan Revision Recommendations (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Ryan Brown, seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed
unanimously.

**MOTION: I move to accept Deer Management Plans- Unit Plan Revision
Recommendations as presented.**

- 6) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Emily Jensco, seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed
unanimously

**MOTION: I move to request the Wildlife Board and CWMU Advisory
Committee to review accessible public land within a CWMU, to determine
if it should be removed.**

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Paul Chase and failed.
For: 4 Against: 8. Ryan Brown, Chris Hoagstrom, Matt Klar, Mike Laughter, Kevin McLeod,
Darren Parry, Kristin Purdy, Casey Snider.

MOTION: I move not to start the Cactus Buck Hunt until Sept 20.

The following motion was made by Mike Laughter seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed For: 8 Against: 4. Paul Chase, Emily Jensco, Matt Klar, Kevin McLeod.

MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of the presentation as presented, but to exclude the Cactus Buck Hunt on the Alton CWMU.

The following motion was made by Kevin McLeod, seconded Mike Laughter and passed unanimous.

MOTION: To Adjourn.

DRAFT

Northern Regional Advisory Council Meeting

November 12, 2020

Attendance

Justin Oliver – Chair
Mike Laughter-Vice Chair
Ben Nadolski-Exec Secretary

RAC Members

Ryan Brown
Paul Chase
Christopher Hoagstrom
Randy Hutchison
Emily Jensco

Aaron Johnson
Matt Klar
Kevin McLeod
Darren Parry
Kristin Purdy
Casey Snider

Board Member

RAC Excused

David Earl
Junior Goring

Division Personnel

Jodie Anderson
Hayley Smith
Jim Christensen
Covy Jones
Blair Stringham
Lindy Varney
Chad Wilson
Bryan Christensen
David Beveridge
Justin Shannon

Paul Gedge
Mike Christensen
David Smedley
Staci Coons
Sydney Lamb
Eric Anderson
Greg Hansen
Guy Wallace
Kent Hersey
Teresa Griffin

Regional Advisory Council Meeting

November 12, 2020

Attendance

<https://youtu.be/TxVcQBVpacA>

- 00:00:36** Chairman Justin Oliver called the meeting to order, welcomed the audience, reviewed the meeting procedures, and had the Board and RAC members introduce themselves.
- 00:07:22** **1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Action)**
The following motion was made by Matt Klar, seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the Agenda and Minutes.
- 00:09:30** **2) Update from past Wildlife Board Meeting by Ben Nadolski**
Motion to write a letter to Wyoming Game and Fish Commission regarding state fishing licenses on Flaming Gorge which passed unanimously.
Motion was made to allow flaying kokanee salmon at Strawberry Reservoir which failed due to a lack of a second.
Motion to accept the Divisions recommendations with the addition that anglers return tagged northern pike on Utah lake which passed unanimously.
Motion to accept rule amendments related to deployed military with modifications which passed unanimously.
Motion to accept conservation permit audit, passed unanimously.
Motion to pass rule R657-38, unanimously.
Motion to approve 2021 RAC meeting dates which passed unanimously.
- 00:13:08** **3) Regional Update- Ben Nadolski, Regional Supervisor (Informational)**

Waterfowl- hunting picking up. Seeing lots of pheasants. Good brine shrimp season. Cyst counts high.

Wildlife- Post hunt classifications.

Habitat- Guzzlers in the West Desert.

Wildlife- Responding to nuisance and conflict issues.

Outreach- Youth pheasant hunt this Saturday. COVID problems and managing resources and staff.

WMA's- Temporary shooting closure in northern and central region. 13 swans harvested for the season.

Volunteer opportunities are limited.

00:20:58 4) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-Amendments (Action)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

00:22:02 Electronic Public Comment Report by Ben Nadolski

374 pages of public comment. 36.25% opposed, 23.75% support, 40% neutral. Summary of public comments.

00:24:39 Questions from RAC Members

Clarification where proposal came from for new blinds and managing existing blinds.

00:28:29 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Clarification given by Casey Snider regarding blinds and regulations. Allowing existing blinds only to stay. Measure in place until no longer used or eliminated. Language changes and clarifying wording. Feedback received from public and quality of habitat. Phragmites control and improving road through Willard Bay to west side. Comments from three different organizations voicing opposition.

The following motion was made by Casey Snider, seconded by Matt Klar and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to strike line one as written. Allow existing identified permanent blinds, but prohibit the construction of new blinds and prohibit any maintenance, replacement or reconstruction of existing blinds. All existing blinds, when they are no longer usable, will be retired or removed.

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Matt Klar and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented.

00:54:40 5) 2021 Big Game Season Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments (Action)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

00:55:05 Electronic Public Comment Report by Ben Nadolski, Regional Supervisor

68.13% opposed, 8.75% support and 23.13% neutral. Resistance to the unlimited any bull recommendation. Concerns about being financial vs. biological decision. Overcrowding and impacting hunt quality. Opportunity and pressure on public lands. Muzzleloaders not being primitive weapon. Reduce non-resident permits. Multi-season permits in archery hunt. Season date proposals. Support adding areas to any bull hunt.

01:02:41 Questions from RAC Members

New 5-day hunt and discontinued hunt. Concern about HAMS hunt being really long. Information given about background of hunts by Covy Jones. Discontinuing limited entry hunts and concerns about compounding draw issues with point creep. Reservations regarding selling out of licenses and 3 season tags. Dedicated hunter program for elk. Projections on how many tags to be sold. Concern about decimating elk herds and collar study. Perception of quality or opportunity. Letter discussing general archery season tag and extending dates by 9 days. Quality vs. quantity and not accusing the division of making recommendations based on making money. Overlap with youth hunt and extended archery season. Concerned that public comments were not given regarding the letter. Comments regarding SFW letter. Computer issues on getting tags sold this past year. Archery tag extended season goes from August 21st-September 17th.

01:05:06 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Applaud DWR in examining objective numbers. Appreciate long season proposal. Concerned about public opposition against proposal. Emails received regarding education received after Central RAC.

The following motion was made by Casey Snider, seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed For: 11, Against:1 Ryan Brown

MOTION: I move to strike 7a from the line, increase the any bull cap to 20,000 and include unlimited youth elk permits on the general any bull permits and they not go towards the cap. Recommend the elk committee revisit the unlimited tags recommendation when they review the plan in 2 years.

The following motion was made by Aaron Johnson, seconded by Chris Hoagstrom and passed For: 11 Against: 1. Paul Chase

MOTION: I move to extend archery Any bull dates from Aug 21 to Sept 26.

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Aaron Johnson and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move not to discontinue the Bison Hunt, but move the Henry Mountain Bison Archery hunt dates to January.

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Matt Klar and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of 2021 Big Game Season Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments proposals as presented.

03:03:55 6) Deer Management Plans-Population Objective Recommendations (Action)
Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>.

03:04:27 Electronic Public Comment Report by Ben Nadolski, Regional Supervisor
Northern Region: 14.37% opposed, 20% support and 65.63% neutral.
Northeast Region: 13.13% opposed, 14.37% support and 72.5% neutral.
Central Region: 11.25% opposed, 13.75% and 75% neutral.

03:10:14 Questions from RAC Members
Objectives higher than populations. Reduced numbers and deer populations. Growing deer population in a responsible way. Improved habitat and increase deer population.

03:18:04 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions
Division does a good job collecting data.
The following motion was made by Kevin McLeod, seconded by Ryan Brown and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move to accept Deer Management Plans- Unit Plan Revision Recommendations as presented.

03:20:20 7) Deer Management Plans- Unit Plan Revision Recommendations (Action)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

03:20:41 Electronic Public Comment Report by Ben Nadolski, Regional Supervisor

Southern region: 15% opposed, 11.88% supported and 73.13 neutral.

Southeast region: 13.13% opposed, 14.37% support and 72.5% neutral.

Same comments and sentiments from the past item applied to this also.

03:21:27 Questions from RAC Members

No questions.

03:22:10 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

The following motion was made by Ryan Brown , seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to accept Deer Management Plans- Unit Plan Revision Recommendations as presented.

03:23:42 8) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations (Action)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

03:24:07 Electronic Public Comment Report by Ben Nadolski, Regional Supervisor

17.5% opposed, 16.25% support and 66.25% neutral. Desire for more transparency and equal treatment for public hunters.

03:24:44 Questions from RAC Members

Complaint process and approvals explained by Chad Wilson. Explanation of CWMU process. Recommendation to look into public ground and accessible ground in CWMU's and removing that. Where to find information about trade out lands. Establishing boundaries between public lands and CWMU's. Landowner units and increased numbers of permits for each species recommended. Recommendations based on acreage. CWMU advisory council review of public land and inclusion of federal agencies. Formal recommendation requirements request. Public land counted in acreage clarification. Approval of permit numbers for CWMU's recommended and reduce in numbers with limited animals.

03:52:19 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Concern about extending variances for CWMU's. Support CWMU's and effort made to provide opportunity and habitat. Public ground access not to be included in CWMU's.

The following motion was made by Emily Jensco, seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move to request the Wildlife Board and CWMU Advisory Committee to review accessible public land within a CWMU, to determine if it should be removed.

The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Paul Chase and failed. For: 4 Against: 8. Ryan Brown, Chris Hoagstrom, Matt Klar, Mike Laughter, Kevin McLeod, Darren Parry, Kristin Purdy, Casey Snider.

MOTION: I move not to start the Cactus Buck Hunt until Sept 20.

The following motion was made by Mike Laughter seconded by Randy Hutchison and passed For: 8 Against: 4. Paul Chase,Emily Jensco,Matt Klar,Kevin McLeod.

MOTION: I move to accept the remainder of the presentation as presented, but to exclude the Cactus Buck Hunt on the Alton CWMU.

04:27:27 Motion to adjourn made by Kevin McLeod, seconded by Mike Laughter and passed unanimously.

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
November 17, 2020
6:00 p.m.**

Attendance

RAC MEMBERS

Brayden Richmond	Tammy Pearson
Austin Atkinson	Dan Fletcher
Bart Battista	Riley Roberts
Gene Boardman	Verland King
Chad Utley	Nick Jorgensen
Sean Kelly	Craig Laub

Division Personnel

Kevin Bunnell	Phil Tuttle
Denise Gilgen	Alyssa Jackson
Teresa Griffin	Jason Nicholes
Covy Jones	Chad Wilson
James Christensen	Kent Hersey
Kyle Christensen	Lynn Zubeck
Michael Christensen	Paul Washburn
Blair Stringham	Vance Mumford
Guy Wallace	Randy Dearth
Chad Wilson	

Wildlife Board Members

Donny Hunter

**Southern Regional Advisory County Meeting
November 17, 2020
6:00 p.m.**

00:00:02 1) Welcome

Chairman Brayden Richmond called the meeting to order, welcomed the audience, reviewed the meeting procedures, and had the Board and RAC

Members introduce themselves.

Brayden Richmond: Welcome to the Southern Region RAC on November 17th starting at 6:00 pm. I want to welcome the members of the RAC and the public that's able to watch. Again, we are doing this broadcast, we are not meeting in person. In fact we'll start the meeting off reading the note on that. It says, "Due to Covid-19 pandemic and the ability of the virus to spread from person to person the Governor has implemented a number of executive orders directed to controlling the spread of the virus by minimizing face to face interactions. Public gatherings are strongly discouraged by the CDC, the State of Utah and local health departments. Since they facilitate face to face contact and impose and impose an elevated risk of virus transmissions. The DWR and the Chair of this public body have determined that RACs and Wildlife Board meetings present a substantial risk to the health and safety to those that attend and will conduct this meeting using a fully electronic format. This meeting format is authorized by recent amendment to the Utah code and by executive order by Governor Gary Herbert and will be temporarily used in place of the in person public meetings that usually occur around the state. Anyone wishing to comment on agenda comments in future meetings or to observe this meeting may do so by logging into the Divisions webpage." So, appreciate everyone being here, it's unfortunate that this is still where we're at, but as we've all seen the rise of Covid cases in Utah the last couple weeks I think we all knew that this is where we were going to be. It will be interesting to see how many more meetings we do this way. I know there has been a lot of concern expressed and I express the same concern, especially on this meeting. It's unfortunate that it's not a normal format with the public, and this is kind of one of the big meetings of the year, but we'll do the best we can. I guess one comment I'll make before we start is, although we don't have the public in the meeting, we may have received the most feedback I've ever seen at a meeting prior to the meeting, which we've all had a chance to review and read. In some regards that's a good thing and hopefully people will continue to send feedback before the meeting, even when we are person to person I think it's very valuable. It's unfortunate we don't have a public meeting where we can talk face to face, we lose some interaction there. But we'll do the best we can and continue forward. I appreciate the RAC here. We're almost a full RAC, we're missing just one person tonight. Thanks everyone for making time and being here. With that we'll pause here and introduce the RAC. (RAC introductions- see above)

Brayden Richmond: With that, let's move to the first item on the agenda and that's the approval of the agenda and minutes. If there are any questions there? Or I'd entertain a motion to approve the agenda and minutes.

00:06:26 2) Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Action)

The following motion was made by Tammy Pearson, seconded by Nick Jorgensen . Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda and minutes as presented.

Brayden Richmond: Okay and we'll just do a roll call like we have in the past too. Austin?

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: Yes.

Chad Utley: Yes.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: n/a

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Okay, great. Thank you.

00:07:23 3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update by RAC Chair, Brayden Richmond

Brayden Richmond: Ok, great. The next item is the Wildlife meeting update. I'll just read down the motions that were made at the last Wildlife Board. There were quite a few motions so bear with me as we go through all of these. So the first motion that the Wildlife Board write a letter to Wyoming Game and Fish Commission requesting true reciprocity of the state fishing licenses between the state of Utah and the state of Wyoming on the Flaming Gorge interstate waters, and that motion passed unanimously. The next motion was that they allow falaying in the field of harvested Kokanee Salmon at Strawberry Reservoir as long as the skin was left intact. That motion failed for a lack of a second. The next motion was that they moved to accept the Divisions recommendations as presented with the addition that Anglers return tagged northern pike on Utah Lake, but that the catch and kill order for the non-tagged northern pike remain in place, that motion passed unanimously. The next motion was that they accept the rule and amendments with modification in wording that states that in order to be eligible for this benefit the individual requesting this benefit must be on active duty and be deployed outside the state of Utah. Sorry, that was in reference to the rule amendment to deployed military and that passed unanimously. The conservation permit audit, they moved that they accept the conservation permit audit and that passed unanimously. On the cougar conservation and expo permit request, that was moved to accept the request as presented and that

passed unanimously. On the wildlife sensitive species, it was moved that they repeal rule 657-38 and that passed unanimously. And finally, the RAC and Board dates were moved to pass as presented and that passed unanimously. Anybody have any questions there or any clarifications? Alright, we're going to move on to the regional update and I'll turn it to Kevin for the regional update.

00:09:50 4) Regional Update (Informational) - Kevin Bunnell, SRO Regional Supervisor

Kevin Bunnell: Ok, thank you Brayden. I'll be brief because of the length of our agenda tonight. First from our outreach section, we were able to hold several of our youth pheasant hunts, even had protocols in place that we were able to hold those successfully. We had four events in the Southern region with a total of 191 participants in those four events. They all went off very well. The other thing from our outreach section was the perch tournament up at Fish Lake, because of the Covid-19 restrictions, it's going to be a little different this year, we will still have it, but there won't be a big kick off event. It will kind of be a big 8 month long tagged fish contest where there will be prizes available and there will be two different drawings; one that will take place in April, and one that will take place the first part of September with some larger prizes from the fish that get turned in. From our wildlife section we will continue releasing pheasants for the next three weeks on Fridays and Wednesdays at several locations across the region, and those are available on our website. Starting post season deer classification and we've got a lot of captures coming up in the next few weeks. One concerning thing that's going on is we do have some sort of disease event going on in the Pine Valley, it's pretty localized down around the community of Dammeron Valley. We think it's EHD which is a hemorrhagic disease that deer get sometimes, but we're following up with our agency veterinarian to get that figured out. From our law enforcement section I'm sorry to report that Hal Stout who is our investigator has announced his retirement. He will be with us through the end of the year, but that will be a big hole in our law enforcement section that we'll have to fill. I wanted to express appreciation on behalf of Josh Carver, he has a couple of kids that have some pretty significant medical issues. There have been several community fund raising events that I know members of the community and members of the Division have really rallied around Josh's family, and that's much appreciated. We've got several significant poaching incidents that have happened in the region that are being investigated, and we hope will end in prosecutions, but those take a while to develop. From our aquatics section, and this is pretty exciting, the construction on the Lakeside Marina up at Fish Lake should be completed by December 1st. That will allow access to Fish Lake to larger boats. It will be a deeper marina than they've had available there for a long time. The way the current marina is, it limits the size of boats that can be launched at Fish Lake, this will change that. They're also putting in a couple of aerators that will keep that marina open, so that boats will have access to the lake later in the fall. Right now it usually happens that the marinas freeze over before the rest of the lake and lose maybe up to six weeks of fishing on the lake just because people can't get their boats on the lake. So that's an exciting change that's taking place. From the habitat section, this is a

busy time of year for them, especially with the fire rehab and they're trying to get as much done on their WRI projects as they can before the snow flies, so there's a lot of work going on in the habitat section. We have lost Rhett Boswel from our habitat section, he took a job with the Forest Service. And so that will be a hard skill set to replace. Rhett was our GIS specialist that supported all of our different sections, so we'll be trying to be careful with that hire to make sure we get a skill set that can replace Rhett and bring that expertise back into the region. And that's all I have, unless there are any questions?

Brayden Richmond: No questions, we'll go ahead and move on. Thanks Kevin. I apologize for giving you a strange look, I was embarrassed that I forgot your name, and I was laughing at myself. So that's what that was. Let's move on to #5, the Waterfowl Recommendations and Amendments.

00:00:00 5) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-Amendments (Action)
Blair Stringham, Migratory Game Bird Program
Recommendations

Presentations could be viewed at
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

Brayden Richmond: Before we jump into this, let's review real quick. What we'll do is we'll have questions from the RAC, then we'll have comments from the RAC, then we'll take a recommendation. On this one I think after watching the other two RACs I think it would be wise to have Blair add a little bit of clarification on this one. We had a fair amount of public comment on this one. So even though this is outside of our region and we may not feel overly invested on this one in our Region, we did have a lot of public comment on this one and I think we need to address it, hopefully quickly, and I think with Blairs clarification it will help us as I've watched what he's said in the other RACs. So Blair, would you mind just adding to this a little bit and helping us understand what the concerns from the public were and the Divisions recommendation?

Blair Stringham: Yeah, I'd be happy to Brayden. The reason why you're seeing this is we put together a committee about a year ago to address the Willard Spur waterfowl area. That's a property that we acquired through some legislation in 2019. So, part of that legislation was to get a group together and talk about some of the issues so we could formulate a plan on the area. One of the issues we had is that area has about 20 permanent blinds that have existed there for quite a few years now. The group, after talking about it, wanted to maintain those blinds, they're basically structures just randomly placed across the WMA. In order to do that, we had to have some kind of process in place just to know where they were and if they were being taken care of and things like that. So we met with one of our sister agencies, Forestry Fire and State Land, that help jointly manage that property with us, and we decided to have people get permits to essentially keep those structures out there. That would allow us to know where they are and know that they're being taken care of as well as mitigate any liability of having those structures out there on the marsh. So, basically

this recommendation is to try to put a process in place that will allow us to have the blinds out there but to have a permit process in place for those structures. As Brayden mentioned there have been a lot of comments about it and the one thing that is probably worth noting is both of our agencies aren't really interested in having any new blinds out there so one thing to consider is potentially dropping that new language out of the rule recommendation which would probably satisfy that, and allow us to have the permit process but not allow any new blinds on that property.

Brayden Richmond: Ok, great Blair, thank you. Kevin, do you want to summarize public comments on this one? And then we'll go to questions and comments from the RAC.

00:17:48 Electronic Public Comment Report (Informational) - Kevin Bunnell, SRO Regional Supervisor

Kevin Bunnell: Yes. So from the comments that came from zip codes within the Southern Region, which is how they separate comments, they just do those that are from the Southern Region, we had 22% of the people that commented were in support of the recommendations, we had about 9% opposed, and 69% that were neutral. And we'll mention, and this is true for all of the comments, we had 78 individual comments, 77 of those were from residents of the state of Utah and one non resident made up the comments that we received in the Southern Region.

Brayden Richmond: Any questions from the RAC on the Waterfowl Recommendations?

00:18:41 Questions from RAC Members

Tammy Pearson: Yeah, I'd like to know whatever regions this is, what was their vote?

Brayden Richmond: Do you have that Blair?

Blair Stringham: I don't have the specific vote. So this property exists in the Northern Region, is that the region you're referring to? (Tammy: I guess) I don't have the specific language on their recommendation, it was basically to not allow for any new blinds, and one of the things they were interested in seeing was not allowing these blinds to continue on in perpetuity, but basically have a lifespan of not having any maintenance on those blinds so overtime when they deteriorated to the point that they were unusable they would just be removed from the area.

Brayden Richmond: Blair, if I recall correctly, the Central RAC made a similar motion where they didn't want any new blinds, but the existing blinds through permit, is that correct?

Blair Stringham: Yes, that's correct.

Tammy Pearson: So are there temporary blinds, like the ones that you pack in on your back and that kind of stuff, is that allowed? Just not permanent?

Blair Stringham: So, on most of our other properties we don't allow any type of structures to be brought in. These ones are mostly made out of wood and some metal and they're kind of just boxes that are set out on the marsh. They fill with water so people drive up to them on their boat and pump the water out of them and then hunt out of them for a day. They fill back up with water. They're difficult to see and part of the challenge with those is just making it so they're safe, so we want to have that permit in place that will require people to mark them so they can be seen by other users and boaters out there.

Tammy Pearson: Thank you.

Brayden Richmond: Thank you Tammy. Other questions by the RAC?

Chad Utley: I just had a question, it looked to me by the rule that regardless who constructs and upkeeps the blind, it's kind of a first come first serve, whoever is there that morning gets to use it. Do you have any other properties where you have any other blinds that follow this rule? I'm curious to know whether you've had any conflicts because of people occupying a blind that somebody else is upkeeping?

Blair Stringham: So, we don't have any other properties that have any kind of permanent blind on them, this is the only property that we allow them on and that's mostly because they were there prior to us even getting the property. I am not aware of any conflict personally, but I know it has existed in the past, because there are some people that feel ownership over those blinds. You are correct, they would come on a first come first serve basis, so whoever was there would be able to hunt those first.

Chad Utley: To follow that up, so if you grant permission for somebody to upkeep that, are you going to have a form where they acknowledge that that type of behavior isn't permitted and there is no ownership? It would seem to me that it would at least alleviate some of the conflict if they go into it knowing that.

Blair Stringham: So that would be clearly communicated to anybody that has a permit to these blinds that they do have to keep marking them, but it isn't their blind and they could be hunted out by other people.

Chad Utley: Thank you, that's all I've got.

Brayden Richmond: AAny other questions from the RAC? Riley has joined us, just to let everybody know, so we have a full RAC. Let's move to comments then, if we have no additional questions. Comments from the RAC? If there aren't additional comments, then I'd entertain a motion.

00:23:10 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

The following motion was made by Chad Utley and seconded by Craig Laub.

MOTION: I move that we strike the language in rule R657-9-34 3(a) where it indicates the placement of any new permanent blind will require written permission from Utah Division Of Wildlife Resources and F.S.S.L. and accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brayden Richmond: Chad, would the rest of your motion include the language to accept the rest of the Divisions proposal as presented?

Chad Utley: Yes, I'm sorry, I would want to accept the rest of the proposal as presented.

Brayden Richmond: Any additional discussion on a motion? Let's vote.

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: Yes.

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: Yes.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: (No response)

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Motion passes unanimously. Thank you. Boy, this meeting started off well, in the other two RACs that first item took them an hour to pass that first motion.

Tammy Pearson: Knock on wood.

Nick Jorgensen: Hey Brayden, I wonder if we could get Verland to do a thumbs up or something if he can hear us? That way he can get his vote in.

Brayden Richmond: I haven't even seen him on my screen, so without him talking he's not going to pop up on my screen.

Nick Jorgensen: Okay.

Tammy Pearson: I wonder if someone can send him a chat or something, because I don't think he can even hear you.

Brayden Richmond: Phil is contacting him and working with him. Ok, let's move on to agenda item #6. And again, this is a huge agenda item, as you're aware with all the public comment and feedback we got. We've got a lot of items to discuss. In order to make this as simple as I think we can make it, what we'll do is use the RAC packet memorandum that Covy sent out and we'll go down that memorandum by subject. What I'd like to do is for each item we'll have questions on that item. So if we're talking about deer we'll only have questions on the deer, then we'll have comments on the deer, then we'll entertain motions on that item. Once we go through every subject, then we'll have a motion to accept the remainder as presented. So we'll go through each subject individually, then once we have motions on each subject, then we'll make a motion to accept the remainder as presented. So, with that we'll start with the big game season dates. Do we have any questions on the big game season dates?

00:25:52 **6) 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments (Informational)**
- **Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator**

Presentations could be viewed at
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

00:26:54 **Questions from RAC Members**

Brayden Richmond: Any comments on the Big Game Season Dates?

00:27:03 **RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions**

Gene Boardman: I've got a comment on the early rifle hunt. The comments that were made on this from the public were generally against the early

rifle hunt sighting that there are too many hunts and too many days in the year that stress the deer.

Brayden Richmond: Gene, I think that's a valid comment, I almost wonder if we want to address that more when we get into the actual deer. I think that may relate to the strategy with the deer, it could be with the season dates, we could approach it either way. If you want to make a motion you're welcome to, but we may want to approach it when we talk about the deer part of the agenda item.

Gene Boardman: That will be ok with me.

Brayden Richmond: Ok, any other comments on the season's dates? Ok, let's go ahead and move on. Before we dive into the deer, and I'm going to have Kevin summarize all the public comments for all the species, then we'll dive into the species specifics. So I'll turn it over to Kevin for just a minute.

00:28:28 Electronic Public Comment Report by Kevin Bunnell, Regional Supervisor

Kevin Bunnell: Ok, thank you Brayden. So this is only broken down by the single agenda item, I will say I went through and kind of broke things out in a little more specific fashion, I can share that with the members of the RAC at your request based on some of the items that were had more comments than others, but I will reserve that unless it's asked for because I don't want to influence the RAC members to go one way or another. But, the overall picture on this agenda item was 14% support, 17% neutral, and 69% opposed.

Brayden Richmond: And let me just add a comment there, all of us received the comments from the public, and we should have had a chance to review those and so we would rely on each member of the RAC to represent the public there. We do appreciate the public's response on this as I mentioned at the start of this meeting. Probably the most response I've seen for a RAC, so we did have a lot of comments. With that said let's jump into the first item on here, the deer. So questions regarding the deer proposals? Wow, if you don't have any questions this is going to move really quick.

Tammy Pearson: There's so much I don't even know where to start.

Brayden Richmond: Ok, any comments on deer?

Craig Laub: I have a lot of comments from a lot of people I talked to. Gene talked about the season dates and the pressure on the deer; I had a lot of comments about the early deer hunt being discontinued and the muzzleloader hunt because the muzzleloaders now are just single shot rifles and it's putting a lot of pressure on that and it's really affecting the numbers and the quality of our hunts.

Brayden Richmond: Ok.

Tammy Pearson: So is this where we want to talk about population objectives?

Brayden Richmond: No, that will be in agenda #7 and 8. So right now we're just talking about the proposals with the changes to the deer. On the deer, again just looking at that memorandum, a couple of changes they're making is that new hunt on the North Slope, they're discontinuing the Henry Mountains management deer hunts, and also the North Slope Summit limited entry hunt. So that's the changes that are being proposed on deer. It's also the time, as Gene and Craig both mentioned, to talk about those early hunts. We can make.. This is the rules and regulations RAC so this is our opportunity for our RAC to have a voice if we want to see changes to the deer. So whatever you want to comment on, or have additional discussion. Any other comments from the RAC?

Covy Jones: If you want an explanation on why we implemented that early season and what it means, is that beneficial here?

Brayden Richmond: I think that would be great Covy, if you could address that and also the late muzzleloader. I think that would be a great reminder. And even Covy if you would address that these are general units and what that strategy means to the quality of the hunts.

Covy Jones: Ok, absolutely. So one of the things that we found in the last deer plan that ended in 2015 is that we were growing deer then, a little bit different of a situation, but we were having a really difficult time managing to these buck/doe ratios especially on these units that are large public land units. And when we did that, one of the things that we kept running into is when we went to increase permits or add the number of permits that we needed to to manage to the objective is we'd meet resistance. The biggest resistance was hunter crowding, you know, we're tired of hunter crowding, it creates a lot of problems in the landscape and we would like to see this more spread out. Well you hit a point where the only way to spread out hunter crowding is to create a new hunt, and we know that the biggest desire for most sportsmen is rifle hunting. Now, that's the rationale behind the recommendation, and there's some compromise, it's earlier and also shorter, and I know there is some negative feedback in this in the RAC packet, but remember, these are very desired hunts too. You're not hearing from that segment of the population. When you look at draw odds, and maybe Lindy can speak to this a little bit, but I'm going to look at some of the data I have here, but on the Pine Valley for that hunt draw odds are 1 in 3.7. So, almost 1 in 4 people that put in for that are actually able to hunt it. You've got a high demand, and they want to hunt it. Just remember that that constituency exists as well as you go through this. Zion is 1 in 1.9. Fish Lake is very high, that's a very desirable season on the Fish Lake, it appears the draw is 1 in 7.8. Anyway, just something to consider while you're thinking about the rationale to why. Also, we understand that deer populations are down, we also cut over 10,000 permits this last year. I don't know if anyone saw BYU's update or not, but one of the things we saw is, a lot of the yearling bucks this year, and a lot of the 2.5 year old bucks this year

were not harvested like they were on average years. There were a lot of bucks that made it through is what I'm trying to say. So just a little bit of information.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Covy, I think that's helpful.

Tammy Pearson: So, are we still asking questions, or are we commenting?

Brayden Richmond: You're ok to ask questions Tammy.

Tammy Pearson: I guess it's kind of both a question and a comment. My biggest concern and the concern of everyone I've talked to is the amount of days that deer are hunted. So if you did the early hunt, does that cut out days on the regular hunt? Because in my mind I think that we're hunting them too long, I think the pressure is too much for that long of a period of time. As far as a new hunt, of course North Slope isn't our area right? I don't like all the added days and all the added pressure to that. I grew up in the days where you had, what was it, maybe a seven day hunt? And I'd go back to that, maybe shorten those days.

Covy Jones: Was that a question Tammy?

Tammy Pearson: Well the first part was the question. Sorry, does that cut days off the other hunt or does it increase the total amount?

Covy Jones: It doesn't cut days out of the other hunts, but what I will remind you is there is less pressure in these other hunts. I understand that the days hunting are a concern, but again when you were growing up we also had 225,000 hunters on the landscape during that short hunt. It was a magnitude of order in difference of hunters that we had out there. Now, the social perception is that folks feel uncomfortable with that and would like more space. The only way to get more space is to spread out through more seasons.

Brayden Richmond: The one comment that I would add to this too is this was done by the deer committee. The deer committee was organized with representation across a broad spectrum and put forth by the deer committee, went through all the RACs. So it wasn't something that just got dropped on the public, it had a review process, it went through all the RACs, and there is a lot of positive feedback on the surveys on the units that have this too. I do think we need to be careful, I understand there is some concern out there, but there is also a lot of positive feedback.

Craig Laub: I agree that in 2015 that probably worked, but we've been in a drought for 3-4 years and I don't think the numbers support what we did in 2015.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Craig.

Gene Boardman: I'd like to say that Tammy you babysitted my kids, so I go back even further than you, and if I go back to when there was basically one deer

hunt in the whole state, 11 days in October. You got on the mountain and it sounded like there was a war going on there. Most people were shooting open sights or scopes that weren't very good and the idea was to throw a lot of lead if you wanted to get a deer. It was crowded and we don't want to go back to that, but now I go out and I hear maybe 10 shots all day long on the first day. We're not overcrowding things. And as I recall on this early deer hunt, it was sold to us that we'd try it on a few units the first year, which is what happened, then on the next year it was expanded to almost all the units or maybe all the units, but it was a bigger expansion from the first few units that came out. Covy is shaking his head, so maybe I don't know what I'm talking about, but that's how I recall it.

Covy Jones: Sorry Gene, I wasn't trying to shake my head. It's been all the original units that we put it on except now we're adding the North Slope, that's the one new one.

Brayden Richmond: So how many total units are there Covy, could you remind us?

Covy Jones: Nine with the new recommendation, eight previously.

Brayden Richmond: So eight previously are the original and the recommendation is to add one more is all?

Covy Jones: That's correct.

Chad Utley: I have a question. How many limited entry permits do you issue on the North Slope in a normal year?

Covy Jones: Kent, can you pull up that data on the North Slope limited entry permits?

Kent Hershey: Yeah, give me a second.

Brayden Richmond: While he's pulling that up, we're not sure whose it is, but we are picking up some background, it sounds like a TV program from someone's mic when they come on. I'm not sure if there's a possibility of turning down the TV, if that's possible or not? Covy, while he's pulling up the numbers on the North Slope permits, could you provide an explanation on that again just to remind everyone? It was in the presentation, but I think a little more explanation would be great.

Covy Jones: Yeah, so this comes back to the days on the North Slope when a hunt overlaps both elk and deer and allows a hunter to go hunt that up there. Before when we started this we didn't really have a way to do this other than adding a limited entry hunt up there on that portion of the North Slope, and the new deer plan allows us to do it with this mid season hunt. That limited entry hunt is not a great quality hunt. There has been a lot of frustration with where it is, timing, and the comments haven't been that it's a great limited entry hunt. It probably fits better in

this model just continuing with general season unit in this circumstance. And so where we can do that now, that's what the rationale is behind the recommendation.

Kent Hersey: Last year on that hunt we issued 96 permits.

Gene Boardman: I've got a question I guess. The Division probably has a pretty good idea now if we'll be able to go back to the number of tags that were issued in 2019 for next year, and things will change and that won't come up until April, but I'd like to know what the chances are that we're going back to 2019 on the amount of tags issued.

Brayden Richmond: Gene, maybe I should let Covy answer that, but I think that's an awfully tough question, and you said it, that will be the upcoming RAC in April. I guess I would hesitate to even have a comment on that in this meeting, I think it's purely speculation. I would like to table that until April if that would be alright, unless Covy wants to throw out predictions.

Covy Jones: Brayden, what I was going to say is our recommendations are data driven, we manage to the plan. So to put out a number before we do all of our deer classification and know exactly what everything looks like, it wouldn't be fair to the public and it's not fair to the process. '18-19 was a really hard year for deer, this year we had higher survival. But, we lost a lot of deer over the last few years before that. There's a lot that goes into this and I don't have the data to make it.

Gene Boardman: The problem is we come up to April and there's only one place to cut the damn tags and that's the general public. I'd like to see the Division or someone looking into if we could share that around a little more if we can't go back to the '19 levels. If we're the same this year, or below, I think it needs to be shared around more than waiting until April and then cutting all the tags on the public.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Gene. Other comments on the deer? I think we may be ready to entertain, if there are any changes to the deer portion of the plan, I don't know that I've heard any real strong options. But if there are any motions to make any changes we'd entertain that. Otherwise, we'd move onto elk. Remember we won't make a motion to approve as presented until the very end. Are there any motions that we should entertain on the deer?

Deer: No motion was made on the deer

Brayden Richmond: Ok, let's move onto elk. As you know the majority of comments were on the elk, the majority were on the general season/unlimited general season tags. I'd imagine we have a lot of opinions there and some good discussion. Let's start with questions and some clarification on it, and then we'll move on to comments. So questions on... actually let me go into the elk packet and remind everyone of what we have on this elk section. So they did a mid-year review with the statewide elk committee, they discussed the issues listed below. They reviewed the age objectives, look for options to increase opportunity in our limited

entry hunt and that's where the HAMS hunt and September archery hunt came in. In our area we also had a lot of comments on the HAMS hunts on Deep Creeks, look for options to increase opportunity on the general season any bull hunts- so we had a lot of comments there specific to our region were a lot of comment specific to the Southwest Desert unit. There were new age objectives on the Book Cliffs and Little Creek. Book Cliffs and Little Creek are currently 7.5-8 and the recommendation is 6.5-7. Cache and Little Creek is currently 4.5-5 and the recommendation is 6.5-7. Central Mountains/Nebo currently 6/5-7 and the recommendation is 5.5-6. They're recommending new limited entry hunts, with the archery hunt from September 1-30th and a handgun/muzzleloader hunt from October 1- November 15th. There's a discontinue of current limited entry hunts on the Cache North, Nine Mile, Stansbury, and West Desert, those would all be moved into the general elk units. So just a reminder the 15,000 tags on the general elk units, we're adding four units there, so I think we need to be sure to address that when we're talking about the general season elk hunt. Then there's boundary changes to the Plateau, Southwest Desert, Box Elder, and then the new general season elk hunts with the unlimited tags. So quite a few items on this elk plan. Let's start with questions and we'll open it up to the RAC with questions.

