

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting

January 5, 2021, DNR, Boardroom
Electronic Meeting

The meeting can be viewed live at <https://youtu.be/5hftBj4VNOo>

Tuesday, January 5, 2021, 9:00 am

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|---|--------------------|
| 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 | CONTINGENT |
| 4. DWR Update
– Rory Reynolds, Interim DWR Director | INFORMATION |
| 5. 2021 Landowner Association Permit Recommendations
– Rory Reynolds, Interim DWR Director
– Chad Wilson, Public Wildlife/Private Lands Coordinator | ACTION |
| 6. R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations
– Darren DeBloois, Mammals Program Coordinator | ACTION |
| 7. Other Business
– Byron Bateman, Chairman | 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:

Spring 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/Wyatt Bubak
Action: Under Study
Status: To be presented April 2021
Placed on Action Log: August 27, 2020

Fall 2021 – Target Date – Resident Only permits for the Youth Elk hunt

MOTION: I move that we ask the division to review the possibility of youth any weapon elk tags going to residents only and bring back the information next year. This is to be placed on the Action Log.

Motion made by: Randy Dearth
Assigned to: Covy Jones/Lindy Varney
Action: Under Study
Status: To be presented November 2021
Placed on Action Log: December 3, 2020

Action Log Assignment

December 3, 2020

Chad Wilson – DWR and the CWMU Committee to put a presentation together educating the public on the benefits of the CWMU program.

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting

December 3, 2020

Electronic Meeting

The Board Meeting will stream live at <https://youtu.be/8t7rVxnI3qE>

AGENDA

Thursday, December 3, 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
– Kevin Albrecht, Vice-Chairman
• Update – Dedicated Hunter and General Season Deer Applications – Lindy Varney | CONTINGENT |
| 4. DWR Update
– Mike Fowlks, DWR Director | INFORMATIONAL |
| 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
• Wyoming Game and Fish Commission – Flaming Gorge Letter | CONTINGENT |

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Wildlife Board Motions

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

Fall 2021 – Target Date – Resident Only permits for the Youth Elk hunt

MOTION: I move that we ask the division to review the possibility of youth any weapon elk tags going to residents only and bring back the information next year. This is to be placed on the Action Log.

Motion made by: Randy Dearth
Assigned to: Covy Jones/Lindy Varney
Action: Under Study
Status: To be presented November 2021
Placed on Action Log: December 3, 2020

Action Log Assignment

December 3, 2020

Chad Wilson – DWR and the CWMU Committee to put a presentation together educating the public on the benefits of the CWMU program.

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
December 3, 2020, DNR Auditorium
Electronic Meeting
Summary of Motions

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

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

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda for the December 3, 2020 Wildlife Board Meeting.

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

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed unanimously.

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

3) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-9 Rule Amendments (**Action**)

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

MOTION: I move that we deny any new blinds, allowing the existing 20 blinds to stay for 10 years, and, at the end of 10 years, be removed.

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Karl Hirst, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's remaining recommendations as presented.

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

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and failed 4 – 2 with Donnie Hunter, Kevin Albrecht and Bret Selman opposed.

MOTION: I move that we reduce the season on Pine Valley, Virgin River and Pine Valley, Beaver Dam Desert Bighorn Sheep hunts by 7 days to stop the overlap with the General Season deer hunt. The 7 days would be removed from the start of the hunt date.

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

MOTION: I move that we ask Director Mike Fowlks to return to the January board meeting to be recognized for his career and retirement.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we reduce the general season elk spike hunt on the Book Cliffs units to 5 days.

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

MOTION: I move that we change the New Harmony extended archery deer dates to September 18 – October 15.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we do not approve the recommended age class on the Book Cliffs, Little Creek, and keep it at 7.5 – 8.

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and failed 4 – 2, with Randy Dearth, Wade Heaton, Karl Hirst and Bret Selman opposed.

MOTION: I move that we keep the Central Mtns, Nebo age objective at its current objective of 6.5 – 7.

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

MOTION: I move that we accept the new limited-entry hunts on the Cache, North, Oquirrh-Stansbury, West, Plateau, Barney Top/Kaiparowits, West Desert, Deep Creek and Box Elder, Pilot Mtn.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Randy Dearth, and passed 3 – 3, with Chairman Bateman breaking the tie. Kevin Albrecht, Wade Heaton and Bret Selman were opposed.

MOTION: I move that we move Nine Mile, Anthro to a limited-entry HAMS hunt instead of the recommended any bull elk unit.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed 5 – 1 with Randy Dearth opposed.

MOTION: I move that we discontinue the current limited-entry hunts on the Cache, North, Oquirrh-Stansbury, West, and West Desert, Deep Creek.

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and passed 4 – 2 with Karl Hirst and Bret Selman opposed.

MOTION: I move that we change the Box Elder, Sawtooth, Oquirrh-Stansbury, East and Southwest Desert, North to a limited-entry HAMS hunt.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the boundary changes for Plateau, Boulder, Southwest Desert, South and Box Elder, Grouse Creek as presented, and that we do not split the Oquirrh-Stansbury into East and West.

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Karl Hirst, and passed 5 – 1 with Randy Dearth opposed.

MOTION: I move that we increase the general season any bull permit quota to 17,500, and add unlimited youth permits that will not count towards the quota.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Karl Hirst, then amended by Wade Heaton and seconded by Bret Selman. The amendment to the motion passed 4 – 2 with Randy Dearth and Karl Hirst opposed. The motion then passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we extend the archery hunt on the any bull seasons by 9 days for the next two years until the elk committee reconvenes and then have them discuss it.

AMENDED MOTION: I move that we amend the motion from 9 days to 5 days.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we ask the Division to review the possibility of youth any weapon elk tags going to residents only, and to bring back the information next year. This is to be placed on the Action Log.

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

MOTION: I move that we accept the pronghorn recommendations as presented.

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

MOTION: I make the motion that we move the Henry Mtns hunter's choice archery hunt season dates to January.

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

MOTION: I move that the season dates for the Henry Mtns, hunter's choice archery hunt be set for January 18 – 31, 2021.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we continue the Desert Bighorn sheep archery hunt with the unit and dates determined by the Division, and to discontinue the Zion archery Bighorn sheep hunt.

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Bret Selman, and passes unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the archery Rocky Mtn. Bighorn sheep hunt on the Fillmore, Oak Creek.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we discontinue the Box Elder, Pilot Mtn. Rocky Mtn. Bighorn sheep hunt.

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

MOTION: I move that we accept the balance of the recommendations for the 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments.

5) Deer Management Plans

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

MOTION: I move that we discuss the Deer Management Plans – Population Objective recommendations and Deer Management Plans – Unit Plan Revision Recommendations together.

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Bret Selman, and passed 4 – 2 with Randy Dearth and Karl Hirst opposed.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Deer Management Plans as presented, with the addition of Elk Ridge increasing from 1,000 to 2,000.

6) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations (Action)

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed 4 in favor with 2 recusals. Wade Heaton and Bret Selman declared a conflict of interest and recused themselves from a vote.

MOTION: I move that we accept the request for Cactus Buck permits on the Alton CWMU with the stipulation that the season date has a September 15, 2021 opening, the public tags are not sold and are allocated only to youth or hunters with disabilities.

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

MOTION: I move that the Division and the CWMU advisory council present to the Board a report on the current public lands located within the CWMU boundaries and the reasoning/justification for it.

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed 4 in favor with 2 recusals. Wade Heaton and Bret Selman declared a conflict of interest and recused themselves from a vote.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the CWMU recommendations.

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed 5 in favor and 1 excused. Karl Hirst was excused from the remainder of the meeting.

MOTION: I move that we approve the LOA permits at the 2020 allocations, with the exceptions of decreases due to decreases in public permits on a unit, and with the exception of LOAs that qualify under the new proposal for additional permits, keeping the proportions the same.

7) Conservation and Expo Permit Adjustments (Action)

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed 5 in favor

with 1 excused. Karl Hirst was excused from the remainder of the meeting.

MOTION: I move that we approve as presented by the Division.

DRAFT

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
December 3, 2020, DNR Auditorium
Electronic Meeting
Attendance

Wildlife Board

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

RAC Chairs

Central – Brock McMillan
Southern – Brayden Richmond
Southeastern – Trisha Hedin
Northeastern – Brett Prevedel
Northern – Justin Oliver

Division Personnel

Ben Nadolski	James Christensen	Paul Gedge
Blair Stringham	Jason Vernon	Paul Washburn
Brayden Richmond	Justin Shannon	Riley Peck
Brian Steed	Kent Hersey	Rusty Robinson
Chad Wilson	Kevin Bunnell	Staci Coons
Covy Jones	Lindy Varney	Teresa Griffin
Dave Beveridge	Matt Briggs	Torrey Christopherson
Dax Magnus	Mike Christensen	Wyatt Bubak
Dennis Shumway	Mike Fowlks	
Greg Hansen	Miles Hanberg	
Guy Wallace	Paige Wiren	

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
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<https://youtu.be/8t7rVxnl3qE>

- 00:01:00** Chairman Bateman called the meeting to order, read a public health order from the State of Utah regarding COVID-19 and public meetings, and took a roll call.
- 00:03:33** **1) Approval of Agenda (Action)**
The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Wade Heaton and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda for the December 3, 2020 meeting.
- 00:04:10** **2) Approval of Minutes (Action)**
The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Donnie Hunter and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the October 1, 2020 Wildlife Board Meeting.
- 00:04:35** **3) Old Business/Action Log (Contingent)**
Vice-Chairman Albrecht asked the Division if there were any updates on the Board's request for a report on new hunting technology.
Lindy Varney gave a presentation on combining dedicated hunter and general-season deer applications.
- 00:12:49** **4) DWR Update (Informational)**
On behalf of the Board, Chairman Bateman thanked Director Fowlks for his Division of Wildlife Resources career service.
Director Fowlks asked if the Board would consider restructuring the Big Game RAC and Wildlife Board meetings in the interest of making the meetings shorter in length and to allow the meeting participants to discuss the agenda items in greater depth. All board members and RAC chairs said that they would consider restructuring meetings.
Director Fowlks gave updates on Licensing, Habitat, Wildlife and Law Enforcement sections. The Director recognized the passing of former Division of Wildlife Resources Director Jim Karpowitz.
- 5) Waterfowl Recommendations and R657-9 Rule Amendments (Action)**
Blair Stringham gave a pre-recorded online presentation that was posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.
- 00:29:09** **Public Comments**
Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentation.

00:30:10 DWR Additional Information

DWR migratory game bird program coordinator, Blair Stringham, gave background information regarding the Division's recommendations.

00:31:56: Board/RAC Questions

The Board asked questions about the stipulations regarding waterfowl blind ownership and use, and who would be liable for maintaining the blinds. The Board asked if there were a date by which permits must be obtained for the existing blinds.

00:36:40 RAC Summaries

All RACs passed the rule amendments with varying stipulations and opposition.

00:40:03 Board Discussion

The Board expressed concerns about safety and public competition for usage of the existing blinds. The Board suggested that a time limit could be placed on how long the existing blinds were allowed to remain in use after which the blinds would be dismantled. The Board voiced disapproval for the proposed retrieval zone recommendation.

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

MOTION: I move that we deny any new blinds, allowing the existing 20 blinds to stay for 10 years, and at the end of 10 years be removed.

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Karl Hirst, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's remaining recommendations as presented.

6) 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments (Action)

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

00:47:24 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentation. The Board expressed appreciation to the public for the volume of comments.

00:49:52 Board and RAC Questions and Discussion

The Board asked if the season dates of a specific proposed Bighorn sheep hunt that would overlap with a general season deer hunt in the same area could be modified. The RACs asked for clarification for the reason why the Bighorn sheep hunt dates would have to be modified. The Board commented on the benefits of not having overlapping Bighorn sheep and deer hunts.

The RACs expressed concern that this proposed date change had not gone through the public process. The Board acknowledged the challenges of the electronic public

process versus the in-person public process, and questioned the bias against public comments not heard by the RACs, but received by the Board directly from the public.

The RACs questioned the benefit of reducing the proposed Bighorn sheep hunt by 7 days.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and failed 4-2 with Donnie Hunter, Kevin Albrecht, Karl Hirst and Bret Selman opposed.

MOTION: I move that we reduce the season on Pine Valley, Virgin River, and Pine Valley, Beaver Dam Desert Bighorn Sheep hunts by 7 days to stop the overlap with the General Season deer hunt. The 7 days would be removed from the start of the hunt date.

01:06:30 Board Discussion

The Board discussed concerns about the potential or perceived negative impact that the Book Cliffs, Bitter Creek spike bull elk hunt might have on the elk population in that area and suggested reducing the number of days in that hunt.

The DWR shared the biological data used to support the spike bull elk hunt recommendation.

01:12:46 Update

DNR Director Brian Steed joined the meeting to acknowledge DWR Director Mike Fowlks' retirement, and to announce that Rory Reynolds will serve as the interim division director.

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

MOTION: I move that we ask Director Mike Fowlks to return to the January board meeting to be recognized for his career and retirement.

01:18:13 Board/RAC Questions and Comments

The Board asked the DWR about cow elk tooth data and shortening the Book Cliffs spike bull elk hunt.

The RACs commented on a perception that the Book Cliffs elk population is performing poorly, and also reiterated regional motions.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we reduce the general season elk spike hunt on the Book Cliffs units to 5 days.

01:26:22 Board Questions and Comments

The Board had questions or comments about the new North Slope (early) any legal weapon hunt from October 13-17, 2021.

01:27:00 Board Questions and Comments

The Board asked for RAC summaries on the Division's deer recommendations.

01:28:13 RAC Summaries

All RACs accepted the recommended deer hunt season date changes as presented.

01:29:20 Board Clarification

The Board clarified that the previous motion applied to all three subunits in the Book Cliffs.

01:30:10 Board/RAC Discussion

The Board shared discussion from the Southern RAC about the New Harmony extended archery hunt season date changes. The Board expressed a concern that the length of the hunt was too long and that migrating deer were being negatively impacted.

The RACs expressed concern that the date changes passed in the previous motion had not gone through the public process, but that regions had received public comment about the New Harmony hunt.

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

MOTION: I move that we change the New Harmony extended archery deer dates to September 18 – October 15.

01:37:56 Board Discussion

The Board discussed concerns about the recommended change in the Book Cliffs elk population age objective. The Division provided additional background on the purpose of the recommendation.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Kevin Albrecht, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we do not approve the recommended age class on the Book Cliffs, Little Creek, and keep it at 7.5-8.0.

01:45:06 Board Questions and Comments

There were no questions or comments from the Board about the Cache, Meadowville recommended age objectives.

01:45:33 Board/RAC Comments and Discussion

The Board recognized that the board member received public input that usually would be channeled to the elk committee. The Board expressed both a preference to keep the current Central Mountains, Nebo age objective so that hunters could continue to harvest high-quality bulls, and to accept the recommendation so that more people could take advantage of the hunt. The Board surmised that the wildfire in that area contributed to the quality of the bulls.

The RACs mentioned that elk collar data show that the same herd of elk move between the Central Mountains, Nebo and the Manti, but that those areas have different age objectives.

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and failed 4-2 with Randy Dearth, Wade Heaton, Karl Hirst and Bret Selman opposed.

MOTION: I move that we keep the Central Mtns, Nebo age objective at its current objective of 6.5-7.0.

01:54:57 Board Questions and Comments

The Board asked a question about the length of the proposed new HAMS hunts. The Board asked the RAC chairs if there were any motions made on the proposed new limited-entry archery and HAMS hunts.

The Board expressed concern about both the length of the proposed new limited-entry hunts and reducing the number of days of the hunt too much.

The Board asked what dates the proposed new limited-entry hunts would overlap with general season dates.

