

**Utah Wildlife Board Work Session  
March 16, 2011, Holiday Inn Express Hotel  
2450 N Towne Center Drive, Washington, Utah**

**AGENDA**

**Wednesday, March 16, 2011, 1:00 pm**

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| 1. Approval of Agenda<br>– Rick Woodard, Chairman                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>ACTION</b>        |
| 2. Mule Deer Management Discussion<br>– Rick Woodard, Chairman                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>INFORMATIONAL</b> |
| 3. Board Meeting Procedures Discussion<br>– Rick Woodard, Chairman                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>INFORMATIONAL</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Should public comment be taken at board meetings?</li><li>• When should the board vote for a new chairman and vice-chairman?</li><li>• Should the chairman be able to vote on each motion?</li><li>• How can items be added to the meeting agenda?</li><li>• Should sweeping motions to wrap up an agenda topic be made or should each item be discussed individually?</li></ul> |                      |

NOTE: The Wildlife Board will not be taking action on any of the above items. However, the Wildlife Board may be identifying agenda items for future Regional Advisory Council and Wildlife Board meeting agendas. The meeting is open to the public however no public comment will be accepted.

**Utah Wildlife Board Work Session**  
March 16, 2011, Holiday Inn Express Hotel  
2450 N Towne Center Drive, Washington, Utah

**Wildlife Board Present**

Rick Woodard (Chair)  
Ernie Perkins (Vice Chair)  
Tom Hatch  
Bill Fenimore  
Jake Albrecht  
Keele Johnson  
Del Brady  
Jim Karpowitz (Exec Sec)

**Public Present**

Lee Howard  
Donnie Hunter  
Rusty Aiken  
Sam Carpenter  
Steve Dalton  
Adam Bronson  
Jason Carter  
Garth Carter  
Allen H Carter

**Division of Wildlife Resources**

Anis Aoude  
Rick Larsen  
Greg Sheehan  
Kent Hersey  
Kevin Bunnell  
Martin Bushman  
Cindee Jensen  
Staci Coons  
LuAnn Petrovich  
Mike Styler (DNR)

**Public Present (continued)**

Dennis Kay  
Ryan Hatch  
Russell Teague  
Hartt Wixom  
L. Tracy  
Blair Eastman  
Derris Jones

1) Approval of Agenda (Action)

Chairman Woodard said we are deciding on the future of deer hunting and we will be looking at ideas the Board has come up with and formulated. We will try to achieve a consensus of ideas today that we would like to take to the RACs for public comment. He then went on to introduce the Wildlife Board and the Division employees in attendance at the meeting. He then went over the agenda and asked if anyone has anything else to be considered.

Mr. Hatch said he noticed that there will be no public comment taken today. We have some valuable sources in the audience today and he would like to ask them to participate and give their opinions.

Chairman Woodard said he respects his position, but this meeting has been advertized as no public comment.

Mr. Hatch asked why.

Mr. Bushman said that was what he understood the meeting to be. There was not an interest in having public comment, so that is what it was billed as.

Mr. Hatch asked if whether or not they would take public comment.

Chairman Woodard said when they started the work sessions; we have not included any public comment to date. The feeling at the onset was if we did take public comment and questions throughout, the meeting could end up a lot longer. These have been half day meetings. That is the basis for it.

Mr. Albrecht said even if we have a dozen people present, it would only add a half hour.

Mr. Bushman said the only concern is we put on the agenda that no public comment would be authorized. There are those who have undoubtedly decided not to come because of that.

Mr. Albrecht asked if they could take written comments or questions.

Mr. Bushman said you would still be taking comment. One of these individuals might have some specific information pertinent to what is being discussed and the Board wants to ask them a question that would not be a problem. For the public to offer comments on what is discussed or what ought to be discussed would be a problem.

Mr. Hatch asked what the repercussions are if we allow them to speak.

Mr. Bushman said by law under the "open public meetings act" we are required to post an agenda and then discuss the items identified on the agenda. The argument is set up that if we allow public comment that we have violated the agenda. Violating the act could bring both civil and criminal penalties.

Mr. Hatch said he sees that, but in meetings where public comment is taken only a few get a chance. Isn't that a violation?

Mr. Bushman said when you say you're going to take comment, it is up to the Chair to regulate in what context it is going to occur. Here it is a little different, since we have said we are not going to take it and then we do.

Chairman Woodard said so if a Board member would like to ask a specific question to a member of the audience that will be okay.

Director Karpowitz said we can set these meetings up however the Board wants. If they want public comment meetings we can do it. If we do we should put out a more specific agenda than just mule deer management so they know what will be discussed. In the past our work sessions have been closed meetings so we can get a lot done in a short amount of time.

Mr. Johnson said where the work sessions are meetings without action items where we are trying to get information, we need to be able to communicate with the people in the audience.

Mr. Woodard said for the purposes of today's meeting there will be no public comment, but if a Board member has someone in the audience that they would like to answer a question, that is permissible.

Mr. Perkins said we must allocate more time for meetings where we are going to take public comment.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by Bill Fenimore and passed 4 to 3 with Tom Hatch, Del Brady and Keele Johnson against. Chairman Woodard broke the tie in favor.

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

Mr. Hatch said he is not saying they ought to make every meeting open, but where we've had ten people show up who have traveled here, we should give them the opportunity to give their two cents. He doesn't remember the Board ever making that decision. The Division made the decision.

Mr. Woodard said it was never discussed. They were set up as a Board discussion.

Mr. Perkins said the Board has accepted that as the normal practice for multiple meetings and there has never been a suggestion to do it differently.

Director Karpowitz said work sessions are a relatively new thing. When we set them up originally, we asked the Board how they wanted to do them. They went with more an informal set up with the Board and Division. He thought they were following what the Board wanted to do. If they want them done differently, just let them know.

Mr. Hatch said every time we have a meeting, the Division needs to come to the Board and ask how they want it set up.

Director Karpowitz said that is fine and if the Board would have mentioned that they wanted public comment, we would have done it that way.

Chairman Woodard said our next work meeting is May 4th and we will discuss it under agenda item 3 – Board meeting procedures.

1) Mule Deer Management Discussion (Informational)

Chairman Woodard said what he has heard for discussion today is amending some units back to 15 bucks per 100 does and switch the order of the cougar harvest (harvest objective first and then limited entry), which could be moved to the Cougar meeting because of the way it was advertized. The next subject is speed control zones in critical areas of wildlife crossings, highway mortality, shed hunting changes suggesting moving to the Wyoming model, past DWR unit management practices, hunt structure, lifetime license holders, Dedicated Hunter programs, antler restrictions, predators, and

competition between deer and elk. He then asked if there are other things the Board would like to discuss.

Mr. Albrecht said he would like to talk about the plans for each unit and how they will be implemented and also ATV use.

Mr. Brady said he would like to talk about doe hunts.

Mr. Perkins said he would like to add habitat and nutrition.

Chairman Woodard said he would like the Director to start with any updated mule deer related actions.

Mr. Hatch said he knows there are open houses being held around the state. He was unaware that they are happening and he would have liked to attend one tonight in Panguitch.

Director Karpowitz said they left the choice for open house nights up to the regions and it is unfortunate there was a conflict with tonight. They have been very positive meetings and started some good dialogue with the public. He apologized there was a conflict on this.

Mr. Perkins said there is an open house in Richfield on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Fenimore said he went to the one in Heber City last month. We haven't had one in Northern region yet.

Director Karpowitz gave an update on urgent actions on deer management since the last Board meeting. One thing was better communication and they asked each region to have these open houses and they asked each region to line up spring range tours on all of the deer units, inviting the public to come and take a look at the winter range conditions. They will get the schedule to the Board members on these tours. Communication is something we need to improve on to the public and hearing from the public.

The fall classification data has been in hand since January. Director Karpowitz spent some time looking at it at home to see if observations during the deer hunt matched what our post season deer classification looked like. It really did, pointing out the areas where the hunters were most concerned which were the areas where there was significant winter loss, showing up in reduced fawn/doe ratios. As he looked through the information it appeared that action was necessary right away. He got together with the big game biologists and looked to send the information to the Board members. He also saw red flags to be addressed this spring. At least in two regions there are some units with low fawn/doe ratios and low buck/doe ratios. We ought to do whatever we can in that short amount of time to help these deer. He got together with his people to decide which units needed coyote control this spring and allocated another \$125,000. They also looked at any units that are about to go into harvest objective to see if we could raise cougar

permits. Mr. Bunnell has some detailed predator information to share. They got Wildlife Services involved and hit some of these units very hard with good results. They have been successful with the late snows getting a lot of coyotes removed. It was also timely that we were able to raise the objectives for cougar harvest. We are going to keep with this for as long as conditions allow.

The division has worked hard the last six months to be more responsive to the public and feel they have accomplished that. He hopes the Board has been able to go to the division website as it covers the deer issues we are working on. As he talked to sportsmen and legislators, a lot of them were not aware of everything that is going on for deer management in Utah. When they get the information they are excited about all the things that are happening. We are doing a lot toward deer management and he is confident it will work in the future.

Mr. Johnson said something was going on in Southern and Southeast regions winter before last. Does data reflect it?

Director Karpowitz said it was reflected in the deer classification information. It was obvious that it had a couple of impacts on the deer population. We not only lost fawns, but also there were low buck/doe ratios. We have hundreds of collars on deer so we know our winter mortality. We had a substantial winter loss. It was obvious during the deer hunt and it is backed up by post season classification. We are collecting more information on deer than we ever have in the past. At the last Board meeting, he passed out a winter range and condition report that they collect weekly. They are detailed and on every unit. We have had substantial deer loss this winter and it can still happen after green up. We are starting to see that in radio collars and spring classification.

Mr. Johnson asked how hard Southeast was hit. He gave examples from farmers, ranchers, etc in the area and the fact that the deer weren't there.

Mr. Aoude said the data indicates we lost some fawns, but not adult deer. In those cases they probably did not show up in those fields. Southern and Southeast success rates did drop by quite a bit. That tells us there were a lot fewer yearling bucks. We had some fawn mortality in Southern and Southeastern, not this winter, but last winter. That affected the hunt success.

Mr. Johnson asked when can they can get the harvest, biological data etc. all broken down.

Mr. Aoude said it depends on what information he wants. They can get it to him anytime.

Director Karpowitz said the main employee who administers the contract on harvest data passed away in the middle of it. It put our contractor in a bad position.

Mr. Aoude said we got the harvest data a little later than usual, but we just barely got the general season data yesterday. The harvest was no different in Northern, Northeastern and Central. Southern and Southeast have lower success rates.

Mr. Perkins asked about Northern.

Mr. Hersey said it went from 22% last year to 25% this year.

Mr. Albrecht said on the data classification, does the local biologist ever call and say they have a problem with some information.

Director Karpowitz said it was very recent information. He jumps the gun quite often. When he picked up the information, he was concerned and went right to the biologists to create a course of action.