00:48:36 Questions from the RAC:

Austin Atkinson: I have a question to kind of kick this off. I'm not sure if you wanted to go in order and try to break this out as it's numbered in the memorandum, or do it all at once.

Brayden Richmond: I think let's tackle it all at once, let's jump into the elk. So whatever question you have, go for it.

Austin Atkinson: Covy, I have a question for you about the elk committee, when did they meet, how many times, was this post Covid/in person, could you give us a little bit of light on that.

Covy Jones:

Covy: Yeah, this goes back to a directive from the Board, Austin. So the Board asked us to review a few things from the elk committee that weren't in the elk plan. One of them was to review the age objectives that weren't working. When we met in March with the Board, and there were several RACs that said the age objectives keep cutting and cutting and we don't see those ages increasing, or we keep adding and hitting a point of saturation on the unit. They're just not working with what we set them at in 2015. So the Board said, we'd like you to meet and investigate those and go over it unit by unit. Which ones are performing to plan, which ones aren't. The other thing is, and this started two years ago but we asked the Board for some time to work through the deer plan, but two years ago they said we want you to explore some kind of primitive weapon hunt which was later defined by the HAMS hunt on some units. We said ok, we need to reconvene the committee to do that. So, we reconvened the committee post Covid, exact date Austin,

I really don't remember. It was August/September. We only had one meeting. We went through these issues, in addition to that we went through the sales date we had in July for any bull permits and talked about the pressure there, the issues there and the concern of folks just wanting to hunt, and I'd love to address any of that. But we had one meeting, went through those and came to a consensus of a lot of the issues and made recommendations on some tweaks in the elk plan. Nothing very big. Well, at the time it didn't seem very big, but there are obviously some concerns and frustrations from the public on some of the recommendations that the committee made and in conjunction with the Division.

Brayden Richmond: Any other question from the RAC?

Austin Atkinson: I'll ask another one, I've got a few here. The archery and HAMS, the new limited entry hunts gives more opportunity, I understand that. What I'm unclear on Covy is the age objective, like on our age objective map, we have all those limited entry units and I understand these are still limited entry units and would still be spike hunted under the regular structure, but what is the age objective with archery in HAMS with this plan going forward or does it no longer exist?

Covy Jones: So when we brought it up in the plan we set it up with the lowest age objective because we understand that restricting the weapon type means that we'll probably harvest lower quality bulls, even if higher quality bulls exist on the landscape. And if the goal of this hunt was providing additional opportunity, we knew that if we set it at the same or above the neighboring age objective there's a chance that we would actually reduce the opportunity and not be able to increase or provide that. And again, it's the weapon type that really curtails when we go back and look at our hunts. Obviously hunting elk with a rifle during the rut, you have almost always the highest age objective, a few units don't follow that trend, you know the Wasatch and a few others, but overall that's what it is. So we did put a criteria in there for age objective, but also to look at percent success. And base permits on percent success and where we're at there and provide opportunity that way. After a few years, when we rewrite the plan next time, we'll have a few years worth of data and that will probably help us better set an age recommendation for these units. But setting it, we recommend one, but setting it hard and fast we did not do.

Austin Atkinson: Ok, so they are not set at 4.5-5...

Covy Jones: It's written in there, that's one of the metrics to manage for that age class, in addition look at percent success. So it's both criteria.

Austin Atkinson: And how did we, if I can follow up on that, how did we choose these four units? Was that part of the elk committee or was that strictly on the Division?

Covy Jones: No, it was part of the elk committee. So we went through unit by unit where we asked a couple of questions when we went by unit by unit. Do we have units as a whole under performing, or what aren't performing well as units. And if you look at some of these like Cache North is a great unit and it borders a general season unit there in Idaho. Oaker/Stansbury in that unit we've cut and cut and cut permits and now we're down to 19-20 which is the bottom end of what we're recommending on a limited entry unit and still not meeting the age objective there. West Desert/Deep Creek down to 20 permits there. And then looked and said are there portions of any units, and had the biologist/managers on the phone in addition to the elk committee and the plateau of Kaparowitz came up from the committee that here is an area that's part of a limited entry unit that doesn't really get a lot of hunting pressure, so without affecting the Boulder we could probably change this, direct some pressure here and provide a different kind of opportunity. And that's how we came up with the units. So unit by unit or portions of units under utilized or under performing.

Austin Atkinson: One more follow up. I know we can't guess on permit numbers yet, but for those worried about what this will do to their unit because it may be their backyard unit, I see non resident permits for every hunt, so I'm guessing 10ish at least for each hunt is that safe to say?

Covy Jones: I mean we offer more than that on all of these now with the exception of the Plateau because it's not a hunt. Austin, I want to be completely honest with the RAC here and the goal here is that by restricting weapon type and offering a different kind of opportunity, hopefully we can provide more opportunity as well. Nobody is looking to go completely crazy with this out of the box, but 20 permits on some of these units... they probably have more opportunity to offer than that.

Brayden Richmond: Any other questions Austin? You said you had several, is that all of them?

Austin Atkinson: I do have a couple more. Do we have a way that we collect any hunter satisfaction rating from general season elk hunts? I know there is not a mandatory harvest reporting, but do we have any data that shows someone was happy with their general season elk hunt?

Covy Jones: Kent, do you have that data in hand? Could you bring that up for us?

Kent Hersey: Yeah, I'll be able to get that in a few minutes. What specifically? Are you looking for? The archery, the any bull, the spike, all of the above? Any units?

Austin Atkinson: I should have clarified, mainly for the any bull.

Covy Jones: Austin, we met September 1st for the elk committee. They got that to me and I wanted to clarify that.

Kevin Bunnell: It might be (inaudible)

Covy Jones: Yeah, yeah, it's not a mandatory harvest survey, but it's part of the data that we collect, so we should have that data. Along with success rates and everything else.

Kevin Bunnell: So it's collected through the phone surveys (inaudible)

Austin Atkinson: Covy, while he's looking that up, I'll ask a related question. Hypothetically, if any bull tags were not increased to unlimited, do we need to add those other four any bull units? Was that contingent in the elk committee? I'm trying to appear into what they said, if we're going to increase tags we need more units or vice versa, we increased units now we need more tags?

Covy Jones: Alright, Austin. You asked a bigger question, so I'm going to ask the RAC to allow me to answer some of it as a whole, and if I don't answer your question Austin, hit me up again. This came down to a bigger discussion on where we are at with general season hunting on elk, and some of the frustration and the fact that we sold out in less than eight hours when we offered those permits for sale. And the restrictions with deer hunting and where we are, this is our last over the counter hunt. And just having that discussion with the elk committee about maintaining a general season over the counter hunt for elk in Utah, a lot of them felt like that was very important. And maintaining that as part of our hunting culture. Again, it's our last over the counter hunt that we have in the state. So when we talked about that, and talked about the frustration, we asked how do we expand the opportunity in general season? In Utah we manage for quality elk. With the exception of maybe.. I don't know if you could even say Nevada who has very few elk and very few elk permits, but Utah manages for a lot more quality than about anyone in the midwest and we have a lot more limited entry. We know that it takes years and years to draw those limited entry hunts. So, what areas can we give on and maintain more opportunity in general season, because we're having that demand. So we did, we looked at it as a package Austin, we said ok if we can recommend these regions is the committee ok with recommending unlimited? And I think the word unlimited sounds crazy. It sounds absolutely crazy, but it's not unique and anybody that hunts knows that Colorado offers unlimited resident and non resident bull tags, and they have that caveat in there that it's got to be a rational bull. Wyoming offers unlimited bull permits. Montana offers unlimited resident bull permits. Idaho offers unlimited resident bull permits. And the any bull units in Utah are really hard units. So the first thing we asked ourselves was, do we have a biological concern with this? Are we going to do something that could damage a population? And the answer is we didn't have a biological concern. There are enough areas refugia in these places that will allow the bulls to maintain... all the cows will be able to have a calf if they are in body condition to do so. So that wasn't a concern. All that background, we looked at units, we said if we do this could we recommend this? The committee felt that if/then. If we could get these additional units, then it would be a recommendation that they could support. I hope that answers your question.

Kent Hersey: So, in terms of satisfaction what we see is on a scale of 1-5 and one is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied, 3 being neutral. 3.2 is our overall average satisfaction with 46% of the people saying satisfied, so either giving it a 5 or a 4, 24% giving it a neutral, and then 30% saying unsatisfied. And that's overall a state perspective. Depending on the unit, those with elk tend to have better satisfaction, some of these units have very few elk on them and they tend to be lower, as you'd expect.

Brayden Richmond: Go ahead Bart.

Bart Battista: I have a question about the comment about the refugia and the permination that yes, there's enough refugia and there will be enough bull elk that can hide in this refugia. Is that based on assumption? Or is it gleamed from data? Right now it seems to me that this is just a race to the bottom. Hunt as much as you can until you have a problem and then you have to try to get them back to a healthy population. Right now they're healthy, there's a lot, so let's hunt and give as much opportunity as possible. Then you're going to have to try to recover from that. And that's just a concern.

Covy Jones: I think it's because we are talking about males, Bart. Tammy could probably answer this number as good or even better than I can. Tammy, how many bulls do you set loose in your pasture with your cows?

Tammy Pearson: I run 600 cows and we turn out about 70 bulls.

Covy Jones: On free range, and that's probably even high isn't it Tammy? That's probably pretty good coverage.

Tammy Pearson: Figure at least one bull to 20 cows or something like that.

Covy Jones: Yeah, it's just a basic Wildlife Management principle. We know we're not going to get below that threshold with the areas that we have. The Uintas have large areas of wilderness, Tribal lands, all these units are surrounded by limited entry units with higher bull densities. A lot of times when you run high bull to cow ratios you end up with bulls leaving the unit and going to find other animals. So, if anything we have enough bulls moving around the state that biologically it's not a concern. So, race to the bottom is very inaccurate. It may be socially unacceptable, and the comments are that this is a social issue, but biologically it would have crashed in Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana and it's just not the case. Elk are very sustainable to pressure, and it could reduce harvest success, we understand that. Giving an opportunity like this could make them more susceptible to that increased pressure and make them less available because elk are smart, they're hard to hunt. When they get pressure they disappear. We do have a lot of collar data that shows that, especially on the Wasatch and other areas where we've hunted them hard, and the cows too. Kent, did you have something to add to that?

Kent Hersey: I was just going to add that is based on a lot of data. We had over 300 collared elk on the Wasatch and as soon as the hunts started about 70% that are using public land that number reduces to about 25% in a day. And it happens very quickly and as soon as the hunt are over they go back to that public land. They respond to pressure quickly and according to those deep canyons it makes it very hard to hunt or eventually impossible with that private land refugia.

Bart Battista: Thank you.

Covy Jones: Bart, I'm actually really glad you asked that question. I just want to say thanks, because it gave us an opportunity to explain that. Sorry Tammy, I didn't mean to talk over you.

Tammy Pearson: No, you're good and I don't mean to jump around but of course my heart is in the southwest desert. So what kind of estimate did you have on those elk there?

Covy Jones: I don't think the biologists get to talk enough and I would love to let either Jason or Teresa field that question.

Tammy Pearson: Throw them under the bus.

Jason Nicholes: So Tammy, your question is how many elk do we have in that area north of Hwy 21 that is proposed as an any bull unit? Is that correct?

Tammy Pearson: Right, right.

Jason Nicholes: So, we have survived that several times over the past couple of years and it's ranged between 150-200 elk in that area north of 21 in our surveys.

Tammy Pearson: That's kind of what I had in my head and I had several people ask me. How many did you collar last winter?

Jason Nicholes: We collared, I believe, seven elk up there between Iron Mine Pass and Black Rock Pass. The rest of the elk were collared south of 21 on the Shanty Hills last year, another 20 or so.

Tammy Pearson: Oh, okay. I know, you know, this is my backyard/frontyard and whatever else you want to call it. But I think people for the most part, that I've talked to, besides the comments that we all got is I think they're ok with the general season hunt and splitting the unit, but nobody is ok with the unlimited tags. I haven't heard anybody happy with that. Like you said, it might be a social decision. It's as bad as arguing with those horse huggers that want a million horses out there.

Covy Jones: And Tammy, I never want to discredit the social aspect of a recommendation. Public comment is really important to me, and the fact that it steers these recommendations is great.

Brayden Richmond: I'm just going to say, Kevin does have the numbers on these public comments if we want to review them, if you're interested just ask. Specific to the southwest proposal. I wanted to ask another question while we're on this. Jason, my understanding with this area that we're dividing off on the Southwest Desert is that we really don't want elk in that proposed area. That's an area that we don't want the elk moving into. So part of the reason for making this a general hunt is to help push them out of there. Is that correct?

Jason Nicholes: Uh, I would say no, I don't think we mind having elk in that area, we've done a lot of work developing guzzlers in that area specifically for elk in that area. We want to manage for a lower number, we don't want more than the range can handle there. But I think that it's an underutilized resource. Looking back at the harvest data over the last three years, it looks like we've had 6-7 bulls harvested in that area over the past 3 years. And I think with 200 elk up there we can take more and not have a problem. It's an underutilized resource.

Brayden Richmond: And I might add, we'll get to comments in a minute, but let me go out of turn a little bit to add to Tammy's comment. This is kind of in my backyard, it's in my back county and I talked to the locals about this issue. I would get the same comments Tammy would. People aren't necessarily opposed to this being a general unit, they're opposed to the unlimited tags in that area. So that's kind of the general comment I've got. Now, we've definitely had comments that don't want it broken off at all or made a general unit, but generally speaking, the consensus has been they're fine with it being a general unit they just don't want unlimited tags.

Tammy Pearson: Well, and I think to be fair Brayden is they're going to compare that to the Spike hunt, because unless you're hunting spike during that hunt, you don't want to be out west. It turns from population 2.0 to 2,000 people. I think that's the biggest fear and it's not necessarily coming from my community it's coming from the people that are out there.

Brayden Richmond: Yes, that's the same sentiment I hear.

Craig Laub: I have a question for Jason. Just across the road on the south side, how many elk are over there supposedly?

Jason Nicholes: South of Highway 21?

Craig Laub: Yeah.

Jason Nicholes: So, right now I would estimate that there are probably about 700 elk south of Hwy 21.

Craig Laub: Okay, do you think outside the open will pull the elk down far enough? Part of the comments I heard were people afraid that because the elk number would go down on the north side then elk from the south side would go across.

Jason Nicholes: I think that we may push some there with hunting pressure. We may push some south of Hwy 21. I think it will be seasonal, I think once the season is done they'll go back.

Craig Laub: Okay, thank you.

Tammy Pearson: I agree with your comment Covy, when you were talking about the pressure on elk. I have been extremely surprised by the places I have seen elk this year. I mean just off the wall. I had elk tracks last fall and again this year that have gone right down the middle of the valley. I don't know if they're trying to cross out there by the solar panels and head to the minerals or what, but it's been kind of funny. I ran into a little five point bull last night and I think he was pretty happy that I was not hunting, he just kind of stood there and looked at me.

Austin Atkinson: Can I ask a question Brayden? This is Austin. For Jason and for Covy I guess. Obviously we read a lot of the comments about the southwest desert split, and I'd ask Jason could we turn that into a spit unit but keep it limited entry with a lower age objective? Would that help with what you're trying to do with the southwest desert north portion?

Jason Nicholes: Yeah, I think that's an option to have it as another limited unit and manage to a lower age objective. That's definitely an option.

Covy Jones: And Austin, I would say it maybe accomplishes maybe one goal, but not the goal of offering up more general season activity to maintain (inaudible).

Brayden Richmond: Chad, it looks like you're contemplating asking a question. Just hit that button.

Chad Utley: Thank you, I actually do have a question for Covy. I don't mean to oversimplify this unlimited tag issue, but it seems to me when I watched your presentation and while I'm listening today, you've indicated that there's a demand for these unlimited tags, but that the hunting isn't going to be very good. I think the word you're using is difficult. What I'm understanding is they're not great hunting units, but yet there is this high demand. Am I over simplifying that, or is that accurate?

Covy Jones: So, yeah, in Utah we've decided to pick our best elk units and make them limited entry. And then units that were more difficult to access, more wilderness, more areas of refugia, those were the areas we took to put into any bull. And we did that because that was the public demand, and that offers that refugia that you need in order to maintain bulls on the landscape that makes sure all the cows are bred. So yeah, it could make the hunt harder, I don't want to sell this as it will be

easier. Any time you pressure elk or apply more pressure they can become less available. Now that said, there is already quite a bit of pressure on these hunts and you might be at a point of pressure saturation at this point, if that makes sense, so it wouldn't necessarily change. But any bull units are hard to hunt. There is always a chance of a bull, but at a success rate of about 10%, that's one every 10 years. Some folks are a lot better at it and they harvest every year or every other year, and some hunters have been going for 20 years and don't harvest and still love it and still buy a tag every year and are grateful for the opportunity because that's what they want to do. But success, if we base it on harvest that's one thing if we base it on the ability to hunt that's another thing.

Craig Laub: Covy I got a question for you. If we go to an unlimited number then in 3-5 years are we going to have to cut that number because we've decimated the open bull units?

Covy Jones: Okay, I think I would go back to what I said before in that biologically, no. The populations are still going to grow. All your cows are going to get bred. But again I think there is a lot of pressure solically on this one, and if the support is there to go unlimited, the Divisions goal is not to ram this down anyone's throat. That's what I would say. Our goal is to provide a chance at opportunity. We made the recommendation, and if it's not supported it's not supported.

Brayden Richmond: Hey Gene, when you have your mike open we're getting a lot of background noise. So feel free to ask a question, but when you have your mic on we're getting a lot of background noise from I believe the TV in the background. Any other questions from the RAC? We can move on to comments. I don't want to move along too fast, this is an important RAC, but at the same time I do want to move along if we're ready. Are there any questions?

Nick Jorgensen: You know, we've had more input than I've ever seen in the four years that I've been on the RAC against unlimited tags for the elk. I guess my question is, how much influence should the public have in terms of what they want here and what they don't? Are we listening to those who take the time to make those comments or will it be a decision independent of all those comments? That's my question.

Brayden Richmond: That's why you're in this spot Nick. You get to make that hard determination and your recommendation is part of the RAC. It is an interesting situation to be on the RAC because my opinion has been different than public input at times and you kind of have to weigh that. I don't know if you're asking Covy that question or if you want someone else to answer it, but I think it's a good question Nick, and it's going to be a fun one tonight to deal with.

Nick Jorgensen: Well that's a question for anybody that has enough guts to answer it I guess. It could be from Covy, I'd like to know his opinion and Brayden I'd like to know your opinion on it if you're willing to share.

Covy Jones: I don't have an exact answer for you. But what I can say is recommendations are always a combination of biological, social, pressure and really a lot of this, I think Brayden nailed it. This is all on the RAC. Kevin, you were going to say something.

Kevin Bunnell: I was just going to say very simply Nick, I think that absolutely public comments need to be factored into the recommendations that this RAC makes, that's why we gather.

Nick Jorgensen: I hope so.

Brayden Richmond: I guess one other comment I'd add to that. It is challenging, you know, similar to any other elected position, you have to weigh the pros and cons, you have to weigh the public input and then you have to try to make a great decision. And you're not going to make everyone happy. This really doesn't have biological impact as Covy stated it's really coming down to a social issue and so that makes it frankly even harder. If it had some biological impacts I think that's easier to make a decision. The social is difficult. One thing I would suggest on issues like this, and Tammy can speak to this even better as a county commissioner, you get a lot more input when people are unhappy than when they're happy. I think you also have to keep in mind that there is a large, well I don't know large and I don't want to misrepresent, but there is a portion of people out there that think this is a good recommendation and they don't comment. Most of your comments come from people who want change or disagree. So it's a tricky one. I watched the other RACs struggle with this issue and we're going to struggle here in a minute.

Tammy Pearson: Yeah, and I, you know leave it to me to always make the smart aleck remark, but a good friend of mine sent me a meme that says, being a leader or being in politics if you expect to make everyone happy you better change careers and sell ice cream instead. So I think the people who are weighing in on this are tied to it. I don't think the biological impact is strictly on the animals, I think we're also talking about the resources themselves, the impact it's making on the ground, the crowds and whatever. So it's a hard thing to weigh those options.

Bart Battista: I mean from it seems like for the past couple RACs since I've been in, and I've been in for the past year or so, it seems like there is a general trend of people not being happy that the Wildlife Board wants to increase opportunity. So when you get proposals like this where it increases opportunity, potentially at the expense of quality, we are going to get that same group opposing it. That's not the full story for sure, but that does seem like something that's going on.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Bart. Gene, we said we'd come back to you. Coming back to your question.

Gene Boardman: I finally got in. If I understand it, you're changing the designation on 7.5 limited entry elk units with the proposals tonight, 4 to HAMS and 3.5 to go to the open bull. Is that correct?

Covy Jones: Gene, I am sure that question is for me. I got to dissect it a little bit to understand what you're trying to ask. First of all we did a couple of things, we looked at unit age objectives on three units, so where we looked at them were Book Cliffs Little Creek, Cache Meadowville, and the Central Mountains Nebo and we realized that they probably weren't at the appropriate age objective. So the Book Cliffs Little Creek had a 7.5-8 and that's a small portion of the Book Cliffs. They're the same elk as the elk that are outside so managing that differently than the rest of the Book Cliffs just didn't make sense. We tried it, it didn't work, so we're recommending that to go back with the rest of the Book Cliffs which is back down to 6.5-7. Cache Meadowville, we lumped that in with Cache North when we originally did the elk hunt and looking at collar data we've realized those elk are probably more using Cache South and Cache South is managed at a higher age objective so when we add permits there we are negatively impacting the Cache South but not actively managing the Cache Meadowville. So we're recommending we increase that age objective from 4.5-5 to...

Gene Boardman: That's not the question I'm asking.

Covy Jones: Okay, then I am glad you stopped me. Help me understand your question.

Bart Boardman: Now you're taking four limited entry units and making them HAMS units, is that correct?

Covy Jones: Not completely correct, no. We are taking Cache North which was an independent limited entry unit... Well not taking it, we are recommending that. We are recommending that the Stansbury portion, so half of the Oaker Stansbury's is recommended to go into this. The West Desert Deep Creek which is a full unit, and then the Plateau Barney Top Kaiparowits portion of the Boulder. So it's not the full Boulder, it's a portion of the Boulder, large in area but not as many elk.

Gene Boardman: Okay, and you're taking or recommending to take 3.5 units out of limited entry and make them any bull unit areas, right?

Covy Jones: Yes. We're recommending the full unit on the Nine Mile Anthro. We're recommending the Oaker portion of the Oaker Stansbury. The north portion of Southwest Desert North. And a small portion out in the Box Elder Grouse Creek we're calling the Sawtooth.

Gene Boardman: Okay, I agree this is going to provide more opportunity but it's got to reduce opportunity on the people that are trying to get a limited entry any weapon tag. Don't you think that would be correct?

Covy Jones: So, by that definition if we're taking them out of limited entry, yes. When we evaluated these units they weren't functioning as good limited entry units.

Gene Boardman: Okay, just establishing there's a trade-off here and if you're wanting to draw a limited entry tag so you can shoot an elk, this is going to cut your opportunity a little bit.

Covy Jones: Yeah, you know honestly Gene, you are right. There are absolutely trade offs. Maybe I was coming off a little bit defensive of the recommendation and that's not my intent at all. But there are always trade offs to wildlife management. You're always swinging that pendulum between opportunity and quality for sure.

Brayden Richmond: I would just suggest, and maybe this is a question for you Covy, I'm not so sure that is accurate. So we're adding opportunities and areas which would likely add permits to the general season permits, but then those HAMS hunts, the idea is that you could have likely more tags on those. So you're likely increasing general season tags and increasing limited entry tags.

Covy Jones: And Brayden when we met with the committee that was the goal. The goal was to provide more opportunity in both without damaging quality, especially on limited entry. But I'm acknowledging what Gene said, no system is completely perfect.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, you're impacting peoples' backyards on some of these, but the net result should be more tags for limited entry and more tags for general elk. Other questions? Are we ready to move on to comments and discussion for the RAC? Any additional questions? Let's move into comments from the RAC. And once we kind of wrap up the comments then we'll kind of go into entertaining motions from this elk portion. Comments from the RAC?

01:29:19 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Bart Battista: This is Bart, I did want to comment that in my earlier statement I didn't want to be dismissive of all of the comments that people made against this. I mean there are people that will be affected and are concerned about it. I just wanted to make sure that was clear.

Brayden Richmond: You know, I want to add a comment here. This probably goes to what Nick was saying. This was interesting, generally I really like what the Division has done here in the elk committee and I like these recommendations. Me personally, I am not too nervous about this unlimited general elk tag, I think biologically it is sound and frankly I think it's going to be similar to what happened with the turkey tags a few years ago when we make those turkey tags not limited entry, we didn't see the sales go up that much. In fact I believe the sales have actually decreased a little bit if I understand that correctly. I think there is somewhat of a false sense of urgency to buy these tags recently and it's driving demand, but we'll see in a couple of years. Having said that, I represent the sportsman and it kind of puts me in an interesting spot where I kind of disagree with the feedback I got. I'm likely not going to be voting on this

unless it comes down to a tie breaker. But if I were voting I'd have to take the feedback I got very serious and I want to represent those that reached out and added comments. So I think that this unlimited elk is a challenging one. I also just want to speak briefly on those HAMS hunts and the archery hunt units. I just applaud the Division and the elk committee for coming up with these. This is something we've asked for in Utah for a long time. There has been a lot of feedback about having more archery opportunities in the rut in Utah. I think this is a great approach and I think these are great units to do it on. I am very supportive of these HAMS hunts and the archery dates on those units. I'm very excited about that.

Bart Battista: So, I guess one concern I have is I hope that we're going to maintain proper monitoring, I mean I know we always say that we do. If we're going to do this we have to make sure that we aren't hurting the populations, that's my biggest concern. I know you're saying it's not a concern biologically and it's sound, but we have to ground truth that and I just want to make sure that we do.

Covy Jones: Bart that is part of the data we collect. Everyone of these units we fly every 3 years in addition to ground classification every year and make sure we aren't hitting biological thresholds. That's our first goal, so thanks.

Tammy Pearson: So Covy, let me ask you this question. On these that we're talking about tonight, is this going to be locked into a five year plan as well? As far as whatever changes we approve right now? Not to dismiss what you just said Brayden, I'm really happy you're the Chairman, so if we have a tie breaker we'll let you do that. But, if you want a specific recommendation right now, I would be happy with the boundary changes to add these general season units and split that off, but I'm not comfortable in making a recommendation that you do the unlimited tags. But what I'm saying is if we made that recommendation, are we locked into that now for five years before you change anything again?

Covy Jones: Uh, no Tammy, the elk plan is up for review in 2 years. This is a mid plan review for 7 years. We met after 5 and we have 2 more.

Tammy Pearson: So if we are going to pick anything out of here is now the time to do that? While we're talking about elk?

Brayden Richmond: Sorry, say that again Tammy, what are you asking?

Tammy Pearson: Sorry, so if we want to make something, some sort of a change away of what is recommended... so I would say that I would cut out the unlimited tags, that would be my recommendation for elk.

Brayden Richmond: We could go ahead and entertain some motions on this elk portion again, we're still talking and having some discussion, but if you want to make a motion on that portion of this you're welcome to make a motion.

Tammy Pearson: Well, I can wait until we are done talking about it. That's just one other question I guess.

Brayden Richmond: I guess a comment I'd have to what you said Tammy about can we not make changes to this moving forward. We love to have 5-7 year plans, but history would teach us that we love to change them in the middle too. The Wildlife Board can pass and make changes any time they choose. It's really nice to have a plan and try to stick to it, but no, it's not locked in stone.

Tammy Pearson: Okay.

Austin Atkinson: Brayden this is Austin. Can I make a comment while we're on this unlimited elk tag section? I would just like to say fiscally going unlimited doesn't seem very responsible in my opinion. We're used to selling a million dollars worth of tags in one day, and now we're going to spread it out and perhaps people may not buy those tags, they get busy. Who's to say how many we're going to sell? My big concern, and Lindy provided those numbers, is over the past 5 years we're looking at 35,000 individuals that have purchased any bull tag. Covy can correct me if I'm wrong on that. About 35,000 unique individuals. Potentially we could way oversell that 15,000 limit if that limit was removed. I would like to say that on the survey that was sent out, the word unlimited was very scary. I don't think there was enough background that was given on that. Anytime we hear that word unlimited, it came up when we talked about predators, anytime that word comes up there is always a group of people that freak out, and rightfully so. Those that have their honey holes and they like to go into the Uintas or they like to go wherever for the any bull hunts and now they're thinking that everybody could be in their unit with no end in sight and buy their tag on their way to the hunt, it is very scary for the sportsmen and I think that for that reason we need to take this comment that we did receive into account. Now, one comment that Covy did bring up was, families want to hunt together, and I believe in that and I think most of the public does as well. I think we should consider what most of the other RACs have considered and that was allowing youth hunters that are 17 and under to purchase that bull tag with no limit, no cap at any time. I believe that does help the families that want to take them out and go hunting, but I'd be a proponent of leaving this 15,000 cap at least for the next two years until it's reviewed. That's my comment on the unlimited elk tags.

Brayden Richmond: Sorry Tammy, go ahead.

Tammy Pearson: I was just gonna say to tag under what Austin said, is this eligible for the mentoring program for the youth, or is that only for limited entry?

Lindy Varney: No, you can use the mentor program for the youth for these permits.

Tammy Pearson: Okay.

Brayden Richmond: Go ahead Chad.

Chad Utley: I just had a comment, and this kind of goes back to Nicks question. I think I speak for all the members of the RAC. We received a lot of comments, we read all of those comments. The well thought out comments I set aside and I've read them a number of times and put a lot of thought into it. Regardless of how this vote goes, know that your voice was heard, it was considered and that's all we can do. We listened, we considered, and made the best decision possible.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Chad. Gene, did you have a comment?

Gene Boardman: Yeah, just wanted to comment that on bringing on these new units to any bull, I'm not against it particularly. But I remember when Mt Dutton was first opened to elk hunting and we swarmed that place the first year and that's what's going to happen on these new units that are opening because people are going to think that, gosh there are going to be some big bulls there because they've been protected all this time and our chance of getting a big bull that's where it is. So, I'm not against the change, I'm just saying that when it happens there is going to be.. it's going to be interesting.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Gene. Additional comments?

Craig Laub: I just would like to say on that unlimited tag, I'm not really in favor of the unlimited tag, but I think with the additional units and that I think it would be good to set that number from 15,000 to 20,000 and see how that goes.

Brayden Richmond: Here's what I would propose. I think we could ask for a motion on just the portion of the unlimited elk tags, that's really the bulk of the conversation. Then we could get that one out of the way if there are any additional discussions on the rest of the elk tags we could visit that after. But I would like to ask that we entertain a motion on the any bull unlimited elk tags.

Tammy Pearson: I would love to make a motion to limit the number of the any bull to 15,000 or whatever the cap was that we were talking about earlier. I do not support the unlimited tags.

Nick Jorgenson: I second that motion.

The following motion was made by Tammy Pearson and seconded by Nick Jorgensen

MOTION: I move that we limit the number of any bull to 15,000, but have unlimited youth tags.

Motion passed 9 in favor; 3 opposed (Gene Boardman, Chad Utley, and Craig Laub).

Brayden Richmond: Do you want to address the youth tags in that that Austin brought up, or do you want to leave your motion as stated?

Tammy Pearson: I kind of like that Austin. I think that's a good idea, whatever we can do to bring the kids in. Do you want to make them unlimited?

Brayden Richmond: The other two RAC have made youth tags unlimited, with a cap on the remaining tags.

Austin Atkinson: And in past year data showed that about 1,100 youth have purchased those tags in the past, so you could essentially sell a thousand over that if it was youth unlimited and adults got the rest.

Tammy Pearson: I am good with that if that's alright with you Austin.

Brayden Richmond: Let me restate your motion Tammy. So you want to keep the cap at 15,000 tags on the any bull units, but have unlimited youth tags. Is that your motion?

Tammy Pearson: Sounds good to me.

Brayden Richmond: And Nick do you second that motion?

Nick Jorgenson: I second that motion, yes.

Brayden Richmond: Additional discussion. Let me maybe just start the additional discussion. I guess the one comment I'd make is we are adding 4 units without increasing anything from those 15,000 tags. Just a comment. I don't know that I feel strongly that that needs to be changed, but that would be my comment.

Craig Laub: I agree with you, Brayden. I can't vote for it unless we have an increase. I'm not in favor of unlimited, but I think we could stand to increase the number.

Brayden Richmond: Okay, we have a motion and a second. Let's go ahead and vote on this motion and see if it carries. Austin?

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: No

Brayden Richmond: Gene, would you like to state why you're voting against?

Gene Boardman: Since they're adding more units, might as well add more tags. I like 20,000 instead of 15,000.

Riley Roberts: Yes

Chad Utley: No

Brayden Richmond: Would you like to state why you said no Chad?

Chad Utley: I am not convinced that it's going to have any biological detrimental impact on the elk. And if it provides more opportunities for families that want to be out there hunting, then I don't see the harm in it.

Nick Jorgenson: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: No.

Brayden Richmond: And is your reasoning what you mentioned before?

Craig Laub: Yes it is.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Okay the motion passes with three No's and I made notes on the reasons for those no's which I'll present to the Board, so I appreciate that. Let's move on to the remaining elk recommendations. Do we have any remaining comments on the additional elk recommendations? And if we don't, we've had a lot of comments already, I'd entertain any additional motions or changes. Again, we'll wait to accept the remaining as presented until the very end.

Austin Atkinson: Brayden this is Austin. I'd like to make another comment on the archery and the HAMS units in respect to that. I know Gene was talking about those units. I'd just like to remind the RAC that as we increase these opportunity hunts, which I'm all proponent for more opportunity and more tags available, when we make these seasons really long, it makes it difficult to keep the balance. For example the HAMS hunt that is proposed is a 6 week season from October through mid November, which experience has shown these hunters are going to figure out how to harvest if we give them too much time. So I hope that as we increase these opportunity hunts that we don't have to cut tags back and it becomes another very small limited entry hunt because we've given them too long of a general season. The reality is 4 weeks for archery sounds good, but it's a long time. 6 weeks

for HAMS, that's a very long time, and I don't want to see us have to cut tags back because people are too good of hunters these days. That's my comment on that.

Brayden Richmond: Austin I agree with your comment. I think it's a very valid comment. As I look at these I think it's just a great opportunity to have some lower points required to draw due to a lower success but if we have too much success and lose that opportunity. So I agree with your comment. The question I have is would you be interested in making a motion along that line?

Austin Atkinson: You know this is kind of a new animal this archery and HAMS and I'm not sure how it all fits in the plan. But I see two options, we either cut the seasons back substantially and we still the sportsmen that complain they got the wrong season, it's not during the rut, etc. Or we separate that into multiple hunts which is very common amongst other hunts in other states and give them a week window and make 5-6 different hunts instead of everybody getting the whole month or the whole 6 weeks. We could still give quite a few tags, but shorten the widow so success is not too high. I'm not sure if anyone else has an opinion about that or I could try to form a motion around that.

Covy Jones: Brayden is it okay if I comment on the season length there? Just to give some background and some clarification?

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, that would be great.

Covy Jones: So the thought process on the archery was the month of September. It's common and Idaho has that recommendation. But on the HAMS it was a long season date because that overlaps other general season hunts and their hunting with an inferior weapon type. Now, we don't hit the mark on every one of these, and I should say we discussed all the hunts with the elk committee, we didn't discuss all the season dates with the elk committee. I would ask that if there is a motion to shorten the HAMS portion of this hunt that we move it later in November instead of earlier, just because there are so many other hunts in October. I guess that would be a preference if that's the direction the RAC wants to go.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Covy.

Chad Utley: I have a question before we get too far into this. We received a number of comments about muzzleloaders and the ability of those to shoot farther with scopes than they have in the past. I remember one comment said they were at 400 yards to shoot with a muzzleloader. That's certainly a lot more different than a shotgun or archery would be. I'm wondering if you have any statistics on the different success rates on muzzleloaders vs. the different weapons included in the HAMS?

Brayden Richmond: Chad, I believe you're asking about the HAMS hunts. On the HAMS hunts you can not have a scope.

Chad Utley: Okay, thank you.

Brayden Richmond: Okay, any other comments? Or does anyone want to make any other motions?

Tammy Pearson: Let me ask a question real fast. The tag numbers, now I'm trying to find this on the packet. Was there a recommendation at any point in time over the 15,000 tag limit?

Brayden Richmond: For what?