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

MOTION: I move that we accept the new limited-entry hunts on the Cache, North, Oquirrh-Stansbury, West, Plateau, Barney Top/Kaiparowits, West Desert, Deep Creek and Box Elder, Pilot Mtn.

02:03:27 Board/RAC Questions and Comments

The RACs commented on the public input regarding the discontinuation limited entry hunts. The Board expressed support for the Division's recommendations.

The Board asked what the current population is of the herds on the different units where the Division was recommending discontinuing where limited-entry hunts.

The Division provided some background for the recommendations, as well as population data.

The Board suggested making both the Nine Mile-Anthro and Southwest Desert, North units limited-entry HAMS hunts.

02:24:02 Board Discussion

The Board suggested that the quality of hunts that the Division recommended changes to is the reason for the recommendations, and suggested that the Box Elder, Sawtooth and Oquirrh-Stansbury, East units be HAMS hunts rather than the recommended general-season hunts. The Board expressed concern regarding finding a balance between limited-entry and general season hunts.

The Board asked the Division for clarification on the recommendations. The Board noted certain advantages that HAMS hunts could manifest.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Randy Dearth, and passed 3-3 with Chairman Bateman breaking the tie. Wade Heaton and Bret Selman were opposed.

MOTION: I move that we move Nine Mile, Anthro to a limited-entry HAMS hunt instead of the recommended any-bull elk hunt.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed 5-1 with Randy Dearth opposed.

MOTION: I move that we discontinue the limited-entry hunts on the Cache, North, Oquirrh-Stansbury, West and West Desert, Deep Creek.

02:39:40 Board Discussion

The Board expressed opposition to the recommendation to move the Box Elder, Sawtooth, Oquirrh-Stansbury, East and Southwest Desert, North units to general season elk hunts.

02:43:40 RAC Summaries

All RACs accepted the new general season elk hunt recommendations as presented.

02:46:50 Board/RAC Discussion

The Board brought attention to how decisions on new general season elk unit recommendations could affect permit numbers.

The RACs mentioned that they discussed new general season elk unit recommendations at length, and that they decided to accept the recommendations.

The Board noted that the elk committee did not have the opportunity to discuss public concerns with constituents, and commented on public input they received after the RAC meetings took place. The Board reflected on how permits might be allocated to provide the maximum amount of opportunity in HAMS hunts, and asked the Division for input on this idea.

The Board stated that creating new general season any-bull hunts could take some pressure off current bull elk hunts, and also articulated the merits of general season hunts. The Board suggested that HAMS hunts could be viewed as a hybrid of general season and limited entry hunts, and that HAMS hunts will address the problem of point creep. The Board recognized that limited entry and general season hunts use two different point systems, and also board members voiced differing opinions on the how many HAMS hunts should be approved.

03:04:07 RAC Summaries

All RACs accepted the boundary changes as presented.

03:05:08 Board Discussion and DWR Clarification

Since the Board voted to change the Oquirrh-Stansbury, East unit to a limited-entry HAMS hunt, the Division noted that it would not recommend the proposed Oquirrh-Stansbury, East boundary change because of access issues.

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the boundary changes for Plateau, Boulder, Southwest Desert, South and Box Elder, Grouse Creek as presented, and that we do not split the Oquirrh-Stansbury into East and West.

03:08:59 Board/RAC Questions and Comments.

The Board asked for clarification on what was being voted on in the general season elk hunt recommendations, and noted that there were fewer permits available for sale this year.

The RACs commented on the change in permit numbers when the multi-season permits were introduced for sale, and suggested withdrawing the multi-season permits for adults, but leaving them for sale to youth hunters.

The Board asked how many any-bull youth permits were sold this past year.

03:14:07 RAC Summaries

All RACs passed the with varying stipulations and opposition see December Board Packet Summary of Motions for specific motions and votes.

03:18:06 Board Questions

The Board asked how the quality of the any bull hunts would be affected by an increase of 17,500 permits, if the statewide elk plan could accommodate allocating 1,000 unlimited any bull permits to youth hunters and if the elk committee considered breaking up the general any weapon elk season structure into two seasons.

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Karl Hirst, and passed 5-1 with Randy Dearth opposed.

MOTION: I move that we increase the general season any bull permit quota to 17,500 and add unlimited youth permits that will not count against the quota.

03:26:24 Board Comments

The Board noted that the Central RAC passed a motion to extend the any bull unit archery hunt date until the end of September, but also expressed concern that having the archery hunt overlap with the youth hunt season could have a negative impact on youth experience.

03:33:44 RAC Summaries

The Northern, Central, Southern and Southeastern RACs passed motions to extend the any bull archery hunt by 9 days. The Northeastern RAC passed a motion to maintain the current any bull archery hunt dates.

03:36:31 Board Comments

The Board voiced appreciation for public input about items discussed at RAC meetings that were received directly by the Board after regional meetings. The Board suggested extending the any bull archery hunt for two years, after which data collected from youth hunters would be presented to the elk committee to determine if the overlap in the archery hunt and youth hunt had negatively impacted the youth experience.

03:38:32 Board Discussion

The Board acknowledged the RAC chairs' concerns that this issue had not gone through the public RAC process, and argued that because of the circumstances of the virtual meetings format as required by public health safety concerns, it was difficult

for the public to submit input on issues. The Board further argued that the Board should act on issues that had not gone through the public process, but issues that the Board agreed had merit, specifically this issue of extending the archery hunt. The Board also suggested extending the archery hunt 5 days instead of 9 days. The Board noted that this archery hunt extension proposal had, indeed, been presented by a member of the public. The Board also discussed hunt dates related to anticipated dates of when elk are in the rut, and expressed concern about the overlap of archery hunters and youth rifle hunters being in the field at the same time. The Board asked if the youth hunt dates could be adjusted to try to resolve the overlap of archery and youth hunt dates.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded by Karl Hirst, then amended by Wade Heaton and seconded by Bret Selman. The amendment to the motion passed 4-2 with Randy Dearth and Karl Hirst opposed. The motion then passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we extend the archery hunt on the any bull seasons by 9 days for the next 2 years until the elk committee reconvenes and have them discuss it.

AMENDED MOTION: I move that we amend the motion from 9 days to 5 days.

03:48:35 Board Questions and Discussion

The Board asked what the ramifications would be if youth any weapon permits were allocated to residents only, and asked if, on an annual basis, all 50 non-resident youth permits were filled. The Board asked if board members and RAC chairs would consider allocating all youth any weapon permits to residents only. The Board asked if permit numbers could be discussed during the public process meetings in the spring, when permit numbers are agenda items. The Board also discussed the need to wait a year to act on this issue so that the permit allocation change proposal could move through the public process.

The following motion was made by Randy Dearth, seconded Kevin Albrecht, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we ask the Division to review the possibility of youth any weapon elk tags going to residents only, and bring back the information next year. This is to be placed on the Action Log.

04:05:42 BREAK

04:14:00 Board/RAC Discussion

The Board and RAC chairs discussed eliminating the multi-season elk permit.

04:20:48 Board Discussion

There was no discussion regarding the Division's pronghorn hunts recommendations.

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

MOTION: I move that we accept the pronghorn recommendations as presented.

04:22:35 RAC Summaries

All RACs accepted the pronghorn hunt change recommendations as presented.

04:24:14 Board Discussion and Comments

The Board had no discussion about the proposed new bison hunt or the Nine Mile bison hunt boundary change.

04:25:35 Board Comments/Questions

The Board commented on the popularity of the recommended discontinued Henry Mtns. bison archery hunts, and suggested hunt date changes rather than discontinuing the hunts. The Board asked the Division for the historic data that influenced the recommendations, and commented on how the archery hunts affect the Division's harvest objectives. The Board asked about potential hunt date changes.

04:33:43 RAC Summaries

The Northern and Southeastern RACs passed a motion to move the bison archery hunts to January. The Central RAC passed a motion to move the bison archery hunts to January, or to before the rifle hunt. The Northeastern RAC did not discuss this issue.

04:35:11 Board Discussion/Questions

The Board noted the popularity of the Henry Mtns. archery hunts. The Board asked if the hunters choice bison hunt could take place at the same time as the bison cow hunt.

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

MOTION: I make the motion that we move the Henry Mtns. hunters choice archery hunt season dates to January.

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

MOTION: I move that the season dates for the Henry Mtns. hunters choice archery hunt be set for January 18-31, 2021.

04:40:59 Board Questions/Comments

The Board expressed support for finding another Desert Bighorn sheep archery unit to balance the loss of the proposed discontinued Zion unit hunt. The Board asked if the Division had identified a unit that could replace the discontinued Zion unit, and what the dates of the Zion hunt were. The Board asked about the creation of a Desert Bighorn sheep archery hunt on the Dirty Devil unit.

04:45:43 RAC Summaries

The Northern RAC accepted the Desert Bighorn sheep archery hunt recommendation as presented. The remaining RACs passed a motion to maintain the archery hunt but on another unit as determined at the discretion of the Division.

04:47:25 Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded Donnie Hunter, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we continue a Desert Bighorn sheep archery hunt with the unit and dates determined by the Division, and to discontinue the Zion archery Bighorn hunt.

04:49:25 Board/RAC Questions

There were no questions from the Board or the RACs about the Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep hunt recommendations.

04:49:53 RAC Summaries

All RACs accepted the Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep hunt recommendations as presented.

04:50:28 Board Discussion

There was no discussion from the Board on the Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep new and discontinued hunt recommendations.

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded Bret Selman, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the archery Rocky Mtn. Bighorn sheep hunt on the Fillmore, Oak Creek.

04:51:18 Board/RAC Questions

The Board asked why the Division recommended discontinuing the Box Elder, Pilot Mtn. Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep hunt.

04:52:21 Board Discussion

There was no discussion from the Board.

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

MOTION: I move that we discontinue the Box Elder, Pilot Mtn. Rocky Mtn. Bighorn sheep hunt.

04:53:06 Board/RAC Questions

Neither the Board nor the RACs had questions about the recommended Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep unit boundary changes.

04:54:57 Board Questions and Comments

The Board asked the Central RAC to explain the motion that RAC made regarding the proposed dedicated hunter rule change. The Board commented on the Central RAC's recommendation.

04:57:53 Board Discussion

There was no discussion from the Board.

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

MOTION: I move that we accept the balance of the recommendations for the 2021 Big Game Seasons, Key Dates, Hunt Changes and Rule Amendments.

7) Deer Management Plans – Population Objective Recommendations (Action)

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

04:58:32 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentations.

04:58:57 Board/RAC Questions

There were no questions from the Board or RACs.

04:59:13 RAC Summaries

The RACs gave summaries on each region's deer management plan population objectives.

05:01:21 Board/RAC Comments

The Board noted that the Division makes recommendations based on what the agency thinks is attainable. The RACs and the Board commented on the Southeastern Regional San Juan, Elk Ridge unit population objective recommendation.

05:06:16 Division Clarification

The Division stated the population objective goal for the San Juan, Elk Ridge unit.

05:08:07 Board Questions

The Board asked the Division about projects on the Elk Ridge unit, and if chronic wasting disease was a problem in that deer population.

05:12:15 RAC Summaries

All RACs passed the Southern and Southeastern deer management plan population objectives with varying dissent and stipulations.

05:15:16 Clarification

The Division clarified the structure for the discussion of topics and issues.

05:16:36 Board Discussion

The Board suggested discussing agenda items 7—Deer Management Plans-Population Objective Recommendations--and 8--Deer Management Plans-Unit Plan Revision Recommendations--at the same time.

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

MOTION: I move that we discuss Deer Management Plans-Population Objective Recommendations ad Deer Management Plans-Unit Plan Revision

Recommendations together.

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

Covy Jones and regional wildlife program managers gave pre-recorded online presentations that were posted on the Division of Wildlife Resources website.

05:18:01 Clarification

The Division further clarified the goal of the Elk Ridge population objective.

05:19:23 Board Discussion

The Board voiced that it supported the recommendations for the Southern region plan. The Board discussed modifying the Elk Ridge population objective, but also was concerned about modifying the objective based on a social perspective.

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Bret Selman, and passed 4-2 with Randy Dearth and Karl Hirst opposed.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Deer Management Plans as presented with the addition of Elk Ridge increasing from 1,000 to 2,000.

9) CWMU and Landowner 2021 Permit Recommendations (Action)

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

05:25:58 Public Comments

Director Fowlks summarized public comments received from the online presentation.

05:27:44 Board Questions

The Board asked to discuss the landowner association issues separately from the CWMU owner/operator issues. Wade Heaton and Bret Selman declared a conflict of interest in voting on CWMU motions.

05:29:17 RAC Summaries

All RACs passed the CWMU permit recommendations with varying dissent and stipulations.

05:36:36 Board Discussion and Questions

The Board discussed the topic of public lands within CWMUs. The Board also presented the argument for requesting the cactus buck hunt. The Board suggested discussing the Alton CWMU permits separately from the other CWMUs. The Board expressed support for the Alton CWMU cactus buck hunt. The Board asked the Division how harvested cactus bucks would be managed.

05:48:54 Clarification

The Division clarified the number of permits that would be issued for the Alton CWMU hunt.

05:50:00 The following motion was made by Karl Hirst, seconded Donnie Hunter, and passed 4

in favor with 2 recusals. Wade Heaton and Bret Selman declared a conflict of interest and recused themselves from the vote.

MOTION: I move that we accept the request for Cactus Buck permits on the Alton CWMU with the stipulations that the season date has a September 15th opening, the public tags are not sold and are allocated to youth or disabled only.

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

MOTION: I move that the Division and the CWMU advisory committee present to the Board a report on the current public lands located within CWMU boundaries and the reasoning/justification for it.

The following motion was made by Kevin Albrecht, seconded Donnie Hunter, and passed 4 in favor with 2 recusals. Wade Heaton and Bred Selman recused themselves from the vote.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the CWMU recommendations.

05:54:55 RAC/Board Comments

The Northern RAC chair commented on public perception of the CWMU program and suggested that emphasis be placed on educating the public on the program. The Board expressed support for this suggestion.

06:00:52 Board Questions

There were no questions from the Board.

06:01:13 RAC Summaries

All RACs passed the LOA permit recommendations with varying dissent and stipulations.

06:07:08 Board Questions and Comments

The Board asked the Division to explain how percentage of use is calculated. The Board expressed concern about the efficacy of the LOA program. The Board advocated for a formula-based approach to LOA permit allocations, and stressed the importance of maintaining good relationships with landowners. The Board suggested approving the 2020 permit numbers and then proposed discussing in the future how the program could be modified.

06:18:30 Clarification

The Division explained the function that Certificates of Registration (COR) have in the LOA program.

06:19:18 Board/RAC Discussion and Questions

The Board advocated for a change to the LOA program. The Board asked the Division if it could present program alternative ideas at the spring board meeting, but also proposed making changes through a process that would allow input from all involved parties. The RACs asked a question about, and the Board discussed waivers.

The Board discussed a Diamond Mountain landowners association variance, but agreed not to address the variance request. The Board asked the Division about a program revision timeline. The Division recognized the procedural difference between making rule amendments versus making decisions on permit numbers.

The Board asked if the Division were willing to consider amending the LOA rule. The Board suggested that there are ways to amend the LOA rule that would benefit both the landowner and the public. The Division provided additional input on permit allocation recommendations.

The Division asked for clarification on the motion. The Board asked for clarification on, and discussed the method used to determine permit allocations. The Board asked about the relationship between public permit cuts and LOA permit allocations.

The following motion was made by Wade Heaton, seconded by Donnie Hunter, and passed 5 in favor with 1 excused. Karl Hirst was excused from the remainder of the meeting.

MOTION: I move that we approve the LOA permits at the 202 allocations, with the exceptions of decreases due to decreases in public permits on a unit, and with the exception of LOAs that qualify under the new proposal for additional permits, keeping the proportions the same.

06:48:11 Board Comments

The Board commented that typically the variance comes before the board as a separate item, and that it was passed this year with the motion that was just made.

