

**Northern Region Wildlife Board Advisory Council**

**July 10, 2007**

**6:00 P.M.**

**Place:** Brigham City Community Center, Brigham City, Utah

**RAC Present**

Brad Slater  
Lee Shirley  
Ryan Foutz  
Paul Cowley  
Bill Fenimore  
Ann Neville  
James Gaskill  
Shawn Groll  
Robert Byrnes  
Bret Selman  
Darwin Bingham  
Jon Leonard

**DWR Present**

Bill Bates  
Darren Debloois  
Jodie Anderson  
Justin Dolling  
Scott Davis  
Kevin Bunnell  
Jill West  
Kirt Enright  
Scott McFarlane  
Randy Wood  
Kent Hersey  
Rick Schultz  
Wade Paskett

**Wildlife Board**

Dick Diamond  
Ernie Perkins

**RAC Absent**

Mark Marsh

**Public Present** - See Attached Roll Sheet

**Meeting Begins:** 6:00 p.m.

**Number of Pages:** 12

**Introduction** - Brad Slater, RAC Chair

**Agenda:**

Introduction of New RAC Members  
Bison Unit Management Plan  
Dedicated Hunter Program Information  
Bucks, Bulls and OIAL 2007-2008 Information  
Cougar Proclamation and Rule R657-10  
Furbearer Proclamation and Rule R657-11  
Commercial Hunting Area Variance and Species Review

**Approval of Minutes - (Action)**

Adopted by Consent

### **Approval of Main Agenda (Action)**

Adopted by Consent

### **Introduction of New RAC Members**

Justin Dolling, Northern Region Wildlife Manager

Justin Dolling- On behalf of the Division of Wildlife Resources in the Northern Region, I'd like to welcome the new Regional Advisory Council members which are Jim Gaskill, Paul Cowley, Robert Byrnes and Jon Leonard.

### **Miscellaneous**

Dick Diamond (Wildlife Board)- expressed his appreciation to the RAC members for their support while he was with the Division for the past 41 years.

### **Item 1. Bison Unit Management Plan**

Bill Bates/Wade Paskett

See Handout

### **RAC Questions**

Fenimore- The purity of the herd is obviously important. Other herds do not have that purity since there has been some sort of *hiberization* of cattle, is that correct?

Paskett- That is correct.

Fenimore- So if there are cow on this range, how will you prevent that from occurring here?

Paskett- Bison were basically force bred so that is where *hiberization* occurred. It usually does not occur naturally.

Fenimore- One of the graphics indicates that Sportsmen for Habitat purchased 2,500 AUMs. It later indicates that there was allotment sharing with domestic cattle. Will you explain what that meant?

Paskett- Sportsmen for Habitat do not currently have cattle on those allotments. Redistributing some of the permittee's cattle to those areas will distribute the use of forage to bison, as well as to livestock.

Bates- The bottom line is there are approximately 250 less mouths to feed on an annual basis so there is more forage available. The plan is to determine how to increase the population to 325 and yet also provide forage for all of the livestock. It is a cooperative effort right now to determine what type of distribution makes the most sense.

Neville- It appears that the majority of the property is owned by the BLM. Do they plan to keep the status quo as far as the different allotments or will they gradually changing them over?

Bates- The BLM Richfield Field Office did send a letter in support of this plan. Based on the 4-H allocations that currently exist with the BLM and the *SITLA* AUMs, there is sufficient forage for the proposal that we have in place. They are somewhat concerned about the SITLA AUMs since if SITLA decides to do something else, we would have to create an alternative plan. Sportsmen for Habitat has put procedures into place to ask to have those reallocated to Wildlife but they are not going to address that until their plan is finalized which will likely occur in 1 ½ years.

Byrnes- How many AUMs are currently assigned to cattle in the habitat?

Bates- 19,144

Byrnes- Is there any sheep grazing within the Bison habitat area?

Bates- Not within the bison habitat. There is one private landowner that has domestic sheep on a in a nearby area but it is not being used by Bison at this time. There is a sheep allotment on the other side of Highway 276 but there are not Bison in those areas either.

Byrnes- So there are no sheep AUMs that are being used for cattle?

Bates- A *trackite* does come a little bit across the highway but the BLM, through their Resource Management Plan, is currently going to convert those to cattle so the issue will go away.

Selman- Does Bison equal one AUM like a cow-calf pair?

Bates- Yes. One reason for going with the 275 and 325 adults is because of the comparison to livestock where they deal with AUMs for a mother cow which keeps things consistent.

Cowley- You started with a relatively small herd. Are you concerned with genetic inbreeding or other similar issues? The Division started with less than 30 animals yet you are saying a minimal viable population is 430 animals.

Bates- One of the strategies we left off of the list was that we are also going to supplement the herd with five bulls every ten years from an outside population. The first place we would like to get them from would be Wind Cave because they show the best genetic divergence.

Cowley- As we look at your list of tasks and objectives, it appears it will require an increased manpower? Do you have a schedule of implementation to increase the number of employees you have to work on this project?

Paskett - Right now there is not a time table. Every thing basically centers around the implementation of this habitat project and the monitoring of the bison.

Cowley- It seems like you should put a time frame to some of those tasks so you can actually progress through those. It will also help the public to understand what is being done and the schedule that will be followed.

Bates- This a 5-year plan. All of the objectives and strategies are meant to be accomplished within those five years. In the fall, we plan to implement three or four habitat projects. The research project proposal will be in by the 1<sup>st</sup> of September. Most of the tasks included on the list have already begun so they are not considered an additional work load. It is a big effort but we are up to it.

### **Public Question**

Matt Weyland- Will the Population Management Goals/Strategy 6 be based on a 100% harvest? Is that a goal you are trying to reach each year after post harvest or prior to?

Bates- It is based on the 88% harvest that we are now experiencing.

Tom Martin- How did you come to the count of 50 bulls per 100 cows? We are now at a point where the bull ratio is the lowest it has ever been with the exception of one year. I know you have strategies to make an older herd but maybe the bull count should start at 75. If there is going to be mature bull trading with other genetic areas, it may make sense to make that number higher. I don't understand why 50 is the magic number.

Bates- That number is based on an optimum ratio for trophy hunting. 50 bulls per 100 cows is a very high bull/cow ratio. One reason it showed lower this last year is because we counted fewer bulls. The large mature bulls are not always with the herd so sometimes we miss those. I would not want to go any higher than 50 bulls per 100 cows because that is more than sufficient to take care of the breeding of all of the cows in the herd. No one is complaining about what is being harvested on the Henry Mountains.

### **Public Comment**

Byron Bateman (Sportsman's for Habitat)- We support this project 100%. We own enough AUMs for 150 cattle or bison year round but due to the drought, we have not put cows on the mountain. We have already spent over \$500,000 on that mountain and we're planning to spend another \$500,000. We were down there two weeks ago looking at all of the projects that were included on the list. We have the money in the bank and are ready to do it. 98.5% of the land being discussed belongs to the BLM. It belongs to every U.S. citizen. One interest group should not have control over that. We are trying to create a win-win situation with livestock and wildlife. It is an isolated mountain. It is a jewel that has the world's greatest deer herd. It has one of only four genetically pure herds in the United States. We should be at 430 animals to maintain the genetic diversity and to keep it off the ESA. If the animals become endangered, it will effect the cattlemen, the sportsmen, and all of the citizens of Utah. We (Wildlife, Livestock operators, BLM, DWR) have all worked together to create a good plan. We create more water and forage for all wildlife and livestock. After the plan is approved, we will put the projects to work.

**Motion-** Neville- Recommend the Bison Unit Management Plan, as presented

**Second-** Foutz

**Motion Carries-** Unanimous

**Item 2. Dedicated Hunter Program Information**

Jill West, Wildlife Program Coordinator

See Handout

**RAC Questions**

Shirley- Why don't we allocate those dedicated hunter permits to those areas that have the most public land instead of worrying about artificial boundaries? The southern area has a lot more public land than exists in the northern area.

Byrnes- The RAC packet states that the Division will likely be over-subscribed by several hundred to a thousand people in 2008 through 2010. How will it be over-subscribed if there is an on-line application process?

West- I may have misused the word "over-subscribed". I meant there will be several hundred to one thousand people who want to be in the program but there will not be enough spots. We will not sell out of permits the day they go on sale since there will be enough CORs available every year.

Neville- There is obviously a great volunteer effort associated with the hunters. Has the Division every thought about doing a similar program but with non-consumptive groups? There are a lot of people that want to do good things but there needs to be an organization to head up that effort.

West- We have considered that. With 10,000 dedicated hunters, it would be difficult for me or the Regional employees to work on those projects. We have a long list of education and naturalist programs that we want to do. We are in the process of increasing the staff for the volunteer program. Once we catch up with the dedicated hunter growth, we will be able to focus on those types of programs.

Fenimore- Approximately 30% of the hunters live in the southern region. The other 70% live in the other regions. Do you have problems matching up the need with the people since it would be difficult for the northern hunters to travel to the south?

West- It is not yet a logistical issue but it could become one. Since the program started, there has been adequate work to be done. We do have a system where hunters can travel to a distant location and receive credit for their travel time.

**Public Question**

Matt Weyland- Out of the 9,977 dedicated hunters, how many of those are into their second or third year and will not need to participate in the program next year?

West- We enrolled 4,800 people this year. We anticipate approximately 2,800 people are in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year and will roll out of the program so those spots will become available. The number of people allowed to enroll will continue to increase each year.

Weyland- There appears to be a bit of procrastination since the committee only meets every few years. I anticipate the dedicated hunter program will have to be reconstructed in the near future.

### **Item 3. Bucks, Bulls and OIAL 2007-2008 Information**

Kent Hersey, Wildlife Program Manager

See Handout

### **Item 4. Cougar Proclamation & Rule**

Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator

See Handout

### **RAC Questions**

Byrnes- The Cougar Proclamation does not include a map of the units. Is that typical?

Bunnell- There are 50 cougar units in the State which would make the scale so small that it would be difficult to make it meaningful in a Proclamation.

Neville- After comparing the recommendations for the harvest and other causes for mortality, have you find there is a higher mortality rate in some areas outside of hunting?

Bunnell- We certainly take all of the mortalities into account when we make a recommendation on a unit. For example, this year on the Monroe unit, there were four cougars harvested by hunters. There was a total mortality of 13 on the unit. We had 7 cougars that were killed by incidental take from trappers and 2 animals were poached.

Fenimore- The objective is for the female harvest to be 40% or below. According to the slides, it was slightly over that this year. Have you ever considered male-only hunts or do other states surrounding us have male-only hunts? Does the recovery time for females allow them to reach an age where they are sexually mature?

Bunnell- Some of the recovery time is to allow the females to begin having litters. There is not a "male-only" hunt since it is difficult to determine whether a cougar is male or female. Some states have created a female sub-quota where every lion is required to be checked in. Utah has attempted that in the past but is not in favor of it since units were being closed down in two days since the quotas were met so quickly.

### **Public Comment**

Byron Bateman (Sportsman for Fish & Wildlife)- We had a board meeting last night. We voted unanimously to accept the Division's recommendation. The graph clearly illustrates that the lion population harvest is declining. It is time to consider the overall management and follow the

Cougar Management Plan.

Ernie Millgate (Utah Federation of Houndsmen)- We have worked closely with Kevin Bunnell to implement the Lion Management Program. We would like to see the *treasure* management units closed. We unanimously agree with the State's recommendation.

Rick Ellis- We have a ranch in Promontory. This proposal sounds good on paper but I am concerned (as a livestock producer and a mule deer hunter) about the realities of the plan. We are losing colts, calves and mule deer. The cat kills in the canyons are phenomenal. I am not opposed to having reputable houndsmen come to the property with an individual who has a tag. We are not interested in making money but we are concerned about the money we are losing on a daily basis. As a rancher and a hunter, I can not agree with the way the Proclamation is written.

### **RAC Discussion**

Selman- I have worked with Kevin Bunnell in an attempt to obtain land owner lion tags. We have the exact same scenario as Mr. Ellis. It is difficult to define the kills. We find more sheep kills than calf kills. The compensation has only been 100% for the past year. If a landowner loses ten animals, they are compensated for thirty which is significantly more compensation than Utah offers. I drew the tag that I needed last year but was unable to get the cat that cost use over 100 head of yearlings. We are asking for is a mechanism where we can take a cat when we have the opportunity. We are only asking for a small portion of these tags. I am disappointed in this proposal and hope that something can be done to remedy the problem.

Foutz- Have you worked with Mr. Ellis on his property? It sounds like he is willing to allow some reputable houndsmen to go out there? Is Promontory a limited entry hunt?

Bunnell- It is a limited entry hunt. During the break, Ernie Perkins spoke with Mr. Ellis about working with the Federation of Houndsmen. I would love the opportunity to try to get around the issue in that way. If we are unable to do so, it should become an iterative process. We should make an effort to get landowners and reputable houndsmen to work together.

Foutz- Brett, do you currently allow houndsmen on the property?

Selman- We have failed to find a reputable houndsmen. In our past experience, the houndsmen tore down fences to travel across the property. If fences are removed, that area becomes a road for the snowmobilers. Some of these properties are leased private property that the landowner will not let other individuals on. There needs to be a mechanism where we can work on our own property like we can on everything else.

Byron Bateman- There is a mechanism in the process and that is Wildlife Services. If there is a problem animal, Wildlife Services will be there within a day and will bait the cat. Property owners should allow the government trapper onto their property because they will take care of the problem.

Bingham- Agriculture has a problem with depredation and there needs to be some special

interest put there. I would suggest working with all factions to solve the problems. Mr. Ellis has a problem. He has lost calves and horses and it may not be long until a rider is taken. I appreciate the efforts that are being made by the Division. We need to continue to control the problem.

Byrnes- According to the Proclamation, livestock owners can kill a deprecating animal within 72 hours. Would it be beneficial to extend the time period?

Selman- Absolutely. We are constantly using the government trappers. The problem is that some of the cats have been run up trees on several occasions so they will jump the tree. I have seen these scenarios. When kills are occurring on private ground in the summer, there should be a mechanism to go back during the hunting season. It is not a preventive measure, it is to rectify a problem.

**Motion-** Gaskill- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the Proclamation and Rule, as presented.

**Second-** Neville

#### **Discussion on Motion**

Bingham- I think the motion should include a statement that the Division will continue to work to protect the livestock and the agriculture industry.

Selman- I agree with Mr. Bingham.

**Motion Carries-** Unanimous

**Motion-** Selman- Recommend that the Wildlife Board consider creating a focus group to address chronic cougar depredation issues on private land.

**Second-** Bingham

#### **Discussion on the Motion**

Shirley- The Cougar Management Plan should address the issue since it is up in one year. If Biological Services can not take care of the problem, then there needs to another solution.

Bingham- I think that is a good solution. They should start addressing the issue this year so it will be ready to put into place next year.

Shirley- Would that focus group then supplant the Cougar Management Plan group that will be arranged again in two years.

Slater- This group is recommending that a focus group be created to identify those issues and make some suggestions as to how the issue should be approached. The focus group could then make those recommendations to the Cougar Management committee.

Fenimore- Although I am sensitive to the issue, I am not sure it is central to the need. During the hunting season, it will be impossible for the property owner to know whether they are hunting the cat that actually took their livestock. I do not support the motion as presented. ADC is effective and available. There are a lot of remedies that can be utilized for a problem cat on private lands which would be more likely to target the right cat. I do not think it is appropriate to create a focus group since the Cougar Management committee will meet in the near future.

Leonard- I do not think it would cause a problem if a focus group were to look into the problem. We obviously have a chronic problem in certain localized areas.

Foutz- It seems that the only other solution available is to allow the private land owner to eliminate the cat. I don't think the public would ever agree to that solution. Is there another solution that would help these private land owners?

Bunnell- It would be beneficial if the private land owners were to get the Livestock Damage Prevention Board to pass a similar motion. If Wildlife Services becomes involved, they may be able to remove the cat in the winter.

Selman- Why can't there be an opportunity for the private land owner to hunt the cat during the hunting season since he is the one that has fed it during the year.

Slater- The intent is for the focus group to consider those kinds of questions.