Tammy Pearson: Just on the Elk tags. The total number. I'm just saying that these guys wanted an increase and that's not a part of the elk recommendation is it? To increase the tag number?

Brayden Richmond: What? Tammy I am a little lost. On spike tags it would stay the same at 15,000 which is what it currently is, and the motion that you made was 15,000 on the any bull tags. Now the tag numbers on the other limited entry won't be decided until April. I'm not sure I'm following what you're asking.

Tammy Pearson: Well, I guess what my question... so with my motion because we said the 15,000, was that part of the original... I didn't pop up with 15,000 on my own, we've been talking about it.

Brayden Richmond: So 15,000 is what it's historically been for any bull.

Craig Laub: Brayden, could I make a motion to amend that to 20,000? I'd like to make it if someone will second it.

Brayden Richmond: No, we already have a motion and it's passed for a number. So I think we're past that. No, we couldn't do that, that one's done.

Austin Atkinson: Brayden, this is Austin. I don't know if you have a biologist for West Desert Deep Creek, but looking at the two archery HAMS hunts that are in our region, obviously we have plenty of winter range in the Plateau Barney Top, but if we moved the season dates back to November 1-15th which was in the SFW proposal that they sent as well, and pushes it later like Covy recommended when he was just speaking. What does that do to West Desert Deep Creek? Do those elk go to Nevada, to the reservation? Or would that still be a viable hunt in November?

Covy Jones: So yeah, that unit's primarily in the central region, but that's a great question. A lot of them do go to Nevada, but not all of them. There is still private land where there are elk. That doesn't mean it will be an easy hunt.

Austin Atkinson: Okay, thank you.

The following motion was made by Austin Atkinson and seconded by Nick Jorgensen

MOTION: I move that we accept the archery and HAMS hunts as presented, but change the season dates on the HAMS hunt to November 1st through the 15th.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brayden Richmond: Any additional discussion? Okay, we'll call a vote on that. Austin?

Austin Atkinson: Yes

Bart Battista: Yes

Gene Boardman: Yes

Riley Roberts: Yes

Chad Utley: Yes.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Thank you, motion passes unanimously. We really didn't have a whole lot of discussion on the remainder of the items on the elk. Are there any other changes we want to talk about or motions or are we ready to move on?

Austin Atkinson: Brayden this is Austin. I'd like to bring up the extension for the general season elk dates that has been brought up in a few letters and email that were sent to us. It was suggested by the public that they really want to hunt during the rut, which is later in September. Currently the archery hunt ends too early on that in any bull units. This would not apply to spike units. Other RACs have also discussed this, so I think we should bring it up. The proposal would be to extend the archery bull season by 9 days and make it overlap with the youth any bull any legal weapon hunt.

Brayden Richmond: Thank you for bringing that up, I intended to discuss that. So thank you for bringing that up. This has been received pretty favorably as I've watched this so I think it's a good one to discuss and come to a solution.

Does anyone have questions on this? Everyone should have received the email outlining the proposal Austin just said. Does anyone need any clarification on that? I believe it's fairly straight forward. Austin would you like to make a motion on that?

Austin Atkinson: Sure.

The following motion was made by Austin Atkinson and seconded by Tammy Pearson.

MOTION: I move that we extend the archery any bull season dates by nine (9) days.

Motion passed 11 in favor; 1 opposed (Gene Boardman)

Brayden Richmond: Okay, so we have motion to extend the archery any bull units by 9 days. Any discussion on that?

Gene Boardman: I don't like extending the season. Changing the season dates include that shows that it goes later, I'd go along with, but we're just about ready to give the archer 365 days of hunting.

Brayden Richmond: Well, they need 370 Gene. (laughs) I appreciate the comment Gene. Any other comments?

Austin Atkinson: I would throw back in there Brayden, as I understand it the archery hunters would have to wear hunter orange because of the general season hunt that overlaps with the youth any weapon hunt.

Brayden Richmond: That is correct.

Bart Battista: That was going to be my question about safety.

Brayden Richmond: So anytime you overlap a general season you're required to wear hunter orange. Let's go ahead and vote.

Austin Atkinson: Yes

Bart Battista: Yes

Gene Boardman: No.

Brayden Richmond: And Gene is the reason for your no vote based on your comment a minute ago?

Gene Boardman: That's correct.

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: Yes.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Thank you, so we have one (1) no, the rest yeses. The motion carries. Thank you. I do want to make a quick comment here. I think this is good to point out. This recommendation was really spearheaded by one individual I believe out of the Central Region. He came up with the idea and spearheaded the idea. Sent emails out, contacted RAC members. I frequently hear that this RAC process doesn't listen to the public and it's hard to get things done. Three RACs today have passed this motion spearheaded by one public, it's not someone on a RAC. Frankly I'd be surprised if this doesn't carry through the Board. I just think this is a great example of public involvement and the process does work. I'm glad that you remembered that one Austin, and I think this is a great one to realize that this is the process working. Thank you.

Austin Atkinson: Brayden, I will throw in one more comment into that, I don't think we're out of the woods yet, because the limited entry guys are going to bring this up again. So keep that in mind. They always want to hunt later in September.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, I mean it still has to go through the Board, but even at that, it's been heard in 3 RACs and passed in 3 RACs and it's an individual that spearheaded it. So the system works. He's been heard. He had a good idea and it's working. Any other motions or discussions we want to have on the elk portion? Then we'll move on to the easy ones, you know like buffalo.

Austin Atkinson: Brayden, this is Austin again. I'll bring up one more. Southwest Desert unit. I had a lot of public comments on that. I mean it's a unit that's 100 miles long north to south, it's a very large unit. How does the RAC members that live close to that unit, that utilize that unit feel about keeping Southwest Desert North a limited entry? Still splitting the unit, but not adding it to any bull?

Tammy Pearson: I think there are benefits to both. I'm not sure. I think if you're taking point spread it would help with that. If you're talking general season and opportunity there's a lot more benefit to opening it up for an open bull. I've

already drawn out my elk hunt, so I'm done. That's the only chance I got to hunt out there. And I would have really appreciated that extended archery season.

Brayden Richmond: And Austin my personal opinion on this one, just talking to some of the locals, where we're not going unlimited on the general bull, I don't know that I felt an overwhelming response one way or the other of keeping that limited entry versus putting it into an any bull unit. I would be inclined to stay with the Divisions recommendations.

Austin Atkinson: And I think the reason I bring it up outside of the comments we received is once it goes any bull we lose the ability to manage for age objective and is it going to decrease the quality that these guys want? Not maybe in the first year, but over the years when those bulls are moving back and forth. You're killing them on one side with quite a few tags and an unlimited amount of pressure within out statewide quota. And the other side is a very difficult unit to draw. That would be my concern.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, and I think that's a valid concern, a valid comment. And we would entertain a motion obviously if you wanted to make a motion on that.

Austin Atkinson: I'll throw out the motion then.

The following motion was made by Austin Atkinson.

MOTION: I move that we split Southwest Desert into a North and South and leave it as a limited entry unit for Southwest Desert North.

Motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Brayden Richmond: Do we have a second on the motion? The motion fails for a lack of a second. I do need to go back and apologize. We've looked at it and Craig, you asked a question earlier if you could go back and make a motion to increase the number of tags on the general season unit. I said you couldn't because we had a motion that stated the number, but I guess looking at the rules you could go and make another motion and see if it carries. So if you want to make the motion Craig, you're welcome. It is a little strange to me where it carried pretty heavily that we would go and change those numbers. But you're welcome to try if you want to.

Craig Laub: I'd like to try, I don't think people realized the limit on that, but I'd like to try to raise those tags to 20,000 from 15,000.

The following motion was made by Craig Laub and seconded by Verland King.

MOTION: I move that we increase the any bull permits from 15,000 to 20,000.

Motion passed 6 in favor; 5 opposed (Austin Atkinson; Bart Battista; Riley Roberts; Chad Utley; and Nick Jorgensen)

Brayden Richmond: So let's go ahead and vote on it, I think we've had the discussion already.

Austin Atkinson: No.

Bart Battista: No.

Gene Boardman: Yes.

Riley Roberts: No.

Chad Utley: No.

Nick Jorgensen: No.

Sean Kelly: Yes

Verland King: Yes

Craig Laub: Yes

Tammy Pearson: Yes

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Riley was no?

Riley Roberts: Correct

Brayden Richmond: Chad was? Sorry we missed you Chad, what was your vote?

Chad Utley: No.

Brayden Richmond: So the vote is, passes 6 to 5. So the motion will be to raise that to 20,000. I guess we can have this as 2 motions. When I go to the Board I'd like to tell them that we have a motion to raise it to 20,000 with an unlimited on the youth. Could I say it that way or do I need to present it as two separate motions? If anyone is uncomfortable with that let me know, but that's how I present it to the Board and also discuss we had a lot of discussion on this.

Bart Battista: So I guess I have a question on that, but probably should have gone before the vote. I did say no, but I thought in the initial discussion that it was wanted to raise the number because of the 4 new units that were being added? And 5,000 is the appropriate number for those 4 units? Probably right, but it seems like a large number for that.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, thank you Bart.

Tammy Pearson: Hey Brayden, just to clarify that though, that's a statewide number, that's not just those 4 units?

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, you're not pushing all 5,000 into those 4 units, they can go wherever they want. You may have 20,000 people show up in those 4 units, who knows?

Austin Atkinson: Hey Brayden that motion doesn't overwrite the portion of the youth that we put into the first motion, or did it?

Brayden Richmond: No, that motion that we put in for the youth in the first motion would still stand.

Craig Laub: I said all that changes was the number from 15,000 to 20,000.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah. I think I agree with that motion. I think it's the right motion to make. So I appreciate that and the RAC voted in favor.

Tammy Pearson: And honestly, if I had been thinking a little faster or slower it would have been in my motion. So, sorry about that Craig.

Brayden Richmond: Okay, any additional comments or things we need to cover on the elk portion? Ok, let's move on, the next item is the pronghorn or in Utah we call them antelope. So in the plan the proposals would be the new hunt on Fillmore Oakcreek muzzleloader, North Slope/Three Corners/West Daggett muzzleloader, and then there's some changes made to the Plateau Highlands and we'll maybe ask Covy to cover that quickly for us if there are any questions. Then discontinue the Central portion of that Plateau Parker. So fairly straight forward. Let's open it up for questions on the pronghorn proposals.

02:07:47 Questions from RAC Members

Tammy Pearson: What is our state... Do we have a state objective as far as population and that? Or are we just going strictly per unit?

Covy Jones: It is the sum of all the unit objectives and we took those before the Board right after we did the pronghorn plan, I believe that was last year those went before the Board. Kent was highly involved in that and he's on the line here. Kent do you happen to have the summary of the pronghorn objectives?

Kent Hersey: It looks like the statewide summary is 21,430.

Tammy Pearson: Just seems like we're seeing a large increase, at least in my area. I'm seeing a lot of places where they've never been before. It seems like a lot of the rehabs, the WRI projects since these fires, the antelope are going a lot higher into the upper country in higher elevations and we're getting... they're everywhere.

Brayden Richmond: You know Tammy, that's an interesting comment because that's exactly what's going on on Plateau and why they're proposing that change on Plateau. So, interesting comment.

Tammy Pearson: Right right. So do we visit the numbers, not until in the spring, right? It just seems like we could really increase a lot of tags and opportunities there.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, the numbers will be in the spring. Any other questions on the pronghorn portion?

Gene Boardman: I'm just amazed that our premier antelope unit the Plateau is having problems. Did we do something wrong there or is there an explanation for why it's gone that way? They used to hunt it heavily and then trap from it.

Covy Jones: Yeah, I think there were a couple of times where there were some pretty extreme increases in permits down there. Some recommendations were in excess to what the Division recommended. I don't think that every pronghorn is gone, but they're definitely not using the Plateau like they were. It's pressure related at this time and there is a lot of pronghorn habitat on the Plateau at this time, and you know they've always used the trees. A lot of them have used the trees in that area and it's more now and a lot fewer using the Plateau. This is a regional thing too, so if anyone from the region would like to pipe up on this, please feel free.

Verland King: I think, this is Verland, I think it's predators, it's the hard winter, it's drought conditions. They all play a part and the antelope numbers are down. There are a few right here around Bicknell and there are a few out high, but numbers are down. We're happy, happy, happy.

Brayden Richmond: Verland for a minute there I was thinking you were wanting to increase the numbers and I was getting excited. Any other comments on antelope? Are there any motions that anyone would like to make changes to the antelope portion? Alright, let's move on to bison. This one had quite a few comments on it, so there may be a few things we need to discuss here. Questions on the bison? Kevin just informed me that the Southern Region RAC packet, we actually had no comments on the bison which is really surprising because statewide there were quite a few comments. So that's surprising that in our region we didn't get any. Not many anyways. Questions on the bison from the RAC?

02:12:54 Questions from RAC Members (Bison)

Austin Atkinson: This is Austin. I have a question if there is a lot of sentiment to keep the archery Henry Mountains hunt available in the draw and not cut them completely. It sounds like it was not a biological concern, more of a timing concern in pushing those animals where we would want them to be pushed. Would there be a timeframe that would work looking at the whole schedule of the Henry Mountains that would make more sense to do those hunts later in the season?

Covy Jones: Yeah, Austin we talked about this in some of the other RACs and the sentiment to keep a unique opportunity. Understanding that you can hunt a bison with a bow during the other seasons as well. But to keep kind of a unique opportunity there, we have some time open in January and we know that can be some really hard season dates, but if there is public sentiment there we as an agency would feel comfortable doing that. One thing we're not comfortable with, is when the bison leave the mountain they go on to winter ranges and affect a lot of people in the area, so not having that pressure early and allows them to stay up on the mountain longer in a place where there is not as much conflict. So that was our concern behind the recommendation, because those hunts are both early.

Brayden Richmond: Covy, would it be fair to say....

Covy Jones: Yeah, go ahead.

Brayden Richmond: Covy, would it be fair to say that if we moved that archery into January that we likely could increase tags because the harvest is likely going to drop significantly. Looking at those late cow hunts, the success rate is poor on a once in a lifetime hunt, it's surprising how low the success rate is. I would have to imagine an archery hunt in January is going to have a very poor success rate, which I believe would allow us to increase opportunity. Would that be an accurate assumption?

Covy Jones: That's a fair statement Brayden. It could be a very, very difficult hunt.

Brayden Richmond: Personally, I really like that idea. I like the idea of offering more people the opportunity for a once in a lifetime hunt. I think, man, if we could find a way to have more hunts not be a 100% success rate, some of our draw hunts would allow people to go hunting instead of go killing.

Tammy Pearson: What's the fun in that? Honestly the buffalo hunt I can't see anything in the success unless you've got a long range cannon of some sort. So my question is on the Book Cliffs. I'm not really sure what the Book Cliffs is. That's not one of the ones where they're worried about the private land and the conflict between the cattle and the.... because that's Range Creek?

Covy Jones: That's correct Tammy. We're actually expanding that boundary to cover the whole Nine Mile unit. Where we don't have a bison management plan. We're not managing for bison. The Book Cliffs Wild Horse Bench that's on the Book Cliffs proper and we've harvested enough bison in recent years that we just need to pull back. That's the rationale about discontinuing that hunt.

Tammy Pearson: Okay.

Kevin Bunnell: The geography there is an explanation. You've got the Book Cliffs there where we're managing for bison. Then you have a big swath of reservation land and that's where bison are leaving the reservation and coming on to Range Creek. The bison we're managing for are on the other side of the reservation property.

Tammy Pearson: Okay, so it's all right. I'm just trying to get my head wrapped around the map part of it. I know it's a huge conflict from the Tribe, across the river on to private, and they've just had so much trouble there. But this is a completely different unit?

Covy Jones: It's a completely different unit. And the awesome thing about that, and update on that over the counter license, we've harvested over 50 bison in that area and given the opportunity to sportsmen to be able to do that. So that's a success. That's pretty neat.

Tammy Pearson: Okay.

Gene Boardman: I'd like to know how many tags there are on this archery hunt? What was given out this last year?

Covy Jones: This last year Gene, it was pretty minimal. I can bring it up though real quick. 3 and 3, Gene. There was a cow hunt and a hunters choice hunt and 3 in each.

Tammy Pearson: Was there anything harvested?

Covy Jones: I imagine there was. Harvest success on these hunts is typically pretty good, but I don't have that data in front of me yet.

Verland King: Yeah, and the reason those are just a few tags is because of the drought you tried to cut the numbers and now we're trying to grow them back now. Right back into a severe drought. A lot of these ranchers aren't taking their cattle to the desert, or if they are they're going with a percentage of what they normally do. And in the meantime, you guys didn't hunt enough. You're increasing the herd. Our problem is there is such a lag time between when you manage for drought and habitat, but it just doesn't work where the ranchers have to manage right now. Whether it's their own personal opinion or decision or the BLM comes in and wants them to do something. Then there's this group of

buffalo that you're growing now, even in this drought that we've had. We didn't have a drop of rain all summer. So, that's where the livestock guys on the Henry Mountains and anywhere else have a lot of heartburn.

Covy Jones: It's hard Verland, you're right, in the West where we can get into these cycles and trying to manage for multiple uses on the land. It gets really really hard sometimes. I can say we're still well below the objective on the Henry's right now. But that doesn't mean we don't have conflict or problems at times, but we try to do the best we can.

Brayden Richmond: Any other questions on the bison? Comments on the bison?

Austin Atkinson: I have a comment Brayden. Currently the archery hunters get to hunt those bison first before the rifle hunters go in there with the hunters choice. That would be a proponent of keeping the archery first. Let's put it on top of the deer hunt. I know that's been brought up before, but someone that's waited their time, or gotten lucky and drawn a premium limited entry deer does not want to see a bison hunter running around. There are so few people up there anyway, we're talking less than 30 people up there with deer tags, it's not going to be a big deal to have 3 archery bison hunters running around. They're not even chasing the same animal. So I would keep the archery hunt first, I would not cancel that archery hunt, but let them go first. Let them hunt in October. That's my comment.

Brayden Richmond: You know, my comment is fairly simple on this. That archery hunt has been extremely popular. I think it's been a very good hunt. There is a high demand for it. I do not want to see that archery hunt pulled. As for the date I'm not sure which side I'd like to air on that. Either having it late with more opportunity or during the rifle hunt with the deer hunters. But I do want to see that archery hunt continue.

Verland King: Well, the reason we had that archery hunt was for opportunity that would keep the buffalo on the mountain. It was a trial to see what it would do. Well the results are it pushes the bison down on the winter range, down on the desert where the conflict with the cattle is the biggest. Pretty much a lot of times I guess when they're hunting deer maybe they're not hunting buffalo. You need to remove that early hunt because it's doing exactly what we didn't want it to do. That's kind of a joke to put it in January, sell more tags and make more money. Those January hunts don't work out.

Brayden Richmond: Is there an option to put archery tags on top of the early rifle tags? Again, you're not talking about a huge number of tags, but could you hunt them at the same time? If you draw the archery tag, you know that going in that your success rate might be lower and you know that going in. But what if you hunted them at the same time? Would that be possible?

Tammy Pearson: Isn't that at the first of November? The early rifle?

Brayden Richmond: Are there any other comments on that? Any other comments or thoughts on the bison?

Riley Roberts: I've got a comment. We are sure a weird bunch. It's like we meet a handful of times a year and we're always complaining about things we've already changed and things we want to see different and we're never happy, but we don't want to mess with it at the same time. I appreciate the Division because they're trying to make these changes and all of this feedback from all different sides and I've got to tell you it gets a little frustrating, even from members of the RAC who point fingers at the Division. I had to keep my mouth shut tonight because I don't have a filter these days. It's really offensive to me that we'll point fingers directly at the Division because this is the only process in the world that allows us to do this. The Division didn't do this. Most of what we've decided in my 10 years on the RAC has been a social issue. It's the same with the bison, it's the same with the elk, it's the same with the deer. So I would appreciate it if we, at least on the RAC, would refrain from doing that. Also, I would like to back up Austin on this, I like that idea of keeping it. I think that it is about opportunity and I like having that archery hunt for the bison. I think it's a good thing and I would hate for us to get rid of it. Especially this early on, I think it's going to provide some opportunity, and I do appreciate the discussion from the other RAC members on the different season dates and looking outside the box, whether it was the early rifle or later on. I like the early hunt, I think that's an opportunity and I don't think it's going to affect things as much as maybe we're letting on that it might. You've got less than a handful of guys out in the field and that is a giant unit. There are a lot of critters out there and I think this could be a really good thing in the future if we just continue it. I would support the idea that Austin brought up and keeping it on the early side. Thanks.

Gene Boardman: I have a hard time figuring how 3 archery hunters on that unit can stampede all the buffalo to the winter range. But if it is, I guess it is. I hunted it years ago in November and there were bison from Stevens Mesa all the way to the top of Canal. It's just kind of hard to figure how this hurts. But if it does hurt, let's find reasonable dates that it won't hurt.

Tammy Pearson: Let me ask a question. Now I'm conflicted because it looks like it's the Division that's proposing the discontinuation of the hunts? It's not the RAC. Am I saying that right?

Covy Jones: That's accurate Tammy. When we instituted the hunt one of the things we committed to was trying this to be able to get the harvest, try to provide a little bit of opportunity and not push the bison. So when it didn't meet all those objectives, that's when we came back and said it just doesn't meet all the objectives that we're looking for there. So it is our recommendation to discontinue. We understand that it's popular, and it feels like there's a public sentiment to want to keep it. Again, we would ask that if we are to evaluate this that... it would be hard in January, but it fits within the parameters of what we're trying to do and manage. And I understand that may not be what the RACs

looking for. You guys are free to make the recommendations. You know, Riley pointed this out, it's a great system. We make the recommendation and the RAC gets to beat it up and put in a lot of public input, and make some great decisions.

Brayden Richmond: Are we ready to make a motion on this one?

Austin Atkinson: I'll make a motion Brayden.

The following motion was made by Austin Atkinson and seconded by Riley Roberts.

MOTION: I move that we approve the recommendation to keep the Henry's Bison archery only permit with two options on the season dates - to be between the hunter's choice ALW and cow only hunts

Motion passed unanimously.

Brayden Richmond: Okay. Can you restate the dates on that? So it would be between the any bull and the cow hunt? Is that what you said?

Austin Atkinson: Be after the hunters choice hunt and before the cow hunt. So we'd have to push the cow only rifle hunts back, and come up with new dates for those.

Brayden Richmond: We have a motion to keep the archery bison hunt, but push the date between the hunters choice any legal weapon and the cow hunt.

Riley Roberts: I'll second it.

Brayden Richmond: So, we have a motion by Austin and a second by Riley. Any discussion?

Tammy Pearson: So you're changing from an archery to an any legal weapon? Repeat that again.

Brayden Richmond: No, no, no. So we keep the Henry Mountain archery hunt, but change the dates to between the hunters choice any legal weapon and the cow only hunts. So what we'd do is put it back to the end of December to the first part of January is where we'd put that hunt, and then put some of the cow hunts even further back. But what that would do, the biggest concern on this is those archery hunters pushing those bison off of the mountain, this would not do that. Ok, let's go ahead and vote.

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Battista: Yes

Gene Boardman: Yes.

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: Yes

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Motion passes unanimously. Any other motions that we need to make on the bison portion? Ok, let's move onto desert bighorn sheep. So the only change on this proposed by the Division is eliminating the Zion archery tag. any questions on that? So any questions on the desert bighorn sheep portion of this?

02:32:17 Questions from RAC Members (Desert BigHorn Sheep)

Nick Jorgenson: We just eliminated that because of the low numbers on Zion?

Covy Jones: Jason if you want to speak to that?

Jason Nicholes: Sure. I would say the population is down as well as the average age of harvest is declining over the last 5 years. Zion is 1 of 2 desert sheep units that we have committed to manage to older age class rams and we're currently harvesting a 6.5 year old ram on average on that unit. We've got to cut permits somewhere and archery permits are the most recent ones that were added to that unit so that's where we're starting.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Jason. Other questions on this?

Austin Atkinson: This is Austin, quick question. Would we be able to keep the opportunity of having an archery hunt since it is the only one that exists currently and rotate it or put it on another desert sheep unit without it affecting the any legal weapon permit? I understand that this archery was not supposed to affect the any legal weapon, that was in the agreement when we came up with this and it's only happened one season so far. This year's hunters have not gone yet. So could we put it on another unit, or is that not a viable option?

Covy Jones: Since that's more of a statewide perspective Jason, I'll take that one. I think that if that's something that the public wants to keep for deserts, we could look really, really hard around the state to do that. I can see good and bad between the idea to rotate it. One is good because it spreads it around every year, bad because it causes confusion for folks. Good because it doesn't set a precedence that one unit has an archery hunt. There are both sides of that. It's allowed for in the plan and if the public wants to keep it, we could definitely look for a different unit to put that on.

Brayden Richmond: Any other questions? Comments on the desert bighorn?

02:34:44 Comments from RAC Members (Desert BigHorn Sheep)

Austin Atkinson: I'll just follow up with a quick comment to my question. Switching the unit around doesn't sound like a big deal to me. With the Box Elder rocky unit we cancel that hunt every other year because of the interstate agreement. So with the archery hunt we want the opportunity, we want the permits. I understand that these archery hunters have killed sheep in the years past, maybe higher success than we thought there would be. But I would be proponent for not taking away that opportunity, even if it goes to a lower quality, lower age objective unit. We put it at our very top unit by putting it on the Zion, but these guys just want to kill a sheep with their bow. I think we could rotate that to a unit that has the sheep for that year available. That's my comment.

Brayden Richmond: Additional comments? I'd entertain a motion on the desert bighorn sheep.

The following motion was made by Austin Atkinson and seconded by Tammy Pearson.

MOTION: I move that we maintain a Desert Bighorn Sheep archery hunt opportunity somewhere in the State as determined by the Division of Wildlife Resources.

Motion passed 8 in favor, 2 opposed (Chad Utley and Sean Kelly).

Brayden Richmond: Any additional discussion? Oh, go ahead Bart.

Bart Battista: So basically we don't... the motion is to basically or possibly allow the bighorn hunts on Zion unit, because it just says keep it, right? Don't stop it there, but just keep it?

Brayden Richmond: Okay, so let me read to you what we have written on the motion which is what we would take to the Board. Keep a desert bighorn sheep archery opportunity somewhere in the state as determined by the DWR. So I guess your point Bart, if they determine that's the best place to keep it then yeah, that's potentially

accurate based on our motion. Does that capture the intent of what you're proposing Austin? Or would you like to restate that motion differently?

Austin Atkinson: I think that captures it. Obviously there's not an intermediate meeting that we would be forced to approve permit numbers with the Divisions recommended unit whether it was the Zion or another unit they chose for this hunt to happen. But they would have to do it before application season, you'd have to have a unit picked.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah and I think that is a valid point Austin. so this recommendation would be asking the Division to determine a unit to put the permit on, but in April it comes back to the RAC to approve where the permits are and how many. So it should come back to us for an approval for whichever unit it's on.

Kevin Bunnell: That's only sort of true because the draw would have already taken place, and people would have already had to apply for it, so we would have already had to determine a unit prior to when the numbers are set.

Brayden Richmond: That's true.

Bart Battista: I think that was where I was going at, I think now we don't actually have a say about where that hunt is going to go, it's just going to be up to the Division.

Covy Jones: Just to further expand on that, what we'd look at is, right now we're flying a lot of our sheep units and Austin mentioned that commitment we made to offer this permit without pulling it back out of the rifle permits that we historically or traditionally offered. As we fly these desert units and look around at different places we'd look for an area where we have an opportunity to increase a little opportunity, stay within the guidelines of the plan and not pull it back out. And that's why determining a unit for us right now on the spot might be hard. We'd rather look through some data. And some of that data is coming in right now. We're flying sheep right now in certain areas.

Brayden Richmond: And I understand Covy, this is not something that the Division is opposed to, right? The Division just does not want to hunt on the Zion? Would that be accurate?

Covy Jones: That's fair. It's in the plan, it's allowed for, we've made commitments on how and where we do it. So those are the things we'd evaluate as we went forward.

Brayden Richmond: Any additional discussion?

Bart Battista: Would you have a unit selected prior to the Board meeting?

Covy Jones: We would have to because after the Board meeting it goes to the draw. So, we don't have much of a choice. When it hits the Board meeting we have to present the unit.

Brayden Richmond: Good question Bart. Thank you. Okay, let's have a vote.

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: (No response)

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: No.

Brayden Richmond: Would you like to state your reason for no Chad?

Chad Utley: It just seems like we're forcing the Divisions hand when they don't have the data to tell us whether or not it's a good thing for the units anywhere in the state. I think if we said study it and come back to us and tell us if this is viable, I might be able to support it. But at this point, we're telling them to pick without giving us any data. That's it.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: No. Same reason as Chad. I think it's kind of tying the Divisions hands, especially with the design.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes

Tammy Pearson: I'd say yes, with the caveat that I don't think we're tying their hands. This is just a recommendation to the Board and ultimately the Board is going to be the one that decides that. And you've got two more RACs behind us. So, Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Okay, the motion carries with two opposing, Gene are you back on? Hopefully Gene will be able to rejoin us. So, motion carries with two opposing votes, which I'll take those reasons to the Board. Ok, let's go on to our rocky mountain bighorn sheep. So there's a new hunt proposed on the Fillmore Oakcreek, and a discontinued hunt on the Box Elder Pilot Mountain, which we already discussed a little bit. And then boundary changes on the North Slope Three Corners Bear Top and NS Summit West Daggett. Any questions on the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep proposals?

02:43:04 Questions from RAC Members (Rocky Mountain BigHorn Sheep)

Tammy Pearson: Just a quick question on the new hunt. So is that.. that's not splitting a previous unit on the Fillmore Oakcreek?

Brayden Richmond: No, that's using the same boundaries, it's just an archery hunt.

Tammy Pearson: Just the archery. Ok, that was my question.

Covy Jones: Correct.

Brayden: Any comments on the Rocky Mountain Sheep proposals? Does anyone want to make any motions to try and change the proposals? Ok, finally the last item on the memorandum to discuss is the Dedicated Hunter Rule. So the proposed changes limit the number of dedicated hunter permits available in the big game drawing to the following: 15% of the total annual general season buck deer quota for each unit. A maximum of one resident and one non resident if the units 15% total is not met or exceeded. So that's the proposed change on that dedicated hunter. Any questions on the dedicated hunter rule proposal changes? ... if it is met or exceeded, sorry. I guess I said that wrong, if it is met or exceeded.

02:44:32 Questions from RAC Members (Dedicated Hunter)

Gene Boardman: I've got a question, how could this never be exceeded?

Covy Jones: The only way to never exceed it would be to never reduce permits when it was called for. Is that correct Lindy?

Lindy Varney: That's kind of how I would have answered it too, is if we stayed status quo with the quota we'll never exceed it, but when we go up and down we can exceed or be below.

Craig Laub: So to follow it up with James, his unit said we were over 15% of the tags go to dedicated hunters at this time.

Lindy Varney: Yes in 2020 we actually have four units that people applied for, and we were above that 15% so we couldn't issue any new dedicated hunter CORs this year. And that's why we're making this change to the rule, so people can at least have an opportunity to draw out for a permit. Because this year there were no permits to issue to them.

Bart Battista: So if you're looking to expand opportunity among the population as a whole, adding more opportunities to dedicated hunter does that do that?

Covy Jones: I think this is complicated because we issue deer permits annually and go up and down and fluctuate, and we issue dedicated hunters on a three year COR. So if you draw a permit you're in the system for three years. But then the way that the rule is written you can never exceed 15% of the allocated number of permits each year. So if you have 10,000 permits last year and you cut that to 5,000, where it's last year you can have 1,500 permits and now you can only have 750. Well if you had 1,200 people in here you're already above the 15%, so the position we found ourselves in, because we set

the hunts in this meeting we issued a hunt in which there were no permits. This fix just says that regardless of where we are we'll offer one permit for residents and one for non residents, until that program can get back below the threshold. So that's what it would be.

Bart Battista: So when you, sorry maybe I'm showing my limited knowledge here, when you lower the permits in a unit and the dedicated hunters are still going to have more opportunity. You're basically increasing opportunity for dedicated hunters to draw..

Covy Jones: What it does Bart is, you're partially correct, it lags. So it falls at 15% a year or two to get it back into that 15%. If that makes sense.

Bart Battista: So say one year are we fine with dedicated hunters, and again being a non consumptive rep, are most of the hunters out there with the dedicated hunters getting potentially majority of the permits, or do we want to make sure that there is always at least 85% that go to the general public that aren't dedicate hunters?

Kevin Bunnell: Maybe I can help a little bit here Covy. So the baseline intended that if we have a hunt for people to apply for in the draw we always need to make sure that there is at least 1 tag available. That's really the intent here. We ended up in a situation last year where that wasn't the case. That will occasionally resolve in dedicated hunters being slightly over the 85%, but it's never going to be the majority. It will allow them to be slightly over the 15% at times, but we can't offer a hunt in the draw and not have any tags available. That's what happened last year so that's why this recommendation is here, to avoid that from happening in the future. And one tag is not going to make a difference on any unit.

Bart Battista: Okay.

Covy Jones: Yeah Kevin you explained that better. It's just one permit and it's just so we have the possibility of offering one tag.

Gene Boardman: Okay, the dedicated hunters, first of all the lifetime hunters get their shot, secondly the dedicated hunters get their shot up to 15%, is that correct so far?

Lindy Varney: Yes that's correct.

Gene Boardman: And now you're trying to figure a way for them to get additional opportunity beyond that.

Lindy Varney: No, we're just making sure that when someone applies for a hunt that there is a permit available for them to draw out. Because sometimes we do exceed that 15%, and that's why we're only offering one permit for residents and one permit for non residents so it's not giving them a lot more opportunity to draw out for those dedicated hunter permits.

Gene Boardman: Okay. We're just talking about general deer season units and hunts, right?

Lindy Varney: Correct.

Gene Boardman: Is there any hunt that has less than 8 tags available?

Lindy Varney: No, not right now.

Gene Boardman: Well, if there's eight tags available there is obviously one available to the dedicated hunter. Any more than that there are more tags available for the dedicated hunter. I don't see why we need to put this in.

Covy Jones: I think again Gene, it's just because if it were an annual draw and we didn't have to consider those already in the program it wouldn't matter. But because people apply for a three year COR you could end up being above like that example that I used earlier. That's it.

Gene Boardman: All I can see is it's trying to cut more opportunity for dedicated hunters. If it's not trying to cut more opportunity for dedicated hunters tell me now that it isn't.

Covy Jones: It's not trying to cut more opportunities for dedicated hunters. It's just trying to offer a hunt if we offer it in the draw. Which we set those here and then we set permit numbers in the spring. That's all it's trying to do.

Brayden Richmond: Any other comments on this? Would anyone like to make a motion to change the Divisions proposals? Ok, that kind of wraps up all the individual subjects on the memorandum. Let me just open it up quickly and see if there are any other proposals or motions that want to come forward in general regarding the bucks and bulls regulations, and then if there is not we'll entertain a motion to accept the rest as presented.

Gene Boardman: Are we in discussion now?

Brayden Richmond: Yep, you can discuss anything regarding the game seasons, key dates, hunt changes and rule amendments.

Gene Boardman: Okay, I just want to talk on dedicated hunter for a minute. Especially this year with the Covid, I imagine there has been a lot of buying points, there is a lot of buying points anyway, and buying points is buying privilege. I am not in favor of any of that going on and when we have a cut in tags, everybody needs to have a portion of it. You need to cut into the dedicated hunters as well as the general public, especially when you're cutting 12,000 tags. That's my comment.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Gene. Any other general comments? If not I'd entertain a motion to accept the rest of the Divisions proposals as presented for agenda item #6.

Chad Utley: This is Chad. I motion to accept the rest of the Divisions proposal as presented.

The following motion was made by Chad Utley and seconded by Craig Laub.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the division's proposals as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brayden Richmond: Any additional discussion needed? Let's go ahead and vote.

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: Yes

Riley Roberts: Yes

Chad Utley: Yes

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes

Verland King: Yes

Craig Laub: Yes

Tammy Pearson: Yes

Dan Fletcher: Yes

Brayden Richmond: The motion passed unanimous. We'll move on to agenda item #7. Let's take a break and come back at 9:05.

-BREAK-

Brayden Richmond: Okay, we'll jump back in, I appreciate everyone coming back. We're on agenda item #7. Here is what I would propose, agenda item #7 and #8 are very interrelated. I think the same questions would tie to both of them. I would suggest that we do the questions and comments on agenda 7-8 but then we make motions on each agenda item. So, if everyone is comfortable with that, we'll start with questions pertaining to the deer management plan, agenda 7-8.

03:05:33 Questions from RAC Members (Deer Management Plans)

Tammy Pearson: So, these are out of order on our packet, elk are first.

Brayden Richmond: Covy, I may ask you to just introduce these to us briefly. There has been some confusion on what a deer objective is. I think that would be really good to address, and in the other RAC you had some great comments that might answer some of the questions and comments if you wouldn't mind just taking a minute.