10) Conservation and Expo Permit Adjustments

Covy Jones gave a presentation on Conservation and Expo permits adjustments.

06:56:52 Board/RAC Questions

There were no questions from the Board or the RACs.

06:57:08 Board Discussion

There was no Board discussion.

The following motion was made by Donnie Hunter, seconded by Wade Heaton, and passed 5 in favor with 1 excused. Karl Hirst was excused from the remainder of the meeting.

MOTION: I move that we approve as presented by the Division.

06:57:50 12) Other Business (Contingent)

The Board proposed scheduling a meeting with Wyoming Game and Fish to discuss Flaming Gorge fishing license reciprocity.

07:02:26 Meeting adjourned.

Regional Advisory Council Meetings
Video Conference
December 2020
Summary of Motions

1) R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations

CR **MOTION:** Accept DWR recommendations as presented
MOTION PASSES: 5 to 3

NR SER
MOTION: To approve R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and
Recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

SR **MOTION:** To accept the Division's R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and
Recommendations as presented.
MOTION PASSES: 9-2

NER **MOTION:** To approve R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and
Recommendations as presented by the Division
MOTION PASSES: 5-1

2) Other item – Discussion of agenda content for future RAC meetings

CR **MOTION:** Recommend the Wildlife Board to have the DWR look into
rearranging the RAC schedule so the agendas are more "even".
MOTION PASSES: Unanimously

Central Region RAC Meeting

Video Conference

December 1, 2020

The meeting streamed live at <https://youtu.be/UthuHkfo0rE>

Tuesday, December 1, 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. R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations
– Darren DeBloois, Mammals Program 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
December 1, 2020
Summary of Motions

1) Approval of Agenda

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by Mike and passed unanimously 8 in favor.

MOTION: To add an additional agenda item to discuss content of agendas in the future.

The following motion was made by Mike, seconded by Ken and passed unanimously 8 in favor.

MOTION: To approve the agenda.

2) Approval of Minutes

The following motion was made by Mike, seconded by Ken and passed unanimously 8 in favor.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the November 10, 2020 Central Region RAC meeting.

3) R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations

The following motion was made by Ben, seconded by Ken and passed 5 in favor and 3 opposed (Danny, Josh, Luke).

MOTION: Accept DWR recommendations as presented

4) Other item – Discussion of agenda content for future RAC meetings

The following motion was made by Ken, seconded by Mike and passed unanimously 8 in favor.

MOTION: Recommend the Wildlife Board to have the DWR look into rearranging the RAC schedule so the agendas are more "even".

Central Region RAC Meeting
December 1, 2020
Online Attendance

RAC Members

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

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

DWR Personnel

Jason Vernon
Darren DeBloois
Matthew Briggs

Scott Root
Rusty Robinson
Michael Christensen

Central Region RAC Meeting
December 1, 2020
Springville, Utah
<https://youtu.be/UthuHkfo0rE>

00:00:37	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.
00:03:40	1) Approval of Agenda (Action) The following motion was made by Ken Strong, and seconded by Mike Christensen and passed unanimously. MOTION: To approve the revised agenda for the Central Region RAC meeting with the addition of a discussion regarding future RAC agendas.
00:05:11	2) Approval of Minutes (Action) The following motion was made by Mike Christensen, and seconded by Ken Strong and passed unanimously. MOTION: To approve the minutes of the November 10, 2020 Central Region RAC meeting.
00:06:10	3) Wildlife Board Meeting (Informational) No update, Board meeting has not occurred yet.
00:06:30	4) DWR Update (Informational) Jason Vernon updated the RAC on all regional activities.
00:10:00	5) R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations (Action) A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/rac-feedback.html
00:11:11	Public Comments – Jason Vernon summarized public comments received from the online presentation. Three comments received were opposed and one in support of the recommendations. Reasons from those opposed included they did not understand the changes, killing one species to benefit another is wrong and changes should not be made without proof that bears are the problem.
00:12:03	RAC Questions The RAC members asked questions regarding studies that have been conducted pertaining to bear predation and if hunt timing would be adjusted to address concerns with predation. RAC members also questioned if they had the ability to not

	<p>support the amendments presented due to the fact that changes are required to align the management plan with recent legislation regarding predators in Utah.</p>
00:18:09	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>RAC members discussed the issue of wildlife management being directed by the legislature. An explanation was given that changes must go through the public process and alternative methods could be proposed to fulfill the code changes made by the legislature.</p>
00:19:30	<p>The following motion was made by Ben Lowder, and seconded by Ken Strong and passed 5 to 3.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the Division’s recommendations as presented.</p> <p>Reasons for opposed votes included concern with the legislature directing wildlife management and hijacking both the public process as well as the science that goes into management plans. Another concern was that this type of blanket rule does not allow for considerations on specific units.</p>
00:23:00	<p>Other Business</p> <p>RAC discussed the possibility of adjusting RAC meeting agenda items to even out meetings. This would allow the RAC address items on the agenda more efficiently. Some meetings are so long details cannot be discussed while other meetings are short. The RAC understands that there are deadlines and timing issues but would like options explored to address this issue.</p>
00:31:35	<p>The following motion was made by Ken Strong, seconded by Mike Christensen and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: Recommend the Wildlife Board to have the DWR look into rearranging the RAC schedule so the agendas are more "even".</p>
00:34:11	<p>Other Business</p> <p>The RAC discussed a letter from the Houndsmen Association which was received by the RAC Chair asking the Wildlife Board to lengthen the spring pursuit season (to extend it 10 days past the current May 31st date). Some RAC members were opposed to the proposal because fawning and calving season occurs during this time and it would not be a good idea to have hounds pursuing game during this time. The RAC also noted that a proposal like this should go to through the RAC process.</p>
00:38:45	<p>Meeting adjourned.</p>

RAC AGENDA – December 2, 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. R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations
- Darren Deblois, Mammals Program Coordinator | ACTION |

Meeting Locations

CR RAC – Dec. 1st 6:00 PM
<https://youtu.be/UthuHkfo0rE>

SER RAC – Dec. 9th 6:30 PM
<https://youtu.be/P2TcxVsXgSk>

NR RAC – Dec. 2nd 6:00 PM
<https://youtu.be/k-IsjtFJk4E>

NER RAC – Dec. 10th 6:30 PM
<https://youtu.be/d5MlmA3X-6M>

SR RAC – Dec. 8th 6:00 PM
<https://youtu.be/NDf2S5kfDUo>

Board Meeting – Jan. 5th 9:00 am - Tuesday
<https://youtu.be/5hftBj4VNOo>

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 Randy Hutchison, seconded by Matt Klar and passed unanimously.

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

2) R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations (**Action**)

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

MOTION: I move to approve R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations as presented.

The following motion was made by Kevin McLeod seconded Randy Hutchison and passed unanimous.

MOTION: To Adjourn.

Northern Regional Advisory Council Meeting

December 2, 2020

Attendance

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

RAC Members

Ryan Brown
Paul Chase
David Earl
Junior Goring
Christopher Hoagstrom
Randy Hutchison
Emily Jensco

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

Board Member

RAC Excused

Jodie Anderson
Darren DeBloois
Jim Christensen
David Beveridge

Division Personnel

Regional Advisory Council Meeting

December 2, 2020

Attendance

<https://youtu.be/k-IsjtFJk4E>

- 00:01:00** Chairman Justin Oliver called the meeting to order, welcomed the audience, reviewed the meeting procedures, and had the Board and RAC members introduce themselves.
- 00:08:30** **1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Action)**
The following motion was made by Randy Hutchison, seconded by Matt Klar and passed unanimously.
MOTION: I move that we approve the Agenda and Minutes.
- 00:10:22** **2) Update from past Wildlife Board Meeting by Ben Nadolski**
No Wildlife Board Update.
- 00:10:45** **3) Regional Update- Ben Nadolski, Regional Supervisor (Informational)**
Deer capture on Cache unit. Captures scheduled in mid-December. Deer classifications and winter conditions. Pygmy rabbit surveys in Box Elder. Restoration work on Weber River. Winter viewing season begins Friday and Hardware Ranch. Bear Lake whitefish spawning. New wildlife technician in Cache Valley. Swan hunt final harvest. DNR looking to fill seats on Wildlife Board.
- 00:17:20** **4) R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations (Action)**
Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>
- 00:17:50** **Electronic Public Comment Report by Ben Nadolski**
50% opposed, 33.33% support and 16.7% neutral. 6 comments total.

00:18:18 Questions from RAC Members

Timeframe for predator management released by legislature and when division will have authority. Public concerns and perception about process. Improving outreach to explain process and how decisions are made. Lobbying for legislative changes. Distinguishing predator taking fawns. Impact on cougar management.

* Aaron Johnson joined the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

00:35:53 RAC discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Informational video that the public could watch regarding big game populations and when habitat is limiting.

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

MOTION: I move to approve R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations as presented.

00:40:55 Other Business

Discussion regarding RAC meetings and things to improve.

* David Earl left the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

00:47:22 Motion to Adjourn made by Kevin McLeod, seconded by Randy Hutchison and Passed unanimously.

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
December 08, 2020
6:00 p.m.**

Attendance

RAC MEMBERS

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

Division Personnel

Kevin Bunnell	Phil Tuttle
Denise Gilgen	Darren DuBloois
Paul Gredge	Teresa Griffin
Paul Washburn	Michael Wardle
Levi Watkins	Tyrell Orme
Cody Evans	

Wildlife Board Members

Karl Hirst Donny Hunter

Southern Regional Advisory County Meeting
December 08, 2020
6:00 p.m.

00:01:45 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: Again, we continue in this format, we'll see how long it continues to last. But, we appreciate everyone's patience with us. As we mentioned last time the public input has worked well, we've received a lot of comments from the public and we appreciate the public getting engaged that way. We do look forward to getting together face to face at some point hopefully in the near future.

Brayden Richmond: Tonight we also have several members of the Division with us to answer questions and assist us. We thank them for being here and then I also noticed that Karl Hirst is one, and I think he is the only one from the Board that is on tonight, but we appreciate Karl being here. Anything you want to say Karl? Or do you just want to remain silent?

Karl Hirst: Just appreciate everybody's time and effort on this. I had to miss the central RAC and didn't want to go into a Board meeting without at least visiting one of the RACs. Appreciate everybody.

Brayden Richmond: We appreciate you joining and thank you for being here. Just a couple of items real quick, Kevin told me tonight that this will be the last RAC that Sean Kelly will be with us. The Forest Service is going to bring in Chuck Chamberlain to fill that roll. We appreciate Sean. And Sean, you've been here quite a few years, I'm not sure how many, but thank you. You look really sad that this is your last meeting.

Sean Kelly: No, I just appreciate being a part of the process. Chuck is going to do a great job, but it's just time to pass that on. I've been going to RAC meetings for 20 years now in one form or another, so it has been a while now.

Brayden Richmond: That's why you have gray in your beard.

Sean Kelly: Yeah.

Brayden Richmond: Too many RAC meetings. Kevin pointed to his head. True statement, we're all getting older. Appreciate it though, we really do Sean, thank you. And looking forward to working with Chuck in the future. With that let's go ahead and move to agenda item number two, the approval of the agenda and

minutes. Are there any questions or comments there? If not, we'd take a motion to approve the agenda and minutes.

00:07:25 1) Approval of Agenda (Action)

The following motion was made by Craig Laub, seconded by Tammy Pearson. Roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approved the agenda as presented.

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Bart Batista: 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.

00:08:18 3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update by RAC Chair, Brayden Richmond

Brayden Richmond: Hopefully all of you had a chance to watch that. Every minute of the four hour meeting. It was more than four hours, ours was four hours, it was six hours. Just some light viewing. If you haven't had a chance to watch that yet, we'll try to recap it for you here tonight. I'm going to go through the motions, I thought maybe I could highlight it, but I don't think I can. I'm just going to go through the motions and try to address it that way. So, be patient with me and if you have questions maybe just make a note and we'll try to address any specific questions at the end. So there was a motion made that passed unanimously that we move to deny any new blinds allowing the existing of 20 blinds to stay for 10 years and at the end of 10 years to be removed. Sorry, this was on the waterfowl recommendations and rule amendments. So that motion passed unanimously. Then there was a motion to accept the Divisions remaining recommendations as presented,

and that passed unanimously. Now moving into the big game season and key dates, there was a motion to reduce the season on the Pine Valley and Virgin River and Pine Valley/Beaver Dam desert bighorn sheep hunts by seven days to stop the overlap with the general season deer hunt. The seven days would be removed from the start of the hunt; that motion failed on a vote of 4-2. There was a motion to move task Director Fowlks to return to the January Board meeting to be recognized for his career and retirement; that passed unanimously. We'll comment more on that at the end, in fact I'll let Kevin comment on that. A motion that we reduce the general season spike hunt on the Book Cliffs unit to five days; that passed unanimously. A motion that we change the New Harmony extended archery deer dates to September 18- October 15; that passed unanimously. A motion that we do not approve the recommended age class on the Book Cliffs/Little Creek and keep it at 7.5-8; and that passed unanimously. A motion to keep the Central Mountains/Nebo at its current objective of 6.5-7; that failed at a vote of 4-2. A motion to accept the new limited entry hunts on the Cache North, Oquirrh/Stansbury West, Plateau Barney Top, Kaiparowits, West Desert, Deep Creek, and Box Elder Pilot Mountain; that passed unanimously. A motion to move Nine Mile Anthro to a limited entry HAMS hunt instead of a general seasons bull elk unit; that passed 3-3 with the chairman making the tie breaker vote to accept that. A motion that we discontinue the current limited entry hunts on the Cache North, Oquirrh/Stansbury West, and West Desert Deep Creeks; that passed 5-1. A motion to change the Box Elder Sawtooth, Oquirrh/Stansbury East, Southwest Desert North to a limited entry HAMS hunt; that passed 4-2. A motion to approve the boundary changes for Plateau Boulder, Southwest Desert, South Box Elder/Grouse Creek as presented and that we don't split the Oquirrh/Stansbury into east and west; and that passed unanimously. A motion to increase the general season any bull quota to 17,500 and add unlimited youth permits that will not count towards the quota; and that passed 5-1. A motion to extend the archery hunt on the any bull season for the next two years until the committee reconvenes and then discussed it- and then that was amended to make it from nine days to five days; and that passed 4-2. A motion that we ask the Division to review the possibility of a youth any weapon elk tags going to residents only and bring back the information next year to be placed on an action log; and that passed unanimously. A motion to accept the pronghorn recommendation as presented; and that passed unanimously. A motion that we move the Henry Mountains hunters choice archery season dates to January; that passed unanimously. A motion for the Henry Mountains hunters choice archery hunt be set for January 18-31; and that passed unanimously. A motion to continue the desert big sheep archery hunt with the unit and dates determined by the Division and discontinue the Zion bighorn hunt; that passed unanimously. A motion that we approve the archery Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep hunt on the Fillmore/Oak Creek; and that passed unanimously. A motion that we discontinue the Box Elder/Pilot Mountain Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep hunt; and that passed unanimously. A motion that we accept the balance of the recommendation for the 2021 big game season key date hunt season and rule amendments; and that passed unanimously. Then number five was the deer unit management plans. There was a motion that we discuss deer management plans, population objective, recommendations in deer management plans, unit plan revision recommendation together; and that passed unanimously. So again that was two agenda items on the agenda, they made a motion to discuss those simultaneously. There was a motion that we approve the deer

management plans as presented with the addition of Elk Ridge increasing from 1,000 to 2,000; that passed 4-2. On to the CWMU and landowner permit recommendations. A motion that we accept the request for cactus buck permits out on the CWMU with the stipulation that the season date has a September 15 opening- the public tags are not sold and are allocated to youth or disabled only; and that... ok four in favor and two recused from that vote. A motion that the Division and the CWMU advisory counsel present to the Board a report on current public lands located in current CWMU boundaries and the reasoning or justification for it; that passed unanimously. A motion that we accept the remainder of the CWMU recommendations; and that passed unanimously with two recusals- four in favor, two recusals. And then a motion that we approve the landowner permits at the 2020 allocations with the exception of decreases due to the decrease of public permits on the unit with the exception of LOAs that qualify under the new proposal for additional permits keeping the proportions the same; and that passed 5 in favor 1 excused. And finally that they accept the conservation and permit adjustments so they motioned to accept that as presented; and that passed five in favor with one excused. So again, a lot of motions, and a lot of discussion. If you haven't had a chance to look at that, it is available on the Divisions website. It was a long meeting because there was a lot of go over. Just something to make everyone aware of, there was also some discussion for the future... that November meeting is always a long meeting, that's kind of the big meeting of the year, and the Division is looking at a way to reduce the items in that meeting so we can more fully discuss and have the time to discuss everything in that meeting without it becoming overwhelming. So they're looking for some options there and the plan is to spread some of the items out into the other RAC meetings in the year. So we'll see how that comes back and how it looks. Any questions? I hope you don't have a lot of questions because I'm going to defer to someone else to answer them, but go ahead.