**Motion Carries:** For 10 (Shirley, Foutz, Cowley, Neville, Gaskill, Groll, Byrnes, Selman, Bingham, Leonard) Against (Fenimore)

**Item 5. Furbearer Proclamation and Rule R657-11**

Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator

See Handout

**RAC Questions**

Gaskill- Why isn't there a provision as to what will happen if they are all positive?

Bunnell- According to the Bobcat Management Plan, we can increase the number of tags or lengthen the season.

Gaskill- How will the CO in the field determine whether an animal is 300 pounds?

Bunnell- That will only become an issue if there is an animal caught in a snare that should have been released. At that point, the CO will take the trap and bring it back into a controlled environment where it can be checked.

Gaskill- As a point of clarification, on page 22, there is a statement regarding artificial water sources. Would you mind clarifying that statement for the RAC, as well as the members of the audience?

Bunnell- Kit Fox are on our sensitive species list so we are asking people to voluntarily release them. The statement on page 22 is in relationship to artificial water sources. One of the biggest impacts that we are aware of with Kit Foxes is expanding coyote populations. Kit Foxes are highly adapted to very arid environments but they are very vulnerable to competition. When artificial water sources are on the landscape, it increases the potential for competition with coyotes.

Neville- What is the Bobcat population in Utah?

Bunnell- They are difficult to count so we rely on the data that is calculated from the harvest. I would not even attempt to guess. I am comfortable with the plan. We are still at a sustainable level of harvest. We need to manage according to the plan that was passed last year.

Neville- Have you created a map that shows Bobcat habitat?

Bunnell- No, since there are so many Bobcat it would appear to be a blur.

Fenimore- Does the 300 pound pull on the breakaway do any damage to non-target animals that are able to exert that much pressure and break away?

Bunnell- According to the research that has been done, those animals are not harmed. A deer can withstand a lot more pressure than 300 pounds.

Cowley- At what point can a Lynx breakaway? How are you dealing with potential Lynx trapping?

Bunnell- Over the past few years, we have trapped the Lynx that have come from Colorado because they have been in Bobcat habitat, not Lynx habitat. A cat in general will not put a lot of pressure on a snare but there is not a lot of vulnerability that exists due to the habitat requirements and spacial segregation.

Cowley- The transitory migration route is shown on a lot of the maps indicates that some of the areas may be overlapping.

Bunnell- There is a potential for overlapping areas. We have not yet had any incidental take of Lynx. Every individual who obtains a Bobcat tag receives a card that includes information on how to avoid trapping Lynx. We are trying to educate the public and try to avoid that situation.

### **Public Question**

Kenneth Duncan- I have last year's Bear Proclamation that addresses accidental trapping. It states that accidental traps must be released unharmed. How do you release something unharmed out of a cubby trap?

Bunnell- It would not be possible to release the animal unharmed but as far as I know, that type of incident has not occurred.

### **Public Comment**

Stan Bassett (Utah Trappers Association)- The Utah Trappers Association agrees with the recommendations that have been presented tonight. We think it is a positive change. If this breakaway system is passed, we will educate the members throughout the State as to how to use the break away system correctly. We would like the law enforcement to receive the same kind of education. The proclamation should state that the breakaway allows for the lock to break, not the snare.

Byron Bateman (Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife)- Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife supports the Division's recommendation. We want to express appreciation to Mr. Bunnell and the different groups that created the three year management plan for the Bobcat.

Ernie Millgate (Utah Federation of Houndsmen)- The Utah Federation of Houndsmen supports the State's recommendation. We appreciate the Division and the President of the Trapper's Association for creating this proposal.

Ken Duncan- I agree with the recommendation to put the breakaway on the snares. I have personally seen situations where lions have been forced to chew the snares to be released. I am concerned about the cubby trap. I do not feel that is an ethical way of trapping. I do not think there is a way to dog-proof a set since there is such a size difference between the different dog breeds. My dog that is worth a significant amount of money was caught in one of these traps. He would have died had I not been there to rescue him. There is a risk to the Division that a hiker or skier will have their dog trapped.

### **RAC Discussion**

Neville- It would be helpful if the members of the RAC could review the data that is presented prior to the RAC meeting.

**Motion-** Gaskill- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the Proclamation and Rule, as presented.

**Second-** Bingham

**Motion Carries-** Unanimous

### **Item 7. Commercial Hunting Area Variance and Species Review**

Justin Dolling, Northern Region Wildlife Manager

See Handout

### **RAC Questions**

Selman- Is there a good success rate raising the Hungarian Partridge?

Dolling- Yes, they can be raised in a fly pen and then released. The survival of most pen reared

birds raised in a fly pen is very low.

Selman- Is the success rate for hens as high as the success rate for pheasants?

Dolling- I would assume they are similar, but I do not know for certain.

**Motion-** Selman- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the proposal, as presented.

**Second-** Cowley

**Motion Carries-** Unanimous

### **Other RAC Business**

Neville- I am very concerned about the amount of paper and postage that is being used by the Division to prepare the RAC members for the meetings. Would the Division be willing to consider offering electronic notification to those RAC members that are interested? It would not only save paper and postage, but would also simplify the process for the Division to update the RAC members on specific items.

**Motion-** Neville- Recommend the Division consider an option whereby the RAC members could receive the information electronically.

**Second-** Gaskill

Ernie Perkins- I believe the website includes a portion of what goes into the RAC packet. The motion is worth consideration.

**Motion Carries-** Unanimous

**Meeting Ends:** 9:35 p.m.

Central Region Advisory Council  
Springville Jr. High  
165 S. 700 E. Springville  
July 11, 2007 ↻ 6:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

John Bair, Sportsmen  
George Holmes, Agriculture  
Doug Jones, Forest Service  
Fred Oswald, Non-consumptive, Vice Chair  
Jay Price, Elected  
Duane Smith, Non-consumptive  
Allan Stevens, At Large  
John Weis, At Large

**Members Absent**

Ed Kent, Chair  
Calvin Crandall, Agriculture  
Byron Gunderson, At Large

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

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Weis to accept the agenda as written**

**Seconded by Duane Smith**

**Motion passed unanimously**

2) **Approval of the May 22, 2007 summary (Action)**

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Bair to accept the summary notes as transcribed**

**Seconded by Duane Smith**

**Motion passed unanimously**

3) **Regional Update (Information) (attached)**

- **John Fairchild, Central Regional Supervisor**

**Wildlife**

- Bears have made the news quite a bit this summer. DWR and the Forest Service have been busy getting the word out to campers and campground hosts about how to reduce the risk of camping in bear habitat. In addition, we've moved numerous bears from campgrounds and rural subdivisions to areas where they're less likely to encounter people and have had to kill four that were considered high public safety risks. The drier than normal spring has resulted in a food shortage for bears and they're looking for it in all the wrong places. Keep a clean camp. Don't store your food in your tent.

**Aquatics**

- Yuba Reservoir producing nice sized walleye and northern pike.
- Over 100,000 eggs were taken from Bonneville cutthroat trout at the annual spawning event at Mountain Dell Reservoir in June. The fish that will be raised at Mantua Hatchery will be used supplement native populations along the Wasatch Front. Several

thousand are slated for upper Diamond Fork as a follow up to the reintroduction that was done last year.

### Habitat

- Habitat biologists are preparing management plans for all DWR lands in Sanpete County east of Hwy 89. The plans are required by state code and will address a variety of management issues; vehicle access, habitat improvement needs, noxious weed control, livestock grazing and property control.
- The region has dodged the major wildfires that have consumed about ½ million acres in Utah already this year, but it's early in the season. We can expect more wildfires in the region this summer and will be working with the BLM and Forest Service to develop fire rehabilitation plans that will benefit wildlife.

### Conservation Outreach

- Our conservation outreach manager, Scott Root, conducted non-stop television and newspaper interviews for a week following the tragic bear incident in American Fork Canyon last month. Scott did a great job under difficult circumstances.
- And finally to dedicated hunters, don't put off signing up for conservation projects. It's only going to get hotter, and the archery hunt will be here before you know it.

#### **4) Dedicated Hunter Program Information (Informational)**

- **Jill West, Wildlife Program Coordinator**

### RAC Discussion

John Bair – I think Jill has been very prepared and has done an excellent job. With the time and thought that was put into this I think we are headed in the right direction.

Allan Stevens – Have you looked at the difference in numbers of dedicated hunters who live in Central but hunt in the Southeastern region? The administrative boundary for Southeastern region is different than the hunt boundary. Half of the Manti is in the Southeastern region for the hunt but in Central for projects.

#### **5) Bucks, Bulls and OIAL 2007-2008 Information (Informational)**

- **Kent Hersey, Wildlife Program Manager**

#### **6) Cougar Proclamation and Rule R657-10 (Action)**

- **Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator**

### Questions from the RAC

Q: John Weis – The average age of harvest last year was 2.9, correct?

A: Kevin Bunnell – That is what was on the slide. I think that was a typo. It was 3.3.

Q: John Weis – What were the last three or four years?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It has gone from 3.2 down to 2.9 back up to 3.2.

Q: John Weis – What was it before that? It seems that you are not meeting objectives.

At what point do you decide you need a greater reduction in permits to get the population back?

A: Kevin Bunnell – There are several things that go into that. Often times what we have looked at is what the trend is. We have recently terminated predator management plans

for several of the units. A lot of what I presented includes the data from units that are currently managed under predator management plans. If you just look at the limited entry units it is a little different picture. All biologists follow guidelines. If a unit or an eco region is not reaching parameters then we reduce the number of tags. We have done that the last several years. The response from the population is not going to be quick.

Q: John Weis – So you are comfortable with the incremental back off and feel that with the lag time the population will eventually reach some of the targets set years ago?

A: Kevin Bunnell – I am confident that we are headed back in the right direction. This is why the research on the Monroe and the Oquirrh is so important. We can look at how those units respond. It wouldn't surprise me if the number of permits does not increase over the next couple of years because we are reaching a point where we are in pretty good balance.

Q: John Weis – How can we be in a good balance if you are missing on all of your targets?

A: Kevin Bunnell – The trend in almost all of the units is in a positive direction. Over the next two or three years we will start meeting those targets and then permits may be increased.

John Bair – I am glad to see the Vernon moved back to limited entry. Can you tell me how many females were killed on the Southwest Manti unit? After the meeting would be fine.

### **Comments from the Public**

Jason Walker – Utah Federation of Houndsmen – I appreciate that cougars are being recognized as trophy animal not just a predator. We need a good cougar population to be able to train dogs.

Fred Oswald – Are you comfortable with the numbers recommended.

Jason Walker – I would like to see it reduced more but I can see that we are trying to move in the right direction.

Brent McGhie – Utah Federation of Houndsmen – Our group is about three years old and 500 members strong. We would like to thank you for your sacrifice of time and we would like to thank Dr. Bunnell and the people at the DWR for listening to our opinions. We are not perfectly happy with the state of lion hunting in Utah but we do support the Division's recommendations for this next year. The Northern RAC supported this last night and I would encourage you to do the same tonight.

Fred Oswald – Two out of every three hunters surveyed indicated that they felt like the cougar population is decreasing. Does that concern you in terms of the proposal tonight?

Brent McGhie – Yes, but like Jason said, we are not thrilled with what has happened over the last ten years but we are happy that it seems to have bottomed out and at least we are going the right direction. Most of all we like the fact that Dr. Bunnell listens to our opinions and we have a voice.

### **RAC Discussion**

John Bair – I think Kevin has done a good job putting data together and keeping track. He has worked hard to have sound cougar data. They have made some adjustments that are warranted. I think it is a good proposal and we have seen the support for it here tonight.

## **VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Bair to accept the proclamation and rule as presented  
Seconded by Doug Jones**

John Weis – I am not going to support this. I have already gone through some of my reasons talking with Kevin. I appreciate the fact that we have been going in the right direction the last couple of years to try to get the numbers back. I feel there is complacency for the cougar numbers within the population of people that want to have them there and see the value but at the same time don't want them there. Everybody is happy to see the falling numbers because we are getting rid of a predator. I really think we have to consider cougars as something other than something to dispose of as a predator. I don't support maintaining it this way when we are missing the objectives. I think we need to take a more aggressive approach toward trying to regulate harvest for the next year or two.

**In Favor: George Holms, Jay Price, Allan Stevens, Duane Smith, Doug Jones, John Bair**

**Opposed: John Weis**

**Motion passed 6 to 1**

- 7) **Furbearer Proclamation and Rule R657-11 (Action)**  
- **Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator**

### **Questions from the Public**

Q: Ken Madsen – What are the clarifications for dispatching animals after dark?

A: Kevin Bunnell – It has been a gray area as to whether you can use a firearm at night or flashlight if you are checking traps after dark. Our law enforcement realize that is legitimate and that has been clarified.

### **Questions from the RAC**

Q: Allan Stevens – Why is no hunting license required?

A: Kevin Bunnell – The furbearer license serves the same purpose.

John Bair – Speaking as a houndsman I hate bobcats and I want to know how we can get rid of them, I am serious.

### **Comments from the Public**

Jason Walker – I support the recommendations. Being a trapper and a houndsman I like the new snare regulations.

Paul Jarvis – I represent the Utah Trappers Association, we have 650 members. We really appreciate the way Kevin has put this together on the break away snares are we support it all the way.

Rick Westwood – I have a suggestion after reading through the proclamation. Different species are listed on many different pages. I think there should be someplace where the protected and non-protected species are listed.

Ken Madsen – I would like to thank Kevin for his presentation and I support it wholeheartedly.

### **RAC Discussion**

John Bair – Kevin has done a great job working with trappers and the interested groups. He has done a good job putting their presentation together.

### **VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Bair to accept the proclamation and rule as presented  
Seconded by John Weis**

**In Favor: all**

**Motion passed unanimously**

- 8) **Henry Mountains Bison Management Plan (Action)**  
- **Wade Paskett, Wildlife Biologist**

### **Questions from the Public**

Q: Rick Westwood – There are 67 AMUs for buffalo. How many are there for other species such as cattle on the Henry Mountains?

A: Wade Paskett –The 325 bison objective would represent 17 percent of the allocated forage.

### **Questions from the RAC**

Q: John Weis – Do we know anything about the genetic diversity of these four genetically pure bison populations?

A: Wade Paskett – Yes. James Durr from Texas A&M has been studying the genetics of bison for a number of years and has tested virtually all the herds in the United States and Canada. The figures that I gave you are published.

Q: John Weis – You started off with a population of fifteen cows and three bulls and you brought in five more from Yellowstone. You want to expand that and you are worried about inbreeding. You are going to bring in bulls from outside periodically introducing genetic diversity and they are ‘genetically pure’ but if they are not genetically diverse then you are not going to get around that issue. Do we know how genetically diverse they are?

A: Wade Paskett – They do know. According to the geneticist and what they are saying with the American Bison Society it is going to take 430 bison in a herd to maintain that genetic diversity over a 500 year period.

Q: John Weis – I am just curious. It doesn’t matter how many animals you have. If they come from an inbred stock then you are introducing the same alleles therefore not the diversity.

A: Wade Paskett - I understand what you are saying and inbreeding is a concern but according to the research that has been done I trust what these scientists are showing.

Q: Allan Stevens – One of the main objectives is to keep the genetic diversity by getting to that 430. The suggested population is 325 which is about 76 percent of that total number that is needed to maintain the genetic diversity. It seems like since 60’s we have

been below that number so how are you going to meet the objective of maintaining a herd of 430 when we have a stated objective of 325?

A: Wade Paskett – The 325 is a post season number after the hunt. Preseason we will be between 430 and 450 individuals. It is not perfect. That is why we want to bring other animals in from perhaps Wind Cave, which is a separate population from Yellowstone.

Q: Duane Smith – I have a question about the strategy of using additional permits when range conditions are poor. That will lower that number and as a result of the poor conditions you will have reduced reproduction.

A: Wade Paskett – Compromises needed to be made for this plan.

Q: George Holmes – Did you say that Johne's disease is only in domestic sheep?

A: Wade Paskett – Not only, it is carried in cattle as well.

Q: George Holmes – Why worry about the sheep but not the cattle?

A: Wade Paskett – As far as I understand cattle can carry it but virtually every domestic sheep is a carrier of Johne's disease. When they come into contact with bison they will get it.

Q: George Holmes – How were the SITLA AUMs acquired?