Covy Jones: Thanks Brayden, I'd love too. So, this has been coming for a while, redoing these deer population objectives. And it comes along with some other things; one, we are collecting better data than we ever have starting in 2014 with GPS satellite collars, body condition and disease, looking at the shape that deer are in coming in to winter and then relating that back to fawn survival, production, and everything that's going on on the landscape. So we can start to see a carrying capacity or where these animals should run. I want to back up just a second, I don't know if we did a great job messaging with this one. I think the Division was clear that the Board directed us to do this, it was clear that this is in the mule deer plan. The mule deer plan tells us to do this, it tells us to reevaluate all the population objectives and to set clear and concise objectives that are good objectives and manage to those objectives on the statewide plan. But the messaging on this one, I feel like we could have done a better job. Anyway, so in addition to that last year the Board said we were planning on doing this one at a time across the five years to review all the plans. So all the plans are reviewed every year on a five year rotational basis. Five regions, one region per year, so we would do all the southern through one year, all the southeastern through the next year, all the northeast through the next year and it follows the range trend monitoring. So when we go out and assess range and habitat then we go out and take the unit management plans around. So, the Board said ok, that's fine but with House Bill 125 which is a bill that directs the Division how to manage deer as priority and to not manage cougars at the expense of deer. They said we need to have realistic population objectives sooner rather than later. If this is all going to work together we need the Division to set realistic management population objectives for deer. So they direct us to do it in all units and that's why you see this split. So Southern and Southeastern rewrote their entire plans. Southern was up a year ago and they held off until the statewide plan was done to get more direction and so they are a year behind and then southeastern was due this year, and with the new statewide plan they finished theirs. The other three regions only looked at population objectives. To do that we looked at herd health metrics and the last 10 years of the average of where we were at and where we've been and with that the respect of how healthy were the deer at all levels over the last 10 years. Brayden, is that what you're looking for? Does that confuse things more? Is everybody sufficiently confused?

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Let me pause real quick and turn it over to Kevin so he can give us the feedback analysis we got and then we can come back for questions and if anyone is confused we can hopefully get unconfused.

Kevin Bunnell: Okay, I'll quickly go through these in the order of the presentations that were given online. Starting with the northern region, and again this was just dealing with objectives and buck to doe ratios, we had 12% in support, 9% opposed, and 79% neutral. Northeastern region, 12% support, 10% opposed, and 78% neutral. For the central region plans again, 12% support, 14% opposed, and 74% neutral. Southern region we had 28% support, 36% opposed, and 36% neutral. On the southeastern region, 15% support, 14% opposed, and 70% neutral. And again this is just people that commented that added a zip code that put them in the southern region boundaries.

Brayden Richmond: Perfect. Okay, we'll open it up to questions now. Tammy, do you want to lead out? You said you're confused.

Tammy Pearson: I don't think I'm the right person to lead out if I'm confused.

Brayden Richmond: I thought maybe you were implying that you had questions. I didn't mean to put you on the spot.

Tammy Pearson: No. Ok, so my first question if I'm looking at the packet, are we trying to follow the packet at all like we were originally?

Brayden Richmond: No, now we're just back to the agenda, so we're just going off the agenda.

Tammy Pearson: Okay. It's still easier to actually look at something while we're talking about it.

Austin Atkinson: I'll ask a question if that's okay. As I look at the overall population objectives, the majority of the units have a decrease. At first that's concerning to me and I asked why? So as I dove into it, Covy, I'd like to understand about this House Bill 125 and this predator management becomes more important to us in managing our deer herds, why do we need to lower the objectives to something realistic, which I understand why it needs to be realistic, but isn't that just going to make us hit that wall where we can no longer enact these extra predator protocols because we're at objective. These objectives are very close to the 10 year average of where the herds are at already. Can you help me on that?

Covy Jones: Yeah, so let's go through that in two parts. I think one, as I look through these again, there is not one of these that is below what we're currently at. So I think the big confusion for folks was are we really going to go kill 50,000 deer and that's not what it means at all. The other thing is they're all some growth, right? So it's a realistic goal. As we looked at it and thought, ok we have a few years until we rewrite these, some like the northeastern region one year, or the southern region you've got four years before it comes back around to their turn. How many deer could we grow in the monitor of herd health to have this be a realistic goal to grow? The predator management policy, really it takes into effect not so much the number of deer on the landscape but their condition in respect to what's going on. So there's a couple of times when deer would enter a predator management plan and one time is, if we can predict a big crash is coming. So the perfect storm, what we had a few years ago and we need to get body

weights to see what is going to happen this winter, or to better predict what's going to happen this winter under extreme conditions. But if we come in December and we have low adult doe and low fawn weights, right, and can see that there's a crash coming we know that we'll lose deer and predators will stay high and suppress that deer population. That's one way that they could enter predator management. The other time they can enter a predator management is if we have, and we collect cause specific mortality on the unit where we can show that we have fat deer, so their body condition is way up here, but they have low survival. So that adult survival is suppressed. We come back and look at the cause specific mortality and say, we'll they're fat and they could grow. This is the south Manti example, but that population keeps getting hammered by in this case lions. Lions are really hard, or have been hard on that population. So it won't affect that as much, but it gives us an expectation of a reasonable number of deer on the landscape. So then we tie it back to body condition. I wouldn't be so worried that it won't... and I think what you're referring to is the old plan was always a percent of population objective is what would kick it into predator management. Now we're looking at things differently. We're looking at body conditions scores, body condition mortality, all those conditions to say, do we have healthy deer that just can't grow because of predators, or we've got deer that hit a one time climatic event and they fell off hard and predators are going to suppress them if we don't act? Those are some of the factors we're looking at instead of just looking at where are they? And Austin, I'd expect change. As we get better data and continue to get better data the carrying capacity is always fuzzy right? If you have good climatic conditions it's better, if you have poor climatic conditions, it's worse. So we're trying to look through the fuzzy and say on average we should be about here. Having this data, it's awesome. It doesn't mean we have it all nailed down and every five years we're going to take a look at these and see if they need to be reevaluated. Again, if you were to pass this tonight, the northeastern region is up again next year. Their population objectives, where they're at and the herd health metrics would be evaluated again to say, did we get this right? And if we didn't, let's adjust. I hope that may ease some angst.

Brayden Richmond: Covy, sorry Austin, do you have additional?

Austin Atkinson: Go ahead Brayden.

Brayden Richmond: I have a comment on this, but it's a comment I'd really like to hear your response to. So my comment would be that my concern with this is I believe we use the same terminology for deer and elk, management objective. On deer, it sounds to me like we're really trying to figure out the carrying capacity of the landscape and the health of the deer. How many deer can be on the landscape before the deer population is declined naturally? With elk, there is a huge factor in there on what's socially acceptable to also have on the landscape. And that's a concern to me that we're calling both of them management objectives. I think it needs to be consistent terminology and I guess I'd just like to hear your input on that. It concerns me and to me it causes some confusion that we're approaching it differently using the same term.

Covy Jones: Brayden, I actually think that's a really good point. And the difference is that when we set elk population objectives they're more set on social. They're the only population I can think of that we may have hit a biological threshold in the state is maybe the Book Cliffs. So, elk have the ability to do a lot of damage in

a short amount of time and cause a lot of conflict. And because of that, there is a lot more social. Where as deer, everybody loves deer and everybody would love to see more deer, including the agency. We're trying to set deer on a biological threshold. There is not the angst to... and we did say, I think when everybody gets nervous about is we're going to bump up against that and then call a bunch of doe hunts. Right? Because we are over the objective. And what I would say is if we bumped up against that number we would reevaluate body conditions scores and see where they are. If they were poor, we may call for a doe hunt. If the deer are doing well and still have room to grow, we would evaluate the objective instead. That's I think some of the concern too. Elk and deer are different and they cause different levels of social anxiety. And have different potentials for damage. Now, that's not saying that deer can't do damage, but it's not the same. I think we're trying to grow deer everywhere.

Brayden Richmond: I appreciate you addressing that Covy. That would be my input then. I'd love to see apples to apples and I think that it is confusing to use the same terminology for both deer and elk.

Austin Atkinson: Here's my follow-up question Covy. I look at this San Juan Elk Ridge and the objectives change. It looks like it's a race to the bottom and I'm trying to understand why? Is there something that is not working in the strategy? The obvious answer is predators, but is that the only one, and what is this going to change by you saying, well we only want the objective of 1,000 deer there. Ok, you can hit that in the short term, but then what have we been doing the last 10 years because it's just gone down, down, down, down.

Covy Jones: Alright Austin, so you asked the really, really hard question. And I'm going to do my best to answer it to the best of my ability on the San Juan Elk Ridge. But, as we talked about herd productivity, and as I go around and caution the RACs and the Board, as an agency not just me, and said the biology behind managing a struggling herd with a lot of males can cause a population to fall off a lot more quickly. So, this may not be popular what I'm going to say, but if you try to run a limited entry herd with super high buck/doe ratios, and then fall on very harsh climatic events that take a toll on that herd, you have the potential for more loss. And the reason why is your male to female ratio has the ability to rebound quickly and the bishop paper that shows males can definitely impact fawn survival and other things. So we watched that ridge and it has gone down, down, down, down. Now the primary driver is habitat and climatic conditions, right? There are predators and other problems, but the primary driver is that. Then as we try to rebound, that's when the predators can come into effect and it's not helped by having very scaled male to female ratios. So, when we looked at the San Juan Elk Ridge specifically, we looked at it and said if we could grow at a good rate, what number could we be at after five years? And it was very possible to hit a goal of 1,000 deer if we keep doing the things we're doing. I don't want to ignore that we're still doing a ton of habitat work, we've increased predator take, we've set up a position that if we can climatically grow deer, we will grow deer. So looking at that optimistically the biologist said where could we be after five years, what's a realistic goal? And that was looking at protection, mortality, everything. That's the number they came up with. Now if they hit that in five year or before five years, we'll reevaluate it. We'll set it higher. It's not quitting,

it's not giving up, it's saying what's an actual goal instead of a wish. If we have population wishes that aren't realistic, it doesn't help our management. If we have population goals to keep doing the things we're doing, what could we hit? That's a realistic goal. That's what we're trying to do.

Brayden Richmond: Any other questions from the RAC?

Covy Jones: I would add on on the San Juan if Guy Wallace is on and has anything to add on that, I would love for him to add that to make sure I didn't miss something.

Guy Wallace: Yeah, I can probably add a little bit. I think that was a great explanation. I think a couple of things to understand about that specific unit is we have a significant winter range loss there. It was a long time ago and we suffered a huge decline because of that, long term and low production and then we hit 2018 again and low production that year and very low survivals and that unit has struggled for quite a while. And the other point that I would make is just a caution about the numbers. because that population back in the '90s when we were looking at and trying to come up with objectives it was a closed unit in the '80s, it was open to limited entry after that, so it was a difficult unit to model, so looking at data prior to that, it was difficult to come up with a population objective number. So I would say that one we have less confidence in originally than we had and we're a lot more realistic in the models we're using now and where that population is now.

Brayden Richmond: Guy, can I ask you some follow-up questions on that unit? Because that really is the striking unit when you look at these plans in my opinion. And maybe it is because that's the unit I'm very familiar with. So I assume when you say we had a large winter loss/habitat loss, you're talking about Beef Basin, is that correct?

Guy Wallace: Yes, correct.

Brayden Richmond: So, the question I have is what we saw happen in Beef Basin, are we taking approaches to be more proactive, not that we'd have a lot of control, but at least we should have a voice to try to mitigate a loss like that happening again. That shouldn't have happened in my opinion, and maybe you have more information than I do Guy, but it appears to me that it was poor management on other departments to not pull mouths off that range before that range was completely devastated.

Guy Wallace: Well, yeah, it was probably poor management on our part as well in that by the time we recognized the problem, I mean it had been talked about in the late '70s through the '80s on the conditions of that winter range, and we were seeing that trend out there. But the hard part was the political climate at that time was no doe hunts so we were struggling with that. And then we hit a drought period there as well and that kind of exacerbated the problem in what we were seeing so it was kind of a perfect storm of events that caused that. And to answer your question about what we're trying to do going forward is we're looking for ranges that we see that

maybe have similar conditions now. We have studies, a USU study right now looking at soil types to see where sagebrush stands and winter ranges that do the best and if we do projects to try and regenerate sage brush which ones have the best potential for that. So those are the kind of things that we're looking at and we attempted some stuff in Beef Basin and we've had mixed success to be honest. So I don't know, and the other problem with that too is that was a huge concentration of deer. They were disproportionate with how much they used that range over the other ranges. If you go to the south part of that unit there's quite a vast expanse of winter range, but the majority of deer at that time were using that beef basin winter range.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, and I appreciate that response. It really is heartbreaking to look at what happened out there on Beef Basin, but it is also interesting what you brought up that the deer just aren't utilizing things they have. There is plenty of winter range for those deer to use that they just aren't using, and Beef Basin just got destroyed. Any other comments from the RAC, or questions?

Verland King: As I looked at that, it looked to me like there may be two units that meet objective or maybe over, and all the rest of them were lower, because the objectives were way high. It looked to me like you were making the right changes, you worked maybe with the habitat and with these droughts and predators and these objectives were maybe something you'd never be able to reach at this time and so you lowered them for that reason. And that's my question. Is that why you lowered them or is it just because you haven't reached them for years?

Covy Jones: We lowered them because we have a lot more data now. We have a lot more data for biologists. Guy is probably the best person to talk about this. Guy if you had the data that we do now when you started your career, I'm sure you would have made different decisions and could have been a game changer. But the data that we have now helps us understand better what a biological carrying capacity looks like. That's the reason.

Guy Wallace: And I would agree. It's tremendous and it's happened so fast, so recently, compared over a long term. We went for quite a number of years and just the amount of progress we've made in just the recent years has just been exceptional with the data that we have and the things we're able to look at now and figure out about these deer herds.

Verland King: Well, it's encouraging to me to know that you're looking at this better data and realizing that those numbers were too high and needed to be backed down. So I was encouraged by what I've seen when I studied this part of it.

Brayden: Thanks Verland. Any other questions? Let's move on to comments. Any comments on the deer management plans? Ok, we'd entertain a motion. And on this one, unlike the last one we don't need to wait to accept as presented. Or if you want to have a motion to change and accept the remaining, however you want to approach it. But we do need to do agenda item 7 and then we'll do agenda item 8. First agenda item 7 the deer management plans- population

objective and recommendations. We'd entertain a motion on that one. So item 7 is the central region, northeastern region, and the northern region.

**03:31:46 7) Deer Management Plans – Population Objective
Recommendations (Informational)
Teresa Griffin, Regional Presentations**

Presentations could be viewed at
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

The following motion was made by Verland King and seconded by Tammy Pearson.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the division's proposals as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: Yes.

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: Yes.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Passes unanimously

**03:32:57 8) Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations
(Action)**

Teresa Griffin and Guy Wallace

Brayden Richmond: Ok, agenda item 8, we'd entertain a motion on that one. That would be the southern and southeastern region deer management plans.

The following motion was made by Verland King and seconded by Bart Battista.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the division's proposals as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

Gene Boardman: I'd like to commend the southern region for the management plan that they put up. I know Teresa's presentation, I thought that they did a real good job of looking over those things. I noticed that a lot of the ranges aren't in as good of shape as they could be and it's a question of there has been so much habitat improvement projects and other items that have been put into getting this up and then the deer went down anyway. Sometimes there are just bigger things than what we can handle. My problem with the management plan is between management plans and three year objectives and age objectives and whenever anything comes up they're cited as if they had been chiseled in stone on Sinai. This is the reason why we can't do anything and sometimes that's just frustrating. I guess sometimes you have to have a management plan to have an objective, but let's be a little liberal with it as far as we can go above or we can go below to meet some other requirements.

Brayden Richmond: Thank you Gene, appreciate the comment.

Tammy Pearson: Pray for rain.

Brayden Richmond: I think we should pass a motion that the Division has to supply rain in 2021.

Tammy Pearson: There you go

Covy Jones: I would like to second that motion! If that's a motion can I second that?

Brayden Richmond: We ask the impossible from you for everything else, so I don't know why that one's off the table. Any other discussion? We have a motion and a second.

Austin Atkinson: Yes

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: Yes.

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: Yes.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes

Brayden Richmond: Thank you. So Item 7 passes unanimously. I wanted to add one little comment in myself, Gene hit on it. But I really think that the southern region did an exceptional job on this. I want to commend Teresa. Her presentation, I felt like she just really did very well on that. Also she showed the amount of input she got and that's a lot of work, a lot of data to work though and I think she really did her job well. So I want to say thank you publicly for that and I think you really did a great job.

**03:37:21 9) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations
(Action)
Chad Wilson**

Brayden Richmond: Kevin, do you have any data on that you'd like to share with us? I'll turn that over to you.

Kevin Bunnell: Okay on this agenda item in classic Southern Region style it's exactly split. 17% support, 17% oppose, 67% neutral.

Brayden Richmond: On this one we did get some, what I felt like were some well composed and good emails on this one from people with some valid points. So, again I appreciate people's public input on this. We'll open it up to RAC with questions.

03:38:08 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Tammy Pearson: I had some personal people that contacted me beyond the comments that we got on the RAC and it was specific to I think the Monroe Mountain in the CWMU and I kind of called around and got some more information and they're not happy with the cut in their numbers. Is this the right place to talk about it? So, the problem that they're having is nothing has changed as far as acreage

or land owners or whatever, but they were cut in half. So I guess my question is what was the reasoning behind that?

Chad Wilson: I just want to clarify, we're talking LOAs not the CWMU, correct?

Tammy Pearson: I'm not positive...

Chad Wilson: I'm pretty sure we're talking about LOAs. We have a bunch of LOAs and we decided this year, there have been somewhere traditionally that the Board has passed a certain number of permits. By rule we have the ability to do those permits by acreage percentages, and there is also a stipulation for percent use. Statewide we kind of were all over the board on that. And for us to come with a recommendation that made sense, and the acreage is really the one we have the data on. We didn't feel real strong on all of those LOAs to say percent of use. So with that in mind we just brought forth our recommendation to use percent of acreage of land compared to the habitat land in that LOA unit. So there were quite a few that our recommendation is a cut because of that.

Tammy Pearson: So it's just a percent, it's not a loss of acreage then?

Chad Wilson: Right. So in the past, and the Board has done this in the past that they've allotted them higher than what the acreage calculation would have been.

Kevin Bunnell: Tammy if I may, the basis of all this recommendation is to try to treat everybody equally. Over the years some things have gotten out of whack by going up to the Board and making special requests and there are all different reasons why they are not inlined with the percent of habitat they had and this year we said we're going to reset it and make the recommendations across the board exactly the same for everyone.

Brayden Richmond: So Kevin and Chad, I have a question on that. I think it's really good that we're standardizing that across the board. I guess I'm curious as to why we standardize to the acreage instead of percent of use? It seems to me that the percentage of use would be a bigger driver than the acreage.

Kevin Bunnell: I'll try this Chad and then you go. We would love to use percent use if we had the data, and we don't have the data. We could calculate the percentage of habitat that they have, we can develop that number. It's a guess at best, unless we have a lot of collar data, to estimate the percent used.

Brayden Richmond: Yeah that is a good answer, because I do think that standardizing makes a lot of sense. But I was curious to why we went with acreage instead of percent of use. So, thank you.

Covy Jones: And Brayden, I think it's more complicated than that too. Because at times percent use counts against. It's not always favorable. Does that

make sense? But Kevin's right, we don't have the numbers, it can go both ways and cause... if that makes sense.

Brayden Richmond: No, Covey that does make sense and that's probably exactly where I have the bigger concern. I do know of an association that gets quite a few tags, but if you go and drive their acreage the animals aren't on it. So I understand it can cut both ways. And if we had the data I would really push that we go to percentage of use. It seems much more fair. But if we don't have the data that explains why we can't do it.

Covy Jones: Perfect.

Chad Wilson: If I could just jump in real quick. Just for some clarification. Sometimes we've seen in the past that we cut the public draw permits down and then the LOA subsequently kept the same amount of permits. And just to clarify Panguitch Lake is one of those. You see their drop of permits and that's because the public draw of permits have gone down. And to clarify too, I think I said this in my presentation, those permits are taken out of the public draw, so we have all of those public draw permits, everyone that goes to the LOA does get taken out of that public draw.

Tammy Pearson: Okay, so coming from my perspective, and like I said I've talked to several people about this, the drought has been devastating on all of us as livestock producers whether you're on private land or public lands. One way or another it's kind of across the board this year here in Utah. But what's not, kind of what Verland said earlier, the cattle are not going out on winter range because there is nothing there. But it still doesn't diminish what the numbers are of wildlife and especially on private property. We've still got basically the same amount of antelope and deer, which they don't bother me a whole lot, but what we said earlier elk make a massive impact. So for these guys to.. we're talking about private land that is not fenced off or anything and that seems to be the thing that's kind of making it feasible to continue on, is the elk is taking the forage and the cattle aren't going to be able to. Anyway, those are just the comments that I got.

Brayden Richmond: Those are good comments, thanks Tammy, appreciate it. Any other comments on this? Let's go Gene and then Austin.

Gene Boardman: LOA's are a lot of deer permits now. And the number of permits that go into the draw isn't determined until after everyone has applied and it's into May by the time that's decided. That kind of bothers me. One thing I'd really like to see is the information put out to account for every dog gone permit that goes out. If it goes to an LOA on a unit, if it goes to a landowner on a unit, if it goes to landowner appreciation, if it goes to pay to slay, every permit needs to be shown somewhere. We have no idea how many permits really go out to landowners. The LOA is just one aspect of it. I think there are two other ways of landowners getting permits. And this information never comes out. We need to have the whole thing on every unit, on deer and elk, all game, as to how many permits went out and how they went out.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Gene. Austin?

Austin Atkinson: As far as these LOA permits, does a qualifying LOA have to allow access to the holder of that landowner voucher or not?

Chad Wilson: Yeah, they write their own bi laws too, but if you have a landowner permit... and there are different ways it's run, sometimes a landowner association is rad and as they actually give a specific permit to a landowner, if that specific landowner gets a permit than the person who bought that has the ability to hunt their land and the surrounding land including the public land. Some of them will just pull all those permits and sell them and divide out the money. They have the bi laws of who is able to hunt what areas on that. A lot of them will open up the whole entire unit for everybody that has a voucher to hunt that unit.

Austin Atkinson: And a follow-up on that I see a lot of heartburn with this Paunsaugunt being cut back considerably. I want to know what is the process of these guys appealing that or going to the Board? Is that going to happen at the Board meeting, has that already happened and they've been denied? What's the next step there on their big cut?

Chad Wilson: Yeah, this is our recommendation. So I would have assumed that they would have reached out to this RAC and the Board. If not this RAC then the Board and plead their case of the additional permits. This right now is the process that they need to go through to plead their case, cause this is our recommendation and the Board has the ultimate decision on that.

Brayden Richmond: I think this is where it gets a little challenging for us, because now is the time to pass a motion to take to the Board, but Tammy maybe you have a lot more familiarity with that one on the Monroe. I don't know, Austin, if you talked to the guys on the Paunsaugunt. But it's challenging in my opinion as a RAC to know if it's justified to make a motion one way or another on these. So to Austin's question, it would be nice if... maybe an approach would be some kind of standardized appeal that they can even send to the RACs as a part of this process so we can actually understand some factual data instead of just an arbitrary email. Some standardized actual data for us to be able to analyze this and decide if this is something we want to make a motion on or not. It's a tough one. In my opinion this really puts the RACs in an awkward position.

Tammy Pearson: So let me address that a little bit Brayden. Kevin can tell everybody I'm crazy or whatever else, but we've had our Ag and Wildlife working group going for a couple of years now and there is a lot of angst with private property owners and there's a huge difference between southern utah and northern utah, mostly because a lot of the obvious prime property is irrigated private land that wildlife inhabit, and then they're back and forth between the private land and the public land. But they make a huge impact on the private land. And there really isn't... because most of us really love having the wildlife. Honestly to me the elk are the ones that make the biggest impact, and those are a really hard thing to deal with. Now, I

understand also that most of us that are doing cattle or sheep or whatever, we're trying to make a living. It's no different than other businesses here and if you have these huge impacts, the compensation just a money thing for whatever damage they do isn't really that significant. Or you have to put a fence or if these guys are in an LOA they can sell the tags, so that's worth it for them to do that, right? So considering what the impacts are, it's my opinion considering everybody I've talked to about this, I feel perfectly comfortable with leaving the tags the way they were originally and not doing a decrease. That's just my own personal view. But we do need to be cognizant of the heavy impacts that is made on private property owners on the Ag community. And especially considering this is a huge drought year, that's really really impacting them on a whole.

Brayden Richmond: Sorry, I was on mute. I want to make one more comment here, I am a big advocate of these landowner permits. Let me clarify why, and Tammy you alluded to it. There is a compensation that is made to these landowners. The Division can write checks as reimbursement or there are these landowner tags that they can sell and get paid for their property. The advantage of the landowner tags is they encourage private property owners to provide habitat and welcome the animals, so for me, boy on the landowner permits I would really air on the side of benefitting the landowner. In my opinion it's so much better than writing a check to cover that depredation. I would much rather have the landowners have a steak and a desire to help the wildlife rather than a desire to demonstrate damage and get a check. So yeah, my opinion would be to air on the side of more landowner tags than not.

Tammy Pearson: Amen. Too bad you can't make a motion.

Brayden Richmond: I'll entertain a motion whenever you're ready. But we can have more discussion if needed.

Austin Atkinson: Are we comments or questions or both?

Brayden Richmond: I think we've really confused those at this point. Do you have one? You're welcome to ask more questions. I think we're all jumbled. You know we were trying to get out of here before 4.5 hours, but it looks like we're going to push that 4.5 hour threshold. Go ahead Austin.

Austin Atkinson: The Alton CWMU. I've got to bring it up. I'm a believer that we need to be fair and stick to our plan across the way. I have no personal connection with this CWMU but I'm familiar with the CWMU program and I'm not a believer that they should have separate cactus buck permits. The CWMU program to me and the comments I've received are that we've allowed that CWMU operator to manage the animals as he sees fit. If he would like to shoot a cactus buck with one of his premium tags, he's more than welcome to. But separating that out, I don't understand why we can't just add more premium buck tags to his allotment and go from there. It's messy with the cactus buck ruling starting September 1st. It doesn't seem fair to other CWMU operators.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Austin.

Gene Boardman: Well with that, they would have no assurance that they'll get the tags if they ask for them as a general tag. So, I think they should be able to manage their cactus bucks. Now, I understand that every once in a while one can be taken that's quite a trophy, but most of them are excesses on the land. Tammy wouldn't stand for sub quality animals on her grazing, she'd sell them off and get rid of them. And, in countries where they have gamekeepers, those animals are called out. I think that unit should have the ability to call these undesirable ones out of the population. The problem that I had listening to the other two RACs is they tend to single out a person when talking about this and it's an association that's asking for it and making it a recommendation and I think we need to keep that in mind. Thanks.

Brayden Richmond: Any additional comments and/or questions? I think we could entertain a motion or two at this point. I would wager that there might be a couple of motions. Would anyone like to make a motion?

The following motion was made by Tammy Pearson to keep the landowner permits at the 2019 levels unless the amount they qualify in 2020 is requested. Seconded by Verland King.

Brayden Richmond: You know my comment on that Tammy is I think that is a valid motion because what that tells the Board is that we have a concern with cutting those tags, ultimately they are still going to make that decision, but the way that's worded is communicating to the Board that we'd air on the side of more than less. And the second part of this is we can still have more motions on this because you're not saying to accept the rest as presented. This is just a stand alone motion. Any further discussion on this motion?

Austin Atkinson: To clarify, Brayden, we're going with the column that says approved last renewal because that would be 2019, not the requested renewal because that would be the tags they requested this year?

Chad Wilson: Can I just jump in real quick. I think on some of those that they may have qualified more for this year, so if we just go off of what they got last time our recommendation may be higher. And I'm trying to think of Pilot Mountain specifically. I think last time they were given two and now they would actually qualify for four, and they're asking for eight. I don't have my presentation up right in front of me, but there may be some that are like that. Panguitch Lake like I said, we reduced tags, You may still want to keep that the same, but the reason we're recommending that is because we reduced tags.

Tammy Pearson: Yes, and that's the disadvantage of not having the presentation in front of your face because I forget all the different components of it. So maybe what I need to do is amend the motion to maybe no loss of tags, but accept the increase in the Divisions recommendations?

Brayden Richmond: What if we did, the motion would be to keep the landowner tags at the 2019 level unless the amount they qualify for in 2021 is greater.

Tammy Pearson: I'm good with that.

Brayden Richmond: And Verland, do you support that?

Verland King: Yeah, I'm good.

Bart Battista: So I want to make sure I'm following that. We are recommending that previous year's number, even though what they requested might be different, what they qualified for might be different.

Brayden Richmond: The motion is essentially that we would take the higher number.. we're asking to keep the landowner tags at the higher numbers using the 2019 numbers unless the 2020 number is higher, based on qualification not on request. So we're asking to keep with the higher numbers based on previous years or the qualification this year.

Chad Utley: So, is this saying that we're not going to follow a uniform process then on the issuance of these tags?

Brayden Richmond: Yes, that's what it's saying. So that's exactly the drawback Chad, now we're not being uniformed again.

Tammy Pearson: So to that point I think that it goes back to, who was it that said it, the amount of use, was it you that said that? Where the acreage is actually used more rather than just the percent of use.

Braydon Richmond: Percent of use.

Tammy Pearson: A lot of these guys have a whole lot more impact the other ones do.

Brayden Richmond: This kind of goes back to the other statement I used. This is a very hard recommendation to come up with, we just don't have enough information. This is a tough one to throw numbers or a solid recommendation.

Kevin Bunnell: And let me just make one comment at the risk of maybe overstepping my boundaries. I think that the motion that you're talking about captures the discussion that is going on here, but there is a valid, in some cases like the Panguitch elk LOA, the reason that those are being cut is because the public permits are being cut drastically as well. So that would not address them and keep them at a higher number even though the public permits have changed, which is very different than what you described on the Monroe where things haven't changed. So I don't know if you want to address that issue or not?

Brayden Richmond: This is a little more complicated too because we have a motion and a second, but Tammy, let me throw out an idea here. What if the motion said: The southern RAC recommends erring on the side of being generous on landowner tags. And I think you leave it at that. But I think the idea is we want to encourage landowners to take care of our wildlife. So the motion would express your feelings, but it wouldn't mandate 2019 levels unless it's this or that, it would just communicate the idea that we would want to be generous on landowner tags.

Tammy Pearson: That's a lot simpler of a motion. What he said.

Brayden Richmond: Verland would you give us a second on that one?

Verland King: Yeah, I would.

Brayden Richmond: Are we comfortable voting on that at this point?

Tammy Pearson: Yes, but let me add a little context to that. Considering the year, especially with the drought, I can guarantee that the private property is getting it way harder than public lands right now. Just because of the coverage on the grass and that.

Brayden Richmond: Let's vote on this one. So the southern RAC encourages the Board to take a generous approach to landowner tags. (Kevin speaking in the background) And I think I can communicate that, I don't think that needs to be part of the recommendation. I'll say the discussion was to encourage landowners to have a stake in taking care of wildlife and this is a program that does that. So the motion that we have written down says, Southern RAC recommends taking a generous approach to land owner tags. That's the motion.

The following motion was made by Tammy Pearson and seconded by Verland King.

MOTION: The Southern RAC recommends taking a generous approach to land owner tags.

Motion

Tammy Pearson: I'm fine with that.

Brayden Richmond: Let's vote. This one took a while, for a simple motion. Man I thought we were going to be out of here by 10:30, now I don't think so. We still have another motion coming.

Austin Atkinson: No.

Brayden Richmond: Do you want to state the reason for the no?

Austin Atkinson: I would say that I would recommend that the Division take a systemic approach to change the qualifications to give them more tags, not just change them at the Board meeting.

Bart Battista: Yes.

Gene Boardman: No.

Brayden Richmond: Would you like to state a reason the no, Gene?

Gene Boardman: Well, this is for landowner and I said there's about three different grades of landowner, four if you go with deprecation and I think that their tags should somewhat be represented in the public. If the public gets more tags, they get more tags, if the public gets less tags they have to take less tags too.

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: No.

Brayden Richmond: Would you like to state the reason for no Chad?

Chad Utley: I really support giving landowners these tags generously, but I think there needs to be a uniformed system in how they do it.

Brayden Richmond: So similar to what Austin said.

Nick Jorgensen: No, for the same reason.

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Motion carries 4 opposing.

Brayden Richmond: So, motion carries on this. We have four opposing, and I will communicate to the Board that we'd like to see a more analytical approach to this, but generally we'd like to help the landowners here to get a better universal approach. I hope that would represent the comments accurately. Any other motions on the CWMU and LOA permit options?

Austin Atkinson: And can I ask one more question to one more question to Chad in regards to what I brought up earlier? I think he was going to try to answer why the Alton CWMU is treated so differently for me than other CWMUs.

Chad Wilson: Sorry, I didn't know if it was a question or comment so I didn't know if it was appropriate to respond. So rule has it where... it's essentially because it's on the Paunsaugunt limited entry unit. The CWMU rule states that if we have a management hunt, then they can have a management hunt. So that's why the Alton gets CWMU management tags and that's why they qualify for the cactus buck hunts, because we do have a cactus buck hunt that runs there. If that makes sense.

Austin Atkinson: I think that's a good answer, thank you. And is there concern from law enforcement or anybody about the cactus buck hunt starting on the 1st, where even if they guides are honest a harvest of a buck could be any buck on the CWMU September 1st?

Chad Wilson: Yes, I think there's some concern there. Having talked to the CWMU operator, they're thinking of doing this later in September, probably after the 20th or so to minimize that some. And we could put in, if it's something that would make everyone more comfortable, we could put in whatever stipulation we wanted. Make them check them in to make sure that they are cactus bucks/non reproductive bucks.

Austin Atkinson: And to clarify, the non reproduction, the presence of testicles none of that applies to the cactus buck in the rule that we applied right? It's 50% or more and that's the end of it?

Chad Wilson: Yeah. And that's true it could still be a cactus buck, but we could make them check it in and if they're shooting reproductive bucks we could look at recommending not continuing that hunt in the future. Kind of hold them to a standard of making sure that they're shooting the ones that we want them to shoot and frankly the ones that they want to shoot too.

Brayden Richmond: You know Austin, as I listened to the other RACs discuss this, what Chad just said, that was kind of exactly my thought. If they went out and abused this they'd just revoke it. It would be in their best interest to not abuse this. Because it would be a one year abuse and then they would lose that opportunity going forward. I guess that was kind of my thought on it. They might abuse it one year, but that would cost them years of benefit.

Austin Atkinson: Let me clarify my comments. I'm not trying to single them out by any means, just bringing up the issue that I don't think the rule or regulation should be bent for anybody across the state, especially in the CWMU program where they are wildlife managers for their property. I felt like we had a way to manage those, but thank you for your answers and comments. I appreciate that.

Brayden Richmond: And I agree with you on those questions, Austin, that's a good line of questioning. Any other comments? Or would we entertain a motion? Would you be interested in making a motion regarding that Austin?

Austin Atkinson: No, I think I understand, if there is a hunt on public, he gets a hunt on private. So that makes sense to me.

Brayden Richmond: If there are no other motions to be made I would entertain a motion to accept the balance as presented.

Gene Boardman: That would mean that we accept the Division's recommendations for the cactus buck hunt, right?

Brayden Richmond: Correct.

Gene Boardman: Ok, I'm good with that.

Brayden Richmond: Do you want to make a motion Gene?

The following motion was made by Tammy Pearson and seconded by Craig Laub.

MOTION: To accept the rest of the Divisions recommendations as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brayden Richmond: Any additional discussion? Let's have a vote.

Austin Atkinson: Yes

Bart Battista: Yes

Gene Boardman: Yes.

Riley Roberts: Yes.

Chad Utley: Yes.

Nick Jorgensen: Yes

Sean Kelly: Yes.

Craig Laub: Yes.

Verland King: Yes.

Tammy Pearson: Yes.

Dan Fletcher: Yes.

Brayden Richmond: Motion passes unanimous. Appreciate it. That was a long haul, but this is an important RAC and I don't think we want to rush through it. I appreciate everyone's time and sticking with it.

Brayden Richmond: The next RAC would be, I should have written this down, do we have the date of our next RAC meeting? Oh there it is, December 8th. We don't have the time on here, but December 8th would be the date.

Kevin Bunnell: Typically the December RAC we have early at 5:00. But that was mostly because of travel and potential weather. I don't think it's going to be near as long of an agenda as tonight, and we won't have the travel concerns. Do you want to have that RAC at 6:00 like tonight or do you want to keep it at the original time at 5:00?

Nick Jorgensen: Let's go 6:00.

Craig Laub: I agree.