Tammy Pearson: I just want to make sure that Kevin's not off his treadmill somewhere. I missed the Southwest Desert elk. What did they end up doing on that one?

Brayden Richmond: So the Southwest Desert elk is going to be made into a HAMS hunt. Correct me if I'm wrong, but as I remember, all of the elk units that were proposed to be put into general units, and there were four, all four of those the Board determined to make those HAMS hunts. And the northern Southwest Desert is one of those. I want to be clear there, not the Southwest Desert unit, just the new unit on the north end. Is that correct Kevin?

Kevin Bunnell: Oh, yeah, that's correct Tammy. It will remain a limited entry hunt, but it will be a HAMS hunt. It will have a long season, probably fits that area ok with low elk out there. It's going to be a tough hunt but people will have time to hunt it. That wrapped into the recommendation, instead of going unlimited on the any bull tags, because there weren't any new any bull units, the Board kind of cut down their recommendation. All five of the RACs that recommended 20,000 tags, they reduced that to 17,500 because we're not adding any additional any bull units, but they still wanted to increase opportunity. So in addition

to that they did follow the recommendation from all of the RACs to make any bull tags unlimited to youth and those tags will not count against the cap.

Tammy Pearson: Okay, thank you.

Craig Laub: So where does the HAMS tags come out of? Are they a separate number?

Kevin Bunnell: Yes, it's a completely separate LE elk unit now and it'll have it's own permits allocated just for it, Craig.

Brayden Richmond: Just a reminder Craig, they'll go over the numbers in the April RAC so that's when they'll present the numbers for the permits and we'll have a chance to review those in April.

Craig Laub: Okay.

Brayden Richmond: Any other questions there? Okay. I'll give it to Kevin to give us a regional update.

00:19:34 4) Kevin Bunnell, Regional Update (Informational)

Kevin Bunnell: Okay, thank you Brayden. As Brayden alluded to earlier, and I may have mentioned this at our last meeting, but Mike Fowlks has announced his retirement from the Director of the Division of Wildlife Resources and he will officially be retiring at the end of December. Brian Steed who is the DNR Director who essentially the boss, our directors boss, joined the Board meeting last week and at that time made the announcement that Rory Reynolds has been appointed as the interim director. Rory's name should be familiar to many of you, he was the assistant Director of the DWR before he went up to being the assistant director of the DNR. He also earlier in his career served in my current position as the Southern Region Supervisor, and he spent a lot of time in our habitat section. As much as Mike will be missed, Rory will be a really good interim director for us. I think the agency is pretty happy with that announcement. Next, with our wildlife section, we flew the Escalante sheep unit this last week, the population has increased since the last census which is good. As a result of that flight, Levi Watkins who's our Wayne county biologist, has been put on probation for five years because he finished the flights on Sunday and I was scheduled to go with him on Monday, so I didn't get to go. So Levi kind of got himself into a little hot water, but he'll get over it. Deer captures are going well, they've been going on throughout the region for the last week or so. Teresa wanted to make sure I apologized, we're not able to get the sportsman and others involved with us this year because of Covid, but as soon as we can we'll get back out and participate with us. Deer classification is underway and mostly completed in the region. Christmas bird counts are upcoming and if any of you are birders or know people that enjoy watching and know how to identify birds, they can get involved by going to utahbirds.org and they can sign up and participate in that effort. Then on kind of a scary note, we've got rabbit hemorrhagic disease continuing to spread in

Utah. It's now been confirmed in Iron county. It's one of those things, rabbit cycle and disease usually play a big role in that. We don't see rabbit disease all that often, but we do have it going on right now. Teresa, is there anything you'd like to add to that before I move on?

Teresa Griffin: No, I think you've covered it well and this hemorrhagic disease is new, 2020. It's from Europe and it's the first time that we've had it in the western United States. So we're not really sure about the impacts, but we are concerned for all of the predators. It does affect rabbits, hares, potentially pika also. So, they are such a great food source for so many animals, we may have some prey shifting, and we'll have to keep our eyes open.

Kevin Bunnell: Thank you Teresa.

Tammy Pearson: Does that transfer to species?

Kevin Bunnell: I think it's specific to the animals in the rabbit family, but I'm not 100% sure. Like Teresa said it's a new thing for us here in Utah. I can get an answer to that question from our vet. I will do that and shoot you a text.

Tammy Pearson: Okay thank you.

Kevin Bunnell: From our habitat section, the restoration projects are continuing and that's really the big push this time of year. Most of our fire rehab is done except for Washington County because we're able to kind of push that one off because we don't have to worry about getting weathered out down there. We will be interviewing tomorrow to replace Brett Boswell as our impact analysis biologist. Brett played a really key role in our region as our GIS specialist, so we're hoping to replace his skill set. We've got a bullpen of candidates that we'll interview tomorrow, and hopefully we'll make a good decision there. Gary Bezzant, or habitat manager is part of the Utah Drought seminar and Southern Utah specifically is currently classified as severe drought and there the forecast isn't really all that positive. We may be in for a dry winter as well. Which will mean we'll have to be really careful next year when it comes to managing wildlife populations, and domestic livestock, and just watching our range conditions very closely. Lastly, seasonal road closures on our WMAs in most areas in most cases will begin January 1st. And one last update we have is from the outreach section on the Perch Tournament, and I'm going to ask Phil if he would fill you in on what's going on there.

Phil Tuttle: Thanks Kevin. Yeah, typically the Perch Tournament is kind of an ongoing fish contest for tagged perch where they can catch perch throughout the year and submit those to win a prize and be entered in for the big drawing that goes on in September. That tournament usually has a large single day kick off event with thousands of people from all around the state at Fish Lake. That usually happens in January, and this year we obviously won't be doing that large scale single day kick off event. However, the tournament will continue sort of like normal where people can turn in tagged perch into the lake side store throughout the winter and throughout the year and we'll actually have two drawings this year, one the first part of April for

prized and another one on Labor day weekend in September like we normally do. So, just letting everyone know that we're not doing the large scale kick off event.

Kevin Bunnell: Brayden, that's all I have for a regional update, unless anyone has questions.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Kevin. Let's move on to Agenda item five, the black bear rule amendments and recommendations and this is the last agenda we have tonight. It will be a fairly quick meeting. At this point everybody should have had a chance to watch the presentation and we received public input. Kevin, do you have a summary of the public input on this? Then we'll jump into questions and comments from the RAC.

00:26:35 5) R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations (Action)

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

00:26:56 Electronic Public Comment Report by Kevin Bunnell, Regional Supervisor

Kevin Bunnell: I guess we had seven individuals comment, all of them from the state of Utah, and of those seven, 29% were in favor of the recommendation, and we had 71% opposed.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Kevin. And as I read those, it seemed like the opposition was almost a general opposition to hunting bears. It wasn't really anything specific from what I could gather.

Kevin Bunnell: There was some opposition.. (inaudible).

Brayden Richmond: That's right there was some opposition on those two. Thank you. Hopefully everyone had a chance to look at those and address those. With that we'll go ahead and open it up to questions from the RAC.

00:27:53 Questions from RAC Members

Gene Boardman: I've got a couple of questions. First of all, have we got evidence that bears are really causing mortality of the deer in any kind of numbers?

Darren DeBlois: We do have some data on the Book Cliffs Gene, that shows black bears targeting those neonate fawns. On the Book Cliffs they have been doing this study on fawns just as they're born, and a couple of things we've seen there; one we have collared bears on the Book Cliffs, we've seen them in all those fawning areas in that time of year and we've also seen increased mortality in some of those fawns from bears. Bears are in the mix with other things too, there is coyote

mortality and lion mortality too that time of year. We don't see a lot, in fact last year I don't think we saw any adult mortality to bears, that doesn't seem to be a big issue. We are running a study with USU right now that's looking at what when a bear steals a cougar kill, and looking at that possibility. So if a cougar makes a kill and stashes it and a bear comes across it and steals it from the lion, that lion may need to kill more deer in a year to make up for that difference. We don't know the answer to that question, that's something we're looking at right now. In general what we'd be looking at for predator management for bears is fawn to doe ratios in the fall. If you've got healthy adult deer and they're way below their average fawn/doe ratios that might be a unit you want to look at bears. There are a couple of caveats to that, one is they'd have to have a fairly high density bear unit, so something like the Book Cliffs, or maybe the Boulder, and then try to determine that. Usually we're looking at other things. If it's top down pressure on a herd it's more likely to be something like mountain lions than bears, but bears can have an impact.

Gene Boardman: And the bear impact on fawns, is that mostly just in the first two or three weeks of fawning?

Darren DeBlois: Yeah, it seems like once they're up and moving with the does that drops off. So, we don't see a lot of mortality in fawns older than six months. So in the fall it doesn't show up as much. Really just those first few weeks.

Gene Boardman: Thanks.

Bart Battista: So, I have a question. So, it says if the Division decides... you know. And that seems pretty arbitrary. You've mentioned some metrics, but are those the exact metrics you'd use to make a decision, or what are they going to be?

Darrin DeBlois: What we did in the policy that passed when we did cougar recommendations, we've put a lot of power in the hands of local biologists that know their units. So those decisions will be made at a regional and district level as far as what's going on on the ground, what's the habitat like. Bear impacts to those herds are likely to be rare, but it's possible as we've seen on the Book Cliffs that you might see a unit like that. So the metrics I'd suggest to the biologist to look at is, where are you in regards to your long term average in fawn/doe ratio bearing in mind that the drought can impact those numbers as well. And what's the overall bodily condition of the adults? Are they healthy? They're not limited by habitat and then it really comes down to knowing the district, understanding the dynamics and knowing what's going on.

Bart Battista: So, then how do you tease out... well I have two more questions. First, would it ever go back to the RAC if they wanted to make that decision or are we giving you carte blanche?

Darrin DeBlois: The legislation that passed directs the Division director to make decisions if the herds are struggling. So we evaluate predator management plans or the need for them in December, right now actually, after we get those numbers from captured animals. Then again in the summer after we see what

happened over the winter. Then the way that the policy was approved by the Board is the Director will make those calls. So anything under predator management would be a Director action.

Bart Battista: Okay so, second question, one of the... Why does the Division want to not include the units where this policy may be implemented, the take numbers in the total state numbers? It seems like you're skewing your data. Why wouldn't you want that data? You could have a foot note that says 10% of them are from a predator management plan, or something.

Darrin DeBlois: Right, you could probably do it that way too Bart. I mean what we're changing tonight is to try and make sure the plan jives with the new law. So the plan couldn't require... there has to be some kind of caveat in the plan to allow additional units to go into that category. And so this is the way we chose to address that. It was just to not consider... so you kind of take those units out of the plan and manage them to try to limit densities. Then once you determine that your predator management plan has been effective, or not, you pull it out and they go back into where they were before as far as management strategy goes. That was our approach, there may be other ways to get at it.

Bart Battista: Okay, thank you.

Darrin DeBlois: You bet.

Kevin Bunnell: And Darrin and Bart, just to be clear, we're still requiring all of the bears to be checked in, so all of them will still be documented and recorded. We will know, it's not that there will be bears harvested that we're not aware of under this new plan.

Darrin DeBlois: Right.

Bart Battista: So if I go to the website and I look up 2019 or the previous years data, will the numbers there reflect the take from these management units or will it not?

Darrin DeBlois: It will, so bears are a little bit different in the policy than the lions. Lions, those units go unlimited, for bears it would be an increase of permits. But there would still be a cap on permits. But the objective would be to get the harvest perimeters to a point where you're seeing 10-20% reduction. Bear populations are typically slow reproducing, so you can make impacts a lot quicker than you can with lions so we need to be a little more careful with bears when we do that kind of stuff.

Bart Battista: Right and, I know you said you're going to defer to the local biologist, but you know, since deer is kind of the metric and you mentioned the fawn/doe ratio around now is when you're going to determine that metric. How do you tease out seasonal or droughts or things like that? How do you tease out weather impacts to survivorship?

Darrin DeBlois: Those are discussions that we'll have. I don't want to leave the impression that the local biologist bears all the weight, but it's initiated at the regional level, and then we'll have a discussion about that. And the plan needs to have a justification, so it needs to be clear in the plan what the data says, why we're making these decisions and what we hope to see as a result to the changes in the harvest strategy and so they're not just open ended kind of plans. We need to see that they're measurable.

Bart Battista: Okay, yeah. As you said, since you said since they're slow reproducing, the impacts are going to be greater and we need to be very judicious.

Darrin DeBlois: Right

Bart Battista: If the blunt tool for.. If deer are what most people in Utah care about, right? No offense. That appears to be, from my non consumptive perspective, that's kind of the metric people use. So you're using a blunt tool to help the deer, at the detriment to maybe a healthy bear population. Which that's probably more for the comments portion.

Darrin DeBlois: The objective would always be population density, and hopefully see some rebound in those deer population. So we need to watch both. But that's the intent of the management.

Bart Battista: Thank you.

Austin Atkinson: Mr. Chair, I have a question. Darrin I see that this black bear management plan is quite old now, coming up on 10 years and we're making some adjustments to get it more in line with current legislation. Do you envision that a substantial portion of this would need to be changed when it's renewed in 2023, or do have it fairly close to where we'd like to be? I'd like your input on where it's at now.

Darrin DeBlois: It seems to work pretty well. Obviously when we hit that deadline we'll want to review it. Typically we'd put committees together. What we've done with other plans, we're in the process of looking at the cougar management plan. We look at what other states are doing and look at the latest literature. Right now it seems to work pretty well. We have seen some growth in our bear population over the last five to eight years, and bears don't typically have the same impacts you have with obligate predators like mountain lions, but there are some units where we'd want to have the option. So it's hard to answer definitively, but there would be a process and we'll get started on that probably in 2022, unless something else comes up that we have to address sooner.

Austin Atkinson: One other quick question if I may. How much collaboration is there between your mammal division and let's say the big game coordinator? I've always wondered as we get more into predator management here, we don't have Covy Jones on this call because it's your department. I understand the

difference, you have different factors there, but how much collaboration is there now between this predator legislation and all these changes. Do we need more, do we need less, or what's going on behind the scenes?

Darrin DeBlois: Covy and I have set a goal to make sure there's a lot more collaboration between the two. The way some of these predatory species that we manage, you have to think of their prey base like we do with mule deer habitat. There are circumstances where these predators can impact those populations in a negative way. He and I work really close on the policy changes. And we'll continue to. One thing I'd like to have is more big game interest in some of these committees as we work through management plans. WE've had it in the past, but cross collaboration between the two programs I think is key. So we'll be working a lot closer than maybe we have been in the past.

Brayden Richmond: Really good questions. Any additional questions from the RAC? Let's move into comments. Any comments from the RAC?