A: Wade Paskett – They are leased from SITLA. The division holds leases for wildlife throughout the state. How or when they were acquired I am not sure.

George Holmes – I question the necessity of 400 animals.

### **RAC Discussion**

Duane Smith – We are concerned about cross breeding with cattle for genetic purity. Are cattle not allowed on that range until the buffalo have completed their reproductive cycle?

Wade Paskett - They are allowed on there.

Duane Smith – How do we keep them separate?

Wade Paskett – Historically inbreeding has occurred through forced breeding.

Jay Price – I agree with your strategies but I don't know why we wouldn't implement the strategies as far as conversion of the BLM land and other things before we want to increase the herd.

Wade Paskett – Currently we are implementing the strategies. You noticed we wouldn't increase numbers until 2010. We have a number of projects going on now.

Jay Price – If we are doing that why don't we discuss this in 2010 after those things have been implemented?

Wade Paskett – One thing I failed to mention is that there has been a half a million dollars committed for these habitat projects over the next five years. In order for that type of money to be invested there needed to be a way to increase bison numbers as well as do these projects at the same time. We are starting on the projects first.

Jay Price – It seems like the money comes with strings attached and maybe that is okay. If you are truly committed to the project you would give the money with the understanding that the Division would accomplish the goals.

John Bair – We have already put a lot of money on the ground down there and is a lot more committed. The bison is a unique species and we are lucky that we have this herd. It is exciting to see the plan.

**VOTING**

**Motion was made by John Bair to accept the plan as presented**

**Seconded by Doug Jones**

**In Favor: Allan Stevens, John Weis, Duane Smith, Doug Jones, John Bair**

**Opposed: George Holms, Jay Price**

**Motion passed 5 to 2**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

**380 in attendance**

**Next board meeting August 2, 2007 at the DNR Auditorium**

**Next RAC meeting August 21, 2007 at Springville Jr. High School**

**NORTHEASTERN RAC MEETING SUMMARY – MOTIONS PASSED  
UBATC, Roosevelt/July 18, 2007**

**7. COUGAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-10**

**MOTION:** to accept as presented by DWR  
Passed unanimously

**8. FURBEARER PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-11**

**MOTION:** to accept as presented by DWR  
Passed unanimously

**9. HENRY MTNS. BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**MOTION:** to accept as presented by DWR  
Passed unanimously

**NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY**  
**UBATC, Roosevelt**  
**July 18, 2007**

**Started at 6:30 pm; Adjourned at 9:30 pm**

**RAC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Rod Morrison-Sportsmen  
Floyd Briggs-At-Large  
Bob Christensen-Forest Service  
Rod Harrison-Elected Official  
Kevin Christopherson-NER Super  
Amy Torres-BLM  
Beth Hamann-Non-Consumptive  
Kirk Woodward-Sportsmen

**UDWR PERSONNEL PRESENT:**

Dave Olsen-NER Wildlife Pgm Mgt  
Jill West-Dedicated Hunter Coordinator  
Kevin Bunnell-Wildlife Pgm Coordinator  
Ron Stewart-NER Conservation Out.  
Gayle DeCamp-NER Office Manager  
Maryann Wangsgard-NER L.E.  
Bill Bates-Wildlife Pgm Manager  
Kent Hersey-Wildlife Pgm Mgr  
Anis Aoude-Wildlife  
Wade Paskett-Wildlife

**RAC MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Carlos Reed-Ute Tribe  
Curtis Dastrup-Agriculture  
Dave Chivers-Agriculture  
Karl Breitenbach-At-Large

**UTAH WILDLIFE BOARD MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:**

Allan Smith

**RAC MEMBERS NOT EXCUSED:**

Nancy Bostick-Ebbert

**NOMINATIONS FOR NEW CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN: Kevin Christopherson**

Nomination of Amy Torres for Chairman by Bob Christensen  
Second by Floyd Briggs

Passed unanimously

Nomination of Bob Christensen for Vice-Chairman by Amy Torres  
Second by Beth Hamann

Nomination of Floyd Briggs for Vice-Chairman by Bob Christensen  
Second by Rod Harrison

Bob Christensen nominated by secret ballot  
4 for Bob Christensen  
2 for Floyd Briggs  
1 Abstention

## **1, 2, AND 3. REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA AND MINUTES AND OLD BUSINESS: AMY TORRES**

### **4. REGIONAL UPDATE: KEVIN CHRISTOPHERSON**

Thanks to our exiting RAC members and welcome to our new RAC members.

The DWR Drought Management Plan is available. We will make sure RAC members get a copy. An example of how this plan will be useful is that Whiterocks Hatchery's water is down so they will have to stock fish early. We will refer to the drought management plan to resolve those kinds of issues.

There have been lots of fires around Utah. The Neola fire was not as harmful to the winter range as was thought. As the fire season continues, one of the big issues to be dealt with is reseeding. Seed production is down because of the drought so many of our normal suppliers don't have as much as we need so we may need to look elsewhere.

Bears have been in the news a lot lately. This is especially a problem in times of drought when they go into campgrounds looking for food. Remember to keep your camps clean.

There has been a lot of turnover in Wildlife Resources Northeastern Region:

Clint Sampson will be a new Conservation Officer.

A Wildlife Biologist position is open for the Book Cliffs.

Daniel Ewell will be our new Walk-in Access Biologist. ("Walk-in" means compensating landowners for hunters and fishermen accessing their property).

Quagga Mussels are coming from Asia and have shown up in the Great Lakes. Lake Michigan has had its salmon industry collapse because of them. They attach themselves to pipes in such high densities to block them off. They were found in Lake Mead this spring. We will hire 40 people, statewide to help spread information and keep infection from coming to Utah waters. When we have a position coming to NERO we will have them give an introduction.

We will have a Support Services Coordinator position to be filled.

The Willow Creek CRCT Conservation Project was very successful. We only found one fish this year and so we will be restocking fish this year.

Ferret surveys are coming up. We invite new RAC members to attend. It will be held toward the end of August. If any of you are interested in spotlighting in the middle of the night, let us know. **(Beth Hamann expressed interest in attending).**

Western Area Power is looking at changing releases from Flaming Gorge Dam. We have concern about flow releases. If they go to double peaking it may impact that fishery. They have hired consulting firm out of the Midwest to study potential impacts.

## **5. DEDICATED HUNTER PROGRAM INFORMATION: JILL WEST (INFORMATIONAL)**

### **Proposed changes for 2008.**

Online only application process

### **Questions from RAC:**

Bob Christensen: Is there any discussion for the timeframe for completing hours?

Jill West: Those were not part of the issue we were focused on.

Kevin Christopherson: NER has the smallest participation by far. I wanted to explain why. NER hasn't sold out of deer licenses in the past like Southern region had in the past. Now that our region is selling out, it may be incentive for people to become Dedicated Hunters.

Jill West: Central Region sold out two or three years ago and the levels of dedicated hunters went up as a result.

Bob Christensen: Is it safe to say that the majority of SRO dedicated hunt in SRO?

Jill West: Yes, almost 90%.

### **Questions from Public:**

### **Comments from Public:**

## **6. BUCKS, BULLS AND OIAL 2007-2008 INFORMATION – KENT HERSEY, WILDLIFE PROGRAM MANAGER**

DWR is considering making the 2008 big game application process online only

The reasons are:

Faster turn around

Get drawing results earlier

Les personnel time

Improved accuracy

The Division will provide assistance for those without Internet access

### **Questions from RAC:**

Bob Christensen: For antlerless deer, you probably looked at other states as well. Were they all similar?

Kent Hersey: Yes. They were all similar

Rod Morrison: Are your results all post-season?

Kent Hersey: Yes

### **Questions from Public:**

### **Comments from Public:**

Ken Labrum: At what point in your bull/cow ratio did you get to a diminishing return?

Kent Hersey: I didn't go that low. The lowest I went to was a 4-5 year. To go lower than that, you essentially go into an any bull scenario.

## **7. COUGAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-10 – KEVIN BUNNELL (ACTION)**

### **2007-2008 Cougar Harvest Recommendations:**

N Slope W Daggett 5

3 corners 5

South Slope, Yellowstone 5

South Slope Vernal Diamond Bonanza 15

Book Cliffs, Bitter Creek 13

Nine-Mile Anthro/Range Creek 15  
Wasatch Currant Creek 2 conservation 8 regular. Limited Entry  
Wasatch Mountains Avintaquin 10

Represents a 7% reduction over last year

**Questions from RAC:**

Floyd Briggs: Have you done any studies on the percent of bighorn sheep due to cougar?

Kevin Bunnell: Not in this state. It has been studied a lot in California.

Foyd Briggs: I noticed the 3 Corners is another permit decrease by 2 and we just had a release of sheep in that unit

Kevin Bunnell: It was because they just haven't been harvested in the past, regardless of the number of permits. If we do have problems, we do contact Wildlife Services to take care of a specific offending animal.

**Questions from Public:**

**Comments from Public:**

Jason Binder (President of the Utah Hound Association): We support this proposal.

**RAC Discussion and motion:**

**MOTION by Floyd Briggs to accept DWR's motion as proposed**  
Second by Rod Morrison

**Passed unanimously**

**8. FURBEARER PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-11: KEVIN BUNNELL (ACTION)**

Recommend a Four-year proclamation

Same numbers as last year

UDWR is working with the UTA to develop recommendations and promote techniques to help trappers avoid non-target species (cougars, deer, domestic animals)

Bobcat tags will be available online only

Recommended Changes to Trapping Regulations:

1. Require all snares, except those set in water or with a loop size less than 3 inches in diameter, to be equipped with a breakaway lock device that will release when any force greater than 300 lbs. is applied to the loop. Breakaway snares must be fastened to an immovable object solidly secured to the ground. The use of drags is prohibited.

Why? To reduce the number of non-target animals (e.g. deer, cougars, domestic animals...) captured in snares

2. Clarified the definition of an artificial cubby set
3. Separated "Bobcat Permits" from "Bobcat Tags" – Made consistent with big game permits/tags
4. Clarified what documentation needs to accompany harvested bobcats
5. Clarified the legal methods for removing animals from traps at night

**Questions from RAC:**

**Questions from Public:**

**Comments from Public:**

Jason Binder (Utah Hounds.): We support the Division's recommendations for the 2007-2010 proclamation.

**RAC Discussion and Motion:**

**MOTION BY Bob Christensen: to accept DWR's proposal as presented**  
Second by Kirk Woodward

**Passed unanimously**

## **9. HENRY MOUNTAINS BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN: BILL BATES (ACTION)**

### **Questions from RAC:**

Bob Christensen: You say there are disagreements on committee. Why?

Bill Bates: There are three livestock operators on the Henries that are really affected by bison. One of those didn't agree at the meeting and the Henry Mountain Grazers Association decided to support him. Some want to see the plan pass but they have loyalty to their neighbors. They would like to see the habitat projects in place before bison numbers are increased. That's what we're proposing. We intend to put the habitat projects in place first. We have the strategy that if the vegetation is in a downward trend, we delay it increase again. And we have a trust issue. I think the safeguards are in place and everything's covered. We will each be holding each other accountable.

Kirk Woodward: There is not a lot of competition between bison and deer on the Henry Mountains are there?

Bill Bates: No. There's some overlap in distribution but they feed on different habitat.

Kevin Christopherson: Bill and Dave both have worked really hard on this project. The sportsmen have put a lot of money into this project and some of them are saying when are we going to see the benefit from this? We as a Division feel obligated to show them some benefits. In the Northeast Region we haven't experienced that level of controversy due to Dave's efforts in explaining. It's one of those where if you're not running cows on the mountain you think it's a great idea. If you are, it scares you.

### **Questions from Public**

### **Comments from Public:**

Ken Labrum (Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife): We support the DWR's proposal.

### **RAC Discussion and Motion:**

**MOTION by Rod Morrison: to accept DWR's proposal as presented.**

Second by Bob Christensen

**Passed Unanimously**

Allan Smith: I would like to welcome the new RAC members on board and express my appreciation to RAC members who have put in so much hard work. The real decisions in the management of wildlife issues are made at the RAC level, not at the Wildlife Board level. Also, this RAC and Board process we have here in Utah is probably the best program in the nation to allow the public to give input as well as biologists to give sound data and information. Be sure to do your homework and attend these meetings to keep this process sound. Be sure to represent your constituencies.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.**

**The next RAC meeting August 16. It will be held at the UBATC in Roosevelt. The topics will include Waterfowl Proclamation & Rule, Turkey Hunting Guide & Permit Numbers.**

**COMMENT: Beth Hamann would like to be contacted regarding black-footed ferret survey. Also contact her on any other projects available.**

**MOTIONS MATRIX**  
**SOUTHEAST REGIONAL WILDLIFE ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**JOHN WESLEY POWELL MUSEUM IN GREEN RIVER**  
**July 17, 2007**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** to approve the agenda as amended.

**PASSED:** by a majority vote

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**MOTION:** to approve the minutes of the 5-16-07 meeting.

**PASSED:** unanimously

**CASTLE VALLEY RANCH CHA VARIANCE REQUEST**

**MOTION:** to approve a CHA variance, as requested by the Castle Valley Ranch.

**PASSED:** unanimously

**COUGAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE**

**MOTION:** to approve the Cougar Proclamation and Rule as presented.

**PASSED:** with one opposing vote cast by Laura Kamala

**FURBEARER PROCLAMATION AND RULE**

**MOTION:** to approve the Furbearer Proclamation and Rule as presented.

**PASSED:** unanimously

**HENRY MOUNTAINS BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**MOTION:** to accept the Henry Mountains Bison Management Plan as presented.

**PASSED:** with one opposing vote cast by Jordan Hatch.

**SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY**

**John Wesley Powell Museum in Green River**

**July 17, 2007**

**Commence at 6:30 p.m.; adjourn at: 11:15 p.m.**

**RAC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Albrecht, Kevin	U.S. Forest Service
Bayles, Lyle	At Large
Byrnes, Verd	At Large
Gilson, James	Sportsmen
Hatch, Jordan	Agriculture
Kamala, Laura	Environmental
Larson, Rick	Regional Supervisor
Maldonado, Walt	Sportsmen
Sanslow, Terry	At Large
Sitterud, Drew	Elected Official

**EXCUSED RAC MEMBERS:**

Hoskisson, Wayne	Environmental
Riddle, Pam	BLM

**UNEXCUSED RAC MEMBERS:**

Adams, Bruce	At Large
Lewis, Kurt	Agriculture

**UTAH WILDLIFE BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Keele Johnson

**DWR PERSONNEL PRESENT:**

Aoude, Anis  
Bates, Bill  
Bunnell, Kevin  
Crompton, Brad  
Gramlich, Carl  
Hersey, Kent  
Kerstetter, Roger  
Larson, Rick  
McLaughlin, Craig  
Paskett, Wade  
Shirley, J.  
Stettler, Brent  
West, Jill

**PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**      74

## **CONDUCTING THE MEETING**

-James Gilson, Chairman

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Questions from the RAC:**

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

James Gilson advised the council that James Fauver wished to present a request for a variance to the Commercial Hunting Area Rule (CHA) in behalf of the Castle Valley Ranch. Another unscheduled presentation would be made by the Sand Flats Recreation Area, which proposed to ban trapping within its boundaries. Gilson asked the RAC if they wanted to consider the Sand Flats proposal along with the furbearer proclamation or separately.

**MOTION by** Drew Sitterud to consider the Sand Flats proposal in conjunction with the furbearer proclamation and to accept the CHA variance request as part of the agenda.

**SECOND by** Kevin Albrecht

**PASSED** with a majority vote. A single vote, opposing the motion, was cast by Terry Sanslow.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Questions from the RAC:**

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

**MOTION by** Terry Sanslow to approve the minutes as written.

**SECOND by** Walt Maldonado

**PASSED** unanimously

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Questions from the RAC:**

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

Terry Sanslow summarized the proceedings of the last Wildlife Board meeting. The southeast RAC and Wildlife Board voted alike on the issues raised.

**MOTION by N/A**

**SECOND by**

**PASSED:**

**REGIONAL UPDATE**

-By Rick Larson, Regional Supervisor

**Questions from the RAC:**

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

**MOTION by N/A**

**SECOND by**

**PASSED**

**DEDICATED HUNTER PROGRAM INFORMATION**

-by Jill West, Wildlife Program Coordinator

**Questions from the RAC:**

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

Brandon Wise protested the fact that youth were allowed to enroll in the program, in light of the fact that they can hunt all three deer seasons anyway.