Mr. Bunnell said he has biologists call him when there is a problem. Vance called early in the winter on predators on the Monroe. They don't have a PMP on the Monroe, but they do have one on sage grouse. He told him we have some authority to direct predator management there. We added Monroe to predator control.

Mr. Aoude said they do have biologists calling them. Their recommendations are not due yet, so they are still being discussed in the region.

Chairman Woodard said most of the Board went out on winter counts, so that process hasn't moved forward yet.

Mr. Aoude said the fall classifications are a process to get buck/doe and fawn/doe ratios. Our harvest data tells us how many were removed from the population, along with survival data as well to figure out recommendations for the fall.

Mr. Albrecht said he got a harvest data questionnaire through email yesterday.

Mr. Hersey said that was a survey sent out specifically for anybody who bought just a hunting license to figure out if you hunt upland game or not. For any of the big game you would have received a phone call.

Mr. Hatch said if Director Karpowitz hadn't picked up on this information and the red flags hadn't been seen, when would these decisions been made relative to more coyote control and further harvest of cougars.

Mr. Aoude said it probably would have been a week or two later. The regions would have picked up on it.

Mr. Brady said on fawn/doe ratios, lining out those deer down in the 40's, it goes back 2-4 years. Why didn't we come up with it then?

Mr. Aoude said some of the units are on predator control.

Mr. Bunnell said part of that is the way our current predator management policy is set up. We didn't have fawn/doe ratios as a trigger to start predator management. We are working to change that, so specifically to coyotes, the fawn/doe ratio will be a trigger. This policy has come before the Board in the past and the trigger has been based on the percentage of population to objective. There are two triggers, one on three year and one on a single year average. They are looking at ways to incorporate the collar information (adult survival) that we have never had before and also fawn/doe ratios. He will go over this during the predator part of the agenda.

Director Karpowitz said you see this information every year, but it is in summaries. Sometimes in summaries, it masks the information on individual units. This is one of the benefits of looking at units a little more closely. Really statewide things stayed level, northern went up and southern down. We have always looked at information by unit. The Board hasn't seen it by unit, but by regions or statewide.

Mr. Fenimore asked why it takes so long to get harvest data.

Mr. Aoude said it is a phone survey and you have to get a certain sample size before it is statistically sound. Usually we get it by mid-February.

Mr. Fenimore said he hunted white-tail in Wyoming this year and got a post card requesting his results before the hunt. Also, the internet might be a good way to get information back.

Mr. Aoude said with a post card you hardly ever get enough back and it is heavily biased. The way we do it now is the best way. We moved to a new contractor this year so there was a delay. Usually we have the data by mid-February/

Mr. Larsen said they went to a phone call to pin point exactly where they hunted.

Mr. Aoude said we are transitioning to do it online if people want to. We call and ask them if they want to answer a few questions now, or go onto the website.

Mr. Fenimore asked if internet surveys provide good data in terms of the speed and integrity of return.

Mr. Aoude said the only bias they have is they are not random, so those that harvested might report higher than those that didn't and things like that.

Mr. Hatch asked if there is a connection between cost and speed. He gave the example of the Dan Jones survey.

Mr. Hersey said we are trying to set our quota so that we have a sufficient sample size by unit and weapon type.



Mr. Perkins said we have a good change coming this year to do bucks and antlerless at the same time. We also should review the data being presented and go back ten years or so. Are we already looking at what data are going to the RACs and Boards, rather than just doing it the same way?

Mr. Bunnell said in the RAC/Board packet they can provide as much detailed information as they want. Our presentations might have to be shorter to accommodate the longer meeting. It may be less detail in the presentation.

Mr. Perkins said that is not what he was hoping to hear. For years, we got, for example, population data by unit in the meetings. It was usually presented by the regional manager.

Mr. Aoude said you still get that every year on the antlerless recommendation.

Mr. Perkins said we get one little summary that shows the last three years of data. He wants to see the statewide information.

Mr. Aoude said there is no way you can explain every single unit, but we're still trying to provide pertinent information in a manner where we can still get through a meeting within a reasonable amount of time. If there are specifics that the Board wants provided to the RACs, let the Division know.

Director Karpowitz said it is easy to make information available in a handout. We just don't have time to analyze it in a RAC meeting.

Mr. Woodard said when you have these trends and every year they are bumping down a notch, if the first year of the three year average is high, it can really skew that average. Do they look at that?

Mr. Larsen said it is part of the deer planning that we will get into. There is going to be flexibility and there are some obvious things that keep someone's interest, they will be encouraged to modify recommendations based on those kinds of nuances.

Mr. Woodard said we need to get into the main part of the agenda. He is going to turn the time over to the Board member who wanted the specific item discussed. First is Mr. Perkins on amending some units back to 15 bucks per 100 does.

Mr. Perkins said last December the Board passed Option 2 deer management for the state. He made a motion for Option 1 for Northern and Central regions and it failed. Since then he has received some comments that the reason the Board voted against that motion was there were two elements to Option 1 and 2, one that the 29 units verses 5 region hunting and the second was the buck/doe ratios. In their opinion, the majority of the Board was fixed on the 29 units and specifying permits for those, than they were on the buck/doe objectives. We already have premium limited entry, limited entry, general with 35, 25

and 18 with option 2. He asked the Board to consider taking an option for some 15 objective units back out to the regions. Data from WAFWA and others says that biologically 15 bucks per 100 does is just right for the state and it makes a significant difference in hunting opportunity. He asked on public units in Northern and Central, with our current data, what would the difference be in permits and it is 1500 permits. That is a lot of extra opportunity. Would the Board consider allowing the Division to take this out to the RACs, 15 bucks per 100 does on some units as the objective?

Director Karpowitz said there is a little problem with that logic. It's not the lower number, but the upper that will provide more opportunity. Right now, if a unit falls below 18, they cut tags, but they can't raise them until they are above 25. It would prevent cutting tags on some units so deeply, but it would not add tags unit it is over 25. That doesn't mean those objectives can't be changed. That 25 figure will become problematic down the line, preventing us from adding hunting opportunity once we get some good hunting back on some of these units.

Mr. Perkins said is it a question of the difference between below 18 and below 15? The data the Division ran said there would be an extra 550 permits in Central region and 1000 in Northern based upon this one year snap shot, right now.

Mr. Aoude said a lesser reduction.

Mr. Perkins said that just proposed in Northern and Central regions This could also be done differently if the Board desired, where individual units around the state were put into that as opposed to public land units in various regions.

Mr. Albrecht said it is too early in the game to start switching things. We should stay with it through 2012, then as things go along we could make changes on individual units, like on the Monroe.

Mr. Johnson said as the meeting goes on there will be other proposals to be considered that will address this.

Mr. Hatch referred to a handout from the Division. It shows the amount of less reduction in permits in the Northern and Central. Are you talking units, regions or both when asking this question?

Mr. Perkins said it is a compilation of the regional results on individual units. It is done unit by unit.

Mr. Aoude said they combined the region back together after looking at the units to show what it would look like.

Mr. Hersey said gave the numbers on the Cache Unit to clarify the difference on the buck/doe ratio.

Mr. Hatch said they need to look at trends, rather than year by year. That is one thing we have been accused of, jumping back and forth year to year.

Mr. Albrecht said unit by unit will come yearly, instead of on the three year average. The biologists can adjust accordingly.

Mr. Aoude said it has always come unit by unit yearly, but we set permits yearly. We look at the three year average.

Director Karpowitz said you look at both the average and the trend.

Mr. Albrecht said we never know how many hunters are out there annually until it is over.

Director Karpowitz said the problem with doing it annually is you end up with hunting permit numbers going up and down. The three year average smoothes it out.

Mr. Albrecht said that same biologist knows his counts every fall and again in the spring. He should be able to know what some of those permit numbers should be.

Director Karpowitz said if you react to that every year, the hunting public will be so confused and guessing, up and down. It makes more sense to take the peaks and valleys out of it and manage on an average. Since we made the decision to go to 29 units, a lot of people think the Board is cutting 13,000 deer tags. He was approached during the legislature by several to express concern about the loss of hunting opportunity. He addressed their concern on some units with problems. Before we cut hunting opportunity too drastically and react to any one year's information, we need to be careful. We need to move in the right direction, but not too quickly in order to keep the support of the public.

Mr. Albrecht said if we reacted more quickly in the past, we wouldn't be sitting here today with this problem.

Director Karpowitz said if our reaction is loss of hunting opportunity, there are a lot of people concerned about opportunity. You heard loud and clear from people who wanted higher buck/doe ratios and more intensive management, but now we're starting to hear from the other people who are concerned about hunting opportunity.

Mr. Albrecht said if we increase deer herds, the buck/doe ratio will fix itself.

Director Karpowitz said absolutely but we cannot confuse that with how we hunt bucks.

Mr. Johnson said the answer is to build the pie bigger. We have Steve Brown and Tony Abbott on the radio insulting the Board to the point of filing a lawsuit against them for what they have been saying. They are talking to the legislators. He would be happy to go talk to their Standing Committee and explain this information, putting the example of

some of the hunting history before them. Legislators are listening to those with personal agendas who are mad because they are mad at us.

Director Karpowitz said it is pretty common, no matter what action the Board takes, after the action, you hear loudly from the other side. That is not really concerning. There was some genuine concern expressed to him by people other than them. He doesn't listen to those guys on the radio.

Mr. Johnson said he does not put a lot of credence in what Director Karpowitz just said, because 2-5 legislators are talking to him about this. He is happy to go talk to them about our deer situation. He also has the other side with people saying we need to shut it down completely.

Director Karpowitz said he took every opportunity, not only to the legislators, but others about why the Board made the decision they did. Either way they went, there were going to be people mad. He did tell them he would express to the Board concern about lost hunting opportunity.

Mr. Johnson said he doesn't care about what they say. He is insulted and thinks they might have themselves in a liable position. He only cares about deer numbers, not buck doe ratios or any of that stuff. What do we need to do at the local level to rebuild the herds in the district. A retired biologist said he used to take his work very personally. The biologists now are so busy doing lots of things, they don't have the passion for building the deer herds.

Director Karpowitz said he doesn't agree with Mr. Johnson. There is plenty of passion there and our people are very busy. They are doing what they are asked to do. That doesn't mean we can't refine and adjust. That is good management. There are plenty of people that really care what happens with our deer herds.

Mr. Brady said in Northeast region, he has had 12-15 hunters tell him they want to close it down to try to bring the deer back. They are not after opportunity. In the 80's there were deer all over by Vernal. Now there are no deer.

Director Karpowitz said closing it to buck hunting will not produce any more fawns. When the public says close it down, it won't help the deer herd. It is the worst thing you can do to increase productivity in the herds, to put bucks into a wintering population.

Mr. Brady says he agrees. What he feels we should do is protect the does and fawns.

Mr. Fenimore said over the last 15 years there has been a shift in attitudes. As we've made changes in the way we hunt deer, some people don't want to put the effort into it any more. People from Northern region have told him this. They are looking for other recreational opportunity. We need to be concerned.