00:42:01 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Verland King: Yeah, this is Verland. I've got a comment. I just heard you say a couple of times over that the bear plan and the management and the lions is working pretty well. Well, I'm representing agriculture and I'm a livestock man who runs cattle on the Boulder Mountain and from the sighting of the bears and the sightings of the cougars, and what's going on on the land, it's not working. Your plan, whatever you're doing, isn't working to manage these predators, and I'm not sure how much damage they do to the deer. I know the cougars do, and the bears I trust your judgement on that. As far as trying to keep the numbers in check, and that's what that legislation was for was to get these numbers down. It's not working, and that's why the legislation passed so easily. As I watched some of the other RAC meetings, those guys had no clue and voted against this proposal that you're doing, which is just housekeeping stuff, because they didn't think the legislature should be doing what you guys are doing on the ground because you guys are closer to it. I would agree, but, we've discussed this several times in other RACs and we've been reluctant to take the bull by the horn and make some changes, whether it's how to get these lions harvested where you've got.. and the bears, the hunters are selective. They only kill trophies, and that doesn't affect the numbers on the ground. That's my thoughts on your bear plan, bear model, and your cougar model. It's not working on the ground. Thanks.

Craig Laub: Uh, I'd like to chime in on that too. The livestock people I've talked to have seen more conflict with bears and cougars the last year or two, and yet looking at your charts, the conflicts that have been documented have been trending down. I'm wondering how come? Because that's not what we're hearing on the ground.

Darrin DeBlois: Um, the data in the presentation is based on incidents that have been reported to Wildlife Services. So if they're not reporting them then that wouldn't show up in that chart. Again, we're just talking about bears. I think

lion incidences were up, and I actually think.. Let me double check.. I think the incidents were up, but the damage was down. Well we had slightly more incidences from 68-67 over 2019, but they didn't kill as much livestock I guess is the easiest way to put it. So the damage values were down and have been down since 2018. So incidences would probably indicate how many bears are out there that are getting in trouble, and that's probably the one that we should be looking at. Then Verland, just real quick, I thought I was just speaking to the bear plan. The lion plan we're actually in the process of taking a look at and the current lion plan grows mountain lions, there is no question about that. We're taking a hard look at how you make... If you don't want the densities of lions that you have in some areas, what are the metrics you need to be looking at? So that's something we're looking at right now.

Brayden Richmond: Just a couple quick comments here. Verland and Craig, I appreciate your comments. As you make comments, as the RAC chimes in to make comments, if you could just state your name prior to the comment for the minutes in the records. That would be helpful. Also, I understand that the bear and the cougar are tied together and they're both large predators, but we are talking about the bear plan tonight to be specific. So we probably don't want to get too off track there.

Verland King: Yeah, this is Verland. We're actually not talking about the bear plan, we already covered that, didn't we? You're just making some amendments and changes that will help you fall in line with the legislation, right?

Darrin DeBlois: Yeah, that's right Verland. Tonight what we're voting on is just a couple of tweaks to the plan to make sure it complies with the new law.

Gene Boardman: This is Gene. I'd like to put in just a little bit here. As we go through a lot of cycles, we're going to save the deer with the dedicated hunter program, and I know I've yet to kill a deer that is there because of the dedicated hunter program. I'm not sure I've ever seen a deer that was better because of the dedicated hunter program. Then we were going to save the deer by cutting all the junipers on the mountain, and still our deer numbers are down. Then we went after the coyotes in a big way, and that hasn't solved the problem with the deer numbers. They're going to cycle no matter what we do. Whether disease and stuff is going to make a lot more difference than coyotes or cougars or bears. So, anyway now we've blamed it on having too many cedar trees, we've blamed it on having too many coyotes, now we're going to blame it on having too many bears and cougars and if you want to really do something, take out the freeways and get rid of the elk. They have more effect on the deer than bears and cougars do. I understand that you've got to square up with legislation, but I'm not in favor of the legislature running the program. I'd have been a lot more happy with it if it had come from the Division and not from the legislature. So, I think that we're being pushed into this without it really showing scientifically that we have to go out after the bears to save the dog gone deer. Bears are going to eat a deer or two, that's what bears do. But if most of the damage is done three weeks

in the spring, I don't think they're making a big hole in the deer. That's my perspective on this whole thing.

Tammy Pearson: So Brayden, can I speak to that?

Brayden Richmond: Yeah, go ahead Tammy.

Tammy Pearson: Okay, you've just got to love politics. I do have to say you talk about public outcry and representation on the RAC and the Division and different things like that. You have a whole nother lobbying effort that hits the hill during the legislative session. There are a lot more people that are not involved in the RAC process, a lot more voices that have come to elective officials and those are the messages that get carried up and the movement comes from the legislation on the hill every spring or late winter, whatever you want to call it. I was there. I was in the middle of all the meeting where they talk about, and you've got everything from the Houndsmen, the SFW, Wool Growers, Cattlemen, everybody is up there talking about these issues, and I think when they don't get what they want through the RAC process, they go to legislation. So the Division was involved in a lot of that kind of stuff as well, it's not just strictly legislation. There were a lot of people in on that. And it was just like the comments we get. We get a lot of people up there during those committee hearings and then the floor votes. In the end that's where the legislation came from. Like Verland said, there are a lot of impacts that's not just deer from these kinds of critters. So, that's my comment.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Tammy. Any other comments?

Austin Atkinson: Mr. Chair, this is Austin. I'll make a quick comment. I've been representing the public at large, and I think it's important that I comment. We as RAC members, as sportsmen, as Utah residents need to be very careful how we continue to manage and reach other members of Utah in regards to bears, cougars, and wolves in any sort of fashion. I've been apart of multiple incidents in other states where groups have raised a lot of funds to try to shut a management like this down from legislation, from the top down, so I hope that the Division can continue to write plans that are able to be read by all interested parties; hunters and non-hunters. And I hope we can all help educate through outreach, because it is a battle that is not fun to fight once you lose a lot of the ground that you've made up over how many years here in Utah. When hunters and non-hunters come together and fight about it, it is not pretty, especially with these mammals we're talking about. I hope that we can be cognitive about that and listen to the public, listen to all the parties involved and that we're ready when those fights come, because they will come. That's my comment.

Brayden Richmond: Thanks Austin. Any more comments from the RAC?

Gene Boardman: I'd just like to say, clarify, that I'm with agriculture. If agriculture thinks that there are too many bears then we want to reduce them.

Agricultural problems are probably with that. I just don't think that it ought to be our current situation with the low numbers of deer is a good reason to go after bears.

Bart Battista: So, I have another comment. So I'm looking at the packet and it says the predator management plans will not be considered as part of the statewide rollup. So, earlier when I asked the question if they would, you said that they still would be tracked, but here it says that they're not. So could you please clarify that?

Tammy Pearson: You're on mute Darrin.

Darrin DeBlois: I do that every single meeting. So the state plan requires currently, without these changes, requires us to take all the harvest data and amalgamate it all into one. You know pull it all together at a statewide basis. The harvest perimeters need to fall within the moderate harvest strategy sideboards. The problem is if we're required to do that and we have units that are being managed more aggressively to reduce densities, that may not be the case. So we need a way to make sure.. so the solution was to not include those in a part of the roll up. So any plans that are not in the predator management plan, any units, would need to fall into that moderate harvest strategy when we pull those together at a statewide basis. We will still track the harvest on the predator management units and biologists will look at that, but the plan, I'm not sure if we can meet that requirement in the plan if we have multiple units or more than 25% of the units in liberal harvest strategy because they're in liberal harvest units. So that's why we're recommending that. Did that answer your question?

Bart Battista: It does answer my question. Again, I kind of fall back on, I want to be able to see what is being taken in the annual harvest, or what's the right name for this report? In the black bear annual report.

Darrin DeBlois: It'll, yeah, it'll still be in the report. So all the data that is in there now will still be in there, just for the purposes of the plan at the end of the season, actually every three years when we roll that all up, we'll leave these units aside and report on that separately, or consider them separately with that statewide data. Everything else should fall in the moderate sideboard, and then we'll look at the others and see where they fall. But we needed a way in the plan to allow for that to happen.

Bart Battista: In your typical years and compliance with that moderate level, are we way off that? Would one or two units that go into predator management tip you outside of that balance?

Darrin DeBlois: I wouldn't anticipate that it would, no, it probably wouldn't. And with bears... maybe as a point of reference, what we'd be looking at for bear predator management is high density bear units that are not currently in liberal strategy. I think there are seven of those across the state; Book Cliffs, La Sal, there are a few more. There aren't a lot of units to begin with, if one of those units was pulled under predator management, it may not affect that statewide wrap up, but

in order to be in compliance with the legislation we needed to make sure to either remove that requirement in the plan, or find some way to consider these units separately in case they did pull it into more liberal sideboards. So, that's why our recommendation is the way that it is.

Bart Battista: Alright.

Brayden Richmond: Any more comments? I think we've had some great discussions, and we'll continue to take comments as needed, or I'd also entertain a motion at this point.

01:00:00 The following motion was made by Austin Atkinson, seconded by Chad Utley.
Motion passed 9-2 (Gene Boardman and Bart Battista opposed)

MOTION: I move that we accept the R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations from the Division as presented.

Austin Atkinson: Yes.

Gene Boardman: No.

Brayden Richmond: Gene, would you like to state the reason for the no? You don't have to, but I like to ask.

Gene Boardman: I think I've pretty well stated them, that I don't think the bears are a problem with the deer populations.

Bart Battista: No.

Brayden Richmond: Would you like to state the reason?

Bart Battista: I don't think the numbers should be separated out from the annual report, I think they should be rolled in. Especially if there is very low risk of deviating or causing us to tip out of the moderate strategy. Additionally, it doesn't seem that, as Gene said, three weeks is probably not that big of an impact and it seems unnecessary. Again, a blunt tool.

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: So the motion carries with two no's and again I'll represent the reasons for those at the Board meeting.

01:01:57 06) Other Business (Contingent)

Brayden Richmond: I appreciate your input and your time tonight. The final item that we just wanted to go over real quick. The next RAC meeting isn't until April, is that right? So we have a couple of months off now and I guess the one thing that we want to discuss quickly, I think it's safe to assume with the current climate that it's likely that we'll be doing this same format in April. Do we have a time... what time do we have scheduled for that currently? I think it's currently at 5:00.

Kevin Bunnell: Traditionally, we have the October and April meeting start at 5:00 because regularly the big game meetings go longer. With this format it's a little more efficient than the in person meeting, but we started out meeting in November later, and we didn't get done until close to 10:00.

Brayden Richmond: Hopefully you guys bring us a shorter list of things to go over in April.

Kevin Bunnell: I would suggest no later than a 6:00 start, but a 5:00 start might not be a bad idea. But whatever the RAC prefers we can do.

Craig Laub: What date are we looking at?

Brayden Richmond: So, it's on the 13th of April. Would anyone be opposed to 5:00 or have a strong reason to go to 6:00? I think Kevin's point is valid. The two biggest RACs of the year are the rules and recommendations of big game, and then the dates and antlerless in April. It does tend to be one of our longer meetings. Should we just stay with the standard of 5:00? That's what it's been historically. I'm seeing a couple of head nods.

Nick Jorgensen: Leave it at 5:00.

Brayden Richmond: Sounds like we're going to leave it at 5:00 for the April RAC meeting. Okay, I think that's all we need to go over. I do want to recognize that Donny Hunter joined us part way through the meeting, another member from the Board, so we appreciate Donny being here and listening in. Thank you Donny and Karl. Anything else we need to go over tonight before we close the meeting?

Riley Roberts: Merry Christmas everybody.

01:04:38 Meeting adjourned.

**Southeast Region RAC Meeting
Video Conference
December 9, 2020**

The meeting streamed live at <https://youtu.be/P2TcxVsXgSk>

Wednesday, December 9, 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. **R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations**
- *Darren DeBloois, Mammals Program Coordinator*

Southeast Region RAC Meeting
Video Conference
December 9, 2020
Summary of Motions

1) APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

The following motion was made by Dana Truman, seconded by Kent Johnson and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the agenda and minutes as presented.

2) R657-33 BLACK BEAR RULE AMENDMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following motion was made by Kirk Johnson, seconded by Todd Thorne and passed unanimously, 8 in favor.

MOTION: Accept the recommendations as presented by the DWR.

Southeast Region RAC Meeting
December 9, 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
Steve Duke
Darren Olsen, USFS
Todd Thorne, Public at Large
Kirk Player
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 and Minutes (Action)</p> <p>The following motion was made by Dana Truman, and seconded by Kent Johnson and passed unanimously 8.</p> <p>MOTION: To approve the agenda and minutes for the Southeast Region RAC meeting.</p>
<p>18:35:00</p>	<p>3) Wildlife Board Meeting (Informational)</p> <p>Chair Trisha Hedin updated the RAC with Wildlife Board decisions.</p>
<p>18:39:00</p>	<p>4) DWR Update (Informational)</p> <p>Chris Wood updated the RAC on all regional activities.</p>
<p>18:47:00</p>	<p>5) BLACK BEAR RULE AMENDMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (Action)</p> <p>A pre-recorded presentation was provided online on the Division website prior to the meeting: https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html</p>
<p>18:49:00</p>	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Chris Wood stated there were many online comments from the public.</p>
<p>18:54:00</p>	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC members asked about for clarification about the bear management plan and the new legislative order.</p>
<p>18:54:30</p>	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>The RAC members had no comments.</p>
<p>18:55:00</p>	<p>The following motion was made by Kirk Johnson, and seconded by Todd Thorne and passed unanimously, 8.</p> <p>MOTION: Accept the recommendations as presented by the DWR.</p>

18:56:00	<p>The following motion was made by Todd Throne Johnson, and seconded by Dana Truman and passed unanimously, 8.</p> <p>MOTION: To adjourn the meeting.</p>
18:56:00	Meeting adjourned.

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
December 10, 2020
6:30 p.m.**

Attendance

RAC MEMBERS

Dan Abeyta Joe Arnold
Brad Horrocks Rebekah Jones
Natasha Hadden Daniel Davis
Brett Prevedel

Division Personnel

Miles Hanberg Darren DeBloois
Dax Mangus Randall Thacker
Sean Davis Tonya Selby
Rose Fedelleck

Wildlife Board Members

Randy Dearth

**Northeastern Regional Advisory County Meeting
December 10, 2020
6:30 p.m.**

00:01:48 Chairman Brett Prevedel called the meeting to order, welcomed the audience, reviewed the meeting procedures, and had the Board and RAC members introduce themselves.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you.

00:04:47 **1) Approval of Agenda (Action)**

The following motion was made by Dan Abeyta, seconded by Brad Horrocks. Roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approved the minutes as presented.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

00:05:25 **2) Approval of Minutes (Action)**

The following motion was made by Natasha Hadden, seconded by Joe Arnold. Roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approved the agenda as presented.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

00:06:19 3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update by RAC Chair, Brett Prevedel

Brett Prevedel: Now, I'll try to be brief, but I won't be very brief because we had a seven hour Wildlife Board meeting last week. I'll give you an update of the motions. What I'd like to do is go through the motions and then entertain questions for myself, or Randy Dearth, or for Division personnel after I go through the motions, rather than go back and forth on these topics, if that's ok with the group. Is that acceptable? (Yes) The first thing on the agenda was the blinds out on the Willard Spur, and all the RACs were in favor of not having any new blinds. There was quite a bit of discussion about what to do with the existing blinds and whether they should be maintained or not maintained, and who owned them, and whether there would be conflict; same discussions we had. So in the end the Wildlife Board approved unanimously that they'd allow the existing 20 blinds for 10 more years, and then they'd be phased out or removed at the end of the 10 years.