Bart Battista: I concur

Kevin Bunnell: Okay, I will change that on the agendas to be a 6:00 start time instead of 5:00.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Kevin. I appreciate everyone's participation and we'll go ahead and adjourn the meeting.

04:17:53 10:18 p.m.Meeting adjourned.

Southeast Region RAC Meeting

Video Conference

November 18, 2020

The meeting streamed live at <https://youtu.be/9QSBViwMV0E>

Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 6:30 pm

1. Welcome, RAC Introductions and RAC Procedure
- *RAC Chair*
2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes
- *RAC Chair*
3. Wildlife Board Meeting Update
- *RAC Chair*
4. Regional Update
- *DWR Regional Supervisor*
5. **Waterfowl Recommendations and R657- Amendments**
- *Blair Stringham, Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator*
6. **2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments**
- *Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator*
7. **Deer Management Plans – Population Objective Recommendations**
- *Regional Presentations*
8. **Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations**
- *Regional Presentations*
9. **CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations**
- *Chad Wilson, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator*

Southeast Region RAC Meeting
Video Conference
November 18, 2020
Summary of Motions

1) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the agenda.

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the Southeast Region RAC meeting.

3) WATERFOWL RECOMMENDATIONS AND R657- AMENDMENTS

The following motion was made by Brad Richman, seconded by Eric Luke and passed 11 in favor, 1 opposed.

MOTION: Allow existing blinds but disallowing any new blinds.

The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and seconded by Helene Taylor and passed unanimously, 12 in favor.

MOTION: Accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.

4) 2021 BIG GAME SEASONS, KEY DATES, HUNT CHANGES AND RULE AMENDMENTS

The following motion was made by Brad Richman, seconded by Darren Olson and passed 9 in favor, 3 opposed.

MOTION: Keep the age objective on Little Creek and the Central Mts Nebo as is, disregarding the DWR recommendations as presented.

The following motion was made by Kirk Player, and seconded by Todd Thorne. The motion passed 8 in favor, 3 opposed.

MOTION: regarding general season any bull tag to increase the number to an objective of 20,000 with an unlimited number for youth.

The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and was seconded Eric Luke. The motion passed unanimously, 11 in favor.

MOTION: To continue the bison hunters' choice hunt on the Henry Mountains at available dates in January.

The following motion was made by Eric Luke, and was seconded by Kent Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, 11 in favor.

MOTION: To create another archery bighorn sheep hunt to replace the Zion unit hunt.

The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and was seconded by Kent Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, 11 in favor.

MOTION: Motion to accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.

5) DEER MANAGEMENT PLANS – POPULATION OBJECTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following motion was made by Scoot Flannery, and was seconded by Kent Johnson, and the motion passed, 10 in favor, 1 opposed.

MOTION: Increase the population objective on Elk Ridge from 1,000 to 2,000.

The following motion was made by Brad Richman, and was seconded by Dana Truman, and the motion passed, 10 in favor, 1 opposed.

MOTION: To accept the remainder of the proposal as presented by the DWR.

**6) DEER MANAGEMENT PLANS – UNIT PLAN REVISION
RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following motion was made by Scoot Flannery, and seconded by Dana Truman and passed unanimously, 11 in favor.

MOTION: Accept the Division’s proposal as accepted

7) CWMU AND LANDOWNER 2021 PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following motion was made by Scoot Flannery, and seconded by Helene Taylor and passed unanimously, 10 in favor.

MOTION: To approve one tag per year to the San Juan Landowners.

The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously, 10 in favor.

MOTION: To accepted the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.

Southeast Region RAC Meeting
November 18, 2020
Online Attendance

RAC Members Present

Trisha Hedin, Chair; Sportsmen & Women
Kent Johnson, Vice Chairman; Public at large
Lynn Sitterud, Elected Official
Scot Flannery, Sportsmen & Women
Gerrish Willis, Public at Large
Brad Richman, Non-consumptive
Eric Luke, Sportsmen & Women
Darren Olsen, USFS
Todd Thorne, Public at Large
Jeff Christensen
Kirk Player
Helene Taylor
Dana Truman, BLM

<p>18:30:00</p>	<p>RAC Chair Trisha Hedin called the meeting to order. She called the roll of RAC members to indicate who attended the broadcast. She explained the process that there will be no live presentations or public comments taken during the meeting.</p>
<p>18:33:18</p>	<p>1) Approval of Agenda (Action) The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously 12. MOTION: To approve the agenda for the Southeast Region RAC meeting.</p>
<p>00:03:30</p>	<p>2) Approval of Minutes (Action) The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously 12. MOTION: To approve the minutes of the Southeast Region RAC meeting.</p>
<p>18:36:20</p>	<p>3) Wildlife Board Meeting (Informational) Chris Wood updated the RAC with Wildlife Board decisions.</p>
<p>18:38:20</p>	<p>4) DWR Update (Informational) Chris Wood updated the RAC on all regional activities.</p>
<p>18:46:10</p>	<p>5) WATERFOWL RECOMMENDATIONS AND R657- AMENDMENTS (Action) A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html</p>
<p>18:46:39</p>	<p>Public Comments Chris Wood stated there were many online comments from the public.</p>
<p>18:48:19</p>	<p>RAC Questions The RAC members asked about the advantages and disadvantages of blind constructions.</p>
<p>18:54:30</p>	<p>RAC Discussion The RAC members had no comments.</p>

<p>18:55:00</p>	<p>The following submotion was made by Brad Richman, and seconded by Eric Luke and passed 11 in favor, 1 opposed.</p> <p>MOTION: Allowing existing blinds but disallowing any new blinds.</p>
<p>18:59:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and seconded by Helene Taylor Luke and passed unanimously, 12 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.</p>
<p>19:00:40</p>	<p>6) 2021 BIG GAME SEASONS, KEY DATES, HUNT CHANGES AND RULE AMENDMENTS (Action) A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html</p>
<p>19:01:00</p>	<p>Public Comments Chris Wood read the comments from the public.</p>
<p>19:01:37</p>	<p>RAC Questions The RAC members asked questions of Covy Jones regarding general season hunt dates. No questions were asked. Kent Johnson asked questions regarding mule deer (19:04). Eric Luke asked a question regarding buck/doe ratio on the Henry Mts (19:05).</p>
<p>19:07:30</p>	<p>RAC Discussion The RAC members discussed mule deer recommendations.</p>
<p>19:10:15</p>	<p>RAC Questions The RAC members asked questions of Covy Jones regarding elk. Kirk Player (19:19) selling unlimited to non-state residents is a concern. Kent Johnson (19:20) asked if we considered an antler point restriction; etc.</p>
<p>19:52:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Eric Luke, and was not seconded. The motion failed.</p> <p>MOTION: Reduce the season dates on the Hams portion of the elk proposal (e.g. start the hams hunt a week late (September 7)) and limit the second portion of the Hams hunt to November.</p>

<p>20:07:30</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Brad Richman, and was seconded by Darren Olson. The motion passed 9 in favor, 3 opposed.</p> <p>MOTION: Keep the age objective on the Little Creek as is and keep the age objectives on the Central Mountains Nebo as is, disregarding the DWR recommendations.</p>
<p>20:17:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Kirk Player, and seconded by Todd Thorne. The motion passed 8 in favor, 3 opposed.</p> <p>MOTION: regarding general season any bull tag to increase the number to an objective of 20,000 with an unlimited number for youth.</p>
<p>20:21:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Scoot Flannery, and seconded by Kirk Player. The motion did not pass, 6 opposed, 5 in favor. The motion failed.</p> <p>MOTION: To extend the general season elk archery hunt by 9 days.</p>
<p>20:27:00</p>	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>Eric Luke has concerns regarding the cancellation of the bison archery hunt on the Henry Mountains.</p>
<p>20:32:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and was seconded Eric Luke. The motion passed unanimously, 11 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: To continue the bison hunters' choice hunt on the Henry Mountains at available dates in January.</p>
<p>20:37:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Eric Luke, and was seconded by Kent Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, 11 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: To create another archery bighorn sheep hunt to replace the Zion unit hunt.</p>
<p>20:39:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and was seconded by Kent Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, 11 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Motion to accept the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.</p>

<p>20:40:00</p>	<p>7) DEER MANAGEMENT PLANS – POPULATION OBJECTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS (Action) A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html</p>
<p>20:44:15</p>	<p>RAC Questions Kent Johnson asked why there was such a drastic reduction.</p>
	<p>RAC Discussion The RAC members discussed mule deer recommendations.</p>
<p>21:01:00</p>	<p>Public Comments Chris Wood read the comments from the public.</p>
<p>21:02:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Scoot Flannery, and was seconded by Kent Johnson, and the motion passed, 10 in favor, 1 opposed. MOTION: Increase the population objective on Elk Ridge from 1,000 to 2,000.</p>
<p>21:08:30</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Brad Richman, and was seconded by Dana Truman, and the motion passed, 10 in favor, 1 opposed. MOTION: To accept the remainder of the proposal as presented by the DWR.</p>
<p>21:10:00</p>	<p>8) DEER MANAGEMENT PLANS – UNIT PLAN REVISION RECOMMENDATIONS (Action) A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html</p>
<p>21:11:30</p>	<p>Public Comments Chris Wood read the online comments from the public.</p>
<p>21:11:30</p>	<p>RAC Questions RAC members asked if we could conduct similar surveys regarding the Manti.</p>
<p>21:19:00</p>	

	<p>The following motion was made by Scoot Flannery, and seconded by Dana Truman and passed unanimously, 11 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the Division’s proposal as accepted</p>
21:21:43	<p>9) CWMU AND LANDOWNER 2021 PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS (Action) A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html</p>
21:22:00	<p>Public Comments Chris Wood read the online comments from the public.</p>
21:23:00	<p>RAC Questions The RAC members asked about traditional recommendations.</p>
21:23:30	<p>RAC Discussion The RAC members discussed public comments.</p>
21:26:00	<p>The following motion was made by Scoot Flannery, and seconded by Helene Taylor and passed unanimously, 10 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: To approve one tag per year to the San Juan Landowners.</p>
21:27:30	<p>The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously, 10 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: To accepted the remainder of the recommendations as presented by the DWR.</p>
21:28:00	<p>The following motion was made by Kent Johnson, and seconded by Todd Thorne and passed unanimously, 10 in favor.</p> <p>MOTION: To adjourn the meeting.</p>

21:30:00	Meeting adjourned.
-----------------	--------------------

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
November 19, 2020
6:30 p.m.**

Attendance

RAC MEMBERS

Brett Prevedel	Dan Abeyta
Jeff Tanaguchi	Daniel Davis
Rebekah Jones	Natasha Hadden
Brad Horrocks	Ritchie Anderson
Joe Arnold	Dick Bess
Jamie Arrive	

Mike Smith--excused

Division Personnel

Miles Hanberg	Covy Jones
Amy Vande Voort	James Christensen
Bryan Clyde	Kent Hersey
Clint Sampson	Lindy Varney
Dax Mangus	Mike Christensen
Derrick Ewell	Staci Coons
Randall Thacker	Rose Fedelleck
Tonya Kieffer-Selby	
Blair Stringham	
Chad Wilson	

Wildlife Board Members

Randy Dearth

**Northeastern Regional Advisory County Meeting
November 19, 2020
6:30 p.m.**

00:00:00 1) Welcome

Chairman Brett Prevedel called the meeting to order, welcomed the audience, reviewed the meeting procedures, and had the Board and RAC members introduce themselves.

“Due to Covid-19 pandemic and the ability of the virus to spread from person to person the Governor has implemented a number of executive orders directed to controlling the spread of the virus by minimizing face to face interactions. Public gatherings are strongly discouraged by the CDC, the State of Utah and local health departments. Since they facilitate face to face contact and impose and impose an elevated risk of virus transmissions. The DWR and the Chair of this public body have determined that RACs and Wildlife Board meetings present a substantial risk to the health and safety to those that attend and will conduct this meeting using a fully electronic format. This meeting format is authorized by recent amendment to the Utah code and by executive order by Governor Gary Herbert and will be temporarily used in place of the in person public meetings that usually occur around the state. Anyone wishing to comment on agenda comments in future meetings or to observe this meeting may do so by logging into the Divisions webpage.”

00:03:58 2) Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Action)

Brett Prevedel: Let’s talk about the agenda. We have a full agenda tonight, and we’ll try to move it along. It’s going to take some time but we’ll try to address everyone's concerns or give everyone an opportunity to talk that needs that. With that we do want to move it along so we can finish in 2-3 hours if possible. Has everyone had a chance to look at the minutes? If so, I would take a motion to accept the minutes from our October meeting.

The following motion was made by Jeff Taniguchi, seconded by Natasha Hadden. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes from the last RAC meeting.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: n/a

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: n/a

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: n/a

Motion passes

Brett Prevedel: Ok, we'll move to the agenda, we have enough votes to pass on that. A motion to accept tonight's agenda?

The following motion was made by Dan Abeyta, seconded by Jeff Taniguchi. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept tonight's agenda as presented.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: n/a

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: n/a

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Motion passes

Brett Prevedel: Ok, we'll move on to the first agenda item which is the Wildlife Board Meeting update which I will provide.

00:07:32 3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update by RAC Chair, Brett Prevedel

Brett Prevedel: If you remember our last meeting was primarily fishing. We had some fishing content rule amendments, some updates on the Provo River, we had some changes for deployed military, we had expo permit requests for cougars, and we had our annual report and we had an appeal of a wildlife sensitive species list. We had a lot of consensus on the last meeting and we approved all the items as presented, and the Wildlife Board did the same, so it was a pretty quick and pretty positive meeting. Did you have anything to add to that Miles, related to the Wildlife Board?

Miles Hanberg: I don't Brett.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, so with that are there any questions on the Wildlife Board meeting from last month that anyone has? Ok, if not we'll move on to the Regional update from Miles.

00:08:47 4) Regional Update (Informational) - Miles Hanberg, NERO Regional Supervisor

Miles Hanberg: Thank you and good evening everyone. I appreciate everyone's attendance here from the RAC, we have everyone's attendance except for one that was excused, so I appreciate that. I know a lot of you have received a lot of feedback and I appreciate the time you've taken to hear from people in the public and the time you've spent to consider these issues that we'll be discussing tonight. Thanks again for your participation in the process. This is really the way we need to hear from the public and that all channels through you guys.

Our wildlife section is starting to do deer classification. We'll be classifying deer now into the first part of December. This is our post season deer classification that helps us base our permit recommendations in the upcoming year. This week there has also been bighorn sheep surveys going on up in the North Slope up in the Bare Top and Sheep Creek area to look at those populations and see how they're doing. In the next couple of weeks we anticipate starting to collar some additional bighorn sheep with GPS collars up in that Flaming Gorge area as well. That's pretty exciting work and that really helps us to be able to model those populations a lot as well. We'll be capturing some pronghorn in the Book Cliffs this winter. That will be part of our Wildlife Migration Initiative, so there will be some collared on the north side of the Book Cliffs as well as the south side. Just a quick update on the Book Cliffs study issues with BYU. Right now we're sitting at 52% on survival on the Book Cliffs, that was the fawns that were captured this summer and monitored. So that's up from last year, last year was 36% at this time. So it's up, but we still have a ways to go. We'd like to see those numbers higher than that. The good news is we do have that survival on adult does as well as our older fawns, once they get past the young period in the summer it seems like we have a good survival rate after that. So we just need to get through that neonate period and hopefully things will look better in the future.

Our habitat folks have been working with the Forest Service and others as well as the Ute Tribe to get some fire rehab done on that East Fork fire north of the Altamont area. They just had a contract close to apply seed to a bunch of that burned area. A lot of it's going to be the south facing slopes and the lower elevation. Those are the sites that are at risk for cheatgrass in the future and it was also crucial winter range for deer and elk. That's an effort that we're excited to get done, it looks like we'll be able to get that before too much snow hits the ground. That should be a good effort. Just finished building 12 ponds out in the Book Cliffs and cleaning trees over ponds. That's a big project going on as well as a number of guzzlers going out in the Book Cliffs as well. Habitat folks have been busy doing that. That kind of work out in the Book Cliffs will really help with our water situation.

Our aquatic section is going to announce that the burbot bash up on Flaming Gorge is still planned for January, I think it's going to be the 29-31st. Then there is also the "pupulation" contest, it's a tagged fish contest on small lake trout that are referred to as pups. That's being sponsored by Buckboard Marina.

Essentially if you register and catch one of those tagged fish it's worth \$100. In addition, people who catch those are entered into a drawing. I think one of the prizes is a new boat. That's a pretty neat contest for individuals to take part of. And that contest goes throughout the winter clear into June. So a couple of opportunities are still going on with aquatics this winter despite this Covid situation. The Ice Addition Tournament that has been held in year past at Starvation Reservoir has been moved to Steinaker Reservoir this year to facilitate better fishing and they have to have the tournament in places where there is decent parking to facilitate the numbers of people and at Starvation where they can park people really isn't a great fishing spot. So, it's been moved, and I haven't heard about any Covid related issues. And this will be sometime in January, I don't have the date, I'm sorry about that.

Our outreach section, they're going to be holding a Christmas bird count down at the Ouray Bird Refuge on December 19th for people who are interested in participating in that. It's an annual event that goes on down there. Our outreach section is also looking to refill our outdoor recreation specialists position. The announcements have closed on that and we're trying to narrow the list down to find the candidate to fill that position. We're pleased to announce that our pheasant releases have been going much better this year. We changed up the schedule on that to different days of the week and different times, which really limited the number of people that were waiting for the trucks to arrive at the sites. I haven't heard of the problems that we had in the past and hats off to our dedicated hunters, they've really taken a big part in transporting birds from the grower to the region and distributing those birds which is largely a volunteer effort. So, we're happy about that.

And our law enforcement section, we've had a busy fall. One thing to report is our canine dog here in the region is continuing to do neat things. Actually he's been making a number of cases really good and finding all kinds of things from meat to ammunition all types of things so it's been an exciting tool from the region and for law enforcement efforts as well. So I think I'm going to stop the update at this point. If anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to answer them, but we need to balance the time for the discussion for these agenda items.

Dan Abeyta: I've got a question for you on the 52% fawn survival down in the Book Cliffs. What is the sample size on that? Or is that a better question for Clint? But I was just curious what the sample size was on that 52% survival is?

Miles Hanberg: It's 50 fawns that were captured.

Dan Abeyta: Ok, and then another question I had Miles, is you mentioned the canine officer, who is the handler of that?

Miles Hanberg: That is Sargent Randy Sheetz.

Dan Abeyta: Ok, I was just curious. Thank you

Brad Horrocks: Miles, how come the fawn survival rate is up higher this year? You'd think that with the droughts and stuff it would be lower. So what do you give credit to there?

Miles Hanberg: It could be a number of issues. It was a drought year, but the year before this year was actually a pretty decent summer, we had pretty good moisture, so our does were in better conditions going into last winter so our birth rates and our twinning rates both were higher this year. However, it ended up being a drought year. So the fawns that were born the previous year were probably lighter and in poor condition and maybe not able to survive as well as this batch. So really we're finding the condition of those does before they give birth really relates to the survivorship of the fawns. But we do see that a large reason for this lower rate is predation. We're seeing lion and bear predation on a number of those animals.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you Miles. Any other questions for Miles? Ok, if not we will move into the first action item on our agenda which is the waterfowl recommendations and amendments and Blair is here with us and if you would just take a moment to summarize, Blair, and to take a moment to clarify the one item that was causing some confusion with the blinds?

00:17:51 5) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-Amendments (Action)
Blair Stringham, Migratory Game Bird Program
Recommendations

Presentations could be viewed at
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

Blair Stringham: Sure, I'd be happy to. So the thing with the biggest confusion is the blinds on the Williar Spur. So, for some background information on that, people got together a committee about a year and a half ago to form a management plan to assist us with managing that area. And one of the things we had to tackle was this issue with permanent blinds. So prior to us acquiring this property there were about 20 permanent blinds that existed on that property and they've been there for quite a while now. So, as we talked through with the committee they all wanted to and voted unanimously to keep those blinds on the property. So, that required us to go back and talk with Forestry Fire and State Land, which is our sister agency that we jointly manage that property with, and find a way to accommodate those. What we decided was basically to put in place a permanent process which would require people who have those blinds to make known where they are as well as it would allow us to basically make them mark those blinds so we'd know where they are. And that basically is to keep us safe and to mitigate any liability that may be associated with those. So, we put that together, we put this language in the rule which you guys will be looking at tonight. Basically we put that process in place to cover existing blinds as well as any new blinds that may be on those properties. So, where everybody has gotten hung up on that language, it would probably get us to where we want to be and maybe the easiest way to kind of work through this tonight. So there is some background information on that.

Brett Prevedel: Blair if we make that adjustment and we take out new and just approve it as presented without new blinds being approved, is that what you're saying and that's what most of the comments were in favor of? They were not

in favor of new blinds, I saw very few, and we'll have Miles look at.... I don't know if we have a regional percentage on the comments on this one Miles, but everything I saw was against new blinds. So, is that what you're suggesting Blair?

Blair Stringham: Yes. The feedback that we've gotten, it looked like in the comments as well as there wasn't any support for having new blinds out there, and as an agency, we probably wouldn't want to set many new blinds out there as well. So that would be a good way to handle it.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, were there any comments to summarize Miles?

**00:20:39 Electronic Public Comment Report (Informational),
Miles Hanberg, NERO Regional Supervisor**

Miles Hanberg: Well, my numbers are 66% of people were neutral on this one, 16% supported, and 16% were against. Just to summarize the comments that you guys already have was mainly people opposed to new blinds.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, any questions from the RAC?

00:21:07 Questions from RAC Members

Dan Abeyta: I have a question for Blair. This is on public land, correct?

Blair Stringham: Correct. It is on the lake bed of the Great Salt Lake which is all sovereign land.

Dan Abeyta: Ok, so permanent hunting blinds on public land by permit, so they would need to be under a permit. Is that essentially a private hunting blind?

Blair Stringham: So, the way that they evolved is there is basically a duck club that has been operating out there for quite some time that put those blinds in place. And they were out there legally, so there wasn't any prior authorization to have those blinds on the property previously. So, it's a unique situation for us because we don't have anything like this on any of our other properties, but because of the interest by sportsmen to keep those out there, this permit process would basically allow us to document where those are as well as mitigate for liability for having those on the property. But in terms of ownership they wouldn't be any particular persons, so they would be on a first come first serve basis for anybody that wanted to use those.

Dan Abeyta: Ok, that really answers my question. Thank you.

Brett Prevedel: If there are no other questions, are there any comments from the RAC?

00:22:38 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Natasha Hadden: I was just wondering if you were thinking to eventually phase those blinds out, or if you're intending to maintain them and reconstruct those blinds that are there now?

Blair Stringham: Great question. So there are probably a lot of people out there that would like to see those eventually go away. We acquired this property through legislation last year during a legislative session and the legislature would also like to see those go away. So, probably something that we would put a horizon on that once we reach that, those would go away.

Natasha Hadden: Ok, thank you.

Rebekah Jones: I have another question. One of the comments that you just addressed that anyone could use the blinds. But do you foresee any conflict with having that first come first serve system of using the blinds?

Blair Stringham: I would assume that there probably will be some conflict out there because there will be someone that holds a permit for it, but the way that we would enforce that is it would be allowed as a first come first serve basis. The area is pretty remote, so there probably aren't a lot of interaction with people on that, but we will make it known that they are open for anybody to use at any time.

Dan Abeyta: I do have a follow up from my question. Blair, each blind is going to be under a permit by a private individual, correct?

Blair Stringham: Correct.

Dan Abeyta: Have you considered kind of a drawing thing? I know some national wildlife refuges hold... Like Rebekah was saying, I kind of see potential conflict with whoever is holding that permit thinking they own that blind and if there was some sort of a drawing for.. and I don't know how you'd do that, if you'd do it on the weekends when there is a lot of people out there? I just kind of foresee conflict there with that. With an individual person holding that permit for that blind thinking they own that blind.

Blair Stringham: I totally understand where you're coming from. One of the greatest fears of waterfowl hunters in the state is that we will go towards a draw system, like most of the other states do across the country do for blinds. It's definitely something we don't want to get into the business of doing. So we've considered that, but I think that would be so unpopular that we really wouldn't want to think about it for more than a couple of seconds.

Dan Abeyta: Ok. Alrighty, that's all I have.

Brett Prevedel: I guess you've acquired the blinds so you're just going to have to see how it goes, right Blair?

Blair Stringham: Yeah, I mean ideally we'd like to manage it without any blinds out there, but because it's such a unique situation where they have existed out there for dozens and dozens of years now, we're trying to just make it a situation that will work for everybody involved, both us and the hunters that use that area.

Daniel Davis: So, Blair, what would it take for the Division to make a survey of these blinds and alleviate that conflict and have them already there? Could you give us some history on this private permit, this practice in the past, or is that a survey that can be conducted to know where they're at in them?

Blair Stringham: So prior to this there hasn't been any kind of permitting in place, so that is one of the challenges we have is we don't know exactly where all these things exist out there. So what the permit would allow us to do is allow us to know where the blinds are at. So if we came across blinds that we didn't have a permit for, we'd be able to remove those blinds. It's basically a way for us to clean all this up. Essentially make it workable for us as an agency managing the property to have a process so these blinds can continue to exist so we can manage them and prevent new blinds from popping up all over the place out there.

Brad Horrocks: Blair, you say they are in quite remote areas? Is there a possibility to better utilize the hunting grounds if we put in a system there where they could go online and reserve them and pay the fee to use them a day? Is there any advantage to that?

Blair Stringham: There probably would be in terms of people using them and avoiding conflict. But again, most of the hunters in the state don't want to see us going towards any kind of blind reservation system. So we've tried to steer away from that and make these accessible to anybody at any time. I guess in terms of remoteness, they are only accessible by boats. So people with airboats are primarily the only ones hunting out of these blinds, or really good mud motors with big engines. That's why they're there, but there is potential for conflict to exist with them.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, are there any other comments? If not, I would entertain... the recommended motion from the Division would be to allow approved permitting of existing blinds and prohibit new blinds. So, I'd entertain any motion that anyone feels like they want to make.

The following motion was made by Natasha Hadden and seconded by Brad Horrocks.

MOTION: I move to allow existing identified permanent blinds but prohibit the construction of new blinds.

Motion passed unanimously.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: n/a

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jamie Arrive: Yes.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, motion passes unanimously. Thank you Blair. We will move to the next item on the agenda. Which is...

Blair Stringham: I apologize for interrupting, there are two other things that you may want to address with the waterfowl recommendation. There is the non toxic shot and the blinds on the WMAs that you may want to address. You may want to make a motion?

Brett Prevedel: I'm sorry about that. Would anyone have an issue if we amended that motion to say and the rest of the recommendations as presented? or do you want to do a separate motion on that Miles?

Miles Hanberg: I think it's probably best to do a separate motion at this point.

Alright, I'll entertain a motion for the other two items where, add Willard Spur waterfowl management area to the non toxic shot list, and to create a retrieval zone around Farmington Bay waterfowl management rest area. Have there been any major issues come up with either of these around the state, Blair?

Blair Stringham: There really hasn't been much discussion on either of those. A little bit on the Farmington Bay stuff, but nothing that stood out really in the comments.

Dan Abeyta: I've got a quick question for Blair, is this non toxic proposal for this area, was it not already in place because this is a new land acquisition, is that what's going on?

Blair Stringham: Correct, yes. So all the properties we manage for waterfowl merged to non toxic shot across the board so we're just adding this to the list so it will be a non toxic shot area.

Dan Abeyta: And it wasn't because it was privately owned before, is that correct?

Blair Stringham: So, it's always been sovereign land, but it wasn't part of being managed by the Division of Wildlife, so when that became a waterfowl management area a year and a half ago, we did the management plan and now we're just basically updating it to bring it on line with the rest of our waterfowl properties.

Dan Abeyta: Ok, I copy. Thanks.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, are there any further questions? If not, I'll entertain a motion to approve the remainder of the presentation.

The following motion was made by Dan Abeyta and seconded by Natasha Hadden.

MOTION: I move to approve the remainder of the presentation as presented.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brett Prevedel: Motion passes unanimously. Ok, now I'll move to the next agenda item, which is the 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes, and Rule Amendments. I'm sure we're going to break out several items out

of this large presentation. So, just to achieve some order in this so I can track what the decisions were, if it's ok with the RAC to just take them the way they're listed out of the summary page from the packet. We'll just go through and discuss the items and then if we want to make motions or any votes specifically we can do that. Ultimately there will be the remainder of the packet to vote on. Is that ok with everybody to follow that process, or would you rather take the big items first and get them out there?

Brad Horrocks: I'm not quite sure I follow you Brett. So if we want something for discussion, I'd rather not do the whole packet then vote on it, but can we do it in sections somehow? There is a lot there.

Brett Prevedel: Yes, that's what I'm proposing is that we take it in sections and I would just follow the sections in the order of the sections of the summary page of the RAC packet. So, there's actually about 16 or 18 different items Brad, so we will be discussing individual items. I was just suggesting that we do them in the order we have them written so we don't bounce around and miss something.

Brad Horrocks: I like that.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, so with that, Covy is here to answer questions. I will say that the Division rolled this out with many controversial items in it with not much public survey. You know like the fisheries would do. and as we all know we started getting calls and started getting really mad people within an hour or two and I think my personal opinion is that the RAC should be involved ahead of these major proposals rolling out, since we're the contact point for the public. We also need to remember that even though we're working together on this meeting tonight, we're representing the public and with the online format that's our role. I want to just tell the RAC members that as long as they are civil we can disagree and proceed in any direction we choose as far as a recommendation. With that we're just making recommendations to the Wildlife Board and the other RACs have done the same. So, there is no guarantee they will follow ours.

Brad Horrocks: Brett, I would like to echo what you said. In my four years as a commissioner I think this is the first time we've had people come into our office upset about quite a few things. Anyway, I agree with what you're saying that we could use a little bit of a better format on it.

00:39:19 **6) 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments (Informational)**
 - **Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator**

Presentations could be viewed at
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

Brett Prevedel: Ok, with the way we're going to go, we'll talk about the first deer item which is on the summary page and that is the NS new hunt, any legal weapon and then there was a discontinued hunt NS Summit limited entry hunt. I believe that was primarily a boundary change. Is that correct, Dax? Or who should we talk to on this one?

Covy Jones: I think this is a great regional one to explain the rationale behind the recommendation.

Dax Mangus: I think I can take a stab on this one and I think Amy is on too if we have follow up questions or want more detail. For several years now we've had a limited entry deer hunt that was earlier that had some overlap with the general season any bull hunt on the NS and a lot of that was driven out of the northern region in a demand for opportunity to hunt both deer and elk at the same time. So that hunt predated the little bit newer earlier general season rifle hunts that we have on several of our units throughout the state now. So, after looking at it that limited entry deer hunt on the NS there, it cost the extra money of a limited entry deer hunt, it burnt bonus points, and incurred a waiting period like a limited entry deer hunt. Yet it was pretty low success, really easy drawing odds, it just wasn't a great fit in our current limited entry deer system. And now that we have this other system where we can have a general season deer hunt that's earlier and has some overlap with the elk hunt, that seemed like a better fit. So we are recommending discontinuing that early limited entry deer hunt up there on the NS and instead having it be one of the early rifle general season hunts. There won't be additional permits allocated to that hunt, it will just be a split of the permits allocated towards the any weapon hunts, and we'll go into that earlier hunt as a general season hunt on a general season unit. Like I said we have several other units in the region with that same hunt structure, for example the Nine Mile unit does that same hunt structure. That's the rationale. If you have more questions or follow up, I can try to answer or Amy can as well.

Brett Prevedel: And that's October 13-17th. So would it still overlap the elk season?

Dax Mangus: It's a short hunt, it's only five days, and it starts the Wednesday after the general, any bull, any weapon season opens and runs that Wednesday through the next Sunday. So it's kind of in the middle of the season and that was done to avoid a bunch of extra crowding or something right on the opener, if I'm remembering right, Covy, from the deer committee that met several years back. So there is overlap, but it is shorter. It's not the duration of the entire any weapon, any bull hunt, it's only five days kind of in the middle of that hunt.

Covy Jones: That's exactly it, Dax.

00:42:38 Questions from RAC Members (deer)

Brad Horrocks: Are we going through... You say the tag numbers will be the same?

Dax Mangus: We'll make a recommendation on tag numbers in the spring, but the point I was trying to make was the tags for that hunt come out of the same pool of just the general NS deer hunt. It would give 20% of the permits of whatever gets recommended would go to the archery hunt, 20% would go to the muzzleloader hunt, and of that remaining 60% some of those would go into that earlier season and the remainder of those would go into that traditional rifle deer hunt.

Covy Jones: And typically that's been 20%. We've kind of standardized that statewide and done 20/20/20/40, instead of 20/20/60.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, there was also another item on there, just that the Henry Mountain management buck hunts were discontinued, and I assume that's just a biologist recommendation that they achieved their purpose or they're no longer needed?

Covy Jones: Yeah, the management buck hunts on these premium limited entry units where we have very little harvest, the management buck hunts were just to control the buck/doe ratio where we can get up above 55 at times which we're managing for (inaudible). We are below 40 right now and 40-55 is the premium limited entry range. Last year we came in at 38 and so we don't have the ability to offer that opportunity right now on the Henry's. And we'd rather cut that first before we have to cut any of the limited entry permits.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you. Any other questions on the deer changes?

Dan Abeyta: I've got a question on, how long were those hunts in place, like the Henry Mountain management hunt and the NS Summit LE? How many years were those in place?

Covy Jones: The management buck on the Henry's has been in place for several years, I know at least the last two deer plans it's been in place. And this LE hunt, Dax do you know how long we've been offering that hunt on the NS? I mean the idea behind it was to offer a hunt that overlapped the elk hunt too. How long have we been offering that hunt, Dax?

Dax Mangus: It's been.. I think at least we're in the second iteration of the statewide deer plan where we've had it. So I don't know if Amy is on and you remember more specifically Amy, but I'm thinking probably about seven years or something like that. But I don't remember for sure.

Dan Abeyta: That's ok, I was just curious how long that was in place before the change. Thank you.

Brett Prevedel: Any other questions on the deer changes? If there is no opposition to the way it was presented then I think we can just let it go in with the packet at the end and if we're going to deviate from the Divisions recommendation

then we need to do it as we go, so we can make some motions. So on the NS early new hunt, discontinued Henry Mountain and discontinued NS Summit LE, is there anybody that has a problem with that? Ok, I think we'll move to elk and have that discussion now.

00:42:38 Questions from RAC Members (elk)

Brett Prevedel: How long is the elk plan in place where you talked about a mid plan review, Covy?

Covy Jones: The elk plan is in place for seven years, and we're completing year five right now, so there are two more years for the elk plan. The mid plan review was an instruction given to us by the Board saying go back and look at a few things, so that is what we did. And if there are any questions on how that happened or what we did, I'd be happy to answer them.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, so just as a clarification of how a lot of these recommendations came up; the Division was asked by the Wildlife Board to do a mid plan review of the elk plan and meet with the elk committee. Then the committee had the direction to look at the following three items. They reviewed the unit age objectives. They looked for options to increase opportunity in the limited entry hunts; specifically the HAMS hunts and the September archery hunts. And they looked for options to increase opportunity in the general any bull hunts. So, with that I'm going to go through the recommended changes and we'll just have discussion as we go, and if we oppose the recommended change we will do a vote and a motion at that time and otherwise we'll just move through this list and capture it at the end. So the first one on this list is the Book Cliffs Little Creek age objective. It's currently 7.5-8 and it's recommended that it be reduced to 6.5-7. Clint, do you want to briefly talk about that? Just summarize your thoughts there?

Clint Sampson: Sorry, I was doing a great job on mute there for a minute and making some excellent points. So the reasoning behind lowering the age objective in the roadless Little Creek unit is to make it match the Bitter Creek side. We have failed consistently to hit that higher age objective in the roadless the past several several years, so it was an opportunity to make them both the same. We believe that most of the elk move back and forth and they're not separate individual herds, so it makes it a little bit difficult to try and have a higher age class on one side of the mountain compared to the rest of the range. So that's kind of the basic reasoning behind it.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, questions from the RAC?

Brad Horrocks: You're saying they're kind of the same herd, I guess is what you're saying Clint, it's moving back and forth but I'm not sure... It seems like the tremendous dissatisfaction of what's going on in the Book Cliffs, but is that what's helping us to get some bulls at a little bit of an older age to come into the other part of the Book Cliffs? I don't know, I'm just saying it may be hard to hit that objective but I know that we've got it. From what I hear the tremendous

dissatisfaction of what's going on in the Book Cliffs out there, if that will actually hurt some more?

Clint Sampson: That's an excellent point and we've been focusing a lot on the Book Cliffs lately and try to solve the problems and the issues we've had out there. Elk quality has been a factor with people being dissatisfied with their hunt experience, and the potential might be there to have the roadless as kind of a feeder area with bulls, but we're just looking to make it more uniform I guess.