Mr. Brady said you are losing them right now, when they get nothing for their license.

Chairman Woodard said relative to Mr. Perkin's amending it to 15 bucks per 100 doe. The Board would like to see the status quo continue and give it time before we make this change.

Director Karpowitz said that will require less hunting opportunity, if we stick with 18 bucks per 100 does on every unit, we will have to make deeper cuts. We are prepared to go wherever the Board wants to go.

Chairman Woodard asked if we can pick up some of that in other species, like cow elk.

Mr. Albrecht said as we talk about hunt structure later on, we might be able to pick up some more permits.

Mr. Hatch said this is not a decision we have to make today.

Mr. Perkins said if we are really going to do this today, we need to decide so it can go back through the RACs.

Chairman Woodard said what they need to do on these topics is try to get a consensus from the Board of the points to be taken back to the RACs.

Director Karpowitz said this is the difficulty the biologists run into. If we're going to be at 18 on all units in 2012, we need to start making adjustments this year. If we go back to 15 there will be lesser adjustments. What Mr. Perkins says is well taken. It would help our people to know if we're heading to 18 in some regions and staying with 15 in others. It won't make a lot of difference in 2011.

Mr. Johnson said when we talk about going from region to unit management, the four Board members from rural areas are supporting it. Their people are a lot less than those on the Wasatch Front. We are making the sacrifice in rural Utah and we didn't go in with our eyes closed. This is about the deer. The goal is to rebuild the pie so someday we can get back to where we were. The numbers in the 60's were a habitat disaster and we had to get those numbers down. We are still recovering from some of the damage that was done. We are now too far the other way.

Director Karpowitz said the difference between 18 and 15 bucks per 100 does will not improve the deer herd. It will improve the quality of the hunt.

Chairman Woodard said the next item was from Mr. Perkins to switch the order on the cougar hunts to harvest objective first and then limited entry.

Mr. Perkins said this is not his idea. He heard it from Don Peay and has thought about it since then. He cannot find any fault with this concept. We would do harvest objective early and then extended limited entry cougar hunt following that. The idea being that from a biological standpoint, cougar taken early in the year would preserve deer during

the time difference between the hunts. Houndsmen in the late 90's stepped up and supported significant increases in cougar hunting because the deer populations were down. He thought about it from the houndsmen's standpoint and this would not be as much of a sacrifice as that was then. If the Board is interested and the Division doesn't see a problem, this would be a good solution. On units where predation is a problem, we should take cougars early in the year rather than later.

Chairman Woodard asked the Division to respond.

Mr. Bunnell said he understands what Mr. Perkins is trying to accomplish, but the only downside is it this would reduce the value of that limited entry tag. A counter suggestion would be to shorten the limited entry portion at the end. Our recommendation was late January, the first of February. The houndsmen came and convinced the Board to extend it to the first of March two years ago. It wasn't a Division recommendation. If you want to accomplish that he would suggest, shorten the limited entry season or make those units straight harvest objective, and not have a limited entry season on them.

Director Karpowitz said he got an email from Jason Binder, President of Utah Houndsmen Association, and he was very unhappy with the fact that the Director extended three sheep units and three deer units. He used the phrase that "we are wiping out the lions."

Mr. Perkins said he remembers the houndsmen standing up and supporting things that were a disadvantage to them, when the deer herds were really hurting. He would be interested if the Board would be interested in having the Division take out a proposal on this topic.

Mr. Johnson said he wants this on the record. Steve Smith reported that from 1989-1991, the Arizona Game and Fish Department capture radio collared and monitored 49 Desert bighorns, yet lions killed only two of them. More than ten years later when Curtis Smith collared 36 bighorns, lions killed 12 of them. A study from 1988-2003 concluded that once a lion began killing the sheep, lion control resulted in increased bighorn populations even during the most severe drought on record. He continued to read from this article by Steve Smith. He went on to say that on the San Rafael that we have had a decrease on the sheep and guides have actually seen lions in with the sheep herds.

Director Karpowitz said they had good harvest on lions there this year with the good snow cover. That is one reason he took emergency action to raise the objective. While we had those good conditions, we tried to get a few more. Today might not be the meeting to discuss lion management, but Mr. Bunnell has some good ideas on harvest objective on an eco regional basis. This would allow us to shift some harvest around within an eco region. We would like to share this with the Board sometime.

Mr. Albrecht said he hopes when we do individual unit management plans we have some criteria to address this.

Mr. Bunnell said some units do have some predator problems, but we don't want to get distracted on an issue that maybe isn't a problem. Our collar data tells us that in most places adult survival is not a problem. We are still at about 85% survival for mule deer and it is pretty much average with or without predators on most of our units. Coyotes are a whole different story with the information that tells us they could be contributing to the problem. The collar data in most areas is not pointing to cougars. That is why we need to adjust our PMPs and use it as a trigger, saying that when we have information that indicates cougars are a problem, we ought to address it.

Mr. Perkins said his suggestion is for those units where we are identifying predation in cougars as a problem, that we switch sequence and try to harvest cougars earlier in the year as opposed to late. He likes Mr. Bunnell's proposal also.

Mr. Brady said in Northeastern, Kevin Christopherson indicated that the Division would probably have the figures at this meeting on Northeast region going from harvest objective to a split season.

Mr. Bunnell said this year we went back to straight harvest objective. On the North Slope, the West Daggett and Three Corners, those were split last year and this year is straight harvest objective. On South Slope he thinks it has been split for several years.

Mr. Brady said he thinks South Slope was harvest objective and this year split. From what he is hearing from hunters there, a year ago 14 cougar were taken opposed to two this year. Does the Division have the data to verify that?

Mr. Fenimore asked when a collar goes dead, how do you know what killed it?

Mr. Aoude said we don't. It indicates survival, if we see a drop then we would go in and investigate. Adult survival is around 85%. If we see survival rates less than that, we go in and address the problem. It is a manpower problem, if we were to monitor them and figure out what killed them, they would have to be checked weekly. So far the data does not point to predators, but it is just one year. Survival is not out of the realm of normal. We can tolerate predation by cougar at a level that does not affect the population. Once it gets below a certain level, we use that to trigger action. We are trying to look for a certain return, concerning our limited resources.

Mr. Bunnell said relative to Mr. Brady's question. On the south slope on the Yellowstone, it has been harvest objective. The most they have ever killed on the Yellowstone is five since 2008. On the Vernal Unit, including Bonanza and Diamond Mountain it has also been harvest objective. Over last three years, they've been killing 9-10. This year the harvest is down. Part of the reason our biologists went to a split on some of these units was when transitioning from harvest objective to split, the harvest went up because it created a scenario of two openings. Under the current cougar plan, if it is under PMP, the biologist can run it split or straight. We might not get that phenomenon of the second opening in Northeast region.

Chairman Woodard asked if on the Cougar survey, they ask if they passed up a lion that was not big enough.

Mr. Bunnell said we get that data on our harvest mortality form. We ask them to check the lions in and ask those questions at that time from everybody who harvests. He would have to analyze that data, looking at it differently.

Mr. Fenimore said relative to more training on people checking in animals, because there was some criticism of whether they were being analyzed properly. Did that take place?

Mr. Bunnell said that has been done and they received lots of positive response. He went to managers, presented a training and they took it to the people in their regions.

Chairman Woodard said the next item is by Mr. Fenimore, then Mr. Perkins on speed control zones, critical wildlife crossings and highway mortality. This is relative to what we heard at WAFWA.

Mr. Fenimore said there was a press release from Mark Hadley that talked about sport harvest being exceeded by highway mortality.

Mr. Aoude said that is in general terms in that he said "it could be," and there is no data saying anything like that. We have only been doing the study for a short period of time.

Mr. Fenimore said as we get information from that study and look at all these potential issues that are having negative impacts on deer herds, we could look at 1-3 that could bring a more immediate return in hotspot areas. He noticed on his drive down some work being done on structures. If the highway mortality number is rising, perhaps that is an area where we could coordinate with UDOT to try to mitigate some of those situations.

Mr. Larsen said they do that now.

Mr. Aoude said they use road mortality data to identify hotspots and get immediate attention if possible. If UDOT is going to do work in those areas in the future, we get in on this up front. We are starting to make headway where we haven't in the past. High fences with escape ramps are direct result of using the data, and also crossing structures underneath the roads.

Mr. Fenimore said on the radio they were talking about a study in Montana where lights would flash on the road where there were problems. Do they make people slow down?

Mr. Aoude said that does work initially, but animals become used to the lights. People do slow down if they are not doing a commute.

Director Karpowitz said whenever a highway is rebuilt or new highway construction, UDOT is way more involved as it is being built putting in new structures and fencing.



Those are the big opportunities. Fortunately these are sections where there is high mortality, such as on Highway 6, I-70 and several other places around the state.

Mr. Aoude said Southern region has been a leader in working with UDOT. Bruce Bonebreak has been very proactive in doing that. It is spreading throughout the state.

Mr. Perkins said he appreciates what the Division has done in the last three years on highway mortality. However it is a massive extensive problem that is going to take generations to fix. The retrofit on I-70 is amazing. The fencing that is going in between Cedar City and St. George is superb. That is a retrofit also. We don't have ability to protect animals that we need to protect at the rate that we can go. We need a sportsmen's project, not a Division project. We need to have conservation organizations get an effort going up at the legislature trying to get an effort going similar to what Colorado has, including warning signs, reduced speed limits, and higher fines for speeding through deer country. We could do that on 200 miles of road in Utah and maybe save 3,000 deer a year. If fawns and does are 70% of those, we are building the deer population.

Chairman Woodard said if he recalls that was very inexpensive and actually there was a 50% reduction in highway mortality or more. It was in the Aspen Area.

Director Karpowitz said that should be passed on to the Habitat Section which is working with UDOT on a daily basis.

Mr. Aoude said he agrees with Mr. Perkins on using the conservation organizations, but we need to be careful, because we would not want to jeopardize losing UDOT's support. We are finally to the point where UDOT is taking ownership and they are happy about saving wildlife. We should proceed, but be careful. They have always been resistant on reducing speed limits.

Mr. Hatch said especially on federal highways, we have to be careful as to not jeopardize losing part of it.

Director Karpowitz said the Division received a joint award with UDOT for highway structures and progress in saving wildlife.

Mr. Johnson said in driving down here, he is pleased with the things he has seen to help with highway mortality. Anytime we get a chance we should compliment UDOT. He went over ideas for working with individual biologists and what we can do to reduce mortality. Are we getting information from biologists on where problems are and their recommendations?

Mr. Aoude said that is exactly what we are doing. The habitat and wildlife biologists work together to get that information.

Mr. Johnson said as we address this, it alone might help turn the deer numbers around.

Director Karpowitz said the award came from the Federal Highway Administration Exemplary Ecosystem Initiative 2010 to UDWR specifically for Highway 6.

Mr. Larsen said without getting into details, we are finding things that work, but studies in the past show things that have not worked.

Mr. Johnson referred to an Arizona lawsuit, and a five car pile up this last week up Parley's Canyon because of a moose incident.