Jill West answered that there were only about 100 youth in the program, and that youth had been allowed to join the dedicated hunter program from the very beginning.

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

Terry Sanslow urged the Dedicated Hunter coordinator to restrict program entry to anyone who had ever been guilty of a wildlife violation.

Jill West responded that the program has been progressively tightening legal requirements for entry into the program. At present, any small or big game violation results in program revocation.

**MOTION by N/A**

**SECOND by**

## **PASSED**

### **BUCKS, BULLS AND OIAL 2007-2008 INFORMATION**

-By Kent Hersey, Wildlife Program Manager

#### **Questions from the RAC:**

Jordan Hatch asked questions about buck:doe & bull:cow ratios, age class objectives, fawn/calf reproduction and hunting success.

Kent Hersey responded to Jordan's questions, illustrating his point with the Henry Mountains deer herd.

Verd Byrnes asked about the feasibility of managing each unit separately. Each deer and elk unit has its own unique characteristics, suggesting that unique management strategies would be more effective.

Kent Hersey responded that such management would involve a lot more work for biologists.

#### **Questions from the Audience:**

#### **Comments from the Audience:**

Brandon Wise challenged the Division on its data and position against a 3-point or better hunting strategy.

Anis Aoude assured Brandon that both the data and the DWR's position were biologically sound.

#### **Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

**MOTION by** N/A. Informational presentation only.

**SECOND by**

**PASSED**

### **CASTLE VALLEY RANCH CHA VARIANCE REQUEST**

-by James Fauver, CHA owner and operator

Mr. Fauver asked for a variance to the CHA rule, hoping to win the RAC's approval for additional upland game hunting. Mr. Fauver cited the ranches' habitat improvement projects as justification, and his desire to align the CHA boundary with his CWMU.

#### **Questions from the RAC:**

Verd asked if the variance would only involve upland game hunting.

James Fauver answered in the affirmative.

Verd Byrnes asked Bill Bates what the Division's position was.

Bill Bates answered that the request violated the existing CHA Rule, but that the decision was for the RAC to decide.

#### **Questions from the Audience:**

#### **Comments from the Audience:**

#### **Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

**MOTION by** Jordan Hatch moved to accept the CHA variance as proposed by James Fauver.  
**SECOND by** Drew Sitterud  
**PASSED** unanimously

**COUGAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE**

-by Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

**Questions from the RAC:**

Interested by the stability of the cougar population on the Oquirr Mountains, Laura Kamala asked how the population was monitored.

Kevin Bunnell indicated that radio telemetry in addition to aerial and ground track counts were used.

Laura asked if depredating lions were captured and relocated.

Kevin Bunnell said they were not.

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

Lloyd Nielson challenged the Division on a variety of issues, including bear management, cougar management, predator management strategies, and studies cited by Kevin Bunnell. Lloyd asserted that bear and cougar populations could not be managed adequately with hunts by drawing. A harvest objective or split season strategy was much more effective.

Guy Webster stated that the Utah Federation of Houndsmen did not support a harvest quota hunting strategy.

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

**MOTION by** Drew Sitterud to accept the Cougar Proclamation and Rule as presented.

**SECOND by** Terry Sanslow

**PASSED** Motion carried with one opposing vote cast by Laura Kamala.

**PROPOSAL BY THE SAND FLATS RECREATION AREA**

-by Andrea Brand, Manager of the Sand Flats Recreation Area, and

-by Casey McVay, Moab District Conservation Officer

**Questions from the RAC:**

James Gilson asked who the Grand County Council was.

Andrea Brand answered that it was equivalent to a county commission.

Drew Sitterud asked when the resolution was passed.

Andrea Brand said that it had been passed in March, 2007.

Lyle Bayles asked who had posted the "No Trapping" signs.

Andrea Brand said a private individual had done it.

Lyle Bayles asked about a leash law in Grand County.

Andrea Brand answered that a leash law was in effect throughout the county.

Lyle Bayles asked why there was a problem with pets being trapped, if that law were obeyed.

Andrea Brand said that Sand Flats visitors included a lot of dogs and children, which ran around the area.

Lyle Bayles asked if sportsmen had been represented on the Grand County Council.

Andrea answered that they had not.  
Lyle asked about the number of trapping incidents in the recreation area.  
Andrea said there had not been any complaints of trapped pets on the recreation area.  
Verd Byrnes asked if Andrea kept records of the number of dogs in the recreation area.  
Andrea answered that she did not, but that 1-3 dogs per campsite was common.  
Drew Sitterud asked Sheriff Nyland how long the leash law had been in effect.  
Sheriff Nyland replied that the law had been in place since the 1960s.

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

Dr. Len Sorenson of Moab stated that as a veterinarian he treats many more pets for injuries caused by predators than by traps.  
Grand County Sheriff Jim Nyland stated that his office had not received any complaints from persons, whose dogs had been trapped; but his office has received numerous complaints about dogs off leash. Nyland's biggest concern was enforcement of the leash law, not trapping.  
Kevin Peacock of the Utah Trapper's Association expressed opposition to the proposal made by the Grand County Council.  
The following individuals stood to oppose the Grand County proposal: Brandon Wise, Gerry Swasey, Lloyd Nielson, Guy Webster and Trent Wood.

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

Laura Kamala suggested that the best solution might be education for all parties. In defense of the Grand County Council's motives, Laura explained that they were merely responding to the complaints they had received.  
Terry Sanslow commented that this particular issue was more a county problem than a RAC problem.  
Laura Kamala recommended that the DWR provide more trapping education in Moab, so that the public could become better informed about both sides of the issue.  
Walt Maldonado urged the Grand County Council make an effort to inform the public about the leash law.  
Verd Byrnes suggested that the Sands Flats Recreation Area brochure be updated to emphasize the leash law. Signs should also be posted to that effect within the recreation area.

**MOTION by** (The RAC did not take any action on the proposal by Andrea Brand in behalf of the Sand Flats Recreation Area.)

**SECOND by**  
**PASSED**

**FURBEARER PROCLAMATION AND RULE**

-by Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator

**Furbearer Proclamation and Rule**

**Questions from the RAC:**

Terry Sanslow asked if laws had been enacted to outlaw party trapping.  
Kevin Bunnell said the intent of the law was that anyone who took a bobcat from a trap should be the owner of the temporary tag.

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

Kevin Peacock of the Utah Trapper's Association expressed support for the proclamation and rule as presented.

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

**MOTION by** Terry Sanslow to approve the Furbearer Proclamation and Rule as presented.

**SECOND by** Walt Maldonado

**PASSED** unanimously

**HENRY MOUNTAINS BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN**

-by Bill Bates, Wildlife Program Manager

**Questions from the RAC:**

Jordan Hatch challenged Bill Bates and the Division on a number of issues, including AUM numbers and seasons-of-use, forage allocations by the BLM and SITLA, bison summer counts and sightability index, calf numbers, validity and appropriateness of the statistics cited by the Division, etc.

**Questions from the Audience:**

**Comments from the Audience:**

Gary Hall, BLM Assistant Field Manager, stated that the BLM supported the current agreement with the DWR, which is 275 adults plus calves post hunting season.

Bryan Torgerson of SITLA read a statement from SITLA Director Carter, which said that SITLA was neutral on the proposed increase in the bison population as long as the increase does not cause resource damage.

Horace Simms of the Bison Committee expressed opposition to any future road closures. Steve Dalton of Sandy Ranch voiced the same opinion.

Verlan King, President of the Henry Mountains Grazing Association protested past damage done to winter range by Henry Mountains' bison. The association expressed disappointment about the positive changes coming from range improvement projects, which had been undertaken.

Steve Dalton, Verlan King, Dave Brinkerhof and the Henry Mountains Grazing Association all protested any increase in the bison herd increase.

**Comments/Discussion from the RAC:**

Countering the concerns of the Henry Mountains Grazing Association, Bill Bates explained that Sportsmen for Fish and Habitat (SFH) did not want to commit \$500,000 to future habitat improvement projects, until the management plan had been approved. If the plan was rejected, SFH would put its money elsewhere.

Jordan Hatch suggested that SFH was bluffing in its threat to withdraw funding.

Lyle Bayles responded that the bison management plan called for a 3-year delay in any population increase. Many checkpoints and safeguards were in place to prevent future resource damage.

Jordan Hatch countered that the plan did not adequately ensure that resource damage would not occur. Jordan asked for more specificity on winter forage allocation. In conclusion, Jordan recommended tabling the management plan until all questions had been answered in a satisfactory manner.

Terry Sanslow expressed opposition to tabling the plan. He informed the RAC that three RACs had already voted in favor of the plan. The Wildlife Board would likely pass the plan, even if we tabled taking action. Terry insisted that contingency plans were in place to address future resource damage.

**MOTION by** Terry Sanslow to approve the Henry Mountains Bison Management Plan as presented.

**SECOND by** Lyle Bayles

**PASSED** Motion carried with one opposing vote cast by Jordan Hatch.

**ADJOURNMENT**

James Gilson adjourned the meeting at 11:15 p.m.

**Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
Beaver High School  
Beaver, UT  
July 12, 2007  
7:00 p.m.**

**REVIEW & ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** To accept the agenda and minutes as written.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

**COUGAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-10**

**MOTION:** To accept the Cougar Proclamation and Rule R657-10 as written.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**FURBEARER PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-11**

**MOTION:** To accept the Furbearer Proclamation and Rule R657-11 as written.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**HENRY MTNS. BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**MOTION:** To accept the Henry Mountain Bison Management Plan as presented with the following caveats: (1) no road closures, seasonal or otherwise (2) if the range conditions are down according to BLM there will be no increase in Bison numbers (3) range improvements that are promised will be in place and usable before there is any increase in population (4) maintenance plans will be implemented on all range improvements that are initiated (5) the bison committee stays in place to monitor the affected parties.

**VOTE:** 4 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstained

**Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
 Beaver High School  
 Beaver, UT  
 May 15, 2007  
 7:00 p.m.**

<b>RAC Members Present</b>	<b>DWR Personnel Present</b>	<b>Wildlife Board Present</b>	<b>RAC Members Not Present</b>
Jake Albrecht chairman Sam Carpenter Steve Dalton James Edwards Steve Flinders Gary Hallows Dell LeFevre Rex Stanworth	Aniz Aoude Bill Bates Gary Bezzant Teresa Bonzo Kevin Bunnell Lynn Chamberlain Brent Farnsworth Kent Hersey Giani Julander Sean Kelly Jim Lamb Douglas Messerly Jason Nicholes Fred Pannunzio Wade Paskett Neil Perry Brian Shearer Tim Shurtleff Hal Stout Brian Wing	Paul Niemeyer	Harry Barber Jack Hill Kim Robinson Clair Woodbury

Chairman Jake Albrecht called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. There were approximately 212 interested parties in attendance in addition to the RAC members, Wildlife Board members and DWR employees. Chairman Jake Albrecht introduced Wildlife Board member Paul Niemeyer. Chairman Jake Albrecht asked the RAC members to introduce themselves. Chairman Albrecht explained the RAC process and reviewed the agenda.

Gary Bezzant, the volunteer services coordinator with the Division of Wildlife Resources explained the process by which the dedicated hunters would receive credit for their RAC attendance.

Review and Acceptance of Agenda (action)

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Gary. Our next item on the agenda is approval of tonight's agenda. If I could have a motion.

Rex Stanworth: I'll make a motion to approve the agenda.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, we have a motion by Rex to approve the agenda. Do we have a second?

Steve Flinders: I'll second that.

Jake Albrecht: A second by Steve. All in favor? Any against? Motion carries.

**Questions from the RAC:**

None.

**Questions from the Public:**

None.

**Comments from the Public:**

None.

**RAC Discussion and Vote:**

**Rex Stanworth made the motion to accept the agenda as written. Steve Flinders seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Jake Albrecht: Second item is approval of last month's minutes. Do we have any questions? It's been a couple of months, so, there shouldn't be any questions because I can't remember them myself. A motion to approve the minutes.

**Questions from the RAC:**

None.

**Questions from the Public:**

None.

**Comments from the Public:**

None.

## **RAC Discussion and Vote:**

Sam Carpenter: I motion we approve the minutes of last month's meeting.

Steve Flinders: I'll second that.

Jake Albrecht: All in favor? Any against? Motion carries.

**Sam Carpenter made the motion to accept the minutes as written. Steve Flinders seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Jake Albrecht: The next item is the Wildlife Board update and I'm going to ask Paul Niemeyer if he'll come up and address the Board and the audience because this is kind of where Mike was at last month and where I take over this month.

## **Wildlife Board Update**

Paul Niemeyer: Actually this is probably one of the easiest Board Meetings we ever had. Most of the RACs were pretty much unanimous on all the items that we handled. The Senate Bill 161, which we had too, it affects a lot of different rules, it's just more housekeeping, and that passed, which you passed here in the RAC. The mandatory harvest reporting, that passed, it also passed here in this RAC. The division land rule passed and it passed in this RAC. The adjudicative proceedings rule passed and the RAC passed it. The northern region had a deal on the youth pheasant hunt location change and I don't even know if they even heard that. And then on the southern region proposed native trout projects that passed the RAC and also the Board. So basically the Board supported everything that the RAC passed in the last RAC meeting here. So it's pretty easy when all the RACs kind of get together and everybody seemed to be going one direction. But anyway it was all passed.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Paul. For the RAC members here just some information, each of you should have got a letter from the DWR about a meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup> at Cabella's for some training. If you haven't got ahold of them and let them know whether you're going to be there. You need to do that as soon as possible. Okay our next item is the regional update with Doug.

## **Regional Update:**

-Douglas Messerly: Southern Region Regional Supervisor.

Douglas Messerly: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Lynn Chamberlain has prepared a short video; it's about six minutes that we're going to watch after I introduce these other two topics. So Lynn will be getting that prepared while we're doing it.

- ▶ The first one, of course, is the fire that's the largest wildfire in Utah that's been burning north of here, north and west of here for some time now. It's a very large fire, three hundred thousand plus acres, as many people here are aware. We're monitoring that. We still don't know at this point what affect it's going to have on wildlife but I suspect that there will be both positive and negative affect depending on the species that we're looking at. One of our concerns is a remnant sage grouse population that is known to be within the exterior boundaries of the fire, the welfare of that sage grouse population at this point

is unknown. Obviously there were some animals that were caught in the fire and that impacts the population to some extent. Small game animals have a high capacity to reproduce quickly so we suspect that those smaller animals will recover fairly quickly, assuming there's enough food and water and cover for them. But we are monitoring that situation. We're involved with the people that are fighting the fire and attending their updates and trying to assess the need for rehabilitation later as we track the progress of this fire. I think in reality that seed to reseed this fire is going to be at a premium. There are other fires going and this is a very large fire. There probably won't be enough seed to rehab all of this fire or any of the others in Utah that are burning at this time. So we're going to have to prioritize. I suspect that's what will happen in this fire is we'll identify those most critical areas and we'll assist in whatever way we can with the federal agencies, and in some cases we do the rehabilitation ourselves, in an effort to rehabilitate the highest priority wildlife habitat and also to reduce the possibility of further fires. The danger here is that cheat grass is what will come back in the wake of these fires; we've seen that happen over and over again, and when that cheat grass comes back it has a much higher propensity to burn again and just continue to perpetuate that cheat grass habitat. And so our goal would be to break that up, along with the federal agencies who will obviously take the lead here in rehabilitation. But we will be involved.