Then the big game season changes, there was one motion made on the overlap for the bighorn sheep hunts down in Pine Valley and Virgin River and Pine Valley/Beaver Dam, they would overlap the general season deer hunt, so there was a motion made to shorten the sheep hunts -and they're long hunts, six or seven weeks if I'm remembering- to take the first seven days off of the sheep hunt and start it a week later so it did not have conflict with the deer hunt. There was quite a bit of discussion on that because, Dan similar to our discussion we had yesterday, this just came up at the Wildlife Board meeting and it was not discussed at the Southern RAC or any of the other RACs. We can talk about this after I go through these but the motion was to remove seven days from the start of the season and I believe it failed 4-2 so the season stayed the same; that's what the summary of motions says.

Then the issue of the spike elk hunt came up in the Book Cliffs. It was discussed with the Division personnel at length and if you remember our RAC had passed a suggestion that we eliminate the spike elk hunt in the Book Cliffs and the decision that came out of the Wildlife Board was to reduce the length of the season to five days. There was another date change on the New Harmony extended archery deer dates to shorten the back end of the season; that passed unanimously. The discussion about the age class on the Book Cliffs which if you remember our RAC recommended we left it at 7.5-8 and not reduce it to 6.5-7 which was proposed by the Division. There was a motion to leave it at the 7.5-8 and that passed unanimously. There was also another one on the Central Mountains/Nebo to leave it at its current age class which is 6.5-7 and it failed. There was a motion to accept new limited entry hunts on the Cache North, Oaker/Stansbury, Plateau Stansbury West, Plateau Barney Top, Kaiparowits, West Desert, Deep Creek, and Box Elder Pilot Mountains and that's the new limited entry hunts and that passed unanimously.

Then we had a long discussion on the Nine Mile Anthro unit that we discussed in the RAC. You know our system has some good points and some bad points and this online format obviously doesn't allow for a lot of dialect in person. So, what happened there is, if you remember, we recommended unanimously as a RAC to leave Nine Mile Anthro as a limited entry unit. The Division did not agree with us and they went to the Wildlife Board and asked them to go with their recommendation which was to eliminate the limited entry on Nine Mile and include it in the general season any bull unit. That's what I'm kind of referring

to, maybe it wasn't the best situation because the Wildlife Board basically got two recommendations that were as far extreme as you could get and they had to make a decision. They all said that they had never been on the unit. So it was not an ideal situation. It ended up being a tie vote and Chairman Bateman broke the tie and sided to leave the Nine Mile as a limited entry unit. But then there was some discussion and another motion made, or part of the second motion- kind of lost track of exactly how it happened- but there was a compromise made by the Wildlife Board and what that is is to turn the Nine Mile Anthro into a HAMS primitive weapon hunt. So that was the final decision. We can discuss this in a minute, I'll open it up. I know that wasn't discussed in any of the RACs but they were in a tough spot. Everybody is giving them varying opinions of whether it was a very good unit or a very poor unit and they attempted to compromise and personally I think they came up with a pretty good compromise. I'm sure other people have a different opinion, but that's my opinion.

So then there were the other limited entry units and that passed. They discontinued the current limited entry hunts on the Cache North, Oaker Stansbury, and Deep Creek; and that passed 5-1. Then there was a motion that they change the Box Elder Sawtooth, Oaker Stansbury East, Southwest Desert North to a HAMS hunt also; and that passed 4-2. Then there were some boundary changes that we had supported that went through without much discussion.

Then we got to the discussion on the general season bull elk, and if you remember all the other RACs it kind of went through and they recommended 20,000 permits. That's an increase of 5,000. All the other RAC Chairs said that there wasn't much discussion, it was just acceptable to them. We had quite a bit of discussion about the Northeast, and I appreciate the Division because I asked for some numbers and 60% of all the elk hunters- rifle and muzzleloader- in this state hunt on the Uintas in the Forest sub units. 20% of the whole state hunters actually hunt on the South Slope Yellowstone. As a messenger for the RAC that felt very strongly that you didn't want an increase, I pushed for that and the decision that was made by the Wildlife Board was to go with a new quota of 17,500 tags and unlimited youth tags that will not count towards the quota. Last year there were 1,125 approx youth tags that utilized that hunt, so if you made the assumption that it was going to be similar you're at about 1,850, so about a 3-4 thousand increase.

Then the issue of extending the archery any bull season for nine days came up. If you remember we had a lot of discussion about that not being a RAC agenda item, and it just came from a letter from a sportsman group. That discussion came up again in the Wildlife Board and you know how things get voted on, the public doesn't even know that's being voted on because it wasn't in the Division proposal but it came through the RACs. There was a lot of discussion on that and its effect on the youth hunt and much of the same discussion we had from the RAC. So the end result of that is they passed 4-2 a motion that would increase it five days at the end instead of the nine. Then based on that discussion of it being an impact on the youth hunt, I was kind of surprised because the youth hunt didn't have a whole lot of support; our region likes it. Around the state the comments that come out in the Wildlife Board were not in strong support of the youth hunt, it's hard to draw, it's 16-1 odds and you don't build preference points, so it's frustrating apparently for some people that they never draw. Then there was discussion about the non resident youth tags that are included in there, and 50 of the 100 are non resident. They actually have seven or eight to one odds of drawing instead of the 15-16 to one because of the demand. There was a motion to ask the

Division to review the possibility of making that a resident hunt only. That's not going to happen for this year, well it may happen in the spring when we do permit numbers, but it's going to be placed on the action log and see what the legalities of that are.

Then there were the pronghorn recommendations that went through without any controversy as they did in our RAC. The other adjustments on the Henry Mountain bison hunts that were discontinued. There was support to keep the desert bighorn archery hunt somewhere at the discretion of the Division. That one tag that we voted for to keep. Then the new hunt on the Rocky Mountain bighorn on Fillmore/Oak Creek was passed unanimously. There was the Box Elder Pilot Mountain one that was passed unanimously which was just an administrative issue with Nevada where we trade the tag back and forth. Then the balance of the recommendations were passed.

Then the Wildlife Board passed the adjustments to the deer management plans with the population objective adjustments that were recommended, with the exception of one, which is the Elk Ridge unit and they did ask some questions and ask that that one not be reduced as much as what was recommended by the Division.

And I believe that's about it. Let's see, the other issue was the LOA tags which we discussed at length, and there were so many different situations throughout that list in all the regions that I could tell it was very frustrating for the Wildlife Board where they hear, this one deserves some tags and this one doesn't. They made a motion to approve all the landowner, let me read this, approve the LOA permits at the 2020 allocation level with the exception of decreases due to the decrease of public permits on a unit, and with the exception of the landowners that qualify under the new proposal for additional permits, keeping the proportions the same. So they asked the Division to try to come up with something consistent that was not just subjective and discussed every three years at the RACs and try to make it fair across the board. So the bottom line is that the three that we had in the region, the Diamond Mountain one would stay the same, the one in Daggett county the Three Corners unit would stay the same, and Dax, I wasn't sure what that meant on the Book Cliffs where we decreased permits, so in a moment when I finish this up I'm going to ask you to tell us what happened on that Book Cliffs unit because I didn't know if it applied to the decreases in public permits. Then the CWMU proposal was passed unanimously.

And I believe that was it. I'm not trying to limit discussion in any way. It was a long meeting and I may have kind of skimmed over the highlights, but I'd open that up to questions from the RAC.

Dan Abeyta: Brett, or anybody that was there because that was a long meeting, so Dax or anybody else from the Division if you could maybe help answer this question. My question is, can you help me understand what the Wildlife Boards rationale was for the decision on the Nine Mile Anthro Mountain unit? As I understand it, it is gone from what it was, and what I think what it was was an early season rifle limited entry elk hunt and a late season rifle limited entry elk hunt, and also an archery season. But what I understand it to be now is a 30 day or month long archery hunt up there on Anthro followed by a six week HAMS hunt. Am I understanding that correctly?

Dax Mangus: Yes, that's right. I was just going to mention that before there was an archery hunt, an early rifle hunt, a muzzleloader hunt, a late rifle hunt, and there was also an option to draw a multi season tag that would let you hunt all of those hunts. And

that's pretty standard structure for all of our limited entry elk units. Then you're correct, the new structure, it will still be a limited entry unit where you'll use limited entry bonus points, incur a five year waiting period after you draw, the fee is the same as limited entry, there's basically a month long September archery season, followed by the beginning of October-September HAMS hunt.

Brett Prevedel: Randy is online from the Wildlife Board if you'd like him to discuss the rationale.

Dan Abeyta: Yeah. And I understand the Board is dealing with a proposal from the Division that was quite different than what the RAC voted on, but I'm just trying to understand what was the rationale for that middle ground that they decided on?

Randy Dearth: Basically, there were some HAMS hunts offered on some of the other units and we thought as a good compromise, we wanted additional opportunity in some of those locations, so as a good compromise we would try it on this unit and see how it works out. I think that was the thought process.

Brad Horrocks: Randy, and help me Brett, I don't recall us having that option. It was either an option to close it or open it up to everybody. Then it goes to Salt Lake, and I think this stuff is not following the minutes rules. It has got to be clarified on the agendas. We've never had that on our agenda, and I think they're in violation, especially with that one that wasn't even put on the agenda for the archery deals. If we're just throwing these out the door for everyone to run at, and a guy sends out an email, where do the minute violations come in to this stuff? It has to be on the agenda, and this HAMS hunt, am I missing something, was never presented to us on the agenda if I recall. Help me, I recall this to be closing the unit. So I need to get some clarification. Maybe I don't remember, I can't open up my screen here so I can read the minutes, but did we have that option?

Brett Prevedel: I think we could have come up with that idea as a recommendation. Keep in mind we're making recommendations to the Wildlife Board who makes decisions. We didn't make that recommendation. I guess we could have, Brad, but we did not. We recommended leaving it as a limited entry hunt and we voted on that unanimously. The Divisions recommendation was to eliminate it as a limited entry hunt. I don't want to speak for the Wildlife Board, but I was there and they were trying to find some kind of compromise and that's what they did.

Brad Horrocks: My concerns are, I'd like to see our RAC out here motion into looking into minute violations on these things. Maybe it's just wide open with these, but we can not operate over here and come up with this archery deal with an email that's not officially put on an agenda. If we're just going to throw this wide open and take anything and run at anything and whatever it is and they're going to do the same out there with the state. Holy smokes I see a train wreck coming. Maybe Miles you could clarify with the state? Maybe the state does not follow the same rules that the counties and the state governments have to as far as I know. I don't go out and sit on these other state boards, but if it's not on the agenda you can not make a motion to move on it. And it was not presented to us on the

agenda as that as an option. I know there are some variations there, but I still question how come the state.. Because the rest of us were unnotified of this and took the input from the rest of it. I understand the compromises and that stuff of it, but man I think it needs to be laid down on the table for all of us before the State RAC makes recommendations.

Randy Dearth: Brad, can I jump in a minute? What it says on number four. It says discontinued limited entry hunts. It says we recommend discontinuing the current limited entry hunt, which is the one we've got right now, on the following units to either allow a new limited entry opportunity or a general season any bull unit. So what we went with was a new limited entry opportunity.

Brad Horrocks: Ok, I think we're covered there. Now let's go to the archery. That was all just an email.

Randy Dearth: Which one are you talking about?

Brad Horrocks: It went from nine days extended and they settled for a five day.

Brett Prevedel: The proposal had no recommendations for an extended season. Nine days came through the RACs from a sportsman's group that started it, and then the Board voted on the five days. That was the way it went. We had voted no extension, which also mirrored the Divisions... well the Division didn't make a recommendation because it wasn't part of the agenda.

Randy Dearth: There was a recommendation made for all the seasons, for all hunting seasons and this is the right one. It's right there, I can't remember what page it's on, but there is a recommendation for that and they were going to leave it like it was. The Board modified that.

Brad Horrocks: Ok, so it was clarified on our agendas, I'm going to have to go back and look, but our agenda that was presented to us, you're saying it wasn't just through the emails but it was on the official agenda? And that's what my question is, that it has to be printed to the public on the agenda. Maybe it was on ours and I just have to go back and clarify it. But I'm telling you that something this loose, this county official sure can't get by with acting on stuff this loose.

Randy Dearth: Yeah, Brad, it's on the agenda, it's not a line item on the agenda unless you go to the actual season dates where it says Box Elder these are the dates and general season, these are the dates, and if you go look at all those it's on that one, which that is a general season hunt. The spike on a limited unit is a general season hunt, and that's where that talks about that.

Brad Horrocks: I still just don't see it as an agenda item. But anyway, those are my concerns and my thoughts.

Miles Hanberg: Let me just jump in here. At the Board meeting there were a couple of RAC Chairs that brought up that same concern, Brad, of some items that were not necessarily on the original proposal. The Board discussed that a bit with them. One of the things that was discussed was, if somebody from the public wants to come with some proposal, their mechanism to do it is that big game RAC meeting which is the one we had here in the region and that went to the Wildlife Board. So there are kind of two points of view on that, but it was discussed with the Board that that was an opportunity to let people bring ideas to the table and have them considered during the big game RAC meeting. But, that's something that I can relay back and I can try to get some clarification in the future.

Brad Horrocks: You know Miles, I'd like to ask and run it up the chain a little bit there and see if this is an off the minute violation. I'm just saying we need to get this clarified in the future, I'd hate to see us get running so loosely. How do we know what to bring up and discuss on these? I can see them down there in the Southern unit say we'd like to open the Book Cliffs for general season deer tags and it's not even on our agenda and we don't talk about it. I think it needs to have a little better structure. That's my only comment.

Brett Prevedel: Joe Arnold, did you have a comment?

Joe Arnold: All I was saying was they shortened the spike hunt, but I think the one Brad was talking about... because that was part of what we threw out there was eliminating the spike hunt. But I think the other one that was maybe just an email, I don't remember the agenda as well, it was the one that went into the youth hunt that was not necessarily - or we didn't believe it was- a formal action. Just kind of a pipe dream to throw it out there to see what kind of merit it had. And it goes to the Wildlife Board and just making sure the process is right. I'm agreeing with Brad that this has to go through a formal process before it goes through the process, or if they can just throw it out to the Wildlife Board and we don't get the chance to vote on it. I know we did and we had a discussion and opinion on it, but I don't know if it was a formal action on the agenda, I don't remember that.

Yes there were the three season adjustments, one on the Desert bighorn sheep in the southern region. There was the adjustment on the season of the spike hunt on the Book Cliffs. Then there was the adjustment of the season on the general elk bull hunt. All three came a different route to the Wildlife Board so everybody's point is well taken. They didn't hit the RAC discussion that the bow hunt extension did because we saw it coming because we saw it on the minutes of the other RACs. That's the only reason why we saw it coming, so you're exactly correct.

Brad Horrocks: Ok, and I don't think they had the right to off the minute regulation to act on that. That's my concern and I'd like it clarified.

Brett Prevedel: So, Miles, you'll look into that for Brad and at least relay the concern from the RAC.

Miles Hamberg: Yes, I'll do that and I'll try to have a report back to this RAC by our next meeting.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you.

Joe Arnold: I would like Dax to maybe answer the question, where we were on such opposite pages of what the RAC as unanimous and the Division as unanimous and the compromise is right for that, and good job Randy and his team, because I think we're completely opposite sides. But I'd like to hear from Dax on where we missed in their mind vs what we voted on.

Dax Mangus: Maybe I can speak to that just a little bit. You know we feel a lot of sense of ownership at a regional level a lot of times, but we also have to remember that this is a statewide resource and there are a lot of people that put in to hunt the Book Cliffs that don't necessarily live in Uintah, Duchesne, or Daggett counties. So, the other four RACs all voted to convert Anthro into a general season any bull unit. Our RAC was the only one that did not vote to do that. So when the Wildlife Board goes through the different motions from the different RACs they're faced with four of the five said to make it any bull general season, and the local RAC said, no keep it limited entry. I can't make assumptions for why the Board did what they did, but I just would point that out. I think the Board tries to listen to local input, but it is a statewide resource and when four of the five RACs voted to do one thing, it makes sense that they saw that as a compromise to go with somewhere in the middle; where it's still maintaining limited entry status and be managed for some kind of quality beyond what it would be for a general season any bull hunt, but I can't make assumptions or read the mind of the Board members, but I think Randy kind of explained that it was a compromise. I don't know if that answers your question or not, Joe?