Brett Prevedel: Clint, I'd like to ask you if this was approved, would you increase the tags in the Little Creek area due to the age class?

Clint Sampson: No, not this year anyway. It would depend on how our age class comes back. Right now both units are below the objective.

Dax Mangus: I was going to mention really quick that in the Little Creek area we've cut permits year after year after year trying to get to that higher age objective and we're down to 20 permits issued for the entire roadless area last year between archery, muzzleloader and rifle hunts, 20 total permits. So it gets to a certain point where that represents a smaller portion of the elk herd, yes they're probably the same elk based on collar data, it gets to a point where I don't know that we can reduce permits enough to get to the age objective in there. That's where it gets to the point where it doesn't seem to make sense to manage it for two separate age objectives. Because we'll just cut and cut and cut permits in the roadless until we can hardly even hunt in there because it's the same elk and the same elk herd.

Brad Horrocks: Originally, when that was acquired down there... Are there any cows still running in that area?

Dax Mangus: No, we don't have any permitted grazing in there. There is some trespass livestock in there, but there is no permitting grazing right now.

Brad Horrocks: Worked on that in '86 or '90 whatever it was and were giving about the same number of permits now as we were then. There were sure some great plans, I've hunted it and drawn a tag in it, but we've taken off 600 head of cows, and we haven't increased the elk numbers down there. What's going on?

Dax Mangus: Bison, horses, cows, and if you've been down there recently to the lower end of East Willow Sheet Canyon cabin, in that time frame you're talking when I first came out here I went to the Sheet Canyon cabin and we were down there in the summer and it was real hot and went down to take a bath in the middle of the night down in the stream and the stream was only about an inch deep. But you go back down there now, I think it was last summer Clint tried to ride his horse across the stream and ended up swimming. So things have changed quite a bit. Those Willow communities have come back quite a bit. We've got beavers moving in through those spots and we have quite a few bison in there now. There are some issues with trespass and wild cows and horses in there as well. But the roadless is one of those areas that actually looks pretty good. We've got better aspen stands,

better aspen regeneration in there than in a lot of the other places in the Book Cliffs. Generally overall we definitely have some issues and some struggles and I'm not going to argue with anyone who says that elk quality and satisfaction are down some. I think we acknowledge that and that's a big part of why we're doing so much research out there right now. Some of the things we're doing with predator management, water development, and I think all of those things are kind of at play and are going on at the same time.

Ritchie Anderson: I'd like to discuss the spike hunt out there, I don't know if you want to do that now or later?

Brett Prevedel: Let's do that when we discuss the any bull recommendations. And it is coming up. Jamie, did you have a question on this age class?

Jamie Arrive: Yes, you were saying that you were going to reduce the age class to 6.5. What is the age class in the Book Cliffs now?

Dax Mangus: Currently the Bitter Creek south, the roaded portion of the Book Cliffs is managed for 6.5-7 year old bulls, and the roadless area the objective is 7.5-8 year old bulls. The current average right now, the three year average for the roadless area is 7. It's right on 7.0, and right now for the Bitter Creek south I have that pulled up somewhere, I think it's right around 6. I can't remember if it's 6.1 or 6.2.

Clint Sampson: I think it's 6.2.

Dax Sampson: Ok, Clint knows.

Brett Prevedel: I'll just throw out there that there were several comments that came in, why don't we raise the Bitter Creek area up instead of reduce the roadless area? Clint and I discussed that and the implications are you would have to cut a significant amount of tags to even attempt that in the whole Book Cliffs. What this recommendation is doing is I guess trying to admit that you're not going to reach it. Is that right Clint?

Clint Sampson: Sorry, reach the age objective in the roadless as it currently sits? Is that your question Brett? (yes). You know we've been cutting permits like Dax said over the last several years trying to increase the age from the declining trend, trying to get it up where it needs to be and it's been a struggle.

Covy Jones: If it's ok with you Brett, I think one of the things I want to make sure the RAC understands is in the Book Cliffs. Obviously age and elk antler size are highly correlated, right? Up to year five in elk is 92% of what they'll ever be. On average elk are the biggest at about 6 and your average bull across the west is about 320 inches at year 6. That is highly correlated to the amount of nutrition they get and the amount of nutrition they get even in utero. And what we're seeing in the Book Cliffs with deer and elk is probably in the downswing in quality. It's probably

less to do with the age of the animals and more to do with the quality of the forage. So, I want to make sure that the RAC understands that we looked at this and if you're to go the other way, you're going to stack more bulls on a population that right now is struggling nutritionally. And you will end up with more smaller bulls. So it wouldn't address the quality issue that you're trying to address. Those were the other things that we took into consideration when we made this recommendation.

Dick Bess: The roadless is the last truly horseback unit. It is truly a roadless unit and there are guys that put into that thing for years to try to harvest a mature bull as they can, and I'm not convinced that 6-7 is as big as they get, but I'm not a biologist. I hunt elk a lot and I see some of those older bulls that are 8-10 year old bulls that continue to grow and people gather their sheds off year after year. I just hate that... we still have one side of that and that's the Tribe that elk migrate off of that too. So I hate to lower that age objective on, to me, it's a one of a kind hunt in Utah.

Brett Prevedel: Thanks Dick. You know it doesn't add to this discussion, but I will throw it out. I'm an elk rancher and they put on size until they're about 10. About 20 inches a year consistently and I know they don't have the worn out teeth and other issues so it may not correlate exactly over. Six year olds the first year, they're probably at their mature size, but they put on size and mass consistently until they're 10. Anybody else have any comments? Or do we want to take a direction on this or move on? Miles I'm not sure how you want to do the public comment, because all of these items are grouped under one comment, as far as the percentage?

Miles Hanberg: They are. So, you know I could probably give you what the overall percentages were for all these motions, I mean that's the data that I have. You know I think as you're going down through the list I have kind of an idea of what the comments were for each of these items, I kept track of that to a point. I don't have a statistic, but I could give you some feedback that way.

Brett Prevedel: I think that most of our comments were driven by the general season recommendation and the anthro recommendation, so they weren't specific to this. So, RAC, I heard Dick say that he does not want to reduce it. What's the sentiment?

Brad Horrocks: Well Brett, if it's time I'd like to make the motion that we....

Brett Prevedel: Hold on I have a couple of people on at the same time. I'll come back to you for that motion, Brad. Was there anybody that wanted to get in here before a motion is made?

Daniel Davis: Yes, I've got a few questions, if I could take a minute? So, as mentioned in what was brought up was in regards to the buffalo. Essentially what we are seeing out there, if I'm correct, is more mouths on the range. Is that one of the limiting factors of what we've got going on, correct? So, with that being said,

what are we looking at as far as the buffalo? What direction are we going to go to minimize that number or redistribute forcefully as necessarily? I know you can't build a fence and they don't care about fences anyways, but what are some of those factors? Yes the trespass is there, are there issues or ways that people can be held accountable for that to become mitigated before it becomes a problem? What are some resolutions here that can come to fruition looking forward instead of trying to catch up when it's too late?

Brett Prevedel: If I can jump in real fast, when we have the Book Cliffs working group I think you're exactly right Daniel. When you add everything up there are not enough resources on a poor year especially. On a good year you'll probably break even. But I will say that the numbers of bison were not a major factor. Horses were a very major factor just because of the sheer numbers and the year round. The AUMs attributed to bison, and Dax you can maybe refresh my memory on that, but it was just a very small fraction of the feed demand, there may be other aspects of water and other territorial type of things with the bison, but it wasn't a feed thing specifically with the bison. But Book Cliffs wide, it certainly was. Is that accurate?

Dax Mangus: I don't have the forage analysis in front of me. We do have a resource limitation to the issue in the Book Cliffs and we have a lot of folks, a lot of partners from a lot of different entities working together on that. The roadless area, like Commissioner Horrocks mentioned, used to have a lot of livestock grazing in there, and that was part of that Book Cliff initiative in that area was to make room for bison in there eventually. The bison aren't really doing damage in there, even if we have a couple hundred head that are in there. They move back and forth between Weaver and over to the Tribal lands, but it's still a drop in the bucket compared to what used to be in there. Then we've been super aggressive on our bison the last few years and drought conditions and concerns that we heard from folks like Burton Clay at the Main Canyon Ranch, to the point where we really got aggressive on those bison and you're not going to drive down Winter Ridge and see a herd of 80 bison out feeding in the middle of the day these days. They're moving a lot more. I am encouraged as well looking at some of our GPS collar information, we do have bison moving and covering more areas and spending more time. That is part of our objective in the bison plan is to have those bison well distributed across the unit and not concentrated in a few areas. Maybe you noticed we had a couple hunts for 2020 that were specific just to the roadless area. So we are working with harvest and hunter pressure to get those bison moving around a little bit, and we've hit them super hard and we just noticed this year that we found way more wounding loss than we would have anticipated with bison. We're up to 10 confirmed wounded loss bison that have been found, which is pretty high, and that's on about 50 permits if we don't count the Wildhorse Bench permits. So we're talking a 20% wounding loss based on permits issued, which is very high. We also had a lot of folks that drew the either sex bison tags, where typically the folks that draw the either sex bison tags really want to harvest males, they want a big bull, we actually had quite a few of those folks that harvested cows. We've hit our bison pretty darn hard, and at this point they're a small part of the issue out there. There are some that we're going to keep an eye on and try to respond and manage responsibly and appropriately. You

know, there is a lot going on with looking at the elk numbers, deer numbers, bison numbers, and that's going to come up tonight. And as Miles mentioned our habitat guys have been working their guts out down there. Cleaning out and building ponds, guzzlers, pin and juniper thinning projects, all kinds of stuff to increase forage and also some pretty aggressive predator management we have going on down there. I think we're throwing just about everything we can at it. I know we've got some good folks, a really resourceful team of folks working on the horse issue and coming up with some really good solutions and making some progress with the horse issue as well. So, it's still a lot of work to do, but there's a lot of work being done.

Ritchie Anderson: Just a couple of comments. I agree with Dax, I think the projection is better. I probably know the horse issue about as good or better than anybody. We're on a good path there. We're illuminating those mouths. I'm not going to get into it, if anyone wants to call me for more specifics I'd be happy to answer their questions. We're trying to keep the horses very limited and keep them managed. We are in conversations with the Tribe on different things they're doing on the horse deals and Jamie can comment on that if she wants. But the Tribe has been gathering horses on their side, we've been gathering horses on our side. When I saw our side, private lands, state lands and stuff. These are trespass feral horses, these are not BLM wild horses. So, we're using every option we can to manage those and we have had some pretty good success. We've gotten rid of a lot of horses that don't belong on that range and gotten rid of them. As far as the bison issue in the roadless area, that's going to be a hard management deal just because of access issues. As far as the numbers right now, I don't know that it matters. I don't know that we need to decrease that age on those bull elk in there right now. Like Dax said, with management that's happening in there and projection I think the trajectory is correct. I don't know if we want to reduce that age right now, or if we want to give it a few years and see if the management tools have an affect and go from there. There is a lot being done with the horses. As far as cattle and trespass, those cattle come from a lot of different sources, there is not one particular entity that could be trespass necessarily, so we're working with those different entities to remedy that problem and we've had some pretty good success. We've taken a lot of mouths off the range that don't belong. Thank you.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you Ritchie. And that is a good point. We are not at the end of the elk plan, we're at a mid plan review, so this recommendation we could easily recommend to leave it high with all the good work that is going on out there if that's what we want to do. So, Brad, was that the direction you were headed with your motion?

Brad Horrocks: That's the motion I made, I'd like to keep the current status, the 7.5-8 year old bull that's currently being managed.

The following motion was made by Brad Horrocks and seconded by Dick Bess.

MOTION: I move to keep the current age status of 7.5-8 year old bulls that is currently being managed in the roadless unit in the Book Cliffs.

Dan Abeyta: No.

Jeff Taniguchi: No.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: No.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed 7 in favor, 3 opposed. (Dan, Jeff, Rebekah)

Covy Jones: Mr. Chair? You mentioned some things that I just wanted validated where my statements came from. It's a study published where they reviewed 5,295 wild elk with known ages and inches. I'm not sure about domesticated elk or the inches they put on. It wasn't a statement that was made up. It was a statement validated by a peer review study and I just wanted to make that known.

Brett Prevedel: I appreciate that and I made the point that I didn't know if it correlated across because of teeth-wear not eating sagebrush and various things like that. We'll just move on. There were some other age objectives, if anyone has any interest in getting into these please speak up, that were changed the age objective on the Cache Meadowville was raised from 4.5-5 to 6.5-7. The Central Mountains Nebo was reduced from 6.5-7 to 5.5-6. If no one has any concern with those two recommendations they'll just go with the bulk of the packet. Anyone on the Central Mountains Nebo or Cache Meadowville? Ok, now we're to the new limited entry hunts, and these I believe they're all HAMS hunts, is that correct Covy? The new limited entry hunts are all four HAMS hunts on limited entry areas on the Cache North, Oaker/Stansbury, Plateau, and Desert Deep Creek?

Covy Jones: Yes sir that's correct. So we evaluated again units around the state that weren't functioning well under the current limited entry system or in some cases portions of the units, some of these are not full units. The elk committee

felt like a recommendation of a new limited entry strategy on these units would be something that they could try to offer some more opportunity and maintain some of the quality.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you. And they would be new tags in addition to what is out there or would they come out of the total number?

Covy Jones: So that depends on the unit, because for example, on the West Desert Deep Creek the recommendation is to convert the entire unit, so we wouldn't have any other limited entry hunts there. On the Plateau Barney Top that's a portion of the Boulder and that portion of the Boulder has an elk population doesn't get much pressure on that south end, nobody really hunts it. So it wouldn't affect the Boulder permits but they would be a new opportunity and redirect pressure there. Oaker/Stansbury west is only part of that unit. So we'd have to evaluate permits.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, so anyway four new opportunities, all HAMS hunts. Does anyone have a concern with any of them?

Daniel Davis: Yeah, Brett. With a lot of those being outside of our region, just based on the feedback received from the public, in regards to those it's been a large voice of support aside from the Deep Creeks. There has been a lot of feedback about the Deep Creeks specifically and I think that falls into folks in that area locally being a difficult hunt, they've brought up some access issues as well as landownership and migration patterns and what those elk do. I have a little bit of concern there.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, and the Deep Creek will come up to this part of the general proposal for the any bull. Correct, Covy? Is the West Desert Deep Creek part of the any bull proposal?

Covy Jones: No, the Deep Creeks is part of the HAMS proposal.

Brett Prevedel: And it's not part of the conversion to general season?

Covy Jones: No, that's the Southwest Desert North portion.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. So, there is one other one on here that is the Pilot Mountain archery hunt, which is a new hunt. In addition to the four HAMS hunts, does anyone have any questions on the Pilot Mountain archery hunt. Ok, with that said, do you want to pull the West Desert Deep Creek item out and make a motion Daniel?

Daniel Davis: Yes I would, Mr. Chair. I make the motion to keep the Deep Creek as is in its current management structure for hunting opportunity.

Brett Prevedel: I assume the remaining four hunts, the remaining HAMS hunts and the Pilot Mountain archery hunt would go with the whole packet? There is

a motion to not have a HAMS hunt on the West Desert Deep Creek and leave it how it currently is. Do we have a second?

The following motion was made by Daniel Davis and seconded by Dick Bess.

MOTION: I move to keep the Deep Creek as is in its current management structure for hunting opportunity.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brett Prevedel: We will move to the next category, which are discontinued hunts, current limited entry hunts. One of them is Nine Mile Anthro and it's tied to the proposal a little later to include Nine Mile Anthro in the general area. So let's deal with that in just a moment. Cache North, Oaker/Stansbury, and West Desert Deep Creek, there is a recommendation to discontinue the current limited entry hunts to allow for either a new limited entry opportunity or the move the units into the general any bull season. So, we've already dealt with the one, so let's skip over that and go to the general season discussion and then if we need to come back we can. Before we get to that, just so I get to all these items there are recommended boundary changes on the Boulder, Southwest Desert, and Box Elder Grouse Creek. Does anyone have any concerns about those three boundary changes? If not, I'll move to the general season elk discussion. Ok, general season elk. The recommendation from the Division is to add Box Elder Sawtooth, Nine Mile Anthro, Oaker/Stansbury East, and Southwest Desert North to the any bull statewide hunt, the over the counter non draw tags. I will open that to discussion.

Brad Horrocks: I'd like to know why, 15 years ago probably one of the most sought after elk tags in Utah was Nine Mile. What happened?

Brett Prevedel: Derrick, would you give a very brief description similar to what you told me the other day?

Derrick Ewell: Yes. Can everybody hear me ok? Alright, so there have been a lot of things that have happened over the last 20 years on that unit. Since I've been here the Nine Mile Range Creek unit has gone from LE to general season. Also, the northern boundary of the Anthro unit has gone to general season, so like Pleasant Valley and the private land. Then also, there have been a lot of changes with oil and gas as many of you know. The Forest Service has put a lot of new roads since I have been here the last 13 years, and essentially it's changed from what it was 20 years ago. It's not the same unit. Basically those are a lot of the reasons for the change.

Brett Prevedel: There is also, could you briefly talk about your difficulties in counting elk and trying to manage that as an elk unit?

Derrick Ewell: As far as the population goes, not just the bulls, but as the population goes, it's a migratory unit. So a lot of the elk that are on the unit in the winter time, are not there in the summer. We know that from our collar data, a lot of those elk migrate from the Strawberry Valley area and Soldier Summit and migrate over to the anthro unit in the winter. With that being said, as far as the elk plan, we do a wintering population count. So, we don't have the option to do a summer count or anything like that, which is very difficult anyway. So our population objective is 700 elk on the unit in the winter time. We are consistently above that objective and we are trying to get down to that objective. And we actually met as a committee, we convened a committee several years ago, it's probably been 10 years ago now. And we met extensively, it was a lot of meetings with agriculture, sportsmen and other groups and tried to increase the objective on the unit to have more elk in the wintertime. Essentially we couldn't get agreement to increase the objective so it is still at 700. So, when you are trying to manage 700 elk, that doesn't seem... that's not that many elk to manage for a lot of hunting opportunities. So part of the problem we've had with bulls is getting a consistent age from our harvested bulls. It jumps from 8.5 one year to the next year 4.7. We can not keep it consistent no matter how many permits we reduce or increase. So it's a struggle. It's a difficult unit, a small unit and hard to manage that way.

Brett Prevedel: And if I could add a few things, it's a very popular unit with the Uinta Basin residents. It takes less points to draw, so there are not many units in the state where, what does it take to draw a bow tag out there? 10 or 11 points for a bow tag? (about 6 is the max points it takes). So, it fits a really nice niche for the locals and they remember the unit being like it was 20 years ago and I hunted out there and it was phenomenal. The roads have changed it alot, ATVs have changed it alot, because the oil field roads are now there and the ATVs use them. Many of the comments that came in, and I believe the comments on this item were probably 100% opposed to converting it. If there were any in favor of converting it

to general you could could them on one hand and I don't remember any. And there is a real concern ethically and safety that if you're giving 30 tags right now for all the different hunts? (Yes that's correct) And with the proposal you could have hundreds of people go out there to hunt. There are some big bulls out there and they're going to all congregate around that area and it's going to be a real bad scene public relations wise when that happens, and there is going to be a lot of potential bad things that could happen. That came out many times, just what's going to happen if you open it. And I know that when the Division discussed this, they considered phasing some of these units in and letting people burn some of their points that they've been building up and maybe double the tags if they're going this direction. Maybe double the tags and go three years and let people harvest some of those bulls and use up their preference points. So that's some of the discussions that took place. The recommendation in front of us is to convert it to any bull this coming year. So I'll open that up to comments from the RAC or questions.

Ritchie Anderson: I've got a question on the other areas that are currently LE that you're proposing to open to general season. What was the feedback at the other RACs on those other areas? Are they wanting to keep those other areas LE or are they ok with opening them up, or where are we at statewide at opening those areas up as far as the opinion of the RAC and the public.

Covy Jones: That is a good question. The rest of them passed every RAC, I don't about unanimously, but every unit passed every RAC to open it up. The reason why Ritchie, is because we have a great LE system. We have several LE units where you can go hunt and wait and if you want that experience, you wait and you hunt. The thing that we're worried about is preserving some general season opportunity. This year we sold out of all of our any bull tags within less than 8 hours. And the frustration we got is, hey I can't even hunt elk in my home state anymore, unless I want to wait several years, and you know Derrick you say it's a four year tag, but then it's a five year cooling off period. And so you can't hunt. There is a lot of frustration on that side too. I get it, we could have done a better job messaging on this. But the phone calls and the anger we got was, we want to be able to hunt. And if we want to increase any bull tags, the committee felt like we needed to increase areas where we could have any bull hunts. So when we looked at it, this is one that fit. Now everywhere is somebody's backyard. Everywhere. So it's a trade off. Every recommendation has positives and negatives. There are some negatives here and there are some positives here. And it's a hard decision that the RAC has to make.

Dick Bess: Covy, I'd like to ask here, have you had any other RACs that have had a backyard hunting unit in it? They passed it, but was one of them hunting units in their backyard?

Covy Jones: Yes absolutely. There are several other units, so in the central region you had a portion of the Stansbury unit that is in people's backyards. In the northern region you have a portion of the Box Elder that is in their backyards. In the southern region you have a portion of the Southwest Desert that's in their

backyards. So everybody has had a portion of something that is in their backyards. They've had to weigh this, and it's really hard, it's really not easy. It was hard for us.

Daniel Davis: I've got a question Mr. Chair. What are the populations for those other units as you stated were at 700 is our target, we're over that at maybe 800, 850? I don't know specifically so I apologize.

Derrick Ewell: It's at about 1,100.

Daniel Davis: Even better. So on those other units what are the population on those units that have been proposed to over the counter?

Covy Jones: Kent is probably the best person to ask right now, where he has the data up. I've asked him to do that. Kent, if you have the data up to answer that question, could you help us with that question?

Kent Hersey: I'm pulling it up right now. Antho is the biggest unit we added for sure. The Oaker/Stansbury East is about 500 elk. The Box Elder portion of Sawtooth is about 100 elk. And then the Southwest Desert is about 175 elk.

Could I ask where are we with our objective numbers on our general season units? Are we pretty good there on our objective numbers? Just generally? We don't need to go to each unit. Just generally statewide on the general season hunts on the objective number. Are we pretty close, are we over/under? Where are we at?

Covy Jones: On the population objectives Ritchie? Ok.

Kent Hersey: Overall Ritchie, almost every elk unit in the state is at objective. The exception, that would be the Book Cliffs I think. They would be close.

Ritchie Anderson: Ok, thank you.

Brad Horrocks: Could you get me the statistics on the percentage of how many people have sent in their request not to increase the elk tag numbers? What are the percentages there?

Brett Prevedel: This would be a good time to bring that up Clint because I think most of the comments were either anthro or the next topic which is the permit numbers. I'm sorry, Miles.

**01:35:13 Electronic Public Comment Report by Miles Hanberg, NERO
Regional Supervisor**

Miles Hanberg: So, as I looked at the comments, let me pull this up, overall on big game 85% of the people opposed it in this region and I think the general season elk tags were the bulk of that. Of the comments we received I think

there were about 100 comments roughly, sorry about 80 comments and 33 of those specifically said something about the general season elk tags. That doesn't mean that people weren't opposed necessarily, those are just the people that said something about it in the comments. Overall 85% opposed the recommendations. Some of them probably opposed, but didn't submit a comment actually saying that.

Brett Prevedel: Derrick, just to clarify one point, the 900 you're counting they're probably not there most of the year, that's just a winter count? Do you have a stab at about how many elk live there?

Derrick Ewell: I still think there are a fair amount there that live there in the summer, we've never done a survey during the summer to try and determine that, but based on our collar data we probably had 300 elk that came from the Wasatch unit or surrounding units to come to the unit in the winter. Out of 1,100, so we're probably still over objective with resident elk.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you. Did that answer your question Daniel?

Daniel Davis: It did, yes. Thank you.

Brett Prevedel: So, did you see any comments in support of this written, Miles? On Anthro?

Miles Hanberg: On the Anthro I did not see any support.

Ritchie Anderson: Brett, can I make a comment and throw something out real quick? I mean probably like every RAC member I try to do my own little survey before these meetings on some of these proposals and talk to as many people as I can, and I really have not had any support for this unlimited tag deal. I don't know where that truly is coming from, I don't know if I live in a bubble or what. But the comments I've been getting are more that they would rather hunt every other year and not have the public pressure, especially on the Ashley up here north of Vernal, they would rather have less hunting and better quality. I don't know if we're in the place right now to make this decision, I'll be honest with you. I think there needs to be more surveys and more research. I think this might need to come up next year to be honest with you, because the feedback I'm getting and apparently what we're getting from the comments, don't quite match the quality vs quantity argument on hunting. I'm hearing that we want better quality, and we're hearing from another source that we want more quantity. I don't know that we're here yet, this is my opinion that we need to wait a year and get some more input. That's my feeling.

Brett Prevedel: Let's roll into that discussion right now, because the Anthro is part of that discussion. With the proposal to increase the general any bull elk, I assume increase, to make it unlimited would I'm sure be an increase, The intent was to open these other areas at the same time to provide more opportunity at the same time I have the numbers from 2016-2019. I'm going to disregard 2020 because this year was so strange with everybody with the quarantine and the Covid and that just changed all the numbers and there is no consistency. But '16, '17, '18,

and '19 it appears there is good consistency to me. Just some discussion, the bowhunters did not count against the 15,000 tag limit prior to the multi season tags. So, when the multi season tags came in, if a bow hunter bought that tag they counted against the 15,000. So in 2016 and 2017 prior to the multi season tags, there were about 11,400 bowhunters, and then there was a similar number, a little more, a little over 12,000 rifle hunters and then a few thousand muzzleloader hunters make up to the rest of the 15,000. When we went to the multiseason the bow tags went down to one year they were 8,800 and one year they were 9,200. So 9,000 and they were 13,000. So I know I was cautioned that you can't just make that assumption that they just switched over and bought that tag, but a good portion of them bought the multi season and that's why the demand on the bow tags went down. So whether the number is 4,000 or 3,000 or 5,000 we added, and I know they were rifle hunting, some, because they had multi season tags. But you added people that count against your quota. Prior to the multi season you could buy a tag for a couple of months, and then they would eventually run out somewhere around Labor day, a month before the hunt. And then the multi season came in and that's when you started having this crunch. The first year it was a period of weeks or something like that, the first year with the multiseason. And '19 it was pretty quick, then '20 we had this 8 hour deal that Covy mentioned. So, there is a portion of the people that all got on that website and tried to buy those tags that wouldn't have counted before that are in there now. And where I'm going with this is if somebody wouldn't have said unlimited and they would have picked a number, they probably would have had a reasonable chance of selling this idea. But unlimited to a lot of people, their perception is 50,000-60,000 or whatever their perception is. And that's why everyone is so mad. They're envisioning huge numbers, and I don't know how many elk hunters, does anybody know how many elk hunters we have in this state, Covy?

Yeah, what we do know is that over the last five years we've had 33,000 unique individuals buy any bull permits. So, that's a good estimate. Now, you can't just say it will be 33,000, I don't know what it will be exactly because you have hunters that will draw limited entry permits, or deer tags and not going to buy any bull that year. And Brad, first of all I'd like to agree with you, the multi season permit definitely, this problem was coming, but it definitely increased the pressure. You are right. We took hunters, and not all of them, a lot of them switched from any weapon to multi season and it didn't matter, but there were a lot of archers, myself included, that switched from archery to multi season. So some of this problem was created by that. We were directed to create that permit, and the elk committee felt like they wanted an opportunity like we had for dedicated hunter. But, I can't disagree with you in the fact that that caused some of this problem that we're seeing now.

Brett Prevedel: So, 33,000 not counting the spike hunters? 33,000 just on the any bull?

Covy Jones: That's just on the any bull. The last five years we've had 35,000 unique hunters buy spike permits. So, actually a few more.

Brett Prevedel: I didn't know that number was that big. Potential elk hunters, it's potentially a large, large number that...

Covy Jones: It's potentially large, yes it is. And we understood that and we understood that for a few years it would probably be crowded. I feel like you're right Brett, our messaging on this was not good. We did not do it right, and I apologize for that. I think we could have done it better. The rationale behind it, I think is still sound. But there is also a lot of public sentiment against it and they want a cap. Our concern is that we want to maintain an over the counter hunt. And it's not a crazy recommendation. Colorado has unlimited resident and non resident permits. Idaho has unlimited resident permits. Wyoming has unlimited resident permits. Montana has unlimited resident permits.

Brad Horrocks: But listen, listen, before we go there, what is the population of the elk herd in Colorado vs Utah?

Covy Jones: Well it's high, Brad, and they do have (inaudible). I get there is a lot of angst here, and there is a lot of social pressure and we could have done better with our message here.

Daniel Davis: Brett, If I could make a suggestion, could we maybe resolve everyone's concern on the Anthro? Because I think that will help dictate where we end up on the unlimited proposal.

Brett Prevedel: Yes, we can. I mean they are somewhat tied together, and I know I kind of blurred it. I'm sorry I did that, I was hoping to check these things off one at a time. But, we don't know what the Wildlife Board is going to do, so we're making recommendations. Are there any more comments specifically on the Anthro before we make a recommendation?

Jamie Arrive: So, I would just say that for the Nine Mile Anthro, that unit incorporates Tribal Trust Land. Just one concern for us may be the access. We just need to make sure that some access is granted on certain roads, and some are not. You guys brought up the oil well roads, just because they are there doesn't mean they are accessible to the general public. So just keep that in mind. As far as being a general unit, it will increase a lot of people coming into the area, but I can see it going both ways. You know, I think you mentioned refuge areas and Covy do you consider Tribal lands as a refuge area? When you talk about that in regards to the Nine Mile?

Covy Jones: Jamie, thanks for that question. I think that's more of a regional question, what the refuge areas are in unit. I'll let Derrick or Dax answer that.

Derrick Ewell: Hey Jamie, I think on the Anthro unit I don't think that the Tribal land is considered refuge in my mind, just because it's hunted heavily by the tribe and with all the oil field activity it's not a great refuge.

Jamie Arrive: Yeah, perfect. I just wanted to make some clarifications. Thank you.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, where do we want to go with this Anthro unit idea? This Anthro proposal to include it in the any bull area?

Brad Horrocks: I'd like to make the motion to leave it a limited entry unit.

The following motion was made by Brad Horrocks and seconded by Daniel Davis.

MOTION: I move to leave the Nine Mile Anthro unit as a limited entry unit.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brett Prevedel: The motion to leave Anthro out of the proposal to not include it in the any bull unit passes unanimously. Back to the discussion on the general season bull elk. I'll make another commentary here. All the mad people who say there are no elk left. About half of the any bull areas are going to fall in this region. You heard the numbers in the areas they are proposing to add and you know our elk numbers in the Uintas, which is the big area in the state that is any bull open hunting. So we're going to take the brunt of it on the increase and crowding. It will be statewide, but I think the majority of the real noticeable difference will be in the Uintas. And all the comments on the shape of the elk herd.. there are two elk herd on the Uintas, there are the ones where they have a lot of refuge that people don't hunt, and they're not going to hunt because they don't have the ability to get them out and

there is a lot of remote country. And then there are the accessible elk and everybody says that they're all gone, and what we've seen over the last 20 year is the elk that are huntable have been shot and harvested and then in the winter we count tribal elk and count them as objective elk. And in reality a large portion of that 7,800 on SS Yellowstone or whatever that count ends up being, they never leave the tribal land. So we say we're over objective and we give control tags for the last 10-12 years. And all the elk that are not causing problems get hunted harder every year because there are fewer of them. So, my concern is if we increase any bull tags, next month or whenever the cow tag discussion happens, there will be a recommendation to do a control tag on the Uintas and you're going to have that problem that is already there, speed up and get worse. We don't count tribal buffalo in our herd objective, and we don't count Wyoming elk in our counts. We adjust for everything except for tribal elk. And I know we have the private lands tags, and they're working very well. That was a great idea and I think it's being managed well. But it's targeting the elk that are a problem, the tribal resident elk that go to private to private land. So my take on the... I've hunted 33 years in a row on SS Yellowstone, and I want to hunt every year, so Covy I'm talking both sides here. I like the opportunity and I hope I don't have to get on at 7:59 in the morning and sit on the computer and hope I get in this year. But, the people that are really unhappy on this unit, they're right. The huntable population of elk that they see just gets fewer every year because the cows are just not there. So, that's my concern is what happens next month. I'm not too worried about a few extra bull tags, bulls have places to hide.

Covy Jones: Brett can I make a suggestion? Because I think what you're saying is actually a really valid point. And I hope that this is ok, but if that's a concern I think one of the things the RAC can do is ask the Division to investigate how we're counting elk in that unit. And if it's a fair way to do it, and if there is a better way to do it that is more fair to the public. Again, I think the points you're making are valid and I think that is probably appropriate for the RAC to look into that and see if there is a better way to look at that population objective and see if there is a better way that works for both of us, for everybody. We want to be better for the public too.

Ritchie Anderson: I appreciate Covy acknowledging that they could message better, we all have those situations and circumstances. But, the way I understand the statistics in Colorado and in Idaho, actual demand for hunting tags are declining. However in Utah the demand for hunting tags is increasing, if I understand the statistics right. So I don't know where other states have the unlimited tags, if their demand is reducing or increasing, I don't know that we need to look at that a whole lot, we'd have to look at the other statistics. Utah hunting demand is increasing, which is a good thing. That says a lot about our state. As far as the increased pressure, I don't know. I heard a lot of comments this year that they weren't seeing the elk. It was dry, a lot of full moons, it was not the best hunting circumstance in this area during the hunting season, but there was a lot of hunting pressure. I don't know if people are not seeing the elk because the numbers aren't there. When you give a lot of pressure they're going to hide in the hardest spots they can find to hide in. So I don't know if it's not because we don't have the numbers, or if it's because we have too much pressure. Thanks.

Daniel Davis: Yeah Ritchie. Chairman if I can I'd like to make a few comments as well. I've been participating in a lot of these other states and the states that offer the unlimited permits. It's very evident why they would choose not to do that in the future, be it by overcrowding or price. Some states have gotten to the point where you just can't afford to do it. The other one is the overcrowding issue. Hunting these units in these other states that allow this practice, you see a lot of habitat damage done by the increased amount of traffic, the list can go on and on when you add many more people to the landscape. Now, does that guarantee that we would see that here? You know it's all speculation at this point. We could put these unlimited permits out there and sell 21,000, right? Not really increasing our numbers, but we don't really know that. One of the other biggest complaints I've seen as well is the unlimited opportunity and then maintaining multi season hunts and the issues that go along with that. As Ritchie mentioned with the amount of pressure you see in these areas that offer this opportunity, you see a lot of pressure where these animals refuge on the private land, and Brett alluded to that as well, where they refuge on this private landowners and then seek some type of compensation or recuperation of damages that have incurred. Depredation, fences, all of the issues that we're all aware of. But, what that does as well is that forces those animals into areas that are uncountable. You start to see your folks pushing harder to try to be successful which causes them to hunt boundaries or push limitations that they wouldn't normally push to try to be successful. And we can go all day long about whether that's true or not, what have you, but when you're in the field and you see it that's the bigger issue. Trespasses is a big issue and when you get to that point, now it becomes a private vs public, refuge vs non refuge, and as it sits right now being in a general season unit you see where people are hunting the hardest because everybody knows the migration patterns once the pressure is applied. I think that will magnify immensely, and have the potential to be more detrimental in citation and stuff that people wouldn't particularly do. So my turns are not only the unlimited, but the potential of unlimited in a multi season. And what came through that this year, just on a personal basis, I too am an avid archer and I too chose that path before and I know so many people as Covy mentioned before. Heck if I had to dedicate any vacation it was toward the best time to hunt which was the last week of the archery season. Well now I have an opportunity to buy that multi season, so I'll just go on the weekends I go. And now you run into these situations where people buy these permits and don't even utilize them. They think out ahead of time and I think there's a lot of lost opportunity there as well where people buy it in speculation and think I'll squeak out here and there maybe if I get a day here and in true sense they don't even at all so that took the opportunity away from someone else. So, those are my concerns and if that spurs any comment from the rest of the RAC.

Rebekah Jones: Covy, could you summarize what the other RACs did in terms of tag numbers?

Covy Jones: Yes. If that is something the RAC would like me to do, I can. The rest of the RACs voted to increase from 15,000- 20,000 and then have unlimited youth permits. And the youth buy just over 1,000 of these permits and so

that would be about 21,000 probably. Which is a healthy increase and it helps us do some of both. So very reasonable.

Brad Horrocks: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a comment. Did the other RACs receive... did this momentum start after the first RAC and they went to these unlimited tags because my word the phone calls, emails, not counting the ones that went to the Division in opposition of this, I can't imagine another RAC passing on raising these tags if the opposition came through like I have seen on this. I just wondered if the other RACs had passed this increase and the word got out, but hey this is what they're doing.