Mr. Larsen said we are getting there and we have the resources available to us.

Mr. Albrecht said we are doing a good job, but we have some issues on some county roads. There are problems with fawns getting hung up in some livestock fences. If we could meet with landowners in certain areas, we could put in some type of fencing issues. Mr. Bonebreak could go meet with county commissioners and road guys and express our concerns, and work toward getting something done. There are some county roads that get as much traffic as Highway 89.

Mr. Perkins said the Division just published "the Best Practices in Fencing Booklet" and it is getting sent out to the counties right now.

Chairman Woodard said we will now move on to shed hunting changes. This has come from several Board members, individuals through email and some in the Division. Wyoming's shed hunting rule is something we might take some ideas from.

Mr. Aoude said we had a law in the northern part of the state that had a shed hunting season. We found it very difficult to enforce, so we moved towards an education component. Now if you want to shed hunt during that time period you have to take an online course. We no longer have an open season. The approach Wyoming has taken is an enforcement type law where they can cite you if you are out collecting antlers before May 1<sup>st</sup> on public lands only. We still haven't heard how the enforcement is working for Wyoming at this point. Until we hear how that has gone, I would hesitate to mimic what they have done because we don't know.

Mr. Fenimore said one of the wardens from Wyoming wrote to Mr. Perkins and said the way their rule is written is if they find someone in the activity of collecting.

A discussion took place on Wyoming's rule, harassment, enforcing antler gathering rules, the need to discuss how Wyoming's rule enforcement is going.

Mr. Perkins said we approved our process two years ago. Wyoming started their effort this year. We should probably wait a year and see what type of results we are getting, ours and Wyoming's.

Mr. Albrecht said he got a call from a cattleman who runs cattle down on the Henry Mountains. He said that this time of year he cannot keep their cattle where they are supposed to be with the pressure they are getting from antler gatherers. He went on to say you can go down to Hanksville where they actually open the hotels in January and February to shed antler gatherers.

Director Karpowitz said it is very concerning to us. He got several complaints this winter about people harassing deer while supposedly looking for antlers. There is not a simple solution, but we ought to look for a solution. It is hard on deer to be run around all winter. We might consider a get tough approach, but make sure it is something that really works.

Mr. Albrecht said the cattlemen are out seeing what's going on.

Director Karpowitz said the wolf's impact on elk in the Northern Rockies is caused by them being on the run continuously. It depletes their fat reserves and their fawn production has gone down significantly. Human predators have that same effect. If we allow this, you can expect higher mortality and lower production.

Mr. Fenimore heard that someone was killed on the Henry Mountains while paragliding and radioing someone on the ground while looking for shed antlers.

Mr. Albrecht asked Mr. Steve Dalton what kind of activity they have in his area relative to shed antler gathering.

Steve Dalton said something needs to happen soon to stop shed antler gathering. He sent an email to the BLM asking them to do something. It is a real problem.

Mr. Larsen said that is just another layer of complexity. The BLM doesn't want them on the snow machines. We dealt with that in the region a few years ago. Are they looking for sheds or are they breaking the law from a public lands stance?

Chairman Woodard said on the way to the meeting they passed a pickup with a four wheeler in the bed and it was full of dropped antlers. It is a problem and this puts too much stress on deer in the winter. We need to do something.

He said the next issue is doe hunts.

Mr. Brady said they had two doe hunts in Northeastern region. We need to be more careful. We don't have that many deer in the northeastern region. We had 275 permits in the region. Part of the reason for the permits was the browse transects were coming in short, but are we grazing sage brush or raising deer. Maybe we need to have the transects in a different area. He is concerned that we need to be more careful about the does. He would like more thought be given on these hunts.

Mr. Aoude said the direction we have given the biologists for doe hunts is to scrutinize the situations. It is range degradation and if you allow that to happen year after year, the population will reduce itself. You want to get ahead of it. Unless we see it on specific areas, we won't recommend doe hunts.

Mr. Bunnell said if they are going to recommend a doe hunt, get local sportsmen out there and show them the problem and show them why?

Mr. Fenimore said also target those areas for habitat improvement to improve the carrying capacity there.

Mr. Aoude said that is being done.

Mr. Hatch said a lot of the antlerless hunts have supposedly done because of degradation of the range and habitat. As he was reading the 40 year history that Mr. Johnson sent us, at the end of everyone they had a range analysis. Almost without exception, the range and habitat was in excellent shape. The last ten years we are always saying we need to increase habitat. Are we looking at the same thing in range that we have looked at historically or is there a new science? For the most part, particularly where there are antlerless hunts, the habitat looks good, maybe better than in the past.

Mr. Aoude said the measurements they have been taking are almost identical to what it was back then. There are good years. If you look at information over long period, there were many years in the late 80's where we had problems with our ranges. It cycles quite a bit. Recently ranges have been gone to grasslands with invasive species of other grasses with sage brush dying out. That is happening. We might not be able to see it, but when you measure it, grasses have increased and shrubs have decreased.

Mr. Hatch said so our biologists are going out and measuring plants.

Mr. Aoude said yes. Every year a book comes out on the region they just did. We are going to start doing some local data gathering annually in between the five year rotation.

Mr. Hatch said we recommend antlerless hunts for three years in a row, kill 1,500 does and then the range dies. We used to have the spring range rides and it let the sportsmen participate.

Mr. Aoude said we are going to go back to that. Once you go out with the biologists, you will start to see the area like the biologists, what they are looking at and what they are looking for. That is why we tell the biologists to explain to the local hunters why a doe hunt might be necessary.

Director Karpowitz said there is a need for our biologists to have a methodology that they can use consistently, so when they look at range they can say that is good for deer or not good. That doesn't really exist right now. We have asked our habitat people who do our long range trend studies, to develop a method of just an ocular estimate then train our

biologists to know exactly what good deer habitat is and what is not. He explained how they measured the range years ago. One reason they have maintained spring classification all these years is it gets biologists out in the spring, looking at deer and habitat. It will help to get a good way for them to judge the condition of the habitat. He talked about the doe hunts in Beef Basin some years back. Over time shrub lands have gone to grass lands. That area used to be solid shrubs. This has happened in other areas over time. That's why you need a long term perspective and be out there looking at it. We are starting to see some positive results on these treatment projects of pushing them back into shrub lands, but that takes time.

Mr. Johnson told about Sheep Creek on Highway 6 area where the same thing has happened. That is why he is careful when he talks about the old numbers. There was damage to the habitat. Another thing on habitat, there is better fawn survival on the wheat farms than other places. They are gaining extra weight and going into the winter healthier. High quality feed will help deer.

Chairman Woodard said on the habitat issues where the section is going out and doing a region a year, is there anyway of redirecting them to the regions where we are having the low fawn production?

Director Karpowitz said that is where they are this year, Southern region.

Mr. Hatch asked how defensible the numbers are that indicate being over objective.

Mr. Aoude said those are probably not very defensible, although they are probably close. There could be some adjustments. We have struggled with that as a Division as well because of the way they were set originally and how do we modify them to reflect what is truly out there. The carrying capacity is hard to measure. We use population objective because it is mandated by the legislature, but it is not the number we hang our hat on. That is why we use buck/doe ratios when we set buck management objectives. The only time we use population objectives is when we are harvesting does. We also direct our people to make sure there is habitat damage occurring before antlerless permits are requested.

Mr. Hatch asked if we need to revisit some of the population objectives.

Mr. Aoude said we are revisiting some of them. It is hard to measure. We need to have realistic long term objectives on the average.

Director Karpowitz said that is just one tool the biologist uses.

Mr. Hatch said it seems like that is always the answer when they question.

Mr. Aoude said more particularly on elk the population objective is more solidly adhered to.

Mr. Hersey said the objectives were set way back. A lot of people question our population estimate now and they are based on a lot more data than what we had back then. Sometimes we have underestimated the number of deer that we have had. If that was the case, the current objective could be underestimated.

Mr. Johnson said he lost faith in the system the first year or so when he was on the Board. One of the Northern areas came in and said we have an objective on what the deer ought to be. We are not going to be able to meet it, so we would like the Board to lower it and they did. That really bothered him.

Mr. Perkins said that was on a management plan based on an assessment of the range conditions.

Mr. Johnson said it wasn't based on range conditions, it was based on them not being able to reach the objective. The herd wasn't building so they lowered the objective.

Chairman Woodard said they have been discussing habitat. Is there more on habitat?

Mr. Albrecht asked the Director how much money was being put into habitat five years ago and also could he share a little history on that.

Mr. Karpowitz said most of the work that has been done on habitat under the Watershed Restoration Initiative has been done in the last 5-6 years. Prior to that conservation permit money was spent on other things. In the last 6 years, we are now over 70 million dollars with all of our partners and 600,000 acres treated. That is directly treated. We have exceeded our goal of 500,000 acres. We've had a lot of good partnering from federal agencies. It was primarily sage brush step and was done with mainly sage grouse and mule deer in mind.

Mr. Albrecht asked how much money is brought by conservation tags at the expo and some of the banquets.

Director Karpowitz said don't confuse convention permits with conservation permits. Convention permits don't bring in any money to the Division except the license fee. That is just a different drawing. Conservation permits bring in 2-3 million dollars a year, some years better than others. There are some general funds that go into it. Former Senator Hatch put in 2 ½ million dollars into the Watershed Initiative before he left. That has been reduced a little. Those are still the basic funding mechanisms for the watershed program then the partners come in and match it.

Mr. Albrecht said he went to a couple of banquets this year and he feels unless there is some improvement on some of the units, the money is going to go down.

Director Karpowitz said that money goes up and down dramatically from year to year, based on rumors and what is being harvested. He is confident our management, particularly on elk will help our revenue remain relatively stable.

Mr. Albrecht said at one of the banquets some of those present weren't bidding and they said it is because there's nothing there to hunt anymore.

Director Karpowitz said that is not true. We still have more than half our elk units are above objective. A few have dropped below, but we'll make adjustments. We do have a lot more hunters out there harvesting the biggest and the oldest, but our average age is hanging in there.

Chairman Woodard said when we average out the age of the elk herds would it help to throw out oldest and youngest.

Mr. Hersey said we have looked at the data with the middle number and it doesn't change it a whole lot.

Mr. Perkins said we increased the age objectives a year ago on those units, so if there is a problem this year, the fix is already in there.

Mr. Albrecht said he doesn't care as much about that, he cares about habitat.

Director Karpowitz said it is a real concern to us, because the conservation permits continue to be important to habitat. He heard a lot of concern expressed during the session about conservation permits and we are undergoing another audit on the program. Still, 90% of that money goes right back into the resource. It's the gravy that helps work get done. It's over and above our base operation and is very valuable to us.

Mr. Brady said he would like to make some comments on conservation permits. We are all guilty, the Board and the DWR, of not taking care of our permits. We need to have a few prime areas for the conservation permits. If we are going to get big conservation money we need premium areas. We have failed in the last few years.

Director Karpowitz said we are still the best game in town.