Joe Arnold: Yeah, a little bit, Dax. I think we are just on completely different sides of it, and that's ok. You guys have good information, and we have information and passion about 20 years ago when the Anthro was good. You guys are professional and biologists and you have all the studies to tell you, yeah this is probably the best route to go. I wonder if maybe in the future, because it's been brought up years ago, maybe there should be a weighted average on region voting, because four of the five- if we voted on some place in southern Utah sometimes it isn't in our backyard so we don't put as much effort and passion and education in it. I agree with you four of the five, but probably just as the Board, nobody has been to the Anthro so it's easy to vote, yeah let's just open it up. I would hope there would be some weighted average put on the local region when it comes to voting. Thank you.

Brad Horrocks: You know that's saying a lot right there, because how many times do we go off of what the Division recommends on these southern regions or northern region units because they're not in our back yard. We, as a Board- I know I do, regularly take off of what the Division wants. Because I don't know anything about the Carmel unit down there in- wherever it's at. But I think it looks like to me as Board members, we probably need to, if we're feeling passionate about this stuff where it comes up start getting a hold of key members in these other RACs and tell them, hey this is in our unit and we want you to support us on this, and what do you have in your unit that you want us to support you in? We can't argue against the Division down there, so we go along with the Division and what their recommendations are for these other RACs because frankly most of us probably don't know

where these units are. We've either got to restructure it a little bit or we need to make sure we do our homework and start calling the key members in the other RAC and telling them we're not in favor of this, would you please support us, so they at least know prior to the RAC and we have a say in it instead of them just going off of what the Division wants. Because I know that's what we do.

Randy Dearth: Let me just tell you one thing. You guys voted unanimously to eliminate the spike hunt in the Book Cliffs. There was another RAC that that motion came up in and it was voted on also. I can't remember which way it went, I wrote it down but haven't looked here. Some of the things that are in our backyard, other people are pretty passionate about too and Dax is exactly right, this is a state resource and there are a lot of people from the Wasatch Front and different parts of the state that love our region and they love to come out to the region and they understand what is going on in our region probably better than some of us do, or better than I do, I'll put that out. It's interesting when you talk and listen to some of the other RACs they've got some pretty knowledgeable people about what's going on in other regions than their own.

Brett Prevedel: Thanks for everyone's input. That's what I was referring to as a Chairman, I could have done a better job with meeting with the Division when we had that big gap, prior to the Wildlife Board and not putting the Wildlife Board in that position. So I'll work on that. And your point on talking to the other RACs, that's a valid point Brad. So, I'd like to move this on if we could. I know that Daniel Davis has joined us and I'm not trying to cut anyone off, if there is more conversation.

Dan Abeyta: I'm going to circle back to Anthro mountain, I never really got my questions answered totally. So I'm going to circle back now, and I think this is the time to do it before we move on. In terms of opportunity on the Nine Mile Anthro unit, where the direction we're going now, if I'm doing my math correctly, it's providing 75 days in the field for hunting; 30 plus the 45. How does that compare to the previous hunt structure Dax?

Dax Mangus: I'd have to go back and look at the days. The intent rather than giving a bunch of days, the intent is to let more people, more individuals hunt. So when we look at opportunity often we're looking at it not just in terms of how many days they get to hunt, but how many people get to hunt. Every person that draws and gets to hunt is a person who burns their bonus point, incurs the waiting period, helps with issues like point creep. So it is a very long liberal season and most of the RACs actually voted to shorten the season for the HAMS portion to just the 1-15th of November, but the full season went through in the Board. So, I'd have to sit down and do the math to tell you exactly on days, but I know the intent is to allow more individuals to draw and issue more permits with the archery and HAMS hunts vs. the more traditional limited entry structure like we had before.

Dan Abeyta: I see.

Brett Prevedel: If I may add, there were 30 total permits, or approximately 30 prior on the Anthro unit for all the hunts combined. And we don't set permit numbers until spring, but the assumption is that would increase substantially. Is that correct Dax?

Dax Mangus: We'll see. That's the intent. I can't speak to exact permit numbers yet, we're still waiting on all the data from last year and then that will come through the RAC process in the spring. But yes that is the intent to issue more permits with this new hunt strategy than we were before.

Dan Abeyta: Is that because the percent success is so much lower?

Dax Mangus: So this is a relatively new thing, but it's anticipated that, with that HAMS hunt you can use a handgun, archery, muzzleloader, shotgun, but no optical sights allowed. What's anticipated is folks will be less selective, less successful, because they're going to have a more limited range. That isn't what we recommended for the Anthro, but we'll see how it works and see what happens.

Dan Abeyta: Ok thanks, I'm good.

Randall Thacker: I was just going to try to answer Dan's question. I looked and it looks like it would be about 52 days roughly with the old hunt structure. That would have been the total basically between the four hunts that would have been involved there.

Dan Abeyta: Ok, so that's a significant increase. From 52 Randall?

Randall Thacker: 52, or maybe 53 without looking at a calendar. About that.

Dan Abeyta: That's still a pretty significant increase, a 50% increase to 75.
Right?

Randall Thacker: Yeah.

Brad Horrocks: What were the permit numbers again? How many did we used to give on it, and what are we giving with this new hunt?

Brett Prevedel: Prior was about 30 total, but we have not determined the new hunt yet, not until spring when we do numbers, I believe.

Brad Horrocks: So is there any discussion about holding it to the 30 tags even though it's scattered over different units? Or are they just going to let them sell as many tags as they want? We voted to keep it a limited entry so I hope that means they kept some kind of structure in there to say, well it is going to be a total of 30 tags, we're going to give you another 25 days. Where are we going with the tag numbers on it?

Brett Prevedel: The tag numbers are determined when... we set up the hunt structure at this meeting, then after the winter counts and in the spring sometime, whether it's March or April when we do the permit numbers. That will be the topic at that time Brad.

Brad Horrocks: Ok.

Joe Arnold: In its hay day it was 10 bull elk during the any weapon. When it was the best it was.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, any other topics, any other questions or comments regarding the Wildlife Board meeting? If not we'll move on to the regional update.

Daniel Davis: I've got a quick question. When the Wildlife Board gives a directive to the Division to establish some working groups or some committees, what's the process on those and who do they reach out to? Is it from the RAC level or is it from the private sector, or where do those committee members usually come from?

Brad Horrocks: I can answer some of that. I just spent about eight weeks on the mule deer working group, Daniel. I was selected, I'm not quite sure how I was selected, but there was quite a wide variety of people that were selected. There were probably 30-35 of us, and I'm not sure how they selected me out of our RAC to work on that mule deer working group. It's not a very friendly set up position, we had to be in Springville at 5:30 at night, at the Spanish Fork/Springville office down there. It was quite a commitment to get to it for how many meetings we had and how late it was. But that's as much as I know, Daniel.

Brett Prevedel: Miles, would you like to briefly discuss that?

Miles Hanberg: I think that I'll let Dax approach that. He's worked on the elk committee so he can explain it well.

Dax Mangus: I've been involved in a lot of those statewide committees. In state code the Division is directed to consult with some specific constituencies when we write our plans. Those include representatives from agriculture, landowners, sportsmen, land management agencies. We also always try to include someone from each of the five RACs and someone from the Wildlife Board. You were chosen Brad for the mule deer committee because you're a local elected official, and also because of your ties on Diamond Mountain. That was one of the reasons that the Salt Lake Office, the folks that are in charge of the committees, consult with the regions and get recommendations from us. So, you're welcome or sorry I guess Brad, but we did recommend having you serve on that committee because we felt like you could represent multiple concerns for our region. I hope you take it as a complement and it wasn't too much of a burden on you. The process is not incredible formal, the Divisions regional personnel will make recommendations to whoever is putting the committees together and they give us some latitude to try and choose individuals, or nominate individuals who we feel will do a good job representing diverse interests, and ultimately it goes through a screening process in Salt Lake and then they go ahead and start making invitations. Sometimes some groups have a standing invasion and the groups will just choose who they're going to send to represent the group on those committees. So, it's not an incredibly formal process, but I think if you look at our last several big game committees, you'll see that there are a lot of different constituencies and interest groups represented. Both the ones that we're directed to have representation of in code and other ones that we try to

include because we want to hear from a diversity and perspective of voices on those committees.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you. Any other questions? Ok, we will move on to the next item which is a regional update from Miles.

00:53:48 4) Miles Hanberg, Regional Update (Informational)

Miles Hanberg: Good evening everyone, I have a few things to share with you. Our habitat section has been pretty busy lately. They've just been finishing up a project with the Forest Service on the reseeding of that East Fork fire, it was a big fire that happened. They identified with the Forest, 9,050 acres for the reseeding. These were primarily the lower elevation areas as you get into the winter range or particularly areas that had some sort of south aspect. We learned on the Neola North fire from the early 2000's when you get the south facing aspect with lower elevations, you tend to have cheatgrass take over those sides. We felt pretty strongly about getting some seed on there before cheatgrass could have the opportunity to dominate that. That was 9,050 acres that they just finished up last week. That was the combination of the airplane and helicopter for reseeding. So good news there I think that everything with higher elevation should recover pretty well on it's own over the next couple of years. So we're excited to have that done. Habitat folks, this is the time of year they start planning projects for the upcoming year. They have proposals and things developed by the first or second week in January. So they're busy doing that as well. It's a lot of work putting partners together and these projects together. It's definitely great work for our Wildlife Resources.

The wildlife section this last week, or early this week actually, finished doing deer captures on the South Slope of the Uintas, some of the Book Cliffs and also over on the Wasatch East unit. A couple of reasons for these captures. One was for a survival study that we do on the SS. That's where we collar adult does and fawns, and that's where we can really get a good idea of what our actual survival rates are for fawns and that really helps us be able to make better models for our populations. The other captures partly in the Book Cliffs and partly in the Wasatch are migration initiatives, just to get a better idea of where deer are migrating to. And of course it's a continuation in the Book Cliffs of our survival study and also including fawns and calves. So, one thing that is interesting with the captures this year is our fawn weights are coming in fairly low this year from what we would like. The lower those fawn rates, the lower survival. While we do need some participation to get out of this drought, our deer herd doesn't really need a big heavy winter this year. Our adults will probably make it though, but we could lose fawns if we get significant snow. What's problematic with these does is when they're in lower condition, that's going to affect our fawn birth rates next spring. The lower the birth rate, the lower survival overall. Anyhow let's hope we get ideal conditions this winter and we don't lose too many deer, and hopefully we can get some good participation throughout the spring and summer to really boost those. Wish we had a little bit better news on that, but we'll just have to see how we make it through. There are also some pronghorn captures on the Book Cliffs as a migration initiative study as well. So, a busy time of year for those folks. There will be some big captures up around Flaming Gorge in January and then there will be additional captures in February and

March to actually be able to implant vaginal implant transmitters in some of the cow elk and doe deer in the Book Cliffs for that neonate survival study.

In the aquatics world, a lot of lakes are starting to freeze now if you get up above about 7,500 feet. Most of those lakes that are frozen are fishable now, and the lower elevations here in the Basin, a lot of the lakes are starting to cap, they're probably not safe yet, but here in the next couple of weeks there should be better fishing happening on those. There are a number of events, I mentioned a couple of them last time. This Ice Addition tournament is going to be held at Steinaker Reservoir this year, and it will be on January 23rd. They go out and pre-drill a number of holes, like 900 holes, and the rules are the participants have to fish in one of the holes that they drilled and they don't allow ice shelters and things like that. That's an event that has been popular. It's been at Starvation in the past and it's at Steinaker this year. The Burbot Bash up at Flaming Gorge is going to be January 29-31st. Then Fred Hayes State Park at Starvation, they're having an Ice Bowl and that will be on February 6th. Then of course there is a continuation of the Lake Trout up on Buckboard Marina where they have tagged smaller lake trout under 25 inches, so if you catch one of those tagged lake trout it can be worth a cash prize and then you'll be entered in for a drawing for I think a boat and a couple of other things. A lot of things coming up with ice fishing and activities this winter.

Some other news, our investigator Sean Davis is retiring at the end of the month. We'll miss his service to the Division and we appreciate his work. He's had a great career. We'll miss him and hope we can get somebody to replace him soon. In addition, our Director Mike Fowlkes, he's also retiring at the end of the year for those of you who may not have heard. He's been a great person to work for and work with. He's certainly going to be missed as well. Rory Reynolds, he has been the Deputy Director of the DNR for the last year and a half, but formally an assistant director for DWR, and he's going to be the interim director for the DWR until the Governor Elect becomes established and decides to appoint a new director for the DWR. We'll look forward to those decisions coming up in the first part of the year.

Another thing I wanted to mention, I sent out an email to the RAC about some opening on the Wildlife Board selection committee. Anybody that can represent sportsman, agriculture, non consumptive, the same kind of representatives that we have on the RAC can apply for that. It will be an 11 member panel and they meet about every two years whenever it's time to recommend a new Wildlife Board member to the Governor. So I sent that out and it has the application link on that, and I'd appreciate or encourage any participation anyone from the RAC wants to have with that. They'll be vital to selecting future Board members. I think that's all I have to share today, unless there are any questions? I appreciate your time, and enjoy the rest of your meeting.

Dan Abeyta: Hey Miles, I just wanted to extend a big thanks to Tory Mathis and his efforts on that reseeding effort up there on the East Fork fire. We really appreciate all the extra work and pulling that off on the right timelines.

Brad Horrocks: I would sure echo that too. I've been staying in touch with those other commissioners over there and boy there needs to be a big shout out for everyone on that. That was great from what I've heard.

Miles Hanberg: Thank you. It's work that needs to be done. It can have big consequences if we don't get on top of that.

Dan Abeyta: Let Tory know we're grateful for all of his efforts on that and making it happen.

Miles Hanberg: Will do.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you Miles. Was Sean Davis on this meeting?

Miles Hanberg: Yes, he is.

Brett Prevedel: Sean, I'd like to echo what Miles said. You've put in many good years here in the Basin and we appreciate what you've done.

Sean Davis: Thank you, it's been a pleasure.

Brett Prevedel: I have one question for Randall, are you there Randall?(Yeah) On the condition of the does compared to two years ago when we had the low body condition, are they that bad? Or are they kind of in between last year and the year before? Or what did you find on that?

Randall Thacker: This year is actually our lowest year. It's lower than even a couple of years ago. This drought cycle has really hurt us. We're low. Just for comparison, the Cache unit in northern Utah had similar weights two years ago and they had zero survival in fawns that year. But they also had some heavy snow. So we hope we get the moisture, but get it in a way that doesn't hammer us too hard and really hurt those fawns. We need a lot of late spring moisture when it's warm and then keep raining all summer, if we can all pray for that, I guess.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you. If there are no other questions for Miles on the update, we'll move to the next item. Any questions? Ok, Darren, the next item is the black bear rule amendments and recommendations. I'd like to ask Darren to give a brief summary and then we can discuss the item.

**01:04:24 5) R657-33 Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations
(Action)**

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

Darren DeBlois: Thank you Brett. Tonight there really are just a couple of items that we're looking for some input and a vote for. As many of you may recall, last year the legislature passed some legislation that requires the Division to take certain actions when we detect the predators are causing mule deer herds to struggle on a particular unit. Last summer

we brought a policy recommendation around to the RACs with the cougar recommendations and so what we're asking tonight is a couple of changes to the black bear plan that takes into account those new policy directives. So we're asking for a couple of things. One is for bear units that qualify for predator management that they be taken out of the plan sideboards, managed as liberal hunting units, but not be figured in when we do the statewide consideration of all harvest data. The plan requires that we look at the state as a whole and all harvest data combined should fall within the moderate hunting strategy sideboards. The other thing the plan requires is that no more than 25% of all units be in the liberal harvest strategy. So we're also recommending that we don't include predator management plans in that calculation. That's it in a nutshell, and it's kind of a book keeping thing. We just need to make sure that the plan aligns with the legislation and the new law and the policy.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you. Questions from the RAC?