- ▶ Secondly a thing I'd like to mention are some problems that we're having with bears. The tragic incident that occurred in American Fork canyon last month is a sign of something that we're seeing down here too. As the summer drags on and as dry as it is bears become much more aggressive in looking for food sources and they are invariably attracted to cabins, campsites, dumpsters, etc. where they can find garbage. Unfortunately when they do this they come in conflict with humans and we intervene at that point, according to the bear policy, and deal with the bears depending on the bear's behavior. We'll try to discourage the bears in many cases. The best solution is usually to get people to clean up their camps, cabins and dumpsters and make that food unavailable. As long as the bear is getting rewarded it will continue to come back and become more and more bold. Unfortunately as recently as last night we had to take a bear on the Beaver Mountain, near the High-low Lakes. This is a chronic offender that we've had ten separate reports on. The bear had virtually lost all of its fear of humans. While we were attempting to get some equipment together to relocate the bear the bear made an aggressive move towards one of our officers and we dispatched the bear. The bear was euthanized. And that continues to be a problem. We've got another bear at Lebaron Lake that we're dealing with right now too here on the Beaver Mountain that we're discussing options about now. It's again a chronic offender. And what we ask the public to do as much as possible is remove the attractants for these animals and clean up the garbage and just make it so they don't get a reward. Hopefully they'll continue to act like normal bears do and stay away from people and avoid that conflict and go on. But we have at times had as many as six or seven bears (problem bears), going in the region. And we're not quite that high right now but we do still have some going. We expect to have more as the summer drags on, especially if it continues to be very dry. Bears are trying to lay on fat right now for the winter and they're working very hard for whatever food they can find, and that drive is very strong.
- ▶ Finally, the video that Lynn has is of a program that we've got going from our Washington County Field Office, our St. George Field Office. In the Washington County area we have a field office where we have a crew that works on the Virgin River and other projects that

have to do with native species. And the project leader down there, his name is Rick Fridell, and he and his crew put together a program where they're utilizing high school students who are interested in the field of biology to come to work for us as crews on these projects. It's an internship program that I think is a great program. We hope to emulate this in other parts of the division. Lynn is doing a feature video on it and he's got a sneak preview for us tonight. It's about six minutes. So go ahead Lynn. Thanks Lynn.

- ▶ Beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, Senate Bill 161 went into effect. Those of you who haven't purchased hunting licenses yet this year will learn that in order to purchase, big game, cougar, turkey, or bear permits you have to first obtain a hunting license for \$26.00 or a combination license for \$30.00. The hunting license allows you to hunt what previously a small-game hunting license allowed you to do. But that requirement is in place and we're finding some people surprised by that when they get to our office. The same requirement exists at license agents and online purchases also.
- ▶ General season archery permits are going fast. There were less than 2000 the last time I looked. I suspect that they'll be gone before the first of August. So if anybody's been waiting on that then now would be a good time to jump on it. With that Mr. Chairman that's my presentation, unless there's a question.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Doug. Before we get started into our agenda items I want to excuse Harry Barber, he's in Wyoming fighting fire. So we wish him well. He'll be here at our next meeting next month I'm sure. For anybody who wants to address the RAC we have some comment cards that the DWR has, the personnel have. We need to have those filled out and they'll get them up to us so that you're able to speak on comments. Individuals are allowed three minutes. If you're representing a group you're allowed five minutes. So with that we'll get started into our agenda with Jill West and dedicated hunter program information. Are you going to take care of that Gary? Okay.

### **Dedicated Hunter Program Information (Informational)**

-Gary Bezzant, Southern Region Volunteer services Coordinator

#### **Questions from the RAC:**

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Gary. Do we have any question from the RAC?

Steve Dalton: Yes, was there any discussion about increasing the cap?

Gary Bezzant: Yes there was definitely a discussion about increasing the cap. It was considered very highly, initially, and ultimately the committee decided that to keep projects meaningful for now they want to keep the cap at 10,000 and see how it goes. See how we do at managing 10,000 for a few years and then revisit the issue in a few years and determining whether or not we feel like we can move ahead with more, and if we can secure the resources to be able to manage that many more dedicated hunters.

Rex Stanworth: Gary at least this RAC in the southern has had a huge concern about the number of dedicated hunters coming into our area, and in fact we've made many motions in this meeting in regards to capping the number coming into the southern region. I guess my

question is: was that ever address with this group, and if it was what were their comments and why were they not willing to look at a cap on the regions?

Gary Bezzant: Yes it was definitely looked at and in fact we at one point had determined if we did raise the cap in any way we felt that it would be necessary to look at regional caps as well in doing that. But in determining and making the decision we were going to stay at 10,000 we felt like that was something that was already in place and we would let it ride for now but it would definitely be on the agenda if we discuss raising the cap any higher than it is because there will be a disproportionate affect on the southern region.

Jake Albrecht: Do we have any other questions from the RAC? Do we have any questions from the public? Please come forward and state your name.

### **Questions from the Public:**

Bob Crawford: I'm Bob Crawford from Cedar City. My question was, as I was sitting here looking at these numbers I was looking at almost half of the dedicated hunters wanting to choose the southern region. I was wondering if the committee had taken into account that you're taking half of the cream of the crop of the hunters and applying it to one unit of the state along with the state wide archery hunt; if anybody has addressed what that's going to do to the unit? Because I think we've learned from both the examples on the Paunsaugunt what happens what happens when you take the cream of the crop out of the unit and the tremendous pressure on the southern region, especially during the archery hunt what that does to the deer herd. Was that addressed in any way? Was there anything put into motion, do you know?

Gary Bezzant: Yeah, like Rex mentioned this is something that has been discussed at length in the southern region for years. In our committee meetings we definitely talked about it. One of the things that are good to remember is that the statistics show that dedicated hunters harvest less animals than a general tag holder. Through whatever reason, whatever mechanism, why it happens I'm not sure that I understand, but dedicated hunters find themselves harvesting less animals and the statistics show that. The post-harvest surveys that are done by the Division of Wildlife show that general tag holders harvest more animals, have a higher success rate than the dedicated hunters. And so that's one thing that you would definitely would want keep in mind about the dedicated hunter program, yes there are more tags taken out of the southern region that were lost to the general draw there isn't necessarily more animals lost as a result of dedicated hunters killing more animals because they have more opportunity to do so.

Rex Stanworth: Mr. Chairman could I follow up with a comment on that? Gary I guess that's one of the.

Jake Albrecht: Wait for comments for the comments.

Rex Stanworth: Okay.

Jake Albrecht: And then we'll just do the questions. Do we have any more questions from the

public? This is Don Peay. In the future could you please step to the mike anybody that comes.

Don Peay: What is the success, the hunter success (inaudible)?

Gary Bezzant: I don't currently have the numbers in front of me. I remember that it was somewhere in the neighborhood . . . I don't know, does anybody else here remember? Jason, are you more familiar?

Jason? : Seventeen percent.

Gary Bezzant: Seventeen percent success rate for dedicated hunters as compared to general hunters around thirty.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, any other questions from the public? Okay we have no comment cards on this item from the public. Do we have any comments from the RAC? Rex?

### **Comments from the Public:**

None.

### **Comments from RAC:**

Rex Stanworth: I guess the concern quite honestly is that the seventeen percent success rate Gary but it's the impact of 5000 people through archery, muzzleloader and rifle hunts. And the other thing is you well know when we have these folks out here they come in and comment, those numbers come right off of the number of tags that are available so their opportunity is not there. I guess my concern is that we continue to fight this and I would like to have been able to make a plea to the group to make some honest effort of trying to make it a more fair and equitable way of distributing some of those hunters. We're just getting too much, too many people on the resource for too much time is what it amounts to. We've even gone so far, as you well know, to try to limit the number of days for archery hunt to see if we could get the impact down and we've not been successful with that. So I guess I'll wait and make some motions based on what we've heard.

Jake Albrecht: Do we have any other comments? I'd just like to make one. As I look at the area that has the most dedicated hunters in it in the central region I think there's a lot of our students from the southern area that go into that area during the time when they register for dedicated hunters and those are from southern Utah from Delta, to St. George, Cedar wherever. And then in return they hunt the southern region so those, I think those kind of balance out. I don't know what those numbers are but I felt that there's a large amount of those. But if we don't have any other comments, we need a comment card or please come up to the mic, and state your name. And then we need to have you fill out a comment card so we'll have it.

Roy Hafen: I'm sorry I don't have a comment card. My name's Roy Hafen. I've bow hunted for about 30 years. When I used to bow hunt I didn't know anybody else that bow hunted. And

when they first changed it to where you had to choose what you had to do it wasn't too bad. I'd like to know why they ever changed the idea to open archery to the whole state because it just screwed southern Utah in my opinion. I go out there and I bow hunt and I talk to people and everybody that's bow hunting are people that didn't draw tags so they can just go buy a bow tag. We have all these people out there screwing up hunts because they don't even know what they're doing. They're out there walking, they're hunting like they're rifle hunting, you know. And they just scare, I mean it's just a joke. So I don't know why they changed that unless it was just to make more money because they knew if they could bow hunt in southern Utah, you know they, everybody, they'd sell out the tags. Back originally you know you had a limit of how many archery tags were in southern Utah. We had a somewhat decent bow hunt up until then. And it's just a joke anymore. There's more camps there than. When I was a kid we have a ranch in Pinto and the rifle hunt there was camps everywhere, and it's like that on the bow hunt now, it's ridiculous. The other thing is on the dedicated hunter, I think, I don't know who's on the committee but I'd like to know who's on that committee because I get the feeling like these, it's like this gentleman says, they get all these suggestions but they don't mean anything. And I'd like to know who made the decision, you know, like to keep, not to raise the cap or not to give preference to guys like I have been a dedicated hunter every since we've had it. I mean it doesn't seem right that we put all those hours and all those years as dedicated hunters and then the day's gonna come and say well you're knocked out and we don't get anything for our effort. I don't, that doesn't seem fair to me. So I'd like to know who makes up that committee that says all these recommend. It seems like you make all these recommendations but nothing ever gets changed.

Jake Albrecht: Okay do we have any other comments. Okay. Our next item of business is informational.

Rex Stanworth: Hey Jake, can I just ask just one question? This is Rex. This is information tonight. Is this going to be coming back to us in November? Okay we'll wait until then.

Jake Albrecht: It comes back on the dedicated hunter rule.

Rex Stanworth: Okay, all right, thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Okay our next item is Bucks Bulls Informational, Kent Hersey.

### **Bucks, Bulls and OIAL 2007-2008 Information (Informational)**

-Kent Hersey, Wildlife Program Manager

#### **Questions from the RAC:**

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Kent. Do we have any questions from the RAC? Rex, go ahead.

Rex Stanworth: Well first of all thank you for that enlightening information because I believe the public is not aware, at least when I was on the elk management committee it seems like people did not want to work on the idea that the more big bulls you got the less opportunity there is. One question I've got for you on this would be when you look at limited entries there's

a cap on every one of these elk permit units. So let's say if it's 1400 on the Pahvant are you taking into consideration on those numbers the number of cows that are being killed in order to keep that cap within guidelines? Because it seems like to me that would skew everything, you know, if we've got to kill 200 cows in order to preserve those trophy bulls.

Kent Hersey: I guess I'm a little confused on your question. But when we issue permits we take into consideration where the, where our bull: cow ration is currently and we try to manage for a certain bull: cow ratio. And if we are harvesting cows off of that it clearly effects our bull: cow ratio so we would want to keep our number of bulls in that population in good proportion to the number of cows in it and keep everything at a total population size that we have set for our management plans.

Rex Stanworth: Well the reason I ask is because we've been told that there are at least two, possibly three hunting units where it is almost a one by one, one bull for one cow. And we can't harvest them because we've put the age objective so high that we have to go in and kill cows in order to keep the cap down. So wouldn't you say that that's probably a very unhealthy herd unit when you've got more bulls than you've got cows?

Kent Hersey: Yeah that is not how we want to manage it. And the problem is that sometimes we issue permits and then they end up getting cut back. We do not want to manage for a one to one ration. We want to keep it down. But if we can't kill bulls to get it down then we have to kill cows to get, you know, if we're over objective we've got to kill something to get it down and sometimes that ends up being cows. So and that's why on some of these units we have tried to put in this management bull hunt to try to get these bull: cow ratios down to where we feel it's a much healthier population.

Steve Flinders: Kent that was a good treatise on deer and elk management in Utah. The obvious question based on your selling of the elk management program in Utah is why don't we have yearling only hunts for deer? Has the division looked at it? I know for seven years we batted it around. Have you looked at any other states and what do you think it would do for us?

Kent Hersey: Well a large objective of the spike hunts is to bring those bull: cow ratios down. We do not currently have any deer units in the state where our buck: doe ratios are through the roof like this.

Steve Flinders: But it didn't start out that way, 20 years ago.

Kent Hersey: I'm actually not very familiar; I haven't been here for 20 years so I can't comment on what it was like back then.

Steve Flinders: Imagine that it's a blazing elk population that was just getting on it's feet, it was open bull hunting. And people struggled with how do we get, how do we provide a hunting opportunity and how do we protect bulls and be able to increase the age classes. Karpowitz was the one doing it, him and a fellow in Montana and look where it brought us today. But what do you think Anis?

Anis Aoude: The reason we don't do it with deer is they're not as long lived and they're more susceptible to winter kill. So if you do a yearling deer hunt and you end up having a bad winter you're back to square one, you've killed all your yearlings, you don't have. So deer is kind of a different animal, they're more susceptible to winter killing and they're not as long lived. And that's one of the main reasons we don't do it with deer

Steve Dalton: My question concerns deer. On your graphs you put up there you have one called reproduction comparison. Aren't all of these scenarios that you've presented here based on the fact that you have a maximum population for the herd unit?

Kent Hersey: Yes it is. It's for units that we are at objective and we are keeping it at that objective.

Steve Dalton: So anything that is under objective doesn't fall into this same scenario you presented to us here, for instance the Henry Mountain deer herd that's way below objective still.

Kent Hersey: It's all driven by the number of does in that population. Given the same reproductive rates and the same number of does it doesn't matter how many bucks are in there, you would have the same reproduction. But the fact is on a lot of these units we, if we are very high on does, I mean you have, and if you start getting into habitat damage issues because of too many deer or something like that these bucks are in place of a doe that could be putting out a fawn. And that's what drives your growth, not bucks

Steve Dalton: Sure I understand that. What my point was, the point I'm trying to make is if you're under objective on the herd unit then the buck to doe ration isn't managing for population or potential it's just managing to reduce the number of bucks in that herd. I guess what bothers me, I live right on Boulder Mountain and they're managing that 15 to 20 does per hundred or bucks per 100 does. Yeah we're way below objective on the herd unit. The population of the herd is way up.

Kent Hersey: Well it doesn't matter if you manage it for 15 to 20, or 30 to 35, I mean your bucks will not affect your growth. You can harvest as many bucks as you want and it will not affect that population's growth. It will come back just as fast if we're at 15 to 20 as it would in another scenario. I mean the doe harvest is the key to whether that things going to grow and if we're way under objective we won't be harvesting does unless we have depredation issues.

Steve Dalton: Right, I agree.

Sam Carpenter: Steve pretty much covered most of the questions I had. I did wonder just what data did you use to come up with your ratios? To me on your higher buck to doe numbers a lower population growth, it almost sounds like an oxymoron. I mean you would think that looking at the data, and this is one of the things I'm talking about, looking at the data here on the Henry Mountains your average buck to does for the 204 to 206 was 42. And that's, wouldn't you agree that's a large number of buck to doe, the ratio?

Kent Hersey: Yeah, that's high.

Sam Carpenter: The doe to fawn ratio is 86.

Kent Hersey: That's very high as well.

Sam Carpenter: So that's high too. And a lot of the stuff I'm looking at in the data that I was passed out doesn't necessarily agree with the lower population growth that you're presenting here. I'm just wondering what this data was intending?

Kent Hersey: If you took the total number of deer on that unit and took a population where the same total, where there is the same total but you had a different, if you had a much lower buck: doe ratio the difference in bucks caused by those two ratios would give you an increase in does on the lower buck: doe ratio. Those does would also have, would be producing fawns and that's where you would get your higher growth. We can't be comparing various units to one another and look at growth because in order for what I presented to be true the population totals have to be the same. I mean we're not, and another factor there is you're looking at fawns per one hundred does. If you looked at fawns per total does that's where you would see your difference. You can have a very high ratio and I'm not suggesting that buck, an increase in bucks will decrease your number of fawns that each doe is producing, that is not the case. But it will, for every buck you would take a spot that could be a doe and that would decrease your reproduction.

Jake Albrecht: Do we have any other questions from the RAC?