Mr. Brady said he does not agree with him.

Director Karpowitz said tell me a state that puts more in the book.

Mr. Brady said right now, where are the big boys going? He asked Mr. Garth Carter.

Garth Carter said they are going to Arizona and New Mexico to hunt elk. They are better than Utah now. Older elk don't score high. Tags are going down and people do not want to come to Utah. It is the lack of better scoring bulls in Utah and interference with other hunters.

Mr. Brady said he has made his point. If you want high dollars, you've got to give them a good product.

Mr. Albrecht does not want to lose habitat dollars.

Mr. Perkins said the habitat program is key to what we are going to have 20-30 years from now in Utah, how many deer and productivity of the herds.

Chairman Woodard said we will go on to Past and Current DWR Unit Practices.

Mr. Johnson said on management practices, he has been going through old hunting reports. In the 1930's there was a need for looking at smaller management units. He read from the report. He grew up with there being 32 units. We have a lot of biological information on the management units that we can compare to. How much comparing are we doing on the unit levels? Going to the regional method, we got away from this. One of our problems is our biologists now have too much to do. It was said we will now go to 29 units and he hasn't heard the Board say this, only the Division. The old system had a lot of units. He would like to have a discussion on how many units, past history on units and size.

Chairman Woodard said the 29 units was a medium and was discussed. Division wanted the flexibility to go more or less.

Director Karpowitz said he can explain how it evolved over time. When he first started for the game management section units were developed and got smaller and smaller to control primarily antlerless harvest. If you look at the east side of Manti, units 32-36, it was all designed for antlerless deer hunts. Over time we got more units for antlerless removal. This was designed for antlerless hunts and hunted bucks statewide. Then 15 years ago we did a complete relook at the deer units and what made the most sense biologically. They took a comprehensive look at this and said with our knowledge now, what makes the most sense biologically. Within that process there were some lumpers and some splinters. Southern region was splinters and Central was lumpers and we whittled that way down. Since that time, we found out some of those units were that were lumped in were too big, for example the Nebo thrown in with the Manti. We have since split that back out. The 29 units make sense biologically. Any where you draw a line there is an exception. 29 units is manageable and we can get a good sample size post season classification, probably can't on 60. It makes sense. 29 has had a hard look at it several times over the years. We can always split or combine a unit anytime as we go along.

Mr. Johnson said in San Juan and the La Sals, basically we're managing on the 31A and 31B because Elk Ridge is limited entry. We are gathering data separately on those and it wouldn't really change there. He was very curious about the historical perspective.

Director Karpowitz said the old guys that originally drew this map did a good job and it has proved out over time. They had a good grasp of where those units were, but they became splinters over time.



Mr. Hatch said in 1965 we killed more deer than we issue permits now.

Mr. Albrecht said that is why he made the motion that way in December so we can go up or down a few units as needed.

Director Karpowitz said there are some issues on some of these unit boundaries and some might have to be adjusted to more definable boundaries. This will be the first time we have 29 areas in the state. A lot of these boundaries are on drainage divides, ridge tops and line A doesn't meet line B. We have to make sure they work enforcement wise.

Chairman Woodard said as the units are getting relooked at, are they keeping winter range/summer range in the same unit as the same herd?

Director K said for the most part, but deer and elk move widely. Where we're at is good, but it can be adjusted over time.

Mr. Johnson said as we are gathering biological data, we don't want to be bouncing around a lot for consistency. His main concern is we did this for lots of years and then it changed. He went over deer hunting historically, including 1080 government trappers coming in and that effect on predators and herds.

Mr. Aoude said the units have really improved over time since 1962. They do encompass most of the life cycle of the herd unit. They are about as good as they have ever been. We lumped some together because of the way we collect data. Back then, even though they had 61 units, they hunted statewide. We have gone a different approach now. We have always collected data on those specific units for habitat and predator control. Now we're moving into hunting them by unit. We have put thought into what those units should be and it wasn't done arbitrarily. The units do encompass summer and winter ranges.

Mr. Johnson said we will never hunt statewide again, because of the habitat problems and the population is so great.

Chairman Woodard said next Mr. Hatch will discuss Hunt Structure.

Mr. Hatch sent out his ideas to the Board and one was hunt structure. He proposed a statewide limited entry scenario where we could combine general season and limited entry structure into one hunt where we would put in for your first, second, third, fourth choice on a statewide system. We also talked about antler restrictions. One thing we could do to offer opportunity and quality hunts is go to this type of hunt. There was a survey online and 1000 hunters statewide took it. 50% or less hunters have taken two deer in the last 10 years. 80% have taken 4 deer or less in the last 10 years. He is not convinced that going out to kill deer is what they mean on opportunity, people just want to get out into the hills. If we go to some type of antler restriction, you can kill two birds with one stone. We will lose deer doing this. Colorado has done this with success and they have stopped it in a lot of areas. He hunted over there for 2-3 years.

Mr. Hatch went on to say that he is concerned that we hunt these deer from mid August until the end of November. We need to look at shorter time periods for hunts and maybe cut the archery season down to two weeks. Give the animals time when they are not being hounded.

Director Karpowitz said he managed two units that had 3 pt and 4 pt or better for 13-14 years. It sounds good until you see it in process on the ground. Whether it is successful or not is largely determined by hunter pressure. If you have units with low hunter pressure it appears to work. Units that have high hunter pressure with an antler restriction, it does not work. In watching the Book Cliffs through most of those years starting in 1981, he watched the number of mature bucks steadily decline over that period of antler restriction. What you see when you change a unit to antler restriction is people want to move away from it, so it appears to be working. When hunters had an option they moved away from these units. They had more hunters on the any buck units. (See Handout) Harvest, on 3 point or better units, it inclined precipitously over time and increased toward the end of the study. The next graph is percent success and it was lower on those units. Two bar graphs were referenced. On units with antler restriction you did have a few more bucks per 100 does. The reason is you put all the pressure on the older age class bucks, leaving just yearlings and some 2 year olds for the following season. Illegal kills was extremely high. It is counter intuitive.

Mr. Hersey said it is a comparison of preseason verses post season. On sub-legal take the graph shows bucks per 100 does.

Director Karpowitz says it sounds like a good idea but only works when there is low hunting pressure. He went on to discuss Nash Wash in Book Cliffs, comparing then and now. The results are relative to the amount of hunting pressure in the area. Every state that has tried this has abandoned it at this point as far as he knows.

Mr. Hatch asked how you define low hunter pressure.

Director Karpowitz said in the years in Nash Wash when it was 4 point or better, you didn't run into a lot of hunters. It was open hunting. Now that we are managing by unit with a limited number of tags on each unit, plus our premium and limited entry units with higher objectives, we are doing the right thing. 4 point or better would be disappointing in results.

Mr. Aoude said the reason there was lower pressure on those units is hunters did not go to those areas because they wanted to be able to take any buck.

Mr. Hatch said in the last 20 years the demographics have changed and people are not as interested in taking a deer home.

Mr. Aoude said the harvest data states otherwise. 50-60% of our harvest is yearlings. This is in the major populace. Probably more of the elite hunters are looking to take a bigger animal. They probably don't harvest twice in the 10 year period.

Mr. Hatch said so you're saying the survey is bogus.

Mr. Aoude said yes because it is not randomized. It is people who are interested in hunting and maybe those elitist hunters that are taking it sway it to that group. That's what happens with those types of surveys. They draw the type of people who are interested in that aspect of hunting and you get that segment of the population over represented over the populace.

Director Karpowitz said he does not think this is just a social issue. There is a serious biological issue connected to it. One of the reasons spike only works so well is any yearling that only puts on spikes is taken and any yearling that shows a propensity for a lot of points is saved. We are saving the very best to grow up to be big bucks. It has a sound biological basis. The reason this doesn't work is under 3 point or better, any little yearling buck that shows any initiate to sprout a third point is taken, same is true under 4 point or better. When you put all of your pressure on your best bucks, don't expect good results in the gene pool. If it were just a social issue, the Division might be neutral on it, but that's not the case. The worst of the bucks were doing the breeding in the Book Cliffs after 13 years of antlerless restrictions.

Mr. Perkins said the WAFWA document has been bought off by every state. It states that point restrictions do not produce more or bigger bucks. Idaho still has a few places where socially it is wanted.

Mr. Aoude said in the places where they are doing it, they are controlling hunter numbers.

The discussion continued on antler restrictions.

Mr. Albrecht said if a guy wants to hunt limited entry, then he cannot hunt general season. If he wants to hunt every year let him put in for the 29 units on the general season. That would draw the number down where they could maybe draw out twice in a lifetime. The problem we have is statewide is a lot of people want to hunt every year, but they also want to get a 40 inch buck maybe once in their lifetime. We need to separate that.

Director Karpowitz said that could be done. It would allow a level of complexity, allowing them to apply for 3 categories, OIAL, deer, and (elk and pronghorn). There are some issues with bonus and preference points. It is doable, but is that what hunters really want.

Mr. Brady said using the youth as an example, currently it is going to take them a long time to draw on the Paunsaugunt or the Henry's. They are going to put in for limited

entry, likely not draw and they're done with it. They're only going to try that for a few years and then look for something else to do.

Mr. Hatch asked if we can't still allocate permits for youth.

Mr. Albrecht said another thing is if he has 12 points and been putting in for the Henry's and decides to hunt general season and it takes 4 to draw, you have 8 left, then you start over with the game. There are about 40-45% of the people who don't want to hunt every year, but want to hunt a better unit than a general season hunt. Then we have 60% of the people who want to hunt every year and still want the big buck at least once.

Mr. Perkins said this went through RACs several years back, and as I remember 80-85% of sportsmen wanted both opportunities.

Mr. Albrecht said that is where the system is flawed, because I have 11 points right now and if I want to hunt the Henry Mountains I've got to wait 30 more years to draw. The guys who want to hunt every year are the nemesis of it.

Mr. Sheehan said one of the issues you have is it wouldn't be that hard to switch over and say pick either a general deer hunt or a draw, but you would find you don't really have a big overlap of general deer people and a lot of people putting in for limited entry deer tags. Most of our limited entry people are putting in for elk or if they are in deer they are those who were in elk and switched back to the Henry's. If you went with Tom's suggestion and said you can't put in for a limited entry deer tag if you're putting in for general deer, he doesn't think you'd see a massive trade off. The real volume is in those going after limited entry elk. They go after limited entry deer second.

Mr. Aoude said if you did that, it might increase odds slightly for limited entry, but it would hurt general season hunting greatly. Anybody with 3-5 points is going to stick with limited entry, because they've already put their time in. They will stop hunting general season, and maybe after a few years, not just kids, but adults will quit hunting in a time when we are trying to recruit hunters.

Mr. Albrecht asked what if we came up with a system where you have a break away of so many points on each one, like a three tier system.

Mr. Aoude said you could do something like that as long as we don't alienate the general season hunters because they are our bread and butter. They are the ones who will keep hunting going in the future. Our survey information shows that people want to hunt every year.