Brett Prevedel: I'm not sure, Brad. We see the Northeastern comments, the ones that are in our region. And they were the 85% opposed as Miles mentioned. I'm not sure what the other RACs see, but we do have the statewide, don't we Miles? I know that Stacy sent that out the other day.

Brad Horrocks: I would dare bet that 90% of the replies and the comments that I've had that are not through the Division on the reply deal are from the southern units.

Daniel Davis: So the rest of the RACs, Brad, passed a limit on the permits of 20,000 and leaving the youths unlimited. They did address that, and from what I've gathered from our constituents across the state is they received the same feedback we did in a relative comparison to being similar. So that was their take on it, I still have the concerns about the multi season and we've had several people in the years past, what started as a trial period, stuck. It was never revisited, the next cycles that came through, stayed in there as a practice and it's coming found that it's liked by the opportunists who say hey, I've got it and I can do it, but it's disliked by those that take that dedicated season that they're passionate about and have seen the issues of overcrowding that they have.

Brett Prevedel: The multi season probably had a larger impact on the muzzleloader season than the rifle for some reason, that's the one that percentage wise was significantly increased when we switched to multi season. Rifle, I'm not sure it didn't decrease the hunters on the rifle hunt because it took up that 3,000 towards the 15,000 that wasn't getting counted before and like you said a lot maybe hunted opening day because they had the long season. That was my perception on that.

Daniel Davis: On archery season we've seen an increase as well on participation because we do have that potential to get into the rut over what the other seasons provide opportunity for. So what folks see an uptake and interest in the archery season because it was an available opportunity for them. Now, that becomes a slippery slope because you know they had done that, well sure they would if the permits weren't available or they were sold out, well guess what if you want to hunt, you have that unlimited archery opportunity to go give it a try, but they never did explore that because they bought an any weapon permit and went anyways.

Brett Prevedel: I follow what you're saying, that makes sense. Jeff did you have a comment?

Jeff Taniguchi: I agree with where we're trying to go with this and where the Division is trying to go with this, but the thing I get the most out of the comments is that it's a PR nightmare. I believe that some of the comments were that the Division is just after money. There is not enough elk to cover all these things. I don't know if... I understand the biology, I understand where we want to go with this, it's just that it was just presented so poorly I worry about the Divisions reputation on this because I just see this thing being a lose lose for everybody involved as it was presented. That's just my thought, I understand that yeah, there are some opportunities that were there, but I also understand that this would be a lose lose. That's my comment.

Brett Prevedel: So, is anybody prepared to.. we already voted to remove the Anthro from the proposal. Is anybody ready to make a motion one way or another on general season bull tags? The proposal is to become unlimited. We could take an alternate proposal, or we could vote on that proposal to be unlimited. However the RAC would like to go.

Ritchie Anderson: Brett, I'm prepared to make a motion, it may fail, but I'm prepared to make it. I would like to make the motion that we recommend to the State Board that we leave things as they are, we allow Covy and his team to repackage and resurvey this deal and come back next year. But my proposal is we leave things as they are, gather more information, it's not the end of the world, and we come back and take another look at it. They'll do a good job, repackaging this deal. So we leave things as they are, redress it again next year.

The following motion was made by Ritchie Anderson.

MOTION: I move that we recommend to the Board that we make no changes to the general season any bull elk tags this year, and ask the Division to repackage and resurvey the unlimited general season elk tag proposal and bring it back to the RACs next year.

Brad Horrocks: Mr. Chairman, the comments if possible, is that even a possible option for us, Covy? Because if we don't act on what their recommendations are then basically we're saying ok we're out of the picture.

Ritchie Anderson: No, I'll let Covy address it, sorry.

Covy Jones: No, I think that's definitely within the RACs purview. The RAC has the purview to say, hey you can either accept, reject, or modify a recommendation from the Division. And what Ritchie is doing is he's rejecting the recommendation saying let's wait a year and go back. And that's definitely within the RACs purview.

Brad Horrocks: Ok, other than I'd maybe like for Ritchie to put the reject part in there about that just to make it clarified, so when we get out there it is clear on what our recommendations are.

Ritchie Anderson: Ok, I can modify my motion to say that I recommend that we reject the proposal of the unlimited tags and leave things how they are for now, give the DWR a chance to do a little more informational gathering and take a look at it next year.

The following modification to the motion was made by Ritchie Anderson and seconded by Brad Horrocks.

MOTION: I recommend that we reject the Divisions proposal of the unlimited general season any bull elk tags leaving the season the same for this year as last year. Also ask that the DWR gathers more information and brings it back to the RACs next year.

Daniel Davis: Can we have some discussion about that before we make a vote?

Brett Prevedel: You can comment, but we do have a motion and a second on the table.

Daniel Davis: Sure. So, my concerns with holding back on a recommendation with having 4 of the 5 RACs already make their recommendation and pass them. With the direction of the Wildlife Board coming through the Division to look at these opportunities and see where we can increase opportunities and do those types of things. I feel like if we don't contribute to that, that we will be a little sidelined with any comment. Totally support what Ritchie's idea is here, however, I have my reservations because increasing it by 5,000 and unlimited youth they're achieving what the Board has asked them to look into and consider. And I feel like the Wildlife Board has a high potential of passing with those recommendations. Now they don't have to do anything that anybody says, they can do what one region says as well, but I have my reservations with giving us directive support.

Ritchie Anderson: I understand Daniel's concerns, I think the other RACs because of their recommendations, show that they also had some reservations. Because they voted not to raise those tag numbers a whole lot, I think their vote kind of indicates some reservations kind of on the idea. I'm not going to speak for them and say maybe they would vote differently if it's presented to them, but I do think that they did show some reservations on the idea. They could make the same suggestions next year as well with it.

Rebekah Jones: Can we go ahead and vote and come back to it? Or no?

Brett Prevedel: If this does not pass we will open it back up for another motion. And I'm assuming where you're going Daniel is to specify a modest

increase and deal with multi season tags. Is that what you're thinking if you get the opportunity?

Daniel Davis: Yes, it would be.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. So the motion on the table is: to reject the proposal to increase tags which would leave it similar to what it is now with the 15,000 maximum. Call for a vote.

Dan Abeyta: No.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: No.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passes 8 in favor, 2 opposed. (Dan, Daniel)

Brett Prevedel: I will leave this open. Do you want to make any motions on the multi season tag situation we have Daniel?

Daniel Davis: Yes, where our RAC passed the motion to leave it as is, that keeps it at the 15,000 for any bull and 15,000 for the spike. With that being said I would like to make a motion to withdraw the multi season opportunity for the elk hunt completely.

The following motion was made by Daniel Davis.

MOTION: I move to withdraw the multi season opportunity for the general season elk hunt completely.

Natasha Hadden: Daniel would you consider maybe having it as a draw tag? A multi season draw instead of an artificial scarcity on one day trying to get on the computer. Doing a draw instead?

Daniel Davis: So, you know with the multi season, I would be more lenient to considering something like that as an opportunity for the youth. Potentially working parents, something like that. Giving them the opportunity to buy that multiseason because perhaps, well we don't know situations but through speculation. As far as an additional draw, that complexes a lot of things in my opinion. We go through the limited entry process. I for one am not in favor for it for the general public.

Covy Jones: Daniel, there is too much to work through to put this into the draw right now. It just wouldn't work.

Daniel Davis: And logistically to come up with that process and have that come to fruition, yeah that's why I would move to have it removed.

Brett Prevedel: Ok we have a motion on the table to remove the multi season permit option in the general bull hunt. Is there a multi season option in the spike hunt also? (yes) And are you referring to both, Daniel?

Daniel Davis: Yes, please. And Mr. Chair if I may, could I amend my motion? withdraw the multi season hunt from the general and spike hunts, and allow the youth under the age of 18 to purchase the multi season permits.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, the last of that was to allow the youth to still hunt multi season, is that what you said?

Daniel Davis: Yes, with the associated fee of multi season and of nature.

Brett Prevedel: Yeah, just like it is now, but it would only be available to youth.

The following motion was made by Daniel Davis and seconded by Joe Arnold.

MOTION: I move to withdraw the multi season opportunity for the general season elk hunt, both the any bull and spike hunts, completely. And allow the youth under the age of 18 to purchase the multi season general season elk permits.

Natasha Hadden: Could you restate the whole motion?

Brett Prevedel: I will. It's talking about withdrawing the multi season opportunity for everyone except youth. And youth is still an option. We have a motion, do we have a second?

Dan Abeyta: No.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: No.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: n/a

Motion passes 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Dan, Rebekah)

Brett Prevedel: Ok, we're turning the corner here. There was one other elk issue that I know was addressed in the other RACs that I'm not sure how it made it to their agendas, because it was not on their agenda. But some letters came in, proposing to extend the general archery hunt through the rut, from some bow hunting organizations. And correct me if I'm wrong Covy, but I believe there were some motions made across the state that were moving towards the Wildlife Board on that issue?

Covy Jones: Yeah. Other RACs decided to consider the public input and make a motion on it. And since recommendations for season dates are open, I think that it's possible to do.

Brett Prevedel: So the concerns that came up with that, and there are several emails and letters and I don't know the route of them, so I'm sorry if you didn't get them all. But the youth hunters had a lot of concern because it would overlap the youth hunt. And the disabled hunters that get to start a week early on their rifle hunt would also be in competition with the bow hunters that last week. Dax, you and I have discussed this quite a bit. Would you like to have a little input here?

Dax Mangus: Yeah. So, this isn't a Division recommendation. I don't know that the Division has an official recommendation on it, that's where the RAC gets to weigh in and take the input you guys have received into consideration and look at the idea. The idea is to extend that any bull archery season by nine days. There has been demand for years by archers to have more of a rut hunting experience hunting elk and this would do that. Because that gap has been there, and we haven't had a hunt in that period other than this youth hunt it creates some conflict there with overlap. That youth hunt is pretty hard to draw, I looked at the odds for it last year, it was about a 1 in 15 chance to draw if for a youth. They're only eligible during that

period of time that they're a youth. And if they do draw it, that's it, they'll never be able to draw it again. A lot of kids never draw, they put in all the years they're eligible and don't ever draw. So, the Uintas will likely get the bulk of the pressure just because it is the largest cluster of any bull units that has a lot of public access. So it's something that could be a win for a lot of general season archery elk hunters, also there is a pretty good likelihood that we'll have... just looking at the numbers at how many people hunted the Uintas last year both on that youth hunt and on general season archery, depending on how many folks are still hunting on the general season archery the last nine days, if half of those folks that buy a general season archery that hunt on the Uintas are still hunting, we'd have nine archery hunters for any 1 youth any bull hunter based on last year's numbers. There is some potential for overlap and conflict there, maybe it's not a big deal, maybe the benefit outweighs that conflict, but I do think that it's probably worth being aware of it and talking about it a little bit.

Daniel Davis: So, Mr. Chair, I've got a few comments in caution and thinking through that recommendation and the email we received on that, if I may make those real quick. So the issues brought up with the unlimited permits also goes back to reiteration on the multi season. So if I bought a multi season permit, you have the potential of 30,000 people up there archery hunting, let's take that back to 15 if we're just staying with the recommended numbers this year. 15,000 people, if they all chose to buy a multi season permit could choose to be there. Now that's the worst case scenario. Let's look at it in the manner of the 13,000 number that you had provided. Look at those numbers and talking about 500 youth trying to hunt at the same time, same time of the year along with all those other folks that buy those permits. I see the hunt structure not being very accommodating towards that. I lean more towards... being an avid archer, archery elk hunting during the rut is a dream, that's what a guy lives for. That being said, there is a time and place and I don't think that the current hunt structure and the season dates structure accommodates that. I feel like there are some things that could be turned around and commingled to make that happen a little bit better. Perhaps moving the youth elk hunt during the general muzzleloader hunt. I mean for goodness sakes you're not hunting with a muzzleloader these days, you're hunting with a rifle. Let's just call a spade a spade. So the orange requirement to camouflage requirements, that's a mute point to be honest. Muzzleloaders are more of a beginner rifle. If I could make any suggestion or incorporate that into an opportunity it would be to move that youth rifle elk hunt to coincide with the general season muzzleloader hunt.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, and that's why I brought this up, because I know it's moving forward and it's been in multiple RACs and it's not on the agenda. And it's just a recommendation to the Wildlife Board. If the RAC has the same concerns that have been expressed from myself, Daniel, and Dax as politically as he could, we could make a recommendation to the Wildlife Board to not extend the archery season to counteract the recommendations that are coming from the other RACs to extend it. If that was so desired. Again, it would fall on the Uintas. Several of these RACs that are making these proposals are not going to be as severely impacted by this.

Brad Horrocks: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make the motion.

Rebekah Jones: I will second that motion.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, the motion is to leave the bow hunt as is which is the recommendation from the DWR and not extend the season.

The following motion was made by Brad Horrocks and seconded by Rebekah Jones.

MOTION: We recommend to leave the general season elk bow hunt as is, which is the recommendation from the DWR, and not extend the season.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes. My son drew that tag and I would have been very frustrated to have archers in the field at the same time. Definite yes.

Dick Bess: n/a

Natasha Hadden: No.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passes 8 in favor, 1 opposed. (Natasha)

Brett Prevedel: Are there any other elk issues?

Brad Horrocks: Mr. Chairman I'd like to make a comment, the overwhelming number of people that got a hold of me and want me to do away with that spike elk hunt in the Book Cliffs. I'm just making a comment that they've got it convinced in their mind that they have destroyed the Book Cliffs with that spike elk hunt. I just want to bring it up for conversation.

Ritchie Anderson: I've received a lot of the same comments that maybe it's time to do something different with that spike hunt. The ranchers in the area which support doing something different with the spike hunt, they're afraid that it's gone too far.

Daniel Davis: In the five years that I've been on the RAC I think everybody knows where I stand with that point since I make a motion usually every year that never passes.

Brad Horrocks: Well, make the motion again.

Joe Arnold: I agree that the spike hunt needs to be looked at. It seems like every limited entry unit is somewhat being suffered by that, at least by the public's opinion. I'm not sure where the biologists stand on that, but everybody's limited entry unit appears to have less quality animals since the spike hunts were started in those. I'll give you the San Juan Elk Ridge; last year my nephew drew at 23 points to draw the San Juan Elk Ridge, spike hunters moved in 2-3 days prior to the end of his hunt, they're sitting on ridges... It took him 23 years to draw this tag and there are spike hunters there on all the points. They've got to do something different with the spike tags.

Ritchie Anderson: Just a thought. If you got to have some spike hunt or whatever, make it a limited youth hunt or something like that, but I think maybe that could be a good introductory hunt for youth, or something like that. But yeah, probably can't go on with how it's going.

Brett Prevedel: Currently there are 15,000 spike tags statewide and Covy mentioned that there were about 1,000 youth in the any bull, I'm not sure if we have that number in the spike. But we're not talking very many youth hunters. I mean it's not comparable numbers wise at all. So is there a recommendation? And if so, be specific because the spike hunt is statewide. So if you make a recommendation specifically to the Book Cliffs, we need to make sure I understand what you're proposing.

Daniel Davis: Now, if I could make a few more comments Mr. Chair. Everytime this issue gets brought up, and it's been brought up several times by, I think me, every year and several of the other RAC members as well are concerned. The issue we run into is we get a lot of feedback from the other residents in the state, other regions, special interest groups, what have you. And the term, not in my backyard, is enough to frustrate a lot of people, me included. However, we spend more time in our backyard than a lot of your average nine day deer hunters, or 13 day elk hunters, or however you want to count this up and chalk this up. So just to put that null and void statement out there, that's very frustrating to hear that. We've watched the quality, now are some of our wildlife issues going into winter due to pressure? Over pressure? Are these animals not getting enough period of rest to sustain some of their body fat from their green feed in the summer, and they're ran ragged, I would have to say yes. And if everybody who's hunted the Book Cliffs wants to hunt the Book Cliffs because I can drive down every ridge, I can drive down every draw, my pack out ain't more than several hundred yards less than a half a mile, so for a lot of people that's desirable. It's accommodating and a lot of people like that opportunity to hunt a unit like that. In turn comes the issue of sustaining that harvest and sustaining that pressure. Yeah, we've seen it, we've seen the elk

population grow a little bit, and we've also seen it decline a little bit and it needs to be following pretty seasonal. That being said, it's on the record, those are some considerations that I hope everyone will look at and take our input from, and what have you. It's been made and stated for years, and we've seen it for years. The sportsmen have seen it for years on the landscape, and I'm just tired of the not in my backyard comments being made when it is in our backyard and we respect the rest of the state for those issues as well. So, I'm in full support of eradicating the spike elk hunt in the Book Cliffs. I feel like if other regions in the state had other issues or valid concerns for the spike elk hunts on some of their units they would have made those statements and brought it to light. So, I don't feel the opportunity of removing the spike elk hunt statewide is necessary, several units have limited accessibility, so that's what drives success in the Book Cliffs. I feel like it has its place, I just don't feel like that's one of those at this time.

Ritchie Anderson: Covy, what's the biological advantage or what not.. let's just talk about the Book Cliffs for now. What's the biological advantage of the spike hunt or to continue the spike hunt? Biological advantage or vegetational advantage? At this point what is the advantage to continue in the Book Cliffs?

Covy Jones: So, I think we need to get some data on where the Book Cliffs are as far as harvest. It's in the middle of the road and Kent can share that data. As far as spikes harvested per thousand elk, they're doing areas to get more pressure in the Book Cliffs, the Wasatch, the Manti, some of these areas closer to major metropolitan areas where folks can go out after work and not drive to the Book Cliffs. But, there is a biological advantage to the spike hunt. It may seem counterintuitive, but if you have a nutritionally limited population and your goal is to have quality, then you don't want to carry as many bulls. Brett, this should make perfect sense as an elk rancher. If you don't have enough feed, to feed all the animals you have, carrying excess males means that the males that you do carry are smaller. So if your concern is quality in the Book Cliffs, and your solution is to stop the spike hunt, it won't have the desired outcome. It will make it so there are more bulls on the landscape. But if it is nutrition limited, as we have said several times that it is, and we have data that shows it's probably the only population in the state that's bumping up against a carrying capacity. It's probably one of the only ones that could be hurt by removing the spike hunt. Now that's the biology behind it.

Brad Horrocks: When it was put into play, it was quite a battle when this all went through, and it was because the elk... the whole science he had behind it was because the bulls on the Fish Lake Mountain their horns were getting broke up because they had too many bulls down there. I would have a tendency if we're going to... people don't want to shoot a cow, they want to shoot a big bull. But if we're going to limit the elk numbers we have down there, let's have the bull numbers up there and limit the cows. Give more cow tags.

Ritchie Anderson: I see Covy's point on the biology. As a rancher we deal with this kind of stuff all the time. But I'm just wondering and I can only speak for the Book Cliffs primarily because I know that area a lot better and visit with a lot of people in that area. I'm wondering if we have reduced the bull numbers now to

the point in the Book Cliffs to the point where maybe we need to hold off on that spike hunt, address it later. The vegetation concerns are real, as far as we need to get out of these drought cycles. But with the work that is being conducted in the Book Cliffs, if we can pull out of these drought cycles it may be time to reduce that spike hunt, or eliminate it for now. When the ranchers too are telling me that they're not seeing the bulls either, maybe we've reduced those bulls numbers adequately for now. I would like to see it either really limited or eliminated and let's see if the drought changes conditions, change some of the habitat projects and other projects have effect and let's see where we are in a couple of years.

Daniel Davis: So, and I agree with Ritchie, has there been consideration to a seasonal rotation with breaking up the spike hunts? Where I'm going with this, and it goes back to the Anthro as well, point creep is one of the biggest issues we face in the state of Utah. With the desire to hunt and the interest in hunting, our point creep is high. I mean there are units in other states that are just as high. However, again, if you want to sit it out and wait that long, then great. Me, I'd rather see more bulls and more limited entry opportunities come out, and how could we not see an effect when we increased our bull harvest by close to 200 bulls a year. You base it on 1,000 hunters and a 25% success, you know, that's still staying conservative and that's on top of the limited entry harvest as well. If it were to go an every other year, I wouldn't be as opposed to that in maintaining some opportunity.

Brett Prevedel: Well, we need to move it in a direction so we can finish the rest of this agenda. If you want a recommendation to come out of the RAC to the Wildlife Board on the spike hunt in general or the spike hunt Book Cliffs, I'll open it up for a motion.

Ritchie Anderson: I've got one more comment then I'd like to make a motion. The biology is sound. If you're nutritionally challenged you've got to reduce the bulls. I think we might be there. I think they're doing some studies out there in the Book Cliffs that would indicate that. So I would make the motion at this time to not have the Book Cliffs spike hunt until those studies come out and we can make a decision on that.

Brett Prevedel: So, we're suspending the spike hunt in the Book Cliffs for now. Ok. We have a motion from Ritchie to suspend the Book Cliffs spike hunt until there is more study done on the vegetation and carrying capacity which is underweight now. So I assume that's a period of a year or two, or a few years, right Ritchie?

Ritchie Anderson: Yeah, I would think so. They're constantly studying, but I think another year or two from what I understand with some collaring and stuff, I think we could decide like Daniel said to do an every other year or so.

Brett Prevedel: Well we'll proceed with the motion to suspend the spike hunt in the Book Cliffs for this coming year. We can address it this coming year. We have a motion, do we have a second?

The following motion was made by Ritchie Anderson and seconded by Daniel Davis.

MOTION: I move to suspend the general season elk spike hunt from the Book Cliffs this for the 2021 season.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: No.

Motion passes nine in favor, one opposed. (Jamie)

Brett Prevedel: Are there any other elk topics before we go through these next few pretty quick? And then we can get to the CWMU and LOA where we need to have some discussion. Any other elk issues? Ok, we'll move on to pronghorn. There are three new hunts proposed, Fillmore/Oakcreek South muzzleloader hunt, NS/Three Corners/West Daggett muzzleloader hunt, Plateau Highlands have three different- there is archery, muzzleloader and an any legal weapon. The discounted hunts are the Plateau Parker Mountain, they replaced each other, didn't they Covy? They were just swapped.

Covy Jones: That's correct. This cancelled hunt on the Plateau Parker Mountain allows that herd to recover and start using the Plateau again. You can still hunt the perimeter and the treed area, but not the actual Plateau.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, it was kind of changing the area to target where the antelope are. So, NS/Three Corners/West Dagget new hunt with a muzzleloader. Any issues with that? Ok, if I hear none then I'll move on to bison. Dax sent us out a summary of the bison changes the other day on email. If I may Dax, you can jump in here anytime. There is a new hunt on the Book Cliffs Wildhorse Bench, which is the old boundary, correct? They're just going back to an old boundary. And the Nine

Mile over the counter was extending the bison over the counter tags to pretty much everything across the river, right?

Dax Mangus: Yeah, that's right. So the recommendation is to include all of the Nine Mile unit in that because we don't have a bison plan on that unit. So to include all of the Nine Mile unit in that over the counter hunt. And then pull that boundary back to the northwestern corner with the Wild Horse Bench. It says it's a new hunt, but it's actually the longest running bison hunt we've had in the Book Cliffs. So we've had that one since 2012, just some different versions of the boundary, so the recommendation is to go back to a different version of the boundary.

Brett Prevedel: And then the discontinued hunts, the Book Cliffs Bitter Creek South, cow only, that was where we target that population a little bit last year and it was very successful so we don't need that hunt anymore. Then there are two Henry Mountain hunts, archery hunters choice and two archery bison tags which were discontinued. Are there any comments or concerns with the bison recommendations?

Jamie Arrive: We just don't support the boundary change on the Nine Mile, but we'll see where it goes with the vote. Thank you.

Brett Prevedel: Right now the boundary is from Nine Mile Creek south approximately, and this would take in the area north of Nine Mile Creek. Is there any more discussion on that, or did you want to pursue that any further or did you just want that in the minutes, Jamie? Or how did you want to deal with that.

Jamie Arrive: Just in the minutes that the Tribe does not support hunting of buffalo. But we've worked with the Range Creek group, I don't know what it's called, just some of the stuff that has come out of it isn't what we desire. But it has moved forward with the over the counter bison sale, so expanding that boundary just gives people more opportunity to hunt bison. But like Dax said, there is no management plan on that side, so that's just our stance on it.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, we'll make sure that's in the minutes. Thank you. If there are no other comments on bison. Desert bighorn sheep there is one discontinued hunt which is Zion archery. Then Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep there is a new hunt Fillmore/Oak Creek which is just an additional archery hunt. And a discontinued hunt in Box Elder/Pilot Mountain is just the rotational hunt I believe. Then there are some boundary changes in our region, this is bighorn sheep keep in mind, NS/Three Corners/Bear Top there is a boundary change, and NS/Summit/West Daggett there is a boundary change. If I remember right they just changed the line between the two, is that correct?

Dax Mangus: What we did on those was expand both of those boundaries. On the Three Corners hunt, now it includes Goslin Mountain, there are some sheep on Goslin Mountain. So that side has expanded to include that area. And then on the other side it was expanded to include some of those high country Hoop

Lake sheep. So basically it was just an expansion of additional boundaries to encompass additional sheep that are present in those areas and part of those populations.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you. Any questions on the desert or Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep?

Natasha Hadden: This is Natasha, I think I remember seeing a letter from one of the sportsmen's groups about the desert bighorn sheep archery.

Brett Prevedel: The Zion hunt that was eliminated?

Natasha Hadden: Yeah, and they were proposing rotating the archery hunt in different units, or something like that. So I just wanted to bring that up.

Brett Prevedel: Was there any activity with the southern RAC on that Covy?

Covy Jones: The sentiment was they just wanted to maintain an archery hunt somewhere for desert bighorn. We agreed when we implemented those archery hunts that they wouldn't come at the expense of any weapon. The population on the Zion as well as the age class of rams has decreased and that's why we pulled it. If there is somewhere else in the state where we could look and find that, if the RAC felt like that was a recommendation they wanted to make, we would be willing to look and see if there was somewhere we could add that hunt back in, but not on the Zion.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you. You ok with that, Natasha, letting that go?

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Mr. Chair.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, that brings us to the dedicated hunter rule and changes. It limits the number of dedicated hunter permits available in the drawing to 15% of the total annual general season buck for each unit, and a maximum of one resident and one non resident permit if the units 15% total is met or exceeded. Any discussion on that? Ok, if not we have about eight motions that we've already addressed, most of them pertaining to elk, and actually seven and they're all pertaining to elk. That just leaves us with the remainder of the big game proposals. I would entertain a motion to pass them as presented.

Daniel Davis: Mr. Chair, I tried to speak up as you were reading, I apologize, Covy is there currently an archery hunt for each species on the once in a lifetime's?

Covy Jones: Yes, every one. But this would take that recommendation on the Zion, would make it so desert's wouldn't have one. There is one for goats, moose there is not one, but moose doesn't pose the same sort of (limitations), there is one for bison on the Book Cliffs, there are two for Rocky's, and this recommendation gets rid of the one for desert's.

Daniel Davis: So with that question coming from the southern region, is there a unit that the Division has seen or considered or have the data to support that recommendation?

Covy Jones: We're getting some of that data now, Daniel. We have some data from previous years flights, in addition we're flying a lot of our sheep units right now. So, we'll have that data before the Board, but we don't have the best data to make the decision of a unit right now. Again, if the wish of the RAC was to make a recommendation to reestablish that hunt on a unit that fits the criteria, we could find that unit or work to find that unit for the Board.

Daniel Davis: Thank you Covy. Mr. Chair if I may make a motion in regards to that?

Brett Prevedel: Desert bighorn, specifically?

Daniel Davis: Yes sir, to the same recommendation that the southern region had. To maintain that species hunt with an archery only utilizing the data that the Division gathers to determine which unit that will be held on as long as it meets the criteria.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. we have a motion to maintain the archery tag for desert bighorn sheep at the discretion of the Division as to which unit that would be.

The following motion was made by Daniel Davis and seconded by Dick Bess.

MOTION: I move to maintain the archery hunt for desert bighorn sheep at the discretion of the Division as to which unit it would be held.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: abstain

Motion passed unanimously.

Brett Prevedel: I would now entertain a motion to accept the rest of the packet as presented on the topic of Big Game Seasons.

The following motion was made by Jeff Taniguchi and seconded by Dan Abeyta.

MOTION: I move to approve the remaining recommendations from the Big Game proposal as made by the Division.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

**02:57:28 7) Deer Management Plans – Population Objective
Recommendations (Informational)
Teresa Griffin, Regional Presentations**

Presentations could be viewed at
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

Brett Prevedel: That brings us to... I guess we do need to discuss the deer management, that is an action item. There was a proposal to adjust the population objectives on the deer management plans. Did everyone see that? There was a little misunderstanding on this. A lot of the comments came in thinking we were reducing the herd size, but the reality of it was that most of these, as more data became available, they realized that they were not obtainable. So they were just trying to make them more in the ballpark of what was realistic. So that's why a lot of the negative comments coming in were saying, "You're reducing the deer herd". That's not the intent of it. With that, if there are any specific units or I can read though the ones in our area that were changed. SS Yellowstone went from 13,000 to 11,000. SS Diamond Mountain went from 15,000 to 13,000. Book Cliffs 15,000 to 9,000. I think that was all of them in our region. I'll open that up to questions or comments.

Brad Horrocks: Mr. Chairman, one comment on the Diamond Mountain outcome. We reduced the numbers.

Brett Prevedel: The population objective, yes. Not the deer numbers.

Brad Horrocks: Yeah.

Brett Prevedel: Did you have a question regarding that for the biologist?

Brad Horrocks: How come they're making that recommendation? How come they're making that recommendation to drop from 15,000-13,000?

Brett Prevedel: Who wants to take that one? SS Diamond Mountain, Vernal.

Amy Vande Voort: I'm the biologist for Diamond. The objective does include the Vernal and Bonanza units as well, it's not just the Diamond unit. When we looked at that we looked at the deer survival study we've been doing for the past seven years now, and have been getting body condition scores. So we looked at that and we also looked at our highs and lows of our population. We've never been able to even come close to 15,000 in the past 20 years, so we're just making it more obtainable to even get to 13,000 with the data we have currently with our survival study and with the habitat and the sevier winters that we have.

Brad Horrocks: Sounds good to me.

Daniel Davis: If I could make some comments. First off there were some pretty brash comments that came through and my boss wouldn't accept that nonsense. After being able to participate on the Book Cliffs working group and establishing what would be the sustainable amount of use on the habitat? Being a part of this process for a dang long time now, I've got to see how a lot of this has

come to fruition and shame on the public to think that. Honestly a lot of these numbers were driven social. A lot of these rules are driven social and backs everyone into a corner on the science base and utilizing the science to get there. And, as Amy stated, a lot of these numbers have never been there in 20 years, as far back as we go with herd objective data we've never been there. These numbers have been factitiously made. Motion by RACs and passed by Wildlife Board. A lot of these come from committees and things from those natures, but we don't see the working group for each individual unit like the Book Cliffs. It would be nice, man it would be nice, I think it would help us in each area respectfully. But I support the recommendation they made and think we're on the right track for it. It's not an exception, it's not a free pass to not doing their job. That's blasphemy. They're doing a great job on it and it's about time we get to the realistic numbers.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you, and I would support that being involved also, moving from a social number to a science number and I don't personally see anything on this page that concerns me. Anyone else?

Natasha Hadden: If I could make a motion to say that we accept the population objective changes as presented.

Miles Hanberg: Mr. Chair. Before we proceed with a motion, just let me read off some of the public comments real quick, because they did take the time to comment so I'd like to reflect what those numbers were.

**03:03:27 Electronic Public Comment Report by Miles Hanberg,
NERO Regional Supervisor**

Miles Hanberg: So it was 56% neutral, 28% opposed and 14% supported the plan. So you can take it how you want with all the neutral people that they didn't feel strongly against or for. That's the summary of that, so I thought that was important to share.

Brett Prevedel: We have a motion to accept the deer management plan population objective recommendations...

Daniel Davis: Can I ask one question? On the Book Cliffs, 9,000 is the highest we've been in 20 years. We're discussing the elk issues like we have already, range issues and those types of things. So we're setting a target to achieve. The goal is only reached if you set your mind to it right? And have a goal in mind. With that said we didn't have buffalo 15 years ago. We didn't have the abundance of feral horses 15 years ago. So in consideration of that, are we realistic at 9,000? Over that time frame we were at 7,500, about 53% of our objective as an average, if that's not correct, please correct me.

Brett Prevedel: I don't know what the correct number is, but if you go the direction you're going and if science says here's the number and you say that's not realistic, you're moving it back towards a social number. And I understand what you're saying, it might be optimistic. But the reason it went unrealistic in the first

place is because somebody took a number and put it on a piece of paper. So it's dangerous to pick a number as a RAC and I'd be uncomfortable doing that.

Daniel Davis: It was more of a question. Not any direction I wanted the RAC to take. However, if science says the best we've ever done is 9,000 and that was prior to all this other, is 9,000 attainable? That's the question.

Dax Mangus: If I could I'd like to speak to this a little bit, Mr. Chairman. We looked at the history and the performance of the unit in the past. There are a lot of challenges there, dietary overlap between bison and deer is pretty darn small. Maybe now that we're not hunting spikes out there, we may not have room for as many deer. I'm just teasing on that. But, the goal that we set, the objectives that we set are based on the history of the unit, based on forage analysis, based on body condition scores on the deer. They are also meant to be a little bit optimistic. There are some components, well a really big component of deer population management, that's outside control. We can do a lot of work on water development, habitat improvement, predator management, but if we have drought years we just can't grow deer. So what we're doing is setting the stage with all the work we're doing in all those different areas, and then if we can get some favorable weather years to line up for us, I think that's a goal that we could achieve. It's a goal that's going to take a lot of work, it's also going to take the stars to a line a little for us. We're going to have a few years with good weather conditions. So, most people that we talk to want more deer, and the Division wants more deer too and we work really hard to try and grow more deer too. We've been kind of accused of everything on this recommendation; of wanting to go out and kill 50,000 does across the state, from people who didn't understand what we are doing. And now this is the opposite end like is your goal too high and unrealistic? I'm hoping that if we're getting questions on both ends that maybe we're somewhere right in the middle there. A goal that biologically we have data that tells us it's obtainable, but it's also going to be a stretch and some things are going to have to a line for it to work out and help us get there.

Daniel Davis: So have there been other units where the state has seen across the regions, or what have you, where that increase of elk population can down play the ability for the deer population to increase? Are we running into a balance issue there between those two species? Because 15 years ago, we didn't have the amount of elk that we have right now. There was a correlation there that I was trying to get to and it would be more directly related between those as well.

Ritchie Anderson: Brett, I've got one comment. I think that the 9,000 numbers are ok. The thing is things can change. I need to clarify a comment I made on horses out there. The BLM does have a HMA, a Herd Management Area that they manage for BLM wild horses on winter ridge. They are way over objective. Putting a lot of pressure on Winter Ridge. Winter Ridge is good deer habitat. So, my recommendation to the RAC and the general public is you contact the BLM, you contact your Senator Mike Lee's office, and your Congressmen and say we expect you to get those horse numbers into objective. Winter Ridge is not a prime area to have an HMA, there is a lot of state land on Winter Ridge, there is private land, the Tribe borders or is close to that HMA. The best solution would be for the BLM or

congress to eliminate that as a wildhorse HMA. The BLM, but I know our local office would like to control those numbers and get those numbers back into objective, they've got to have some public support and public pressure to help them get the resources to get those numbers to objective. We can't touch those horses and they're way over objective. That's good deer habitat. Do a little homework there and help us get those horses back into objective. Thanks.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you. And I know when we did the forage balance the horses were a significant resource demand in the Book Cliffs. They're significant, just the volume they require. Ok, we have a motion on the table to accept the numbers that were proposed for the population objectives for the deer.

Daniel Davis: I'll second that.

The following motion was made by Natasha Hadden and seconded by Daniel Davis.

MOTION: To approve the Divisions presentation on Deer Management Population Objectives as presented.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

**03:12:06 8) Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations
(Action)
Teresa Griffin and Guy Wallace**

Presentations could be viewed at

<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

Brett Prevedel: That moves us to the Deer Management unit revision recommendations. If I'm not mistaken, most of the revisions were related to these population objectives, were they not? I mean that's kind of what it is?

Covy Jones: So Brett, the difference here is that every five years we rewrite the management plan completely. So in three of the regions we just looked at population objectives. In two regions, southern and southeastern, we're behind a year because when we wrote the statewide deer plan we looked at a complete entire rewrite and that's where we outline the projects we're going to do for deer. We outline the limiting factors, we do all that work every five years. So it's just a bigger process I guess.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. And I did read through them, I didn't realize which were new and which were just changing the objectives. There is a lot of work that goes into them, they're really high quality. So is everyone ok with that? And if so, I would take a motion to approve the unit plan revisions as presented.

The following motion was made by Brad Horrocks and seconded by Jeff Taniguchi.