Rex Stanworth: I've got one off the wall, Kent. In this so-called management plan if you're going to go out to the public and put this out I don't see anything in here in regards to enforcement. What's the position of the division in regards to enforcement to the general public? We keep saying to these folks out here that are dedicated hunters or even sportsmen they've got to be self regulated, they're the ones that are going to have to make the reports. I'm just wondering if this is going to go to the public and you're looking at deer/elk management. Is there any place in here where the Division may want to have a statement something about an effective enforcement of poaching and illegal kills or something on that note? I mean that's got to be part of the growth.

Anis Aoude: We make numerous cases every year on spike units where illegal bulls are taken or visa versa. So the law enforcement aspect of it is it's certainly out there and we're out there as much as we can enforcing all these rules and all the rules in the wildlife arena. So enforcement is certainly a big part of this plan.

Rex Stanworth: And I guess that's my point. I don't see anything in here. If you're going to go out and make this for a general presentation.

Anis Aoude: Yeah, sure. And I guess that we're trying to come at it from the biological aspect how populations grow. Certainly that all goes along with it. And you know it may be missing in this presentation but it happens everyday.

Rex Stanworth: I was thinking it was an overall presentation instead of a biological

presentation. Okay, thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Okay I have one question. Has the Division looked at maybe doing spike hunts on all of their elk units and maybe limiting the amount of people that could hunt those spikes?

Kent Hersey: Currently we do not really have an issue. I mean we do have a total cap on spike hunters to answer this part of your question. So um, if the need arises we could cap them on particular units but currently the system we have in place works well. In terms of going to like, are you asking if we should go to all limited entry units should they all have spike hunts on them?

Jake Albrecht: Well like where you have the management bulls area this year, you know, if that doesn't play out and those numbers need to come down will the spike issue maybe come back into play to where you put five hundred hunters on there for so many?

Kent Hersey: That's always an option. However, what we're trying to do here is we have a variety of scenarios. We don't want every unit to be necessarily a spike unit. That would definitely, it would give you the most growth and a lot of opportunity there but you would decrease the number of very high quality bulls and we don't necessarily want to get rid of that. However, if we do have really problem units where the bull: cow ratio keeps going high and higher we've got to kill bulls. And whether that's through the limited entry system or whether we have to come up with new ways of doing it then that's what they need to do.

Jake Albrecht: Okay do we have any questions from the public?

### **Questions from the Public:**

Don Peay, Sportmen for Fish and Wildlife: My question in the presentation which I think was a good one, is what hunters really want to know is why their drawing odds are getting worse and there is more tags than ever. But why don't you address this issue, the quality issue may decrease the number of tags 25 percent but there's been a 500 percent increase in the number of applicants because of the quality. So it seems like we all get caught up in a little tiny difference, and really the reason why people are so frustrated is because there used to be about 40,000 applicants and now there's a quarter million. So I guess that would just have been my question when you're trying to address what hunters really want to know why their drawing odds are getting worse is because a lot more people are applying and I think that ought to be brought out in your presentation.

Kent Hersey: The fact is we're trying to keep increasing permits and increasing permits where we can and we're increasing our elk herds where we can to try and provide increased opportunity. But currently, you know, if people keep applying for that then the odds are going to go down. If more people, if the rate of people applying is going up faster than we can issue permits then unfortunately there is little we can do about that. Unless we wanted to really start increasing the permits, which will be a decrease in quality.

Jake Albrecht: Okay let me remind you once again. If we need questions from the public we need to have your name so you can get into the minutes and the record. So do we have any

more questions from the public?

Clair Hansen: Hi my name is Clair Hansen and I appreciate the presentation on how it's being set up but I'm wondering if we're getting so caught up in keeping the big bulls there, I'm referring mostly to the Fish Lake unit a few years back, where we're trying to hit the quota they were more worried about hitting the bull ratio and then we go and kill all the cows and ruin the whole unit. My biggest concern is I seen that happen and we're not, in my mind we're not going about it the smart way. We look one way and we're not thinking out of the box and going somewhere else. Do we need to open up more bulls for the management, which I think we're trying to do right now? But, I also think that looking at your presentation, that would be the ratio that you're getting in a perfect world but that's not really what's happening out there. In my mind this is what we want to hear that it's all going up and the way we're managing it we're going around where you're trying to do it in a backward fashion. We're trying to manage just for bull and we're not looking at the overall picture to bring the whole unit up so we will have more opportunities in the future.

Jake Albrecht: Okay. Are there any questions from the public? If not . . . Make sure they're questions and not comments because our comments come later.

Verland King: As I watched the presentation it was interesting and in my mind I'd like to know if these are hard facts of the research they've done or how much of it is population modeling that they're using for this, and, if it is some kind of model where was it developed, here in this state under these situations? And also, when another question is: do the population limits based on these different areas are they based on resource management or are they based on how many permits you want to let out?

Kent Hersey: What I provided was modeled populations that are based on real world data that we collect from our elk populations or deer populations. I mean our fawn: doe ratios are looking at things that we observe like statewide numbers that we observed, same with the calf: cow ratios, were all what we observed. And the survivals that we apply are based on pretty much what we observed and from the literature. So they are modeled populations based on real data. As far as his second question, I can remember what it was right now. The objectives are set on how much that area can handle and then we try and manage for a given objective.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, any other questions from the public? Okay we don't have any comment cards, Doug? None on this. Okay, comments from the RAC. Rex.

### **Comments from the Public:**

None.

### **Comments from the RAC:**

Rex Stanworth: Well my comment on yours and the other comment was dealing with the kill so I think it was probably covered. I'll just let it go.

Steve Flinders: Jake I just wanted to wrap things up like I started earlier. The last 2 years the

Division has requested that the Southern Region be a 9-day season as the other regions because we've met the buck to doe ratio in the objectives. The public has been frustrated with the buck to doe ratio they see in the field. And those that have come to this meeting successfully argued to the RAC to pass a 5-day hunt. It would be nice to see an evaluation of that. Has that got us anywhere? What if we went to a 3-day hunt? What if we went to a 9-day hunt? We've had this going on long enough, you know, in different parts of the state that we ought to have some good data on that by now and maybe you can help us solve that dilemma this fall because I can almost guarantee it's going to come up. And the reason I bring up the other issue earlier Anis, is there ways to look at what our general season hunt is in Utah is really a big limited entry hunt, it just has five units within those several other units. Can we pick some of those units and play with the regulations on those units such that we can change that survival? Refuge the units, not close these units but can we come up with other schemes, antler management schemes based on three or four point or better have not been successful in the west but I don't think antler restrictions for smaller bucks have been used very much. And I understand your argument about, or your point about deer survival but you'll typically lose fawns then does then mature bucks, it's those that have body fat. And Northern Utah may get more snow than we do down here. We've had winters deer don't leave 9000 feet; we see them on elk surveys. You guys see them on elk surveys. And we see a lot of bucks at 9000 feet with the elk. So just something that gives the public some more opportunity to be able to choose something beyond this five day hunt because they seem to want more than that buck to doe ratio offers.

Douglas Messerly: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I guess I'd just like to remind the RAC and the public of something that we hear about all the time and as we discuss these options, scenarios, schemes things to do, what you proposed Mr. Chairman we've referred to in the past is a limited entry spike only hunt. That is on the Southwest Desert we would issue 100 limited entry spike tags. The problem is we discuss these things and other options is it continues to complicate our regulations. How many times have you heard people say it's very difficult to figure out how to hunt in Utah? Every time we add another layer, another scheme and another set of options that's one of the tradeoffs that I think has to be recognized and considered carefully by bodies that are making these decisions. So I just wanted to make that comment. The further we complicate it. It would be very interesting to try many of these things but we have to remember that the general public wants to be able to buy their license and go hunting without having a lawyer with them. Thanks

Jake Albrecht: Okay we just received one comment card that deals with dedicated hunters and we've already gone by that on the agenda and if you want to stay until afterwards we'll discuss that under other. And if we don't have any other comments from the RAC, Kent thank you for your presentation. And we'll move on to the next item, which is the Cougar Proclamation and Rule. Kevin

### **Cougar Proclamation and Rule R657-10 (Action)**

- Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Kevin. Questions from the RAC?

### **Questions from the RAC:**

James Edwards: On the Oak City unit we've had ten of the limited entry on there with the split season. For at least ten years now we've never taken more than five. Why do we still have it at ten?

Kevin Bunnell: The criteria that the biologist follow is if there's, if the harvest is less than 50 % of what the quota is then they back off. If we're maintaining kind of an average of about 50, 50 % success rate is pretty reasonable actually.

James Edwards: Well this is the first year we've had more than four for the last four years. So I'm just wondering why we still keep it at ten? That unit is hunted all over. There's guys on horses, on their 4-wheelers, afoot, and every inch of that unit gets hunted by these lion hunters and they're not seeing the lion tracks there. They're just not doing it.

Kevin Bunnell: You know Jim if Teresa or Sean wants to address that more specifically, I'm not familiar with the specific units, and you may want to grab one of them afterward; or if one of them wants to come talk about it now. It looks like Sean's going to come up.

Sean Kelly: I'm Sean Kelly, Division of Wildlife. Actually the success in the Oak Creek's been all over the board. One year we had seven and we filled it in two weeks. And so it has had fairly high success in certain years.

James Edwards: Yeah that was back in the early '90's though.

Sean Kelly: I haven't been here that long. It was 2001 or 2002 I believe. But the Oak Creek's kind of a unit that it's a small isolated deer population. Those are the kind of units that usually can have an effective predator management and so it's had a predator management plan for quite a few years too. And that's one of the reasons that we try for a little high cougar harvest. But like Kevin said, about 50%, we've probably gone both ways but its averaged around 50%.

James Edwards: Is it still under a predator management plan?

Sean Kelly: It is, yeah.

James Edwards: Oh, okay.

Jake Albrecht: Any other questions from the RAC? Do we have any questions from the public?

### **Questions from the Public:**

None.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, we have one comment card, Jason Binder.

### **Comments from the Public:**

Jason Binder, President of Utah Federation of Houndsmen: My name's Jason Binder, I'm the president of the Utah Federation of Houndsmen Association and I'd like to thank you guys for your time this evening. And with the membership of well over 500 members of our club we are Utah's hounds voice and we'd like to thank Kevin Bunnell and the Division of Wildlife for the work that they do on the lion in their proposal and we support it 100 % for the 2007-2008 season. Thank you for your time.

Jake Albrecht: Okay that's all our comment cards from the public so we'll move to the RAC. Do we have any other comments? Seeing none we'll move on to a motion and discussion.

**Comments from the RAC:**

None.

**RAC Discussion and Vote:**

James Edwards: I'd like to make a motion Mr. Chairman that we approve the data as presented by the Division.

Gary Hallows: Second.

Jake Albrecht: We have a motion by Jim Edwards to accept and a second by Gary, Gary Hallows. Any other discussion? None there. All those in favor please raise your hands. Voting was unanimous, thank you.

**James Edwards made the motion to accept the Cougar Proclamation and Rule as presented. Gary Hallows seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Gary Hallows: Mr. Chairman, I move we go smoke.

Jake Albrecht: Gary you don't smoke.

Gary Hallows: I am now.

Jake Albrecht: 5 minute break. Turn the time over to Kevin. Thank you.

**Furbearer Proclamation and Rule R657-11 (Action)**

-Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Program Coordinator

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Kevin. Do we have any questions from the RAC?

**Questions from the RAC:**

None.

Jake Albrecht: Questions from the public? Yours is a comment or is it a question. Okay come up and do your question then.

### **Questions from the Public:**

Leroy Loftus, Trappers Association: I'm LeRoy Loftus, I'm from Richfield, I'm the treasurer of Trappers Association. I'd like to know how the fish and game officers are going to enforce this breakaway snare regulation that we've got proposed here?

Kevin Bunnell: Okay, that's a good question. Essentially it will only become an issue when there's an animal that's caught in one of these that we think should have been released. COs aren't going to be around going around pulling people's sets and checking the pound limits on their snares. When it comes to a situation if there's a deer caught in a snare that probably should have been released that snare will be confiscated and checked under that scenario but that's probably the only time, in my discussions with our law enforcement people, that a snare would be checked or tested.

Jake Albrecht: Any other questions from the public? Okay, if none then we'll move on to comments from the public and we have one from LeRoy.

### **Comments from the Public:**

LeRoy Loftus, Trappers Association: Well again we'd like to thank all of the RAC members for your time to listen to us and stuff. And the Utah Trappers Association would like to thank Kevin for all of his efforts and all of his studies and stuff to come up with a reasonable solution to most of our situations and stuff. And the Trappers Association would like to recommend that you accept Kevin's proposals as he has presented them today.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks LeRoy. It's the time for comments from the RAC, any? Seeing none we'll mover right along to a motion. Rex?

### **RAC discussion and vote:**

Rex Stanworth: Yeah I'd like to make a motion that we accept the Fur Bearer Proclamation and Rule as presented.

James Edwards: I'll second that.

Jake Albrecht: The motion by Rex Stanworth, second by James Edwards, any other discussion? All in favor please raise your hand. How many do we have for? Everybody? Okay the motion passes.

**Rex Stanworth made the motion to accept the Furbearer Proclamation and Rule as presented. James Edwards seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Jake Albrecht: Okay our next and almost to the last is the Henry Mountain Bison Management Plan, Bill Bates.

### **Henry Mountains Bison Management Plan (Action)**

-Bill Bates, Wildlife Program Manager

Jake Albrecht: Bill can you just put that last and just maybe leave that there for a few minutes. Okay, any questions from the RAC?

**Questions from the RAC:**

Jake Albrecht: Okay I have one. Under your safeguards you said that the year 2009 was when you'd like to increase those numbers, on the conditions that the habitat is there, and increase it through 2012 for example. If that habitat doesn't increase at all through those five-year periods where will those numbers stay?

Bill Bates: Well it would stay at the 275 for sure, you know we're not talking about going below that. But that's something that we'll have to address as a committee. And we're hopefully going to make this thing work. But right now it would not go below the 275.

Jake Albrecht: Okay. Any other questions from the RAC? Rex.

Rex Stanworth: I was just going to ask our two committee members, Dell and Steve, they look like they're both on the

Bill Bates: And also Gary too. Gary Hallows.

Rex Stanworth: Gary, okay I didn't see Gary up there. I'd like to just have a comment from those three since they serve on the RAC.

Jake Albrecht: We'll do that under comments. Okay, any other questions from the RAC?

Gary Hallows: I just got back from an intensive tour of the Henry Mountain area in looking for some stray cows. I've got some genuine concerns, and I have served on the committee and yes I think we were getting close, we're in trouble down there. Serious trouble. Not only from a cow standpoint. I question if they'll let us go and if they do it will be a 50 % reduction. What are those buffalo going to eat? They're going to start eating mule deer feed. It's tougher than hell down there and if you don't believe me rattle across that in the next day or two. We got, we shouldn't be talking increases here we should be worrying about decreasing. What are we going to do here? That's tough down there.

Bill Bates: And our bottom line is we don't want to do anything to hurt the resource.

Gary Hallows: I think we've got a crisis here. And if I'm wrong somebody go down and prove me wrong. Thank you. Address that.

Bill Bates: I agree that if there's a problem from drought or whatever those are things that would have to be looked at closely. And the other thing that we want to look at closely too is when we put out seed on these habitat projects if there's no moisture you don't want to put it out on a bad year so all those things have to be factored in and I think that's something that we have to remain committed to.

Jake Albrecht: Okay any other questions from the RAC? Questions from the public? Do we have any questions from the public? Okay we have one.

### **Questions from the Public:**

Verland King: My question is and we've discussed it a lot of times in the committee meeting is, and this bison plan doesn't say anything about the 400 head genetically pure stuff because I thought we'd gotten through that. How can you have genetically pure and good, not inbred buffalo when you started with three bulls and fifteen cows and you added probably less than ten bulls over the years?

Bill Bates: That's a good question and it also is comparable to what happened with bison as a species. Once numbering over 30 million animals they were reduced to around 200 animals left in North America. And all of the current bison populations came from that stock. All I can say is we have to deal with what we have and we need to try to improve. Do we just sit by and watch the species disappear? My answer as a biologist is no, we do what we can to try to maintain the bison genome, and this is what geneticists are recommending as the best option we have. And so I'm committed to also to try to work with other agencies. I received a letter this last week from the American Bison Society. I think we need to be looking at moving animals around. Yellowstone will probably have more genetic variability than the Henry Mountains herd does but ours fits within the Yellowstone genome so we need to be looking outside like Wind Cave shows the most heterozygosity. Is that the right word Kent? You know from our population. So we need to be doing what we can to save what we have.