Mr. Albrecht said he would still like the Division to look at this idea.

Mr. Hatch gave information from the online survey.

Mr. Aoude said that information is not that dis-similar to what we know. Most people want to hunt every year.

Mr. Sheehan said it is not impossible to do, but it might push a lot more people who are eligible toward limited entry elk.

Director Karpowitz said we could do this if that is what the Board wants, but we need to get more input from the public.

Mr. Albrecht said in summary he would like them to look at some different options.

Mr. Bunnell said if the Board wants this to go back through the public process, it can be done. We need to find out what the populace wants.

Mr. Perkins said this meeting is supposed to be how we can build deer populations. That is the most important thing we have to give attention to. This diversion into how we're going to hunt and opportunity is taking time and energy from that.

Mr. Hatch said he doesn't agree. Harvest objective and maximizing recreational opportunity for hunters play into deer populations.

Director Karpowitz said we need to get 2012 behind us before we do any more changes. We still have the hunt season structure issue that we decided to put on hold. It is going to be a dramatic change for most people.

Mr. Larsen said we were going to entertain the season structure, before making more management changes.

Chairman Woodard said on the Division's recommendation, we accepted putting hunt structure aside because there was too much out there for the public to grasp with hunt structure and unit by unit coming at the same time.

Director Karpowitz said the other side of that is we're doing so much change in 2012, what's a little bit more?

Mr. Perkins said the one single drawing suggested by Mr. Hatch makes good sense. He sees no down side to that.

Mr. Aoude said one single drawing would put everybody having to choose limited entry or general season.

Mr. Perkins said you could draw a limited entry first.

Mr. Bunnell said you might only lose your points if you draw your first choice.

Mr. Aoude said you would force people to take one or the other. He does not feel that would be advantageous to the general deer hunters.

Mr. Hatch said he sees it as putting in for first, second, third and fourth choices and only lose your points if you got your first choice.

Mr. Sheehan said that is kind of what we do now on the general deer hunt.

Mr. Johnson said when the muzzleloader was after the general deer season, they would go out on Dodge Point and there were lots of deer, but very seldom saw a two point, just spikes. If we let those deer go through it produces poor genetics and we should shoot inferior deer. A spike only hunt on deer, perhaps in November for youth only should be considered. Genetically it could help our deer herds. It could be done experimentally.

Director Karpowitz said it might be worth trying in a place or two as a youth hunt.

Mr. Johnson said in talking about antler restrictions, on 3 point or better we talked about genetic problems. We have done some management hunts to take out inferior bucks. If we did something like that we would have management tags, spike only along with maybe four point or better.

Chairman Woodard said Mr. Hatch also wanted to discuss lifetime license holders.

Mr. Hatch said if we went to a scenario like we just discussed, those people would have to choose a premium unit and just get a general season tag as well. We also need to look at the Dedicated Hunter Program. It benefits the Division greatly, but the bottom line is we have the very best hunters in the state out hunting all three seasons every year. It is time we look at that. If we need to keep the program in place, he would be in favor of awarding a bonus point instead of guaranteed tag. If they still get the tag, have them pick archery, muzzleloader or rifle. We need to adjust the perks for the program.

Director Karpowitz said they have fleshed out a reasonable proposal to maintain a three year Dedicated Hunter Program. It will probably mean a lot less people in the program, but it will maintain one third to one half of them. Just the nuts and bolts of it, we think we can maintain a program with one major change, in that you have to draw a tag for a specific unit before you can get in it. It does not guarantee you a unit, but a unit for three years once you draw with a three season opportunity. If the Board feels the three season opportunity is too much, this could be considered. In 2012 there will be a cap of dedicated hunters for each unit. We could look at it on a percent on each unit. With that we still think 3000-5000 people would want to participant in the program. If it's not a three season opportunity, it will probably drop way off. We have spent a lot of hours on the program options, including the cost benefit analysis.

Mr. Albrecht asked if they talked about an individual working 10-15 hours a year and he gets a point.

Director Karpowitz said the problem with awarding bonus points, is if you are a maximum bonus point holder, a point means an automatic tag.

Mr. Albrecht said he means on general season only.

Mr. Aoude said it wouldn't be that much of a benefit because you can draw even a Southern region one of every two and one half years.

Still if someone wanted to work 10 hours a year and get one.

Mr. Aoude said not a lot of people would be in the program if that were the case, because it is not that big of an incentive. We do limit harvest on dedicated hunters, since they can only harvest 2 of 3 years.

Mr. Albrecht asked about projects they do.

Director Karpowitz said they know that needs some refinement. That will be part of the package they bring to the Board. This is something that has to be decided right away for 2012. By the end of this meeting he would like a timeline as to when we're going to do the things discussed, whether this Board is going to do it, or wait for two new Board members to come on to do it.

A discussion took place on when these changes might occur.

Chairman Woodard asked what happened on the Dedicated Hunter when it was time to sign up this year.

Director Karpowitz said they are down to about 6000 from 8600. Drawing the unit is a big change. The big draw to the existing program is a guaranteed region. If you cap it by unit, lots will not want to be in the program. We will give options, but they will have to be distributed equitably around the state.

Mr. Albrecht asked if 6000 isn't an easier number to work with than 10,000.

Director Karpowitz said there are pros and cons to that. We would love to have 10,000 volunteers, but not all the projects have been supervised projects. Maybe with 6000-7000 we'll still have the same number of good high quality projects.

Mr. Perkins asked what the options are and when would we do it.

Director Karpowitz said May RACs, June Board meeting. If not it will be the new Board. In that there are several things that need to be decided, lifetime license holders, landowner permits, dedicated hunter, tribal permits, youth hunts, additional youth archery permits, extended archery, deer/elk combo, conservation permits for general season and handicapped hunters. Not much will change except dedicated hunter and the combo hunt.

Chairman Woodard said Mr. Hatch also wanted to look at a more liberal quota on lions and bears.

Mr. Hatch said he has been out hunting lion this year for the first time in 15 years and he is convinced there are more lions out there than they think.

Mr. Bunnell said he needs the Board to let him know if they want a change on lions, because they passed a three year cougar proclamation last year, otherwise we will wait two more years before it comes back around.

Chairman Woodard said he has a few more things on the list today.

Mr. Bunnell said he has some coyote information he would like to share with the Board.

Director Karpowitz said he would like to preface Mr. Bunnell's remarks with some information. During the legislative session, Senator Hinkins ran a bill for \$3 more on big game hunting licenses and ear mark it for predators. He was not opposed to that concept, but thought it needed more discussion, so we asked them to send it to interim. The Division is committed to serious predator control, particularly on coyotes. During the interim they are going back to the legislature and ask for a permit increase that will be comprehensive in nature that will ear mark money for predator control as well as additional money for habitat, highways, and research projects. They are going to propose that the permit fee increase at least on deer and elk, about 150,000 permits be increased enough to cover our needs. Then we are going to ask the hunting public to support us on this. The needs of deer are comprehensive. In the meantime, they added \$125,000 of predator control money to the Wildlife Services contract for the fiscal year we are in and \$225,000 additional dollars for FY 2012. We will be at about \$675,000 for deer in FY 2012 total for coyote control. The permit fee increase will kick in for the future. \$450,000 of our predator control money right now is general funds. We need to get some or most of it switched over to restricted funds as soon as possible so we have it regardless of what happens with our general funds. Presently they have asked Mike Linnell to give them a number to max them out on coyote control efforts without adding overhead. If we are going to invest \$700,000 to coyote control, we want to know if it will work. We are committed to coyote control.

Mr. Hatch asked Alan Carter how many days they could have flown with good conditions if the money was available.

Mr. Carter said the biggest problem he sees is we don't know how much money we had until 2 weeks ago. We need to know the end of November how much money is available. There were two good storms they didn't fly, because there was not enough money. We didn't know how much money we had so we didn't fly.



Director Karpowitz said Wildlife Services had a contract for \$400,000 and we supplemented it just this spring. We already signed the 2012 contract so you know exactly what you have for 2012.

Mr. Carter asked if the Division is going to tell them where to fly.

Director Karpowitz said yes.

Mr. Bunnell said the contract is signed for 2012 and the deadline is November 15 as to where to fly. The Wildlife Services folks have been asked to coordinate with the Division by November 15th. We have been working on that and it is better than it was in the past. Certainly they knew well before the December storm. This is a timing issue on both sides and they are trying to make it better. The Wildlife Services calls us to schedule our regions. The other part of that is a November coyote is not as important as a January or February coyote because they will re pair.

Director Karpowitz said there is an attitude out there that the Division is not committed to predator control, but we have committed, \$700,000 to it. That is far more than anyone else has put in. This is a big deal and we keep Wildlife Services going for the majority of the year. Mike Linnell has never indicated that there is a communication issue and if there is we'll fix it.

Mr. Carter said he'd really like to see that.

Director Karpowitz said it really bothers him to hear people say that DWR is dragging their feet on predator control. We are not and are fully committed and engaged on predator control.

Mr. Carter said they were ready to go November 15<sup>th</sup>. He flew six hours November 30<sup>th</sup> and never flew another hour until after January 1<sup>st</sup>. He was available with three different helicopters.

Mr. Perkins said on going to the legislature for permit increases on deer and elk for predator control, habitat and highway work, are we also talking license fee increases because the needs for habitat go well beyond.

Director Karpowitz said we are not looking to increase the base price of a hunting license. People already have to pay \$26 to get into our draw. We have some pretty serious issues on the fishing side of things. Hunting licenses are now subsidizing some fishing programs. We have to bring that back into balance so fishing licenses might have to go up. We want to keep people in our draw, but if they draw that permit they are going to have to pay a little more. We are thinking a deer tag will go from \$35 to perhaps \$40 and maybe a little more if the sportsmen will support it.

Mr. Hatch said on Senator Hinkins' bill it was a \$3 increase specifically for predator control, but Director Karpowitz wants to get a fee raised without the restriction. If we do

it this way and in a few years, Director Karpowitz retires, that's just \$3 that could go anywhere. Mr. Hatch told Senator Hinkins that if we do this, he should at least put intent language that it has to be used for predator control, or it will be gone.

Director Karpowitz said we will tell him that we expect that and we'll tell him that's just fine. The problem with putting it into legislation is where you have ear marked money and inflation eats away at your base programs, that money is not able to keep pace with inflation then there's no money to maintain the program plans. When we did the fee increase in 2008 we committed to do certain things and we've done them. We will do the same in the future and intent language is fine. In the end, his testimony on the Hill was if they feel like this bill really needs to go through, he would ask that they divide the permit fee increase equally between predator control and habitat. Had it passed we would have been okay.

Mr. Fenimore said we understand the Director's passion and commitment to predator control, but it does sound like there could be some improvement on communication between the Division and Mike Linnell from what was said today.