MOTION: I move to approve the Divisions proposal on Deer unit plan revisions as presented.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously

**03:14:04 9) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations
(Action)
Chad Wilson**

Presentations could be viewed at
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/online-board.html>

Brett Prevedel: That puts us to the last item on our agenda. CWMU and Landowner 2021 permit recommendations. Who's on from the Division? Oh Chad is there. Before we go into the CWMU there is the letter, they called it a formal complaint, but it was a letter of unsatisfactory from someone that had a public permit on a CWMU, and I know you probably got it. What's the process for something like that when it happens?

Chad Wilson: We have a CWMU advisory committee and one of their purposes is to hear complaints. So, I did receive that complaint and it is on the agenda. That meeting is generally held at the end of January or beginning of February and I kind of do that on purpose to catch all the complaints that may come and wait for the season to be over. That's on the agenda. It will be heard with our next CWMU advisory committee. They have the ability to put the CWMU on probation or make a recommendation to the Board. So depending on what their findings are is how we'll move forward on that.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you. And one other question, there was some correspondence regarding the cactus bucks. Concern of adding cactus bucks to the CWMU as in the proposal on one of the units. What did you think of that?

Chad Wilson: I didn't see that email, but through the RAC process, a couple of the RACs have brought that up. So it fits our rule, the CWMU rule to do a management cactus buck hunt because there is a cactus buck hunt on the Paunsaugunt. Some of the concerns are how early that hunt could potentially start, and I think those were valid concerns. The RAC or Board would have the ability to push those dates to a later date, right now it would be September 1- October 31st. The operator of the CWMU doesn't intend to start before September 20th, so that should minimize some of those concerns.

Brett Prevedel: Did that motion go through the southern RAC?

Chad Wilson: So, the central RAC and the northern RAC, I'm hoping I'm remembering all these right, voted to not have the cactus buck hunt. Then the southern and the southeast voted for.

Brett Prevedel: With the early start date?

Chad Wilson: Yeah, nobody said anything about the start date. We had some conversation in the southern region that... well a cactus buck is 50% velvet,

right? If they shoot some big bucks that are reproducing, that would be something that we would look at shutting down in the future. The intent of that is to remove the non reproductive bucks off the landscape. If we saw that that wasn't the case, that would be something we'd recommend in the future of discontinuing that hunt.

Brett Prevedel: So thank you. The summary of the total was in your packet. There are a lot of tags, 2,872 private tags and 476 public tags in the CWMUs. The summary of the changes is 84 renewals, five new applications, and two changes. Did anyone have any comments or questions on the CWMUs form the RAC? Or any interest in the cactus buck issue? Ok, if there are none then I will take a motion.

Ritchie Anderson: Wait, Brett, are we just specifically talking about the CWMUs right now and not the LOAs?

Brett Prevedel: That is correct, we'll do the LOAs next.

Ritchie Anderson: Ok, thank you.

Brett Prevedel: I'm looking for a motion to approve the CWMU proposal as presented.

The following motion was made by Brad Horrocks and seconded by Jeff Taniguchi.

MOTION: I move to accept the Divisions proposal on the CWMU permit recommendations as presented.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you, passes unanimously. Now to the Landowner Association. We had two local ones that sent us letters. Let me find the numbers here. Ok, let me just read off the ones that are in our region, and then if there are other ones you want to talk about, we can. Book Cliffs North elk, they had requested nine, they had qualified for, through the new process that is strictly acres- is that right Chad? (Yes) No adjustments made for any extenuating circumstances and that's our discussion tonight, if there are circumstances and whether we want to recommend an adjustment. So, Book Cliffs North elk, they requested nine, they qualified for two, and the recommended number from the Division is two. Last time around we gave them six. Pronghorn they requested three, qualified for two, which is what they had last time and that is the recommendation. Deer, they requested 13, qualified for 10, they had 13 last time. Then I'll skip over the West Desert and go to SS Diamond Mountain where we had some letters come in. Deer, they requested 53, they qualified for 50, there were 50 recommended and last time they had 48. So I guess they asked for three extra ones. Elk, they requested 31 which is what they had last time, but they only qualified for 30 this time. Then the other one on here is NS/Three Corners elk, and they requested five, which is what they had last time, and the recommendation for what they're eligible for this time is two. So, would you like to go through them individually as a RAC and talk about them?

Ritchie Anderson: There are two specifically that I need to address, but we can do it however you want to do it.

Brett Prevedel: Let's start with NS/Three Corners.

Jamie Arrive: Sorry, I have a question. When you say approved, do you mean approved by this RAC, or approved...?

Brett Prevedel: It was approved by the Wildlife Board, but I assume they went with the RACs recommendation. Remember three years ago when we had it? That was the number they had prior. Chad, I guess some of them are adjusted by RACs and some of them was the process different with the acreage?

Chad Wilson: Yeah, I'm kind of in the same boat as you, because three years ago I wasn't in this position, so I don't know exactly what the RAC passed last time and what the Board did. The other thing to keep in mind is sometimes on some of these recommendations, and I'll tak the Panguitch Lake as an example because I know that one for sure. With the reduction, they were given more tags last time, but we took a lot of public tags away from the draw, that's why our recommendations on that one is lower. So everyone of these LOA tags that are given out actually comes out of the public draw. So on that one I think it was they were requesting seven and our recommendation was three, so that would put four more public tags into the draw then what there would be otherwise.

Brett Prevedel: I'll let you jump in where you want. NS/Three Corners, I do remember that one because we addressed it last time. The private land in the unit,

Brown's Park, is the irrigated land in Brown's Park. So it takes the majority of the game use as opposed to the non private land in the area. Amy, are you still on here?

Amy Vande Voort: Yes, I am.

Brett Prevedel: Last time we discussed it kind of at length. Do you want to add anything in here? It's a legitimate concern that they have, isn't it? That they have an inordinate amount of game use on private land.

Amy Vande Voort: Yeah, they do. We have had radio collars on elk in Three corners about five years ago, and it did show pretty disproportionate use of the private land. I've also taken the time in the past to go and count animals and figure out what we would pay in damages for them if they weren't getting permits, and if they don't get the permits we would end up paying damages for depredation on the irrigated land without the permits. And that's for deer, elk, and moose use all on their property.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you.

Daniel Davis: Amy, do you have a value for that?

Amy Vande Voort: I don't have on for this year. It changes every year based on the hay prices. It's based on what hay sells for every year and then what you count each year, but I don't have the current numbers for this year.

Daniel Davis: Would you be able to get the last years?

Amy Vande Voort: Um, I could tell you the last time I counted to look at it. They sell their permits for quite a bit less than Diamond does. And we would be paying them a couple of thousand dollars on top of what they would get for one permit.

Brett Prevedel: So we don't have to deal with these motion wise each one individually, I just wanted to have the discussion each one individually. Was there any other questions on that Three Corners one?

Ritchie Anderson: Yes. Is there a lot of public pressure to put these tags back into the public draw? Where is the pressure coming from to reduce these landowner tags?

Brett Prevedel: The process changed and it went to straight acreage without insinuating circumstances.

Chad Wilson: Can I clarify on that? Just to be clear, in the rule it says we can do it off of acreage, it also says we can do it off of percentage of use. We don't have the data for percentage of use that we do on acreage. And we're just looking at it on a statewide perspective and we were kind of all over the board on some of these. Some of them were getting significantly more than what the acreage

qualifies for, while others were just right there toeing the line. Really this was a task for us to be consistent with our recommendation to not show favoritism to any one LOA from another.

Ritchie Anderson: So, we're not seeing a lot of public pressure necessarily?

Covy Jones: Some of the RACs there is frustration and there is public pressure. They're fine with the permits they just want to make sure that it's equitable and fair and that the process is equitable and fair. So when we look back and say we need to have a process that is equitable and fair across all the LOAs. Now, we did it according to rule, and that's why. So yeah, there is pressure.

Brad Horrocks: Do they take into consideration on these the amount of time the wildlife is there on the private ground? It seems to me that it is a lot more heavily impacted for a longer time than some other units.

Chad Wilson: That's where I was saying it gets difficult for us. Amy has some pretty good data on the Three Corners, but statewide I don't know that we have the data on a lot of these LOAs to take that part into account as well as we maybe could or should.

Ritchie Anderson: You know, I guess I have a lot of concern about reducing these tags. If we're going to reduce them on the bank of putting them back into the public draw so the public can have access to them, let's talk about the Governor's tag and what we can do to make that more accessible and make it a raffle or something like that, because I would like to have access to that tag, I'm never going to get a chance at that tag. So I think if we're going to talk about taking tags away from landowners to make them accessible, we need to talk about the Governor's tag and making it accessible to people as well. I don't really like the deal we've got to take them and make them accessible to others because there are other situations where I would like to have the opportunity at that the state is not making available to me. As far as everybody is working on habitat and when there is a lot of moisture and the climate's good and we're getting a lot of moisture, everybody looks like great managers. When we have a drought, everybody looks like bad managers. So everyone is working on habitat. These ranchers are hauling significant amounts of water during these droughts, and at a great expense. We're right around \$15,000 for the water we hauled this year. And that's probably pretty cheap compared to what Mark Hill did, and maybe the Dickensions did in Brown's Park. So, a lot of these times when we're hauling water, those wildlife would not have water if we weren't doing that. So, it's not like it's a giveaway and if any of these ranchers decided to pull the 72 hour option, decide to opt out of the management deal, the expense to the DWR would be so tremendous, because they would be running their tails off trying to figure out how they're going to manage these wildlife on a 72 hour basis. I'm telling you, I promise you, these tags are cheap for the state.

Brett Prevedel: I don't think there is really an intent to reduce tags, they're just trying to make it consistent and they use the acreage. Then they take it to

us, and we're the ones with this local knowledge and who know these factors you just brought up, and this is our opportunity to say, no because of the amount of time the wildlife spends on the private land and in Browns Park, or whatever the issue, this is where we recommend a different number and I believe the Wildlife Board, if I can defend it- which I'll do my best to do, I think they'll go with our number. And I think they expect that. Don't they Chad? That's why we're looking at it for some of the local knowledge.

Chad Wilson: Yeah. For sure, that's why we're bringing it out and through the process and letting you know why we recommended what we recommended. But for sure it's your right to make a recommendation as a RAC.

Brett Prevedel: So I think we should just have the discussion and not really question why they recommended what they did, because they told us what they did. They used acreage and tried to make it consistent, and here is our opportunity to add the local knowledge and change it back. Or whatever we want to do.

Brad Horrocks: Amy, could you visit a little bit more on that and the use up there? I know you've said some on it. It seems to me, but I know it's been a few years since I was there, but it seems like there is a tremendous amount of use on the Willow Creek Ranch, I'm not sure if that name is correct. But there is a tremendous amount of use for a long period of time. Am I mistaken?

Amy Vande Voort: No, you're not mistaken. As far as elk, you'll find them on there almost year round down along the hay fields. You'll find moose there in the summer and fall a lot of times. And then they really get hit hard with deer use. You can go out there in the winter and spring and could find almost 1,000 deer on there every day. They just get hammered. I'm sure with the elk, a lot of times if you don't go out there with a spotlight you're not going to see them, but they do get a lot. This morning right along the road there was a head of 30 right there where you could just see and I'm sure there was more than just that. They definitely get a lot of use.

Brad Horrocks: You know my family is involved with the one on Diamond, to bring that to light to everybody that we do participate in one. But the difference it makes with these landowners and taking care of the wildlife, I don't have a problem at all with giving these guys back to their five tags instead of two.

Brett Prevedel: So, we could deal with these individually or we can have this back and forth discussion and make one motion with the four changes or whatever we end up making. Does anyone have a concern with going to five on NS/Three corners?

Daniel Davis: With the five, just for some clarification, there are what? 3-4 primary land owners that make up the private property in the area up there? Are all those landowners part of this LOA, or is it just Dickensons and the Vermillion Ranch?

Amy Vande Voort: So there are currently only two landowners in Three Corners, and both of them are in the LOA. Actually there are three landowners, I forgot about one, and they are all in the LOA.

Brad Horrocks: Dickersons bought out another family up there, and I think that brought them down to three.

Amy Vande Voort: Yeah, there are three.

Daniel Davis: And they're all active in the LOA?

Amy Vande Voort: Yeah, all three of them have all their property enrolled.

Brad Horrocks: So, how do we want to address that, if we want to support these? We don't need to make a motion that we support on that Three Corners unit that we go to the approval of the five? If we approve the whole recommendation it will be covered with the five, correct?

Brett Prevedel: No, the recommendation is two. What I'm hoping to do is adjust 3-4 of these, whatever you want to adjust and then make one motion to approve it as presented except the four that we increased. So I don't have to call all your names that many times.

Brad Horrocks: Ok, whatever you need to do, I think you kind of know the feelings that I have.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, I'll throw that out again, is there opposition to moving NS/Three Corners to the five permits? And if there is then that's fine and we'll vote and do them individually.

Joe Arnold: I just have a question, Brett. I think we're looking for consistency here throughout the state and I know we only want to vote on our particular area. I buy a tag from a landowner in a different unit. But I'm just trying to understand, the permits are given based upon land ownership acreage, so if we vary from that, aren't we then playing favorites in our regions? I'm a little bit confused on what we're proposing now, just because it's our people- and it is our backyard as Daniel said before, I'm a little bit confused on where we're going with this. Sorry.

Brett Prevedel: I guess, on the one we're talking about NS/Three Corners, you're not comparing apples and apples when you do acreage. You're talking unirrigated and private land. So when you go percentage, the game is concentrated on the private land. And that's the intent here to balance the damage with giving some permits. I think your point is well taken, if you were out there and there was no irrigated land and it was all the same country, it would be pretty hard to deviate from percentage. If it was all a similar unit. But, that's where this fairness issue comes in I guess, if you want to call it that. If they're feeding 1,000 deer on the private land, even though they only have 20% of the land and the other 80% is only

feeding 200 deer, I guess that's our job to say whether we think we should adjust that or not.

Ritchie Anderson: The way I understand it is, it is not required for the DWR to make their recommendation based on acreage, it could also be percentage of use.

Brett Prevedel: But they said they don't have the data to do that.

Ritchie Anderson: Brett, we could vote on them individually, or we could wait until the end and roll them all into one motion if there are changes.

Brett Prevedel: Well I don't want to steamroll anybody, so if there's no votes then let's do them individually and see if they pass.

Jamie Arrive: I've got a question. Are there any other LOAs that are similar to this NS/Three corners that feed 1,000 deer or are heavily used throughout the year? Are some of these similar to that?

Chad Wilson: That's a really good question, and it's a tough question. I think that there are some, and you see some LOAs where certain parts of the land get used heavily and then you see others that even though they may be in the mapping habitat, sometimes they don't even have any animals on them. So it's a really tough question, and I think if we knew that answer then we would have adjusted that to make it so our recommendation was that way. There are some that we have held the numbers a little bit higher because of depredation issues.

Jamie Arrive: Thank you.

Daniel Davis: I'm with Ritchie, I say we take these unit by unit and make a motion accordingly, because I think each one is a little bit different in their own world.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, since we've been talking about that NS/Three Corners, I will entertain a motion.

Ritchie Anderson: I have one more comment Brett. One thing I like on the Dickensions is I know they participated on the management plan, and they supported it. They went ahead and supported the objective number. They supported all of that based on five tags. They didn't support it... And those landowners supported all that based on five landowner tags. They didn't support it based on two. So, I don't want to change the game on them now.

Brett Prevedel: We had this same discussion three years ago on the same place. We had good discussion like we're having now and then we decided to go with five. So we're kind of revisiting the same issue.

Joe Arnold: Brett, can I ask a question? Ritchie do they allow public access on? I think the one thing I sometimes have some issue with is they do feed them, they do water them, but then they do not allow any public access, and a few other states allow some public access and the Division gives them some money back that's not a CWMU, but I think Montana I hunted a place there. Is there any public access allowed to, not necessarily depredation, but also in these areas where they are feeding a lot of deer and somewhat complaining about feeding a lot of deer, but not allowing anyone else to hunt those same deer or elk.

Ritchie Anderson: Amy could maybe answer that a little better for me. I know that they do allow some access.

Amy Vande Voort: They do allow access. You have to ask them, they don't just leave it open to anybody because they do have cows and livestock on there. But if you go talk to them, they're pretty good with allowing access for the elk hunters and some other hunts.

Daniel Davis: So, also if I'm not mistaken, to maintain validity in an established LOA they have to grant so much public access. Is that correct?

Amy Vande Voort: Yes, they have to allow hunters on, yeah.

Chad Wilson: The same amount of tags they get, they have to allow that many public hunters.

Daniel Davis: So to speak to that a little bit, they don't get anything for deer because this is a general deer unit. They don't get anything for moose, where it's a once in a lifetime, and they don't in a lot of cases qualify with the acreage to be a CWMU. Now, the hay fields are an oasis in the middle of nowhere and the rest of the ground on the north side is summer ground. So these animals live there year round and when you look at the landowner numbers, that's where it's difficult, because each one of them share their resource, I wouldn't feel comfortable with two among those landowners and for the amount of use that gets used there. That's my take.

Brett Prevedel: So, with that, I would entertain a motion for...

Miles Hanberg: Hey Brett, I think we have one thing, if anybody on the RAC is involved in a LOA in any of these areas we're talking about they probably from a legal standpoint should abstain from voting on..

Brett Prevedel: On all of them?

Miles Hanberg: If we're breaking them out individually, I think that's fine, but if they're involved in a specific motion they probably should abstain from that one.

Brad Horrocks: I've got family involved in the SS Diamond Mnt unit, whatever I need to do, if I need to abstain on that unit or however we need to do it, make sure it's clarified the way it's technically wrote, as long as you clarify it upfront that you are a landowner or a participator in these units, as long as it's clarified up front, you're still allowed to vote but you do need to clarify it. But I don't need to carry the way.

Rebekah Jones: So, I'll make the motion to increase the NS/Three Corners permits from three to five.

Brett Prevedel: From two to five.

Rebekah Jones: Oh, excuse me, from two to five.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you.

The following motion was made by Rebakah Jones and seconded by Brad Horrocks.

MOTION: I move to increase the North Slope/Three Corners permits from the recommended two permits to five permits.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: Yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, Book Cliffs North elk, and I don't believe we received any comments on this one from the landowners but, the elk is nine requested and they qualified for two and last time we gave them six. Pronghorn it's

three and two, and we gave them two last time. And deer it's 13 and 10 and we gave them the full 13 last time. Any recommendations there?

Ritchie Anderson: Brett, go ahead Daniel.

Daniel Davis: This one was a little bit tricky when it came through last time, just to reiterate for some of those that weren't around. Back when we had the West Willow Creek CWMA created as well, they stated that they didn't want any of the elk permits and didn't see that to be elk habitat and felt that they were more privy to stay up in that high country on that private property. That has since changed and they are now receiving CWMU elk permits and when we discussed it as a RAC we decided that going from nine to two, when you're looking at an income to supplement some of the damages from the fences, and repairs and those types of things, we didn't feel it was fair. Just to throw the justification on why we ended up last time, that's kind of just a summarized version.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. So where do we want to go this time?

Jamie Arrive: What did they request last time?

Brett Prevedel: I don't know what they requested last time, but it might have been six. Daniel, I remember the discussion but I don't remember what they requested.

Ritchie Anderson: They requested nine and we gave them six.

Daniel Davis: We met halfway in the middle.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. So that's the same that we've got now. They request nine and the DWR is recommending two.

Ritchie Anderson: I think they would be ok staying at the six. I think there would be a lot of trouble if we went to two.

Daniel Davis: I agree.

Jamie Arrive: Didn't we decrease the number of permits in the Book Cliffs this year? Last year, sorry.

Dax Mangus: Yeah, we did. Book Cliffs permits got cut 20% last year. Sorry they got cut 15% last year.

Jamie Arrive: So, would it be favorable to cut those as well, maybe to five?

Daniel Davis: I can support that as well.

Ritchie Anderson: I would like to see it the same, because I don't want to discourage them. For what we're trying to do in the Book Cliffs habitat wise and number wise, we need that private land. And we need those resources that those ranches have as far as the water trucks, the equipment, the dozers. For what we're trying to do out there on a habitat basis, we need those ranchers. Those ranchers are looking at taking cut too in their numbers, I know they have to some extent already. They're looking to cut their livestock numbers for the same reason that Covy brought up before. You've got to have the vegetation. So I don't want to discourage them, we need them. The worst thing would be if they say no, we don't want any tags but you take your wildlife and get. That would be the worst scenario we could have out there for what we're trying to do. What's one tag difference for the benefit it will give the wildlife and the sportsmen? That's my feeling.

Dick Bess: I agree with Ritchie.

Daniel Davis: I see the other side to that too a little bit. Your cultivated property again is kind of like the North Slope, that oasis. The rest of the ground out there is pretty similar to what's already there. So we don't see the wildlife in hoards on the rest of that private property. They come and go through there just like if it was anything else. If they had it in more of a congregation that it encompassed a larger area mass as a combined whole, I would agree with that Ritchie, but where this is some bottoms of some draws and a parcel here and a parcel there... The partnership with them is very crucial, but I feel that five would be fair from my opinion where I stand from.

Ritchie Anderson: Ok, the other thing is, I think at one point before that they were receiving nine tags, if I remember right. So they have taken a reduction to six, and they're going to be fine with that.

Brett Prevedel: Wasn't the Mustang Fuels property part of this, and when we reduced it part of that was because the acreage left?

Ritchie Anderson: I don't remember.

Dax Mangus: They lost almost 21,000 acres that was enrolled in the LOA when Mustang Fuels left. Also, I was just looking at the numbers, three years ago when they renewed we were at 158 bull tags, and now we're at 120. So it reduced 15% last year, but it's reduced 25% over the three year period. Plus they've got 21,000 less acres on their last application as well.

Ritchie Anderson: Well, I'm not going to repeat myself, I think it's a pretty cheap price to pay.

Joe Arnold: Is this the same area as the Mustang Fuels? Because they didn't want elk tags in the beginning because there were no elk there.

Ritchie Anderson: It's a different area. They're two different areas. I know the Lamberts and Mark Hills water trucks both ran non-stop this summer. I

don't know, the DWR does a lot and the sportsmen do a lot. But I think it's pretty cheap.

Brett Prevedel: I would like a motion from somebody who has dealt with elk, pronghorn and deer numbers in the same motion.

Ritchie Anderson: I'll make the motion that we leave the numbers as is, and leave the elk numbers at six.

Brett Prevedel: Six, two, and ten again?

Ritchie Anderson: On the other species leave them as they have been, you know, and leave the elk at six.

Brett Prevedel: As they have been, you mean what they were last time? What we approved last time?

Ritchie Anderson: Did you say they changed them this time on the other species?

Brett Prevedel: Well it's different than their request, yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Leave them at what they got last time.

Jamie Arrive. So, I have a question really quick, Dax. Did we reduce deer number permits as well on the Book Cliffs?

Dax Mangus: Yeah we did. We cut deer permits 20% last year. I'd have to dig a little bit to find out what we did the two years further back, but it's also been declining. I know we cut 20% last year on deer tags.

Jamie Arrive: Thank you.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, so was that a motion or an opinion Ritchie?

Ritchie Anderson: No, we had a motion and a second to leave their numbers alone.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, well I didn't get a second written down, so we have a motion for six elk, two pronghorn, and 13 deer.

Ritchie Anderson: Do we have a second?

Jeff Taniguchi: I'll second that.

The following motion was made by Ritchie Anderson and seconded by Jeff Taniguchi.

MOTION: I move to maintain the same permit numbers for the Book Cliffs North LOA that they received last year. Six elk, two pronghorn, and thirteen deer.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: No.

Dick Bess: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: No.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: No.

Jammie Arrive: No.

Motion passes 6 in favor, 4 opposed (Joe, Rebekah, Daniel, Jamie)

Brett Prevedel: That brings us to what is probably our final topic of the night, SS Diamond Mountain. Are you going to abstain Brad?

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Dick Bess: I'll have to abstain on that one as well, Brett.

Brett Prevedel: So, what we've got on deer is a request of 53 and they qualify for 50, last time they had 48. On elk they requested 31 and they qualified for 30, and last time had 31. So they asked for five additional deer tags from last time, and there was the letter that came in that said they had an agreement with the DWR when they set that up at 65/35 on the percent of tags, and they wanted that hauled. And I didn't do the math, but I'm assuming that the 51 and 31 are the... I think they have the 35%, I don't think they have the 65%. But that was what their statement was, that they felt like they had an agreement with the DWR for 35% of the tags.

Jamie Arrive: Their numbers are pretty close to what's recommended, right?

Brett Prevedel: Yeah, you're talking two deer tags, well they're requesting three. I don't know what happened with the deer, why they requested five extra. Does anybody know?

Amy Vande Voort: Last time they got 48 deer tags, and since then we've actually increased deer tags. So that's why it's gone up for what they qualify for, and what they got last time.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. So the 53 is based on that percentage that they feel like they have agreed to.

Amy Vande Voort: Yeah, so what they've requested would be that 35%.

Brett Prevedel: Ok. So yes, based on the question it's pretty close. It's 50 recommended and they want 53. It's 30 recommended on the elk and they want 31. So it's four tags difference.

Rebekah Jones: I'll make the motion to increase the SS Diamond Mountain deer tags from 50 to 53, and the elk tags from 30-31.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, we have a motion.

Jeff Taniguchi: I will second that.

Daniel Davis: I've got a question for clarification. Is there truly some agreement? Is that a perception?

Brett Prevedel: Well I don't know and I bet that nobody can find it, because they did list the names from the people at the DWR and they're all long retired. This was a long time ago.

Dax Mangus: This program is based on the rule, and things have evolved over time when this program initially got started. I know Diamond Mountain was one of the initial participants on the LOA program. Also I know over that period of time mapping abilities, you know paper maps vs GIS mapping, there are a lot of things that have changed and the difference is a couple of percent. Doing the most recent, best mapping technology available when we go through and do the analysis, Diamond Mountain has about 33% of the private acreage enrolled in the LOA. So that 2% difference from 35% to 33% could honestly be as simple as rounding error and improvements in mapping technology over this period of time. So I think that is probably part of how we got to where we are. As far as an agreement that was made years and years ago, I don't know you'd probably have to ask an attorney if that's legally binding or not, but I don't know.

Daniel Davis: I guess that was more for my clarification. That was the first time I'd heard that or been made aware of that. So that's all that was.

Brett Prevedel: So, we have a motion on the table to increase to 53 deer and 31 elk. Do we have a second?

Jeff Taniguchi: I'll second that.

The following motion was made by Rebekah Jones and seconded by Jeff Taniguchi.

MOTION: I move to increase the deer tags to 53 and the elk tags to 31 on the South Slope Diamond Mountain LOA permits.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: abstain

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: abstain

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: abstain

Motion passes 7 in favor, 3 abstaining (Brad, Dick, Jamie)

Brett Prevedel: Is there anything I missed or any other topics that anyone would like to address before we adjourn?

Daniel Davis: Quick question Brett. Typically with the Diamond Mountain LOA there is an application for a variance on the public access. Has that been submitted again this year?

Brett Prevedel: I'm not even familiar with that. Who would deal with that? The DWR?

Daniel Davis: Just in the past, this is the only region that ever applies for that variance. All the other LOAs fall under rule. Just in the years past they would apply for a variance and it would go through the RAC and Wildlife Board process to be excluded from that requirement.

Brad Horrocks: What happened on it originally was when it was set up up there, and don't quote me if I'm wrong, but it was one of the first LOAs that was set up to apply for a variance, and we discontinued doing it for years. It kind of fell by the wayside when all of the other units came into place, but we kept doing it. I can sure get them to if we want to send that in or not, but I don't think we've done it in a couple of years, have we Daniel?

Amy Vande Voort: So they did submit a variance request with the LOA renewal this year, so Chad should have gotten it with the packet that was emailed to him.

Chat Wilson: I probably just missed putting that on there, where it's been granted all the year passed. I missed that, I apologize.

Brett Prevedel: And that variance means they don't have to let people on private land?

Brad Horrocks: No, we've always had to do that.

Daniel Davis: That was explained earlier Brett on allowing the same number of public hunters access to the LOA for the same amount of permits issued.

Brett Prevedel: And the variance asks for letting less in?

Brad Horrocks: No, I thought the variance was always put on there to... because we started out with the LOA it was the first one, if I remember right, that was given landowner tags, but it's always been a rule that we had to let people in and stuff there.

Daniel Davis: So the variance, if I'm not mistaken, is to waive that requirement and leave it up to the LOA if they allow public or not. Whereas by rule, they would have to allow the public access in an LOA.

Brad Horrocks: I don't understand it that way, because I would think that we'd want to require them to have to.

Amy Vande Voort: So, Daniel is correct. The variance basically doesn't force them to have to allow equal numbers of public hunters on to the property.

Joe Arnold: Do we re vote then?

Dan Abeyta: Let me just speak to this just for a minute. I remember that this used to be the annual thing. Then a few years ago a variance request went from an annual process to granted for five years. Amy, can you speak to that?

Amy Vande Voort: So it went from an annual to a three year renewal when we do the LOA renewal it comes into play then.

Dan Abeyta: Three years, ok. So we're at that renewal for three more years?

Amy Vande Voort: Correct.

Brett Prevedel: And you're welcome to make a recommendation to Chad or whomever that the variance not be approved, if that's your wish. I just heard Brad say they shouldn't have one and he's part of it.

Brad Horrocks: You know I think that the way my understanding has been that all the landowners have always been. And they used to document it and put all the names down of people they let in. I always thought that was the way this worked to keep everyone happy we had to do that.

Brett Prevedel: Maybe they're just hunting on your place Brad.

Brad Horrocks: No, I know that there has been... Well I haven't been involved in 6-7 years so I shouldn't say, but it was very appreciative with the landowners that this was going on, so they allowed people to do it.

Daniel Davis: Yeah, it was brought up before my time, and it's been discussed everytime as it comes through. That's a lot of people, that's a lot of permits, that's a lot of access to say equally they have to allow, but the deal is they have to ask too, and a lot of people choose not to ask or entertain that. I would like to see that be a percentage, not just zero, I feel like that would be fair and adequate. Not saying that it's going to be advertised and say oh well we have to let this many people on. As an LOA that's kind how it would go if they were asked. But I don't agree with the zero aspect. Being issued these permits and then being able to say that zero people can hunt.

Brett Prevedel: Would you like to make a recommendation to not approve a variance on the public access?

Daniel Davis: So Brett, I guess that would be my question for Chad. If their variance asks for zero, could we make a recommendation to make that a percentage?

Brad Horrocks: What does the CWMU unit do? I thought it kind of followed in line with what they did.

Chad Wilson: If you get a public CWMU tag you can hunt the whole entire CWMU for five days. So it's different. But Daniel, to answer your question, I think that would be appropriate, if you feel like there is a certain minimum amount of public that they need to allow on, we could request that. I'll make sure I bring it up to the Board. I think my presentation is already recorded, but right at the beginning of comments I'll bring it up.

Daniel Davis: This time frame makes it difficult, because usually they present it to the RAC and stand up in the comment period and we can actually have these discussions and come to a consensus, where this format makes it difficult. As more people hunt up there and have the opportunities, it's not, I sold my tag and they're the only ones that get to hunt it. They're across the mountain killing it on public ground. That's where the heartburn has been for the sportsmen in that region. And a little bit of give and take, just a small percentage even would be sufficient.

Brett Prevedel: Why wouldn't it be just like the rest of the LOAs and just require the same number?

Joe Arnold: I would think that you would want consistency.

Daniel Davis: You would, but I don't think that any of the other LOAs make up the percentage of ground that Diamond Mountain does, so I feel like there is an exception there. And if you're looking at 51 deer and 31 elk, so 85 public hunters equate to what you're given as private landowners, that's a lot to manage and that's a lot to mitigate, and I don't think there are any other places that have that kind of numbers, is there Chad? I mean can you really compare this to any of the others?

Chad Wilson: I'm just going to look at that real quick, I want to say the most for any other unit is 18.

Brett Prevedel: Yes, that's correct.

Daniel Davis: So, that's where I want to respect them as landowners as well. Not open the flood gates, allow some restriction, but also put out a little bit of requirement, of cooperation with the sportsmen and the people that are out there as well. And if it be, I'd be glad to make a motion to allow 25%. You know, make the requirement that 25% are granted permission.

Brett Prevedel: Alright, we have a motion to approve a variance up to 25% of the private tags for access. Right Daniel?

Daniel Davis: Yes, that would be correct.

The following motion was made by Daniel Davis and seconded by Rebekah Jones.

MOTION: I move to approve a variance with a minimum of 25% of the private tags for access on South Slope Diamond Mountain.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Jeff Taniguchi: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: abstain.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dick Bess: abstain.

Natasha Hadden: No.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Ritchie Anderson: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Jammie Arrive: n/a

Motion passes 8 in favor, 1 opposed (Natasha)

Brett Prevedel: I'll run that by you Daniel and make sure I understand what the motion was. The requirement would be equal numbers, and you're saying 25%. Correct?

Daniel Davis: Correct.

Brett Prevedel: Any other topics anyone has before we adjourn?

Brad Horrocks: You know, I just thought that it's been a few years since I made the comment, and Mile and Amy and everybody could tell me, but I'd like to see them put in \$5 application fee for their sportsmans tag for Diamond Mountain for a November hunt to let the public buy with their \$5 tag or whatever it is, to be able to go up there and take a buck for the month of November. I don't know how big of a hassle that is, but I feel like there are deer that die of old age up there that you don't see until this time of year, but I think the fairest way to do that is put it out there. Just another revenue source. But I think it's an opportunity that we're kind of losing if we don't do something like that. And I don't know all the pros and cons, but if they allowed 100 to buy a \$5 tag...

Daniel Davis: I see what you're saying, Brad, like a super raffle. One late season deer hunt in each unit.

Brad Horrocks: I'm just speaking for Diamond. We're having deer die of old age, I'd rather see a sportsmen get the opportunity to go up there and take one of them. And that's just my opinion, I don't have the science behind it or anything else, that's just an opinion.

Daniel Davis: Yeah, it would be a neat opportunity and something out of the box. Brett, I just wanted to clarify on that motion, a minimum of 25%, not up to 25%.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, that's what I had. Required 25%. Ok. You've got a note on Brad's comment, Miles?

Miles Hanberg: I do.

Brett Prevedel: He's donating a super tag.

Miles Hanberg: We'll talk about it.

Brett Prevedel: We'll take a motion to adjourn.

The following motion was made by Brad Horrocks and seconded by Daniel Davis.

MOTION to adjourn the meeting.

04:21:20 10:55 p.m.Meeting adjourned.



GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

BRIAN C. STEED
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

MICHAL D. FOWLKS
Division Director

December 3, 2020

Peter J. Dube, President
Wyoming Game and Fish Commissioners
5400 Bishop Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82006

Dear President Dube,

I am writing on behalf of the Utah Wildlife Board regarding the reciprocity issue at Flaming Gorge.

We respectfully request that Wyoming Game and Fish (WGFD) and Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (Commission) reexamine their 2018 decision to increase reciprocal permit fees for Flaming Gorge Reservoir. Instead, we request that WGFD and the Commission pursue a true reciprocity agreement (i.e., allowing any angler in possession of a fishing license from either Wyoming or Utah to fish Flaming Gorge Reservoir in its entirety) with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR). Over the past year it has come to our attention that Utah residents are becoming increasingly frustrated with the reciprocal stamp fee imposed by WGFD on Utah anglers seeking fishing opportunities on the Wyoming side of Flaming Gorge Reservoir. The \$30 WGFD fee exceeds the \$10 reciprocal stamp fee currently charged by the UDWR to Wyoming residents looking to fish on the Utah portion of Flaming Gorge Reservoir. Although Utah anglers have requested that UDWR work with the Utah Legislature to raise the cost of a reciprocal permit for Wyoming residents, it is our feeling that such an effort would not be productive and would fail to address the underlying need for true reciprocity between Utah and Wyoming when it comes to management of this shared waterbody.

In the interest of making angler participation at Flaming Gorge Reservoir as easy as possible, we strongly urge WGFD and the Commission to formalize a reciprocal access agreement with UDWR that mirrors UDWR agreements with Idaho Game and Fish at Bear Lake and Arizona Game and Fish at Lake Powell; allowing for true reciprocity at Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

Currently, the management of Flaming Gorge Reservoir is undertaken through jointly coordinated spawning and stocking efforts. Additionally, UDWR and WGFD fisheries managers and administrators are presently engaged in an effort to arrive at consistent daily creel limits for all fish species that occupy the reservoir. The lack of true reciprocity at Flaming Gorge Reservoir seems to contradict other ongoing efforts to cooperatively manage the Flaming Gorge Reservoir fishery. It is our sincerest hope that WGFD and the Commission will make every effort to address this inconsistency.

Sincerely,

Byron Bateman, Chairman
Utah Wildlife Board

cc: Wildlife Board Members
Michal Fowlks, Division Director