Gary Hallows: Why would we want to take a chance of bringing brucellosis in there? We've got a clean herd, let's leave it clean. Why would we want to take a chance of moving something in?

Bill Bates: We wouldn't bring anything in that wasn't brucellosis free. Definitely.

Jake Albrecht: Okay if there's not any other questions from the, you got one other question Verland?

Verland King: When, in '95 when you went from 200 to 275, in the bison plan it said you purchased the AUMs and four of them were from my dad. I want to know what is or what was the protocol for transferring those livestock AUMs to bison. Were there public hearings or how was that done? Do you know? Can you talk to that?

Bill Bates: That's really a question to ask the BLM. But as I recall it was done through an amendment to the land use plan that went through a public comment period and I don't know if they held any public hearings or anything but they did have it open for public comment and amended their land use plan.

Jake Albrecht: Any other questions from the public? Okay, moving on to comments from the public. Our first one is Byron Bateman.

## Comments from the Public:

Byron Bateman, President of Sportsmen For Habitat: Thank you Mr. Chairman. My name is Bryon Bateman, I'm the, President of Sportsmen For Habitat: I just want to thank all you RAC members for your time and dedication to all the issues that you've heard tonight and all the issues you deal with throughout the year. This committee put a lot of hard time and a lot of hard thought into the things that Bill showed you tonight up there on the board. We feel that we came to a great win win solution for everybody. As Bill illustrated we've already spent a little over a half million dollars down there already, plus a lot of time and a lot of effort. We've gone back down, as recently as two weeks ago as Bill said on the 21<sup>st</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> and talked about some soothe projects some of the things we can do. Now there's a lot of adaptive management that has to go with this and that's why this plan calls that we not do anything for the first three years, to go from 275 to 325. If we approve this plan we'll start spending another half million dollars in the amount of 100,000 dollars plus per year. At the end of this five year program we'll have over a million dollars invested on the ground down there to bring this herd to 325, which still leaves the herd short of 430 where we should be to keep it off the endangered species list. But this is a win win solution for us. If we can all work together. And the drought is tough Gary, like you said it is everywhere throughout the state. And the fire right here to the west of us and to the north of us really illustrates how tough things can get and how tough things can be in the future. But it's an adaptive plan. If there's not enough forage we'll hold back on the increase of the bison. But we just need to get together and work together to make this plan work so we can move forward. We can't wait five years and spend a half million dollars and then think that we're going to go ahead and increase it. We need to do it, do the work, give it three years and then we start to do the increase over the last three years of this plan to 2012. I just want to thank you for your time and support and seriously consider the proposal. It's going to benefit all the citizens of Utah. There are around 5000 people that apply for these bison tags every year from the state of Utah. Your odds last year were 1 in 150. That would be an average of like six lifetimes for one person to draw one of these coveted bison tags. It's a great opportunity to go down that mountain. We also have one of the best deer herds in the world on the Henry Mountains. And by doing these projects down there it's going to benefit the deer. There's also turkey down there. It's going to benefit the deer, turkeys, bison and it's also going to benefit the livestock on the mountain where they're going to have more forage and more water. Thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Byron. Our next one is John Keeler, Utah Farm Bureau.

John Keeler, Utah Farm Bureau: I'm John Keeler with Utah Farm Bureau, member of the working group. I'd like to thank the members of the committee that served and put forth the time and effort in preparing this plan. The group moved to great distances in coming up with some of the recommendations that are in this plan, the strategies and concepts and we want to preserve that. But there are still some hurtles that some almost seem insurmountable. I've listed those that I think are representative of those. There is still a great deal of disagreement on this issue of the genetic viability, although I think people understand probably the need but the number is of concern. The total count or the survey, there's still a difference of opinion on what the total numbers are out there. There's a question regarding the AUMs that are owner controlled by (unintelligible) by SITLA. In reference to the fact that these AUMs are AUMs that are to be used during a specific season on certain allotment. And many of the committee

members feel like these AUMs are being thought of as that they can be spread over the whole area out there, so there's a conflict there. And then the drought conditions, there are some on the committee that don't even believe that the 275 can be maintained out there, especially under drought conditions. So there are several areas that are still contentious in nature. Besides the buffalo we talked about other wildlife. You've got a deer herd, an antelope herd and an elk herd out there all using that resource. And there are some serious conflicts on some of the allotments, Blue Bench and some others that keep getting pounded and pounded and pounded. And now you've got a drought that's exacerbating that situation. The Farm Bureau supports recommendations by the Grazing Association and they may be making comments. But I would like to recommend that we table this and go back and discuss some of these issues further especially in light of the deteriorating conditions out there. I don't think there's any rush for this especially if the recommendation that it's going to be stepped up increments. But I think in order to preserve the integrity of the whole thing and the process and all the effort that's been put into it that we table it and continue our efforts to resolve those issues. Thank you

Jake Albrecht: Thanks John. Our next comment is from Don Peay.

Don Peay, Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife: I'm representing the 17 board members of Sportsmen For Fish and Wildlife. I think last August it rained 5 inches in Hanksville and that's going to happen again. The drought is a serious issue but I guess the point would be are we going to move forward and hope the drought fades or are we going to sit here and continue to argue and do nothing. And whether there's a drought or no drought nothing positive is going to happen. And I guess that's kind of what I think we really ought to be thinking about. Do we want to move forward or do we want to wait? Now moving forward means we're going to start doing some projects. And if those projects don't work we don't increase bison. And if range conditions completely deteriorate we'll probably be reducing the bison and cows. But if we don't do anything nothing better is going to happen down there. And so I'll tell you the perspective that our board sees this from; and I want to bring out just a couple of points: The money that is spent on this project is sportsmen money, and a lot of it's raised right here in Beaver, and St. George, and Cedar City and Richfield and all of these other small towns. So our board treats the money that the membership donates very seriously. And they don't want to just continue to spend money if it's not going to produce a result. So that's a business decision that the board is seriously looking at. And I guess the other critical issue is, is there any trust of moving forward. And I'm just going to take the risk of sounding perhaps a little boastful but I'm just going to click off a few reasons why I think there ought to be some trust with the sportsman. I know the history pretty well, not as well as Mr. LeFevre but I've been around this issue for 25 years, we've been real involved for 5 years. And I know there's a lot of bad blood but I think we ought to bury the bad blood and we ought to move forward. Because you've never had a sportsmen's group willing to do what's been done down there in partnership with the permittees. Never before in the history has there been a sportsmen group willing to work with you on the scale and with the quantity of money. And if we get the cooperation from the Division, which I think there's a lot, a lot of great cooperation a lot of great expertise. It needs to happen. Complicated issues if we ever dealt with any in the past. When I walked into Washington D.C., I looked at that town and I thought, this is a big town and there's a lot of issues. How are we ever going to get rangeland restoration in little old Podunk Utah addressed, when you think of all the issues that happen in Washington D. C.? You know

right here in this state, Mr. Flinders, you know what's happened. That was a complicated thing and we worked on it for 5 years. A lot of people said that nothing would ever happen and there's close to half a million acres that have been treated and another half a million more. We thought this RAC Board process is a pretty good process where we can really dive into issues and not make decisions on ballot initiatives. And all the professional pollsters said you can't change the constitution. Well we raised a million dollars and we changed the constitution and we won it in the general election and then we fought it all the way to the United States Supreme Court and they ruled in our favor. That was a complicated issue and it took seven years. But guess what? We started and we finished. There's probably been twenty business deals we've done with ranchers on the order of 10 million dollars. And I think we could bring everyone of those 20 into this RAC or into the Board and they would tell you we've been very honorable, that we've done what we said we would do and that we have solved problems a lot of people said hadn't been solved, couldn't be solved. I just kind of throw this out as a report because I haven't been to too many RAC meetings but we talked to all of you about this expo idea. And we said we'd do some things and it was a complicated thing and we worked like crazy. Bottom result was that they raised about \$12 million for conservation. It was about a 20 million dollar event for the state's economy. 25,000 sportsmen came from 16 countries and 49 states. We had 10,000 sportsmen in Energy Solutions' arena and we had a great event there with some of the world's biggest celebrities. And I just bring this point out, trust. We had a board that said, where's the contract with Jeff Foxworthy, because we've sold all these tickets and we've done all these TV ads? I said we don't have a contract. It's a handshake agreement. So we have a track record of working with people and doing what we say we'll do. We want to move forward with these projects and we'll take the risk but hopefully we'll get some rain and we'll get some seed to take. But if we keep coming to these meetings and hearing that we're not going to respect your investment, that we question whether or not you can reallocate forage, or what happened with my dad's permits, and we don't believe the Taylor Grazing Act allows you to do these things; if that's the focus then as business people we're going to say we're done investing. So I've laid it out as clear as I can. There's been a lot of progress. We're committed to making this happen and we're committed to doing something that's never been done before. But we have a track record of working with people to make things happen. I can't say it any plainer than that and that's our comments. Thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Don. Our next comment card is Verland King, and I guess you're representing Henry Mountain Users.

Verland King, Henry Mountain Grazers Assoc.: Yeah I'm representing Henry Mountain Grazers. We've come a long way on this bison plan. It's been a fight and we've got some safeguards in there, they're kind of vague and we're not real comfortable with expecting results out of them all the time. Number one, at the current number of bison on the Henry Mountains there is resource damage and there has been for years. It's related to the areas that they have grazed in the past. And that's why we asked to put in the clause where they can be hazed and moved if they're congregated too long in one place. But at the current number there's been resource damage. There's no doubt about it, when you're dealing with the Henry Mountains and that area it's risky. Whether you're wanting to spend money there or if you're trying to raise a cow, raise a calf, or herd of sheep it's a risky business. We heard Bill say if there's a drought we won't go below 275. Well, and then if the range completely deteriorates we'll decrease the buffalo, Don Peay said that. So if it's got to get to the point where the range is

completely deteriorated for them to manage for the resource there's a problem. And that's where, that's the main thing that gets the Henry Mountain Grazers. And that's why we fight this AUM deal, the SITLA lands, the AUMs that were purchased, the livestock AUMs that were purchased and they want to convert to buffalo. With those AUMs there was allotments and seasons of use and with wildlife there's not. With wildlife if you, if as this plan says, if there's a problem with drought we'll go to the, take recommendation through the Big Game Board. I'm not sure how that works. We've talked about it before in our meeting and they're talking 18 months and that's probably to go through this process. But hopefully they can do it faster. But that's where we're coming from and that's why we would support Farm Bureau's recommendation to table the plan for now. Thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Thank you Verland. Also on this comment card we have David Brinkerhoff and Mack Morrell. And if you guys want to address this we'll give you three minutes each.

David Brinkerhoff, Henry Mountain Grazers Assoc.: My name is David Brinkerhoff and like Bill said we've had some knock out drag out fights over some of this stuff and we have come a long way on some of it, some of the issues that we have concern on, but we're not to the point where we can support what's going on yet. There is issues that we need to deal with and I think sightability is one of those issues that we need to deal with before we can actually say how many numbers are down there. From our standpoint the numbers are a lot higher than what's on this paper right here that is put out. From the numbers that the DWR has right here over the period of years that they've used the sightability is 85 %, 84 % right in that area right there and still we're using the 95 % and we need to adjust that to a permanent 85 %. One thing about the Henry Mountains it's a small area. It's not a very big area we're dealing with there. And there is issues of range damage that has occurred. And if some of you would like to look at it we can show you. Steve's got some on his range that has some serious. And I've got a lot on the Bullfrog range that's damaged there. And we need to deal with those before we look about implementing increases. If you look at the drought situation we're currently in right now I'm sure that there's going to be some reductions down there. And for us not to set back and look at here's the buffalo, they want an increase and here we are going home. It's hard for us to deal with that. We need to get by some of these issues before we come this far with a plan. We need to have more foundation on this before we go ahead and say okay this is what we're going to do. I think there's a possibility to work through some of these issues but we're not there yet. As far as the state lands that are concerned there, from what they told me they have sent a letter to the DWR stating that they will not support the plan. The biggest issue, I think, is the resource. The resource is what all of us need to be concerned about. And there is that damage out there that is occurring. There's no doubt in my mind that most of these projects are around the mountain that they've got slated for and they're good projects but they don't deal with the issues of the winter range. They're close to the winter range right there but the winter range is the critical part of that area. With the fire that happened a few years ago there's not doubt in my mind that the resource is there for the mountain. But the issue that we need to be mindful of is the resource damage that is occurring on those winter ranges. The mule deer, I agree with the mule deer. This is something that I would like to see increase. And if we allow these buffalo to increase it's only going to hurt our mule deer population because those buffalo are going to take the feed that usually the mule deer will use in the winter area. And again I thank all those that have put forth effort to make this work. I still think there's a possibility that we can work out these issues but we're not there.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks David. Mack, Mack Morrell.

Mack Morrell, Henry Mountain Grazers Assoc.: Name's Mack Morrell. You know we have come a long ways. And I think we're still dealing with a complicated issue, there's a lot of unknown variables. All of us live by the resource down there. We're close to getting a few things resolved and I would agree with Farm Bureau's John Keeler that we table this for a little bit and get together and work out our differences and go on.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Mack. That's the last of our comment cards, other than the ones that we're holding to discuss under other at the end of the meeting. Our next item is to go to comments from the RAC.

**RAC discussion and vote:**

Jake Albrecht: I've written down some of the things that were said that maybe we need to discuss. A couple of them were sightability, drought conditions, trust and money, doing the habitat work over the next five years, total count on the survey which goes back to sightability, range damage, and AUMs with SITLA. Those are the items that I wrote down that are now open for comments from the RAC.

Rex Stanworth: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to go back to my original question, and that is we have three members that sat on this committee and they've not made a report to this RAC in regards to what their, what they saw, what their feeling is and what they're recommending to us as a RAC.

Jake Albrecht: Bill, where I am a chair I would like one question to ask. What was the vote out of the members that are there?

Bill Bates: Well at our last meeting we had more than this there. Everybody there voted an affirmative except for three. Actually there were two that didn't vote an affirmative and Dell wasn't there at that meeting. But David and Verland opposed it and everybody else at that point voted yea. Who was that?

David Brinkerhoff: My dad.

Bill Bates: Who?

David Brinkerhoff: My dad.

Bill Bates: Oh that's right. And Bliss Brinkerhoff as well.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks. Okay we're back to comments.

Rex Stanworth: There was an issue brought up about somebody would not support the plan, I didn't catch who was not going to support the plan. Was it BLM, who was that?

Verland King: SITLA.

Rex Stanworth: SITLA said they would not.

Bill Bates: We have not received a letter from SITLA.

Rex Stanworth: Okay I just didn't know who that was.

Gary Hallows: I was a member of that group and some of the things that we discussed and agreed to when the plan came out were different than what we had agreed on. Also, Don Peay's group wasn't even there. How do you explain that? None of them. Anyway I'm going to address Don Peay's speech. And I don't care if you want to listen to it or not, I'm going to give it and it won't take a minute. Number one, we don't hate ya. Number two, one of our guys that is on there is a member and I'd be a member if you wouldn't treat me harshly, maybe. I'd join your group, we're not opposed. You're talking about all this money you're spending down there. My ranch alone spent more money for the permit I got than you did and I have enough permits to run 500 and some head and I can't even exceed over 300 and some or have I ever because it's not there. So you can't come on that money-spending thing. What we need to do here is, we're so close here and let's get together and finish and protect that resource. And even if you can run 275 head you're doing what I'm doing with my permit on about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of what you've got. Let's protect the resource here and not squabble over numbers. I think you've got your numbers anyway. Anyway I don't think we're that far but I think we're crowding it. That's my comment and I was on the board and voted.

Jake Albrecht: Steve, go ahead.