01:06:19 Questions from RAC Members

Daniel Davis: I've got one quick question. With removing those predator management units out of that rule for the liberal harvest of no more than 25%, what would that look like if they stayed that way?

Darren DeBlois: If they stayed in liberal... we'll they'd have to be under a formal management plan, Daniel, so those plans have specific justification for why that unit is in predator management for bears. They also have an end date, or not a date but parameters where you would stop that plan. So first you need to determine that bears are an issue and an example of that would be on the Book Cliffs where you see relatively high mortality of neonate fawns to bears. That's one of the few units in the state where we actually have that data because we have fawns and cause specific mortality. But you'd also need to determine whether or not it was adding to the overall fawn survival at the end of the year when you do fawn/doe ratios or if there are other factors such as habitat that might be a concern. So that's how you get into predator management plan if you determine that bears were an issue, then we would set some guidelines on what kind of conditions we'd need to back off on that. So liberal harvest strategy is used to reduce the bear population 10-20% over three years, so that is why we chose to move them into that category. Did that answer your question Daniel, or did I sort of dance around it?

Daniel Davis: Not so much, and I may not have been specific. So, the question, and let me try to reiterate a little bit better. The recommendation is to try and amend the rule that those predator management units abide by, by statute, don't count towards that percentage of liberal objective towards the harvest? Correct? So if those weren't removed and they stayed in there, would we be over the 20%, would we be at the 20%? I'm just trying to wonder why we would remove that if that's already in place targeting the neonates in the areas of issue because it's defined in HB125. So why would we need to implement that rule across the rest of the state?

Darren DeBlois: Right now, if you take all the bear units into account we're already right about there. We have about 25% of our units already in the liberal harvest

strategy. So, if you added one or two units it would kick it above 25%. We're just saying predator management units wouldn't count. Then we'd consider all the other units separately under the plan. We may have to do some adjustment to the units that aren't under predator management to make sure we're complying with the plan. But we need a way to make sure... I guess the reality of it is if you need to put a plan in a liberal harvest strategy outside of what the plan dictates you need to have some safety valve or somehow in the plan that tells you how to handle the other units. So that's the way we went with it.

Daniel Davis: So there's pretty much a potential that the state could end up with 50% of its units in liberal management?

Darren DeBlois: I'd have to do the math, but right now there are seven units that have high bear densities and are not currently in liberal harvest strategy. So those would be the units we'd probably be looking at. I'm not saying those would be pulled into predator management, in fact most of those probably wouldn't. We're not talking about a lot of units, but those would be the ones we would look at if we're concerned about the deer population on them, and could determine that bears were an issue. It might not end up being 50% of the units, but it could wind up being more than the number.

Rebekah Jones: I was wondering if you were planning on collecting any more data to find out if bears are actually preventing mule deer from reaching population objectives?

Darren DeBlois: Yeah, so we aren't planning at the moment to do any specific studies. The Book Cliffs is the one that has the neonate data that's definitive. We don't see a lot of bear mortality in fawns that are older than six months on the units that have both bears and deer. And we don't see a lot of adult mortality to bears either. So it seems like if bears were going to be an impact it would probably be to those neonate fawns where they key in on them in the spring. So, on a unit where you didn't have cause specific mortality for your neonates, you'd probably want to look at your fawn to doe ratios in the fall and determine whether or not those are unusually low and you could average the unit over 10 years to determine that. The other thing you'd want to look at is what's the body condition of your adults, that could give you some indication for habitat and whether or not the population is at carrying capacity. Typically, the further below the carrying capacity the herd is, the more likely a predation issue can suppress that population. The closer you get to the carrying capacity that predation becomes compensatory, if you kill the predator the animals die of something else because the habitat is limited. We've asked our district biologists who know the units the best to really look at the data and look at their units and if they feel like they need a predator management plan to put all that into the plan and explain why they're doing it. Does that help, Rebekah?

Rebekah Jones: Yes, it does.

Darren DeBlois: Ok great. Thanks.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, if there are no more questions, are there any comments from the RAC?

Daniel Davis: I've got maybe one more question. With the potential for the neonate harvest from the bears, has there been any consideration from the Divisions perspective for allowing a limited predator pursuit during that time frame? I know Daniel and the undergrad students from BYU have been collecting DNA from these kills sites, I haven't seen any information on that quite yet, because it's relatively new this year for the DNA collection, so if anybody has any information that would be great to hear. But is that considerable for any kind of deterrent or disbursement that could take place to help aid in some of that? I know the DNA reasoning is to see if it's one animal that has found its food source and that's its primary food source so it can have a huge substantial tool in reducing the number there, but if that disbursement tool that we have in the state is utilized, is that a benefit that the Division has seen or considered?

Darren DeBlois: I wish I knew more about the objectives about that study Daniel. I don't know if they're trying to identify individual animals, I suspect they're trying to identify species. I'm not sure what's possible there. But I think what you're asking is if there is one bear that is good at that, that specializes maybe not doing a general hunt, but maybe trying to address some specific animals would be better. Is that kind of what you're thinking?

Daniel Davis: Yes, because they're very habitual animals, just like a human being, and when they find that readily available food source they stay there and stay adamant about it. And sows with cubs and females with kittens that easy food source is the easiest way to raise their young. With the ability to be able to disperse those in a pursuit method and apply a little bit of pressure on that summer range, to me it seems like a tool that could be utilized that possibly isn't and could have a huge impact.

Darren DeBlois: It's something we could discuss. Something that comes to mind immediately is if you put a lot of dogs on the ground that time of year, you may have a problem with dogs finding fawns. But I see what you're saying, maybe some other kind of non lethal way to disperse bears during that time of year. We could certainly look at that.

Daniel Davis: So the fawning that's taking place and the collaring that has been done out there, we've had fawns on the ground in the springtime during the spring bear season when you actually have the highest number of dogs and houndsmen on the landscape and not once have they found or seen any conflict with the hounds. Those fawns are hitting the ground prior to the end of the season, and just to be honest with you, that end of the season is the most desired portion of the season for houndsmen, it's a holiday week and that's the time of year everyone takes a vacation. So to me I see no evidence to support the conflict. Especially if it was a limited number, that portion could be directed towards the portion of the summer range and those habitat areas. I put a lot of thought into it, it's not a reckless question or comment, but a very serious one.

Darren DeBlois: Dax or Clint jump in, but I think peak fawning is usually about mid June the 15th. I'm not sure if the Book Cliffs is different a little bit. But I think that's what we'd want to avoid is having a lot of dogs when most of those fawns are hitting the ground. If you're just talking about the traditional hounds season, then I'd be less concerned than if we extended it to try to cover fawning season. Certainly something we could discuss and we're open to ideas and anything that would help mitigate that.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you. Miles, what was the public comment on this subject?

01:18:36 Electronic Public Comment Report by Miles Hanberg, Regional Supervisor

Miles Hanberg: There were only three people from the region that commented. One was opposed, two were in support of the Divisions recommendation. One of the comments said that we've been seeing more bears than ever, and another comment said all the bears are disappearing. So we've got kind of both sides of the spectrum there.

01:19:04 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Brett Prevedel: Ok, is there any more discussion from the RAC or any comment before we move on?

Daniel Davis: I just want to share a little bit of concern about the question I had on removing the predator management units from the liberal classification. Which opens the door to a potential of up to 50% of the units being managed in liberal harvest. Whether that percentage was reduced outside the predator management, but HB125 actually has some implications there to allow the state to deviate from that and if it's a unit that's really got some hurt, then those tools are readily available and the Division's been told to act accordingly. I've got concerns about the state possibly being managed up to 50% in liberal.

Brett Prevedel: Darren, where the legislation keys on herd objective and herd size being under objective, you weren't given a lot of latitude on this by the legislation, were you?

Darren DeBlois: There are two things; one like you said Brett, if the herd is below objective then the director is by law required to act, but the other part of that is the Division needs to determine that a predator or a suite of predators are causing that decline. So we revised the policy to try and address that. On some units in the state it's kind of like a death by a thousand cuts, it's not only one predator in particular, but it could be coyotes and lions and bears combined, so we've got some really good data on our mule deer herds with these collaring efforts and we feel like we're in a really good place to make these determinations. A lot of that is keying in on where we are with those herd objectives and we just rewrote and reconsidered all of those management plan objectives for deer that passed at the last Board meeting. That effort was to try to make sure we have realistic estimates of what that unit could support. We've done that in the background. All of that kind of meshes together when we make decisions. And we'll be reviewing better management in December, this time of year, as we're seeing what condition these animals are in and what the fawn to

doe ratios are; and again in the summer when we've had our winter and we know what happened at the end of the winter. If we've had severe losses, we may recommend some better efforts then. But it depends, it's not an all or nothing on predators. It's made to target the ones that biologists feel like may be an issue.

Brett Prevedel: And if a unit is proposed to go to predator management, would that hit the RAC cycle?

Darren DeBlois: No, that would be done as a directive action. We'd report it, but it won't go around for a vote or be a part of the public process. That's something the director is directed to do in a statute.

Brett Prevedel: Ok, thank you. I guess we are at a point where I would entertain a motion on the Divisions proposal black bear amendments.

01:23:15 The following motion was made by Natasha Hadden, seconded by Brad Horrocks.
Motion passed 5-1 (Daniel Davis opposed)

MOTION: To Accept the Black Bear Rule Amendments and Recommendations as presented by the Division.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Daniel Davis: No.

Brett Prevedel: Motion passes 5-1. I believe that's the end of our agenda tonight. Anybody have anything else they want to bring up?

01:24:20 **06) Other Business (Contingent)**

Dan Abeyta: I do have just one more question, just circling back to that Anthro Mountain direction. On something like that with this new direction that is quite different than the old management direction for limited entry, Dax how many years would the Division give that a chance before you'd say this is working or this is not working? Is this something that is a year to year basis, do you give it three years, do you give it five years? What do you do?

Dax Mangus: The recommendation for bucks, bulls, once in a lifetime season dates, hunting strategies, boundary changes, stuff like that will come around to the RAC and Board process every year. I would guess, and I can't remember exactly, but some of the language in the Board meeting directed us that we have two years left on our statewide elk plan, these changes were recommended by the mid plan review by the elk committee at the direction of the Wildlife Board, so I would guess at least a couple of years and then when it's time to revise the statewide plan again we'd have couple of years worth of data and if it looks like it's a great success they'd probably recommend keeping it, if it's not working well they'd recommend making a change. It will come around every year, but I'm guessing we'd probably go a couple of years and when the statewide elk plan gets revised they'd probably take a really hard look at a couple of years worth of data. That's my guess.

Dan Abeyta: Ok, thank you.

Brad Horrocks: I just wanted to make comments on the Book Cliffs Seep Ridge Road, the extension going on down to Grand County. We have tabled that with the way the economy is and the objections and I don't want to get into any details, but that has been tabled pushing forward with trying to extend that road down to Grand County. Right now it really isn't feasible to do or get support to do. So just for information, I know that's a lot of wildlife country through there, but the county has withdrawn that. It started six or eight years ago, I'm not sure how many, but anyway it has been determined to go ahead and table that. We're looking at some ideas people have been coming to us with for that road out there. We've got kind of a proposal there to make one of those lanes into a bike lane. There are some things being proposed to get more utilization out of that road out there. But anyway just for information.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you. Anyone else like to speak before we have a motion to adjourn? Ok, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

01:27:39 The following motion was made by Brad Horrocks, seconded by Dan Abeyta.
Motion passed unanimously

MOTION: To Accept adjourn.

Brad Horrocks: Yes.

Joe Arnold: Yes.

Dan Abeyta: Yes.

Natasha Hadden: Yes.

Rebekah Jones: Yes.

Daniel Davis: Yes.

Brett Prevedel: Thank you for your attendance and everyone's input. I appreciate everybody. Have a good evening, this meeting is now adjourned.

01:28:16 Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm



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

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 17, 2020

To: Wildlife Board

From: Chad Wilson, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

Subject: 2021 Landowner Association (LOA) permit recommendations

On December 3, the following motion was made and approved by the Wildlife Board:

I move that we approve the LOA permits at the 2020 allocations, with the exceptions of decreases due to decreases in public permits on a unit and with the exception of LOA's that qualify under the new proposal for additional permits keeping the proportions the same.

The excel spreadsheet that accompanies this memo includes the actual permit numbers that would result from the motion. The process used to determine the permit numbers are as follows:

- Public draw permit numbers from 2017 and 2020.
- Percent change in public draw permit numbers from 2017 to 2020.
- Final LOA vouchers are a result of the change in public permits from 2017 to 2020.

There has been some concern over a conflict of interest regarding the LOA permit decisions, and as a result, the actions of the previous Wildlife Board meeting regarding LOA permits is being brought back before the Board for review and action.

Hunt_Area	Species	Requested	Qualified	Recommended	Approved Last Renewal	Total permits 2017	Total Permits 2020	% of tags	% Land Change in LOA	Calculated permits	Board Approved	App. Expiration
Book Cliffs, North	Elk	9	2	2	6	209	151	0.722488038		4.33492823	4	1-Sep-23
Book Cliffs, North	Pronghorn	3	2	2	2	52	54	1.038461538		2.076923077	2	1-Sep-23
Book Cliffs, North	Deer	13	10	10	13	427	367	0.859484778		11.17330211	11	1-Sep-23
West Desert, Deep Creek	Elk	2	1 every 3 yrs	1 every 3 years	2	27	22	0.814814815		1.62962963	2	1-Sep-23
South Slope, Diamond Mountain	Deer	53	50	50	48	134	143	1.067164179		51.2238806	51	1-Sep-23
South Slope, Diamond Mountain	Elk	31	30	30	31	84	87	1.035714286		32.10714286	32	1-Sep-23
San Juan, Elk Ridge	Deer	2	0.25	1 every 3 years	2	52	56	1.076923077		2.153846154	2	1-Sep-23
Henry Mtns	Deer	1 every 3 yrs	same	same	same	48	48	1		1 every 3 yrs	1 every 3 years	1-Sep-23
Southwest Desert	Elk	4	4	4	4	122	131	1.073770492		4.295081967	4	1-Sep-23
Monroe	Elk	4	2	2	4	41	46	1.12195122		4.487804878	4	1-Sep-23
Fillmore, Pahvant	Elk	6	4	4	6	63	59	0.936507937		5.619047619	6	1-Sep-23
Panguitch Lake	Elk	7	3.26	3	5	53	44	0.830188679		4.150943396	4	1-Sep-23
Paunsaugunt	Deer	18	7	7	18	147	147	1		18	18	1-Sep-23
Paunsaugunt	Mgmt deer	2	1	1	1	31	31	1		1	1	1-Sep-23
Paunsaugunt	Elk	6	6.37	6	6	91	91	1		6	6	1-Sep-23
Pilot Mountain	Elk	8	4	4	2	8	13	1.625		3.25	3	1-Sep-23
San Juan, Bull Elk	Elk	5	6	6	5	73	73	1	Higher percentage	5	6	1-Sep-23
Mt Dutton/Paunsaugunt, Johns Valley	Pronghorn	6	2.3	2	6	34	45	1.323529412		7.941176471	8	1-Sep-23
North Slope, Three Corners	Elk	5	2	2	5	41	33	0.804878049		4.024390244	4	1-Sep-23
West Desert, Vernon	Deer	36	31	31	28	209	258	1.234449761		34.5645933	35	1-Sep-23
Renews next year												

Oak Creek