Director Karpowitz said he has had a lot of conversations with him in the last few months and he feels they are on the same page. The Division is facing some serious budget issues. At a time when we need to have more money for deer management we have revenue disappearing in the agency. If we cut 13,000 tags, we'll lose \$750,000. State Wildlife grant money, none of which goes into deer management is being cut \$850,000. Our Pitman-Robertson money, our federal aide went down a million dollars. The net effect is some serious cuts in the agency. When he became Director, he committed to focus resources and personnel. Overall, as an agency we have been doing belt tightening the last few years, but now there is going to be some serious cutting over the next few years. We can't afford that right now and need to double our efforts. We will take our fee increase out in August and make sure it gets spent on deer. Everyday we get a little bad news on the federal budget. 30% of our budget is federal money and it is drying up. In spite of all of that I have committed \$350,000 in new predator control money to show people that we are serious.

Chairman Woodard asked what the coyote check off is doing this year.

Mr. Sheehan said wildlife donation check off last year was at \$18,000. We switched the wording and got \$35,000 for coyote control.

Chairman Woodard said we'll now hear from Mr. Bunnell on coyotes.

Mr. Bunnell said he and Mr. Linnell have worked together closely over the past few years to try to tighten up our communication between the Division and Wildlife Services. That goes on bears and cougars they are taking for livestock control and in every aspect, communication is much better now. The schedule that we have calls for the meetings between the two agencies to happen in early November so we are ready to go when the snow starts flying. As far as he is aware, that happened this year. He will check into it.

Mr. Bunnell then went over the coyote control evaluation. (See Attachment #1) He explained how they determine which units they extended the harvest quota on. They also looked at units with low fawn/doe ratios for three consecutive years and areas where they knew they had some winter kill in 2009-2010, primarily southern Utah. They added these units to have additional coyote control. The Book Cliffs, La Sals and the San Juan were also given additional coyote control for this year.

Mr. Bunnell also said that in the past they have look at what the percent of the population relative to the objective on predator management is. They were not paying attention to the fawn/doe ratios relative to predator management. That was a mistake. It is very relevant information, especially to where you should be controlling coyotes. This is an issue they look to add to the predator management policy. What criteria can they add to the policy to incorporate fawn/doe ratios and adult survival data relative to coyotes and/or cougars. (See flow chart in the attachment)

Director Karpowitz said this would bring a big change by bringing fawn/doe ratios into predator management.

Mr. Johnson asked when you look at the fawn/doe ratio.

Mr. Bunnell said in late November, early December. That's why it is critical to coyotes. That shows that from birth through the first six months of life how many survive.

Mr. Johnson said the reason he asked that is during the muzzleloader hunt for deer you see quite a few fawns, but not a lot of two points. When he asked Mr. Flinders what was going on, he said "coyotes." Something needs to happen in the winter with coyotes to get the fawns through. From November through spring also is critical for information.

Mr. Bunnell said we get that information from collar data.

Director Karpowitz said by using the post season number rather than the spring number it will allow us to react more quickly on coyote control.

Mr. Bunnell said this year he asked Mr. Linnell if it is feasible to make a mid winter adjustment after classification data and redirect some of their efforts. He said absolutely. This is an additional step they will add.

Mr. Johnson asked what the three sheep units are.

Mr. Bunnell said the San Rafael, Rattlesnake and Cascade. He then went on to the front page of the handout, comparing how many coyotes were taken and the fawn/doe ratios.

Mr. Perkins said prior to 2006 on the deer population on the Cache, it was down as low as 10,500.

Mr. Bunnell said so there is an argument, that the initial work on the Cache let them get above the level where the coyotes might not have the impact that they did before.

Mr. Albrecht said so if a unit gets so low and the predation is heavy, it can't come back.

Mr. Bunnell said if production is at a certain level and it is high, the impact of predators may be irrelevant.

Mr. Perkins said the Cache was at 50% of objective. About 2006 it started coming back up. Since then it has increased fairly well. Those other units were at and above population during the early 2000 time, but they have been decreasing.

Mr. Aoude said if you're killing coyotes to try to preserve fawns you only need to look at fawn/doe ratios to see the return on the investment.

Mr. Bunnell went on discussing the handout. The pattern you are going to see is in our drier units and less productive areas, coyote control seems to have an impact a greater percentage of the time than in the higher elevations. There will be exceptions to that. He gave some examples.

Mr. Albrecht asked on the Thousand Lake do they fly the park.

Mr. Carter said they do not fly the park.

Mr. Albrecht feels that the herd there hasn't been able to grow because of the cougar and coyotes that we can't get to in the park.

Mr. Hatch asked if this handout information represents flying done with just DWR money.

Mr. Bunnell said yes and it does particularly to deer. The problem with the others is we don't have the data on the bounty control and everything else.

Mr. Hatch said down where he lives, there are more sheep on the Panguitch Lake unit than anywhere else. The fawn/doe ratio is one of the highest. These deer units are getting the benefit from flying there on sheep.

Mr. Bunnell said there are deer units that get the benefit from flying for sheep, not using deer money at all. We put some of our money in the other pot also.

Director Karpowitz told the amounts that are given.

Mr. Bunnell said killing coyotes does not always guarantee higher fawn/doe ratios, but in general, in the less productive areas that are dry is where you can have a positive effect taking coyotes.

Mr. Perkins asked if they might discontinue coyote control on the Cache and move it south.

Mr. Aoude said if we follow the schematic and continue, we will apply it where it is needed.

Mr. Bunnell said we will focus where it is needed.

Director Karpowitz said one of the messages they have tried to get out is predator control is important, but there are other elements. We need a multi pronged approach over the next few months.

Mr. Albrecht said more population is higher road mortality.

Mr. Brady said 2010 was the only time on the Southwest Desert when there has been any coyote take, but that is still a very low fawn/doe ratio. Is that strictly because of the dryness?

Mr. Bunnell said that is part of it, but even that part of the country had a hard winter in 2009. We would have to see a couple of years of control to see where it goes from there.

Mr. Albrecht asked how much a two day scenario in flying for coyotes costs.

Mr. Bunnell said they are paying \$800-900 an hour. A six to seven hour day is \$4000-\$5000. We put \$20,000 on the Fillmore/Pahvant additionally this year and that translates into about three days of flying. They are going to get their own helicopter in that area, but there have been days when they've had five shifts in the air with their contractor.

Director Karpowitz said that Mr. Linnell indicated the Division got him this money right in the nick of time. During the last couple of big snow storms they were able to do some really good control work on these new units. They took 56 coyotes off the Fish Lake the first day.

Mr. Albrecht said he had a lot of calls from horn hunters wondering what was going on.

Mr. Bunnell said to answer Mr. Albrecht's question in terms of coyotes per hour, it is really variable.

Mr. Fenimore said as this increase in dollars takes place, at some point you reach a diminishing return. Are there other ways that we can enhance the effort?

Mr. Bunnell said the regions have been working on that with the local sportsmen, directing them into areas where they have concerns particularly in the May/June timeframe. This works in breaking up pair bonds and eliminating coyote reproduction. We can then add on to that with sportsmen out killing a few more in the right areas prior to the fawns dropping and get additional benefit.

Mr. Fenimore said there was a number that showed the sport take was about equal to Wildlife Services.

Mr. Bunnell said the sport take is three times what Wildlife Services is. The timing on coyotes is really the issue. The study on the Monroe is to split the mountain in half, do coyote control on one half and get to collared fawns within a few days of mortality to look at the return on the effort. They will then switch to the other side of the mountain and see if it can be replicated. Hopefully they will become more efficient in our predator control.

A discussion took place on monitoring pregnant does.

Chairman Woodard said they will now discuss competition between deer and elk.

Mr. Hatch said he talked to someone about Pine Valley where there are no elk and the deer herds are in just as bad shape there as anywhere else. There are opinions on both sides of this issue. The Board does need to consider this when looking to increase elk herds.

Mr. Perkins said if somebody is proposing an increase of elk in the unit, they need to consider the shape of the deer herd.

Director Karpowitz said it already says in our elk plan that elk increases will not occur at the cost of the deer herd.

Mr. Perkins said he agrees with what Mr. Hatch said with one exception in that we should give preference to the deer herds. The elk are not struggling.

Mr. Hatch said he would agree with that.

Director Karpowitz said there have been many studies around the west on this issue and they cannot get good definitive results. It is fair to say we have probably traded some deer in this state for elk, but how many, he doesn't know.

Mr. Johnson referred to a book on this subject. Brian Hatch from Kanab told Mr. Johnson a number of years ago that deer is the favorite food of the mountain lion and as the deer fall, the lions fall. When they introduced the elk, they would go kill an elk, but they love deer the best. This is a theory.

Director Karpowitz said they had elk on the San Juan unit. They were all radio collared and a lot of them were killed by lions. The elk were new to the lions but they learned really quickly.

Mr. Bunnell said what they learned with the radio collared lions that you get animals that tend to specialize. He then asked the Board if for the May work session, do they want

him to amend the cougar plan or do a 1-2 year fix or what do they want him to do? He would like to get the working group back together.

The Board agreed to have this revisited.

Chairman Woodard said next they would talk about ATV use.

Mr. Albrecht said now they have gone to unit by unit, he would like to see some seasonal closures on some of the relatively open units that have a lot of ATV use. He showed a map of the Fish Lake unit.

Mr. Fenimore asked if they can do closures on national parks.

Director Karpowitz said he thinks they can with their permission. He spent some time in January with Idaho's directors. They have quite a few units that by state regulation they limit ATV use. Just like you say a hunter can only use a bow, you have the authority to say when they can use an ATV while hunting. The point he makes is they are getting a real push to open those up to ATVs. He said, if they do they'll have to reduce hunting opportunity because harvest will increase dramatically. They are seeing the other side of it in Idaho.

Mr. Perkins said 3-4 years ago he tried to propose an ATV regulation while hunting and it was opposed by our sportsmen's group because it was unfair to hunters. Without their support, the next step was to try and go for ATV restrictions. That got stopped in the legislature much to his disappointment. All of the increased penalties on private lands were adopted and all the penalties on public lands were stripped. Therefore we ended up with no protection on our public lands which would have addressed this problem.

Mr. Albrecht said he talked to a couple of land managers who were in favor of some restrictions.

Director Karpowitz said private landowners can do their own restrictions and the Board can do it on public lands if they have the will to do it.

Mr. Albrecht said maybe we could do it experimentally on a few units.

Mr. Perkins said do it statewide.

Mr. Bunnell said we could do it on adjacent units and see what happens.

Mr. Johnson told about two guys on an existing trail doing some work on it and they got turned in by a group called "the grand old broads." They were fined \$38,000. So in the federal agencies, it really makes you think about getting off your bike and moving a rock.

Mr. Perkins said he would support restrictions on ATVs while hunting. It might not be as fair as a statewide law that would be applicable to everybody, but hunters are part of this problem.

### **Summary of Meeting**

Chairman Woodard told Mr. Bunnell to bring a proposal on amending the cougar plan to the May work session working toward the cougar recommendations in July.

Mr. Bunnell said he would like to get the committee back together in accomplishing this.

Chairman Woodard asked if on doe hunts and predators are there issues that need to be taken back out to the public.

Mr. Brady said what he gathered from the DWR on doe hunts is the biologists are going to take a very close look at that before they make the proposal. That is all he asked.

Mr. Perkins said on predators, Mr. Bunnell was going to look at mountain lion harvest timing and options on the split.

Mr. Bunnell said he would include all that in amending the plan. Another thing would be in the policy and adding the appendices. Traditionally we have brought that policy to the Board, but in actuality we can just do it and incorporate the changes we talked about.

Mr. Bushman said any rule or policy you make that impacts the public at large has to be taken through rule making typically.

Director Karpowitz said these are just triggers. If the Board acts on it we would be fine.

Mr. Bunnell said it falls under adjusting the criteria. We will just change the appendix and it doesn't need to come back to the RACs and Board. Triggers are in the appendix.

Mr. Bushman said it needs to be approved by the Board. We could just do it today.

Director Karpowitz said we can take it to the RACs and the Board.

Mr. Brady said the public will like to see the direction we are going on this.

Chairman Woodard asked about speed control and highway mortality or is this something that needs to be worked through the legislature?

Director Karpowitz said he will speak to Ashley Green and make sure we look into that if we have not.

Mr. Albrecht said on individual unit plans he would like them to identify roads with high mortality rates.



Chairman Woodard asked about changing the buck/doe ratio from 18 to 15.

Mr. Perkins said it seemed like there was a majority not to change it.

Director Karpowitz said the Board has flexibility on this issue as it proceeds.

Mr. Aoude said the plan will be revised in 2013. They could tackle this then. He feels they should constrict the objective to 18-20. There are some other things that we could do also when the plan is revised.

Chairman Woodard asked about shed antler gathering changes.

Mr. Fenimore said he likes the idea of giving law enforcement a better tool in terms of the way Wyoming was doing it in terms of protecting the deer on their winter ranges.

Chairman Woodard said as he read that it was a legislative issue in Wyoming and it also had a fine.

Mr. Aoude said he would like to wait until they talk to Wyoming and see how it is working. This is really more of a law enforcement issue.

Director Karpowitz said Mike Fowlks will give a report to the Board at the work session in May after he talks to someone in Wyoming about how their rule is working.

Chairman Woodard asked Mr. Johnson if he is alright on our current management practices and the way we are headed.

Mr. Johnson said yes.

Chairman Woodard then asked Mr. Hatch about combining limited entry and general season deer to be one draw.

Mr. Hatch said he would like it to go out as an informational item.

Mr. Albrecht said he would like it as an informational item.

Director Karpowitz said they could take it out in November with the other big game stuff.

Mr. Johnson said on the hunt structure, he talked to someone from Colorado. They cut their permits by 50%. When they did that it went up to 25 bucks per 100 does and stayed there. He also asked Garth Carter about 4 point or better and he heard an entirely different take on it.

Chairman Woodard said we could address that on antler restriction. Next lifetime license holder needs discussion.

Mr. Hatch said lifetime license would just get a general season tag. They wouldn't be able to pick a limited entry unit.

Chairman Woodard said the Division is well into working out Dedicated Hunter and it will come back as an action item in June.

Ms. Coons asked if they want to add a work session June 8th. The whole 2012 package will be presented at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Is that what the Board wants? The Board said yes.

Chairman Woodard asked about the antler restriction issue.

Mr. Johnson said he and Mr. Carter had some discussions about the difference between the three point and four point or better restriction and he would like the Board to hear his opinion on this.

Garth Carter talked about antler restriction. The biologists here today have a lot years into this program. When you see a program like the four point or better go, the reality of it is we have enough information from other states to look back and see what worked and if it is a management tool. He went on to give some history on it from his viewpoint. It was the South Book Cliffs where he was the conservation officer. When he went there in 1976 part of the post season classification was you had to have 200 does on a unit before it was statistically valid. Sixteen trips to that area and it counted 64 deer on the winter range where we did our browse utilization transects. He went to the prime area and in an effort to bring the population back he asked for 4 point or better and he got it. He was looking to protect the does because of the equipment they had back then. At that point in time the South Book Cliffs had the least man days use for deer hunting. For some reason, the whole deer population came back. They had the four point or better for 5-6 years. They went from least to most man day's use. In a small wintering range they were inundated with hunters. They had one arrest during that 5-6 year period that he can remember. When hunters were thinking four point or better, it was a really big buck. It got very popular and the rest of the state wanted it in other areas. It was still not proven. They tried other units in the state, went to three point or better and it was a disaster. What did happen, from a biological standpoint, as a tool it has the ability to raise the buck/doe ratios. The advantage is that when you have a high buck/doe ratio, you have bucks posturing and bringing the does into heat in a shorter time period, fawns come in a shorter time period and less time for coyotes to prey on them. If we could get them past the first five weeks, we were able to keep them alive. What you have when you go to 19 or 29 units is if your have the antler restriction broadcast, hunters would stay where they were. This could be a good management tool temporarily. It has its place from a biological standpoint. Yet, you can't cut the purse strings of the Division, cutting tags by 50%. This would be an option to still get your revenue, still have young and old hunters in the field, but still have a chance to bring the buck/doe ratios up, temporarily until they

are up where you are comfortable. As a biologist, watching the other states he feels 25 bucks per 100 does is a good number.

Mr. Aoude said to defunk that right now, on the South Book Cliffs Unit, we have 46 bucks per 100 doe and 46 fawns per 100 does. We have the highest buck/doe ratio and the lowest fawn/doe ratio. It is not always true that high buck/doe ratio is reflected in high fawn/doe ratios and has never been proven in any study he has seen.

Director Karpowitz went over the ratios on other units in that area.

Chairman Woodard said we have heard from both sides and need to move on.

Mr. Aoude said there is a lot more that produces fawns than a bunch of bucks. There are a lot of things that synchronize does and most has to do with the nutrition of the does during the breeding season.

Director Karpowitz said he does not dispute with anything Mr. Carter said, because he is very observant and spent a lot of time in the field. But what is not accurate is the cause and effect. The same years he was looking at the results of four point or better on the South Book Cliffs, Director Karpowitz has 60 radio collars on fawns on the North Book Cliffs and working with that herd every year. During those years 1981-83, all very wet years, fawn production jumped dramatically. That unit which had single digit buck/doe ratios outperformed the South Book Cliffs every year that had four point or better and higher buck/doe ratios. That is because it was wetter. The issue has some management applications, but it doesn't increase fawn production. It will increase more 2 year olds. There are other factors that come into play.

Mr. Johnson asked if we went to four point or better would we not have to cut the 13,000 tags.

Director Karpowitz said it depends where you're going with it. You could probably get 18 bucks per 100 does. Whether we would sell those tags the first year he doesn't know. History has shown that it drops way off the first year because everybody knows there aren't that many four points out there. In the long run, this would not accomplish anything. In fact, it works against you long term. Mr. Carter said it has a short term application.

Mr. Aoude said the best way to increase buck/doe ratios short term is to cut permits and then if they rebound you can increase them.

Mr. Johnson said on the four point or better you talked about poor genetics coming through, then that would be where you want to do a spike only hunt and management hunts. You could get more tags there.

Director Karpowitz said during those wet years, he checked every deer coming off the North Book Cliffs and there were very few spikes. It is because the deer were on a high

nutritional plane. We lost quite a few deer to predators, but still post season classification came in around 80.

Mr. Johnson said Mr. Carter also said the does had fawns as a group a few weeks earlier.

Mr. Carter said we were fawning on the Book Cliffs two weeks earlier than on the La Sals. He is not saying that is the reason, but the Book Cliffs bred two weeks earlier, fawned two weeks earlier and came into the rut two weeks earlier.

Director Karpowitz said that is not because of four point or better. The peak fawning day on the Book Cliffs is June 7<sup>th</sup>, and the statewide average is June 21<sup>st</sup>. The habitat on the Book Cliffs greens up earlier and the deer have adjusted to take advantage of the vegetation early in June. They also did that on the North Book Cliffs where we had single digit buck/doe ratios. It really has nothing to do with the buck/doe ratio.

Mr. Carter said every time we close a unit in the state, the total population rebounds very well. The only thing we stopped was killing the bucks.

Director Karpowitz said actually what is responding is the bucks, but it doesn't improve production. If you are going to use that management tool, it will not increase fawn production. It will also give you a few more two year olds, but sacrifice anything older than that. Just look at Colorado's four point or better elk. Tom Remington told him that Utah has Nordstrom's in the way of elk hunting and they have Walmart.

Mr. Hatch said once we get into the 29 unit management, we could then perhaps do some experimenting with this tool.

Mr. Johnson said we could do it with a few units now.

Mr. Perkins said we have an obligation to make decisions based on the best science we have. He referred to the WAFWA book, every state documents 20-30 different studies that have been done. They reached two conclusions, one research fails to support any biological meaningful relationship between the number of bucks per 100 does to fawn production and in a fenced enclosure study, with white tail deer, they first had all mature bucks with a healthy buck/doe ratio for several years, then pulled all the mature bucks out of the enclosure and put in a few yearling deer. There were no differences in the mean breeding date of does and all does were bred. That tells us that mature bucks in an enclosed setting don't make a difference in breeding and production.

Mr. Fenimore said we have also tried antler restriction and abandoned it.

Chairman Woodard said we will put this off until 2013 when we look at the entire plan. We will look at ATV use after consulting with Idaho.

Mr. Perkins asked if we could get an ATV proposal for the June meeting.

Director Karpowitz said we will bring it as an informational in November.

Mr. Brady said they talked about coyote control and what if we tried a bounty program.

Director Karpowitz said there is a bounty program. Any county that wants to participate can and has to match the money we put into that.

Mr. Bunnell said part of the \$500,000 we send to Wildlife Services goes to the bounty program.

Mr. Hatch said he sits on the BLM Board and they contribute \$10,000 or so to that program each year in the five county area.

Mr. Brady said he doesn't know if they have it out in his area.

Mr. Aoude said in some counties sportsmen have contributed to the program.

Mr. Perkins said it is not in all counties and you have to work to get them to participate.

Mr. Bunnell said the DWR rule says we will not participate in that program at this point.

Director Karpowitz said the way it is set up now works just fine. County ordinances are a key to it. Some counties have night hunting ordinances and some don't. It is best to fly county by county.

Mr. Johnson asked if we promote coyote calling competitions in the state, bring them in and really go after them.

Mr. Hatch said Dixie Wildlife does it in St. George.

Several other organizations were mentioned that do this.

Chairman Woodard said we are pretty well finished with our mule deer management discussion for today. We will have to hold the remainder of the agenda for another day.

Director Karpowitz said they might want to discuss who is going to vote for the new Board Chair. That will have to happen at the June meeting. The last few Chairs have been voted in by the existing Board.

Mr. Hatch said he disagrees with that. The Board that he will be the Chair of ought to be the one that votes the Chair in.

Chairman Woodard said the remainder of the agenda will be discussed at the May work meeting.

The meeting was then adjourned.