Steve Dalton: I don't even know where to start. This has been going on for so damn long now. Yeah I'm a member of SFW. I was a member of SFW before I was a manager at Sandy Ranch, and I am still a member. I feel I'm a sportsman first and a cattleman second. But I think the ownership of the ranch even knows that about me so. Anyway it's a controversial issue. We are heavily impacted by the bison. What I see happening to us as a group down there, the grazers on the Henry Mountains, is we are potentially going to lose our opportunity to get something done on the range down there. And that's what's got me more concerned than anything is the range resource. These guys, Don Peay and Byron Bateman's group have a lot of money that they're willing to invest. DWR will partner on those projects and invest in them. UPCD money and GIP money both of those sources have criteria that requires a cooperative agreement before they will fund them otherwise they will fund a project that does have a cooperative agreement between the affected parties. So even though I'm one of the most heavily impacted permittees down there by the bison impact and not a damn thing's been done to benefit my operation down there in recent years, in quite a few years, other than more impact by the bison, I'm still in it towards trying to get something to happen. I hate to see Don Peay walk out the door and say that's it I've had it, I'm not going to cooperate, I'm not going to involve myself. We've got an offer here to accept his money to put it on the ground out on the Henries. And I don't know how we're going to leverage money if we don't have his cooperation, if we don't have his funding, helping to create a project that everybody's supposedly going to benefit from. So that's my frustration. I'm a livestock operator. I'm charged with the management of the ranch and the ownership has asked me to do, to try and

agree with this and get something to work. I don't know how to do that. I'm going to attempt later when it's time to make a motion. The ownership of the ranch has asked me to try and get something to work out so that's what I'm going to try and do and that's what I've been doing all along. It just seems we're having a tough time trying to agree on everything. And the drought is for real. Right now this year I was up on our private lands on the Henries, we've got 600 acres of private right up on the face of Mt. Allen on the west side and the bison have already fed it, heavily, clear across the face of that mountain. I estimate probably 300 head. And what I see happening next, if they don't go back to the burn where the rehab was done a few years ago they're going to come right off that mountain like they've done in the past and they're going to be right down on my winter range and right down around our King Ranch private and doing more resource damage. During our drought situation where we are almost guaranteed we're going to be hit by the BLM that we aren't going to be able to go on with full numbers on our winter range. And I know as sure as I'm sitting here those buffalo are going to end up down there. And so I'm just frustrated. So that's my comments.

Jake Albrecht: Dell LeFevre.

Dell LeFevre: I guess I kind of echo what Gary said. It's a tough one. I'm one mountain range away from these guys. I've got an allotment probably almost as big as that Henry Mountain allotment. I've got 50 head of heifers left out there and I'm going to bring them in next week. It's tough. This drought is tough and we never got over the 2000 drought. I guess my feeling is with the ranchers. I appreciate what Don is trying to do. He is putting money in it but there are a lot of questions unanswered. And I guess the Henries is kind of my second mountain and I hate to see it get ruined any more than it is. My big fear is, and like Don said it might rain tomorrow, let's hope it does. But if it don't rain there's no use in doing the projects. And I guess sightability on these buffalo; we've been trying to count them things for years. I have problems with that. But this committee has come a long long ways. I go back far enough when we was ready to kill each other out there and maybe we should have done it. I like to tell this story about the Fish and Game; they jangled with the cowboys all one night. I finally got tired of it and went to bed. I got up early the next morning, I had to shoe a horse before we could go up on the hill, and the Fish and Game finally came to and they was uptight. These son-of-a-bitching cowboys had stolen all their hamburger and bacon and whatnot. I looked over under my army cot, I got an old black dog and there he was about as big around as this table laying there licking his chops and all these little cute white things laying around that had hamburger wrote on it. I didn't say a word and the Fish and Game moved on up the mountain, nothing accomplished. But this is a tough one. I side with the ranchers because I am one. But I also see an opportunity for the ranchers if we can get past these few little niches, and that's what do we do if the drought gets worse?

Jake Albrecht: Any other comments?

Rex Stanworth: Can we ask Mr. Peay for a, I'd like to ask him a question.

Jake Albrecht: A clarification?

Rex Stanworth: Uh huh.

Jake Albrecht: Go ahead, I think this is really important.

Rex Stanworth: Don I guess a quick question for you and your group, obviously your resources are very valuable to not just us as sportsman but to these ranchers, I mean that's a huge situation for them. Are you willing to leave the money on the table if we make a motion such that we approve the plan predicated upon a stipulation of looking at the drought or maybe one of the other issues of, I can't remember what the second one was but there were two issues that I think were the biggest ones. Where would you be in regards to something like that?

Don Peay: It's a complicated issue and I'm not going to give you a one minute answer but I'm going to try to explain a couple of points. Let's take the 50 bison AUMs from SITLA. There's two issues there and I want to hear from the ranching community, what are you really saying? Now if you're saying that DWR bought SITLA AUMs and those AUMs aren't in the right place I'll accept that. But if you're saying you guys bought the AUMs but we don't think you should be able to use them then that's a waste of investment. Steve, you called me one night and said Don I think if you guys would buy Jackson's allotment I think we could help everybody out. And so I drove to Wayne County and two or three times and we done a deal and we spent a lot of our sportsmen's money. And since then I believe, well there's a multitude of variables and as an engineer we're use to doing about twenty things at once, but since then there was a fire and there hasn't been Jackson's cows. And the bison haven't been down on your winter permit in the summertime.

Steve Dalton: Just the last two years.

Don Peay: Okay, the last two years. So if the ranching community says look, if you guys want to buy some grazing permits and we can try to reconfigure, and that solves the problem, and we respect your investment and we want to keep working with you, we'll keep investing. And Mr. Hallows, we can I guess if we run 60 % of our allocation we could turn 150 cows down on the Henries.

Gary Hollows: That would be good.

Don Peay: And we haven't done it. But then if I keep hearing someone say for a little political reason well SITLA doesn't think wildlife should be able to use cattle AUMs or if I hear the Taylor Grazing Act won't allow you guys to play then that's going to mean to us you don't want us down there and we can't justify spending more of our member's money that's not respected and put to valuable use. So I guess that gets to the question that you asked. Our analysis is if we get some rain we ought to be investing in habitat projects. Because we can't predict the future but I would say this, if we don't invest in habitat there might only be 200 bison and there might be a lot less cows if range conditions continue to deteriorate. That would probably be the outcome if we don't invest. If we do invest nothing might happen. We're businessmen, we understand risk. But if we do invest and our partners accept our investment we'll keep investing Rex. But if the point is you're never going to get a return on your investment because we don't think you should be able to do it then we are done. And I've tried to answer your question. That's really where it is.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Don. Okay we've heard comments from the sportsmen, the habitat,

Henry Mountain Association and their users. Any more comments from the RAC?

Steve Dalton: I have another one Jake. I kind of need to respond to Don. I didn't call Don Peay and tell him the Jackson's wanted to sell their permit. Don Peay asked me if they might be willing sellers. And I said I don't know we'll have to ask them. So he said, would you present an offer from us to them? And I said, sure I will. And that's what I did. But the SITLA AUMs that they were discussing, a state section on an allotment is allocated AUMs according to the surrounding BLM land associated with that state section. Well that state section has a place in the world. And that allotment that it's within is managed according to BLM rules and regulations. There's a season of use associated with that section of land and also a number of days they can use it, season of use and an area of use associated with all of those state leases. So for you guys to take those state SITLA AUMs and combine them for the entire Henry Mountains, year round as the buffalo choose, seems unfair to everybody including SITLA. And that's the conflict there. I don't know if you guys can grasp that, if you're not in the cattle business, but we understand it well. There's a season of use and an area of use associated with all the AUMs that are allocated. But the bison have no respect for that, none whatsoever. I presented information years ago, 4 years ago when Don Peay came down, DWR everybody was down there for a meeting. That's seven consecutive years that 75 % of the bison herd was on the winter range during the summer months. Seven consecutive years. And if you don't think that's going to cause damage to the resource you've got to be out of your mind. But nothing was done about it. I couldn't get the BLM to respond. I couldn't get them to move the damn buffalo off of the winter range during the summer months. They would come down there in June 100 degrees, 105 degrees and just stay down there and be counted in July and August when we had to conduct our accounts and nobody would move them. I brought it up 4 years ago to Bill Bates. And I said, can we go move those buffalo when they show up on the winter range? And he says, if you go harass those buffalo I'll have you arrested. It's against the law. Anyway it's been pretty hard to try and gain any cooperation out of this whole issue. And we've pushed pretty hard and we've pressed the issues pretty hard. And we're not, we don't have a whole lot of faith in success, as a matter of fact. I'm probably the only one that has any faith. The rest of these guys are totally opposed. They're pretty reluctant, pretty reluctant group and reasonably so. So anyway I could go on forever.

Jake Albrecht: Dell LeFevre.

Dell LeFevre: I'm going to ask these Wayne County ranchers, are you holding fast or are you going to cave?

Unidentified person: (inaudible) until after a public issue (inaudible) I'm not gonna (inaudible). I've spent 40 years down there and the trust they want me to give had been tromped on over those years.

Jake Albrecht: Verland.

Verland King: We can't afford not to fight it now. (Inaudible), the damage that's done with the numbers we have now, we can't let them get more numbers without correcting the damage that's been done. (Inaudible).

Jake Albrecht: Okay these comments are not being read in because we are not at the microphone. So James, have you got a question?

James Edwards: Are we still in questions or comments? Yes I have a comment. I'm just reading the management goals and objectives and it seems like the two issues are the drought and the SITLA and the sightings. And in the plan here it says that participants of the survey will be sited at the end of the survey which sightability estimates to use. It seems like to me that can go either way. So that should address that issue, if you can decide or they can decide. And the other is it says the population increase will be delayed if vegetation on the unit shows a downward trend based on data from the BLM and the interagency range trend. That should address your with your drought because it says it's not going to increase if the vegetation isn't there. So it looks like to me that the plan's pretty adaptable to address the issues that you're arguing about now, to me.

Jake Albrecht: Rex, go ahead.

Rex Stanworth: I was just going to mention that, you know, is it the money or is it the numbers that comes first? And quite honestly these gentlemen are willing to invest this huge amount of money and then leverage that with other federal money and grants. It seems like to me you've about got to allow them to have some sort of a guarantee that if those conditions are met, or whatever is in that that Jim just read, is going to give them some assurance that if some point in time they're either gong to be able to have those numbers. I've been in farming and I understand what it's like to try to get a prefect agreement. I went through the elk committee and I've got to tell ya I didn't get the agreement I wanted but it was probably as good as we could get at the time. I would sure say to you that rather than to walk away from these investment opportunities for that range that you would seriously, seriously look at that from a standpoint of a long-term investment. And I guess I would have that comment for you. And then I guess Bill, one question I've got for you is: if you're willing to range ride the buffalo after the plan's adopted why do we have a point where we can't range ride those animals back out of these places where they're damaging these people so much today? Is there a difference between now and then? Because these folks are saying it's critical.

Bill Bates: Well that's something that we've talked about as a committee, trying this on an experimental basis. And up until this point because wildlife is free roaming and not tied in by fences and we haven't managed them on an allotment basis he hasn't been willing to allow us to do that. So this shows a major shift in philosophy. And you know it's part of the plan and we'll give it a try, if he's willing to try it on an experimental basis to see if it works. And up until this point the director, whom ever it was, was not willing to do that.

Jake Albrecht: Okay. Do we have a motion somewhere?

Rex Stanworth: Yeah, I'll make a motion that we accept the proposal with the idea that we get great cooperation from the Division today, not next year but today, in helping put up a plan of moving those animals off that devastated area that Steve's talking about.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, we have a motion by Rex Stanworth to accept the Henry Mountains Bison Management Plan with cooperation. Do we have a second on that?

James Edwards: I'll second it.

Jake Albrecht: We have a second by Jim Edwards. Any other discussion?

Steve Dalton: Yes I have a couple of comments and discussion I'd like to make. I kind of put a motion together here that I was going to recommend, right along the same lines you guys are talking. The first consideration has got to be the range resource, not the numbers in the bison herd. It was stated here 325 head is the very first objective you guys have. It shouldn't be. The range resource has got to be your first objective. Anyway this motion I put together I said accept the motion with no road closures, if the range condition is down there's no increase in numbers, the range improvements promised will be in place and usable before any increase in population, implement a maintenance on all the range improvements, there's been no discussion about that yet, and this bison committee itself needs to stay in place and be a living viable entity that can help manage these other partners in these programs. With those exceptions I would make a motion to accept their plan

Jake Albrecht: We already have a motion on the floor.

Rex Stanworth: Let me withdraw my motion.

Jake Albrecht: Will you withdraw your second Jim? Okay now you go ahead Steve and make the motion that you'll accept it and then from there we'll go on.

Steve Dalton: Let's do it right.

Jake Albrecht: Okay we're going to try something here. We have a withdrawal of the motion by Rex Stanworth and withdrawal of a second by Jim Edwards. And we're going to go to Steve Dalton for a motion.

Steve Dalton: Okay, I make a motion to accept the plan as presented with these exceptions: No road closures at all. No seasonal road closures; any road closures were objected to by both Wayne and Garfield Counties. If the Range conditions are down, according to BLM not necessarily the range management team that they refer to in their plan, but if we're in a condition where we have to reduce our livestock numbers that seems to be a downward trend, so no increase in numbers when that is the situation. Range improvements that are promised will be in place and usable before there is any increase in population. Implement maintenance plans on all range improvements that are put in. A lot of the old range improvements over out on the Henries have been totally neglected since they were initiated, so I think it's important we have a maintenance plan for any improvements that are put in. Our bison committee stays in place to help monitor these affected parties and investors in the Henry Mountains.

Jake Albrecht: That's what I was wondering if you want to read it back to me. Did you get that?

Giani Julander: Do you want me to read it back to you?

Jake Albrecht: Did you get everything there?

Giani Julander: I think I've got it all but I'd like a copy from Steve as he has it written.

Jake Albrecht: Okay we have a motion on the floor by Steve that we think we have recorded where it is on the microphone and then they would like a copy of it. Do we have a second?

James Edwards: I'll second it.

Jake Albrecht: We've got a second by Jim Edwards. All in favor? Any other comments then? Seeing none. All in favor please raise your right hand. I count four. All those against please raise your right hand. I have two. That means we have one abstaining. That is correct.

**Motion carries 4 –2.**

**Steve Dalton made the motion to accept the Henry Mountain Bison Management Plan as presented with the following caveats: (1) no road closures, seasonal or otherwise (2) if the range conditions are down according to BLM there will be no increase in Bison numbers (3) range improvements that are promised will be in place and usable before there is any increase in population (4) maintenance plans will be implemented on all range improvements that are initiated (5) the bison committee stays in place to monitor the affected parties. James Edwards seconded. Motion carried 4 to 2. (Gary Hallows and Dell LeFevre opposed, Steve Flinders abstained)**

**Other business:**

Jake Albrecht: Okay we've got two or three comment cards that we want to hurry and discuss. First one is Cindy Stratton, are you still here? Mr. Hafen, are you still here? Come on down.

Roy Hafen: I want to tell these ranchers the bible says where there is no vision the people perish. And you guys are in hard times but if you don't make any changes nothing's going to change. So I just want to tell you make some changes and life will get better and put a little faith in these guys that want to help you. Anyway, I'm excited about you guys. You are a great group and I know you put a lot of time in and I want to thank you for all that you do, the RAC and the Chairman. I just want to mention a couple of things; I would really like you to consider limiting the archery tags in the regions and getting it back to what it used to be so it can be fun hunting again. I really think, the reason why if you don't hear this from other regions because they all want to come down to the south region. We are the only ones that are affected by it. And it seems like it's unfair that you don't consider the fact that we take the whole impact for the whole state. The other thing I'd like to just recommend is you did a great job with the lions but the coyotes, the reason our fawn crops are down, our deer are not coming back is because of the coyotes. If you got back and you look in the '50s and the '60s when we had a lot of deer is when we had poisons and I understand we hurt the eagles and we did a lot of things but the reason we had great deer was because we didn't have the predator problem. They had a thing down in Arizona where they fenced off an area and they put the deer in it and then even in drought conditions the deer still had multiple fawns and they still, the only thing they found that affected the deer was the predators. So I want to, why we can't bring a bounty back on

coyotes I think it would be a great thing. The deer will not come back until we have a predator plan. We're doing a better job with the lions. It's been great. I've been lion hunting and got my lion and it's wonderful. Great deal. But we need to address the coyote problem especially in southern Utah. We don't ever have deer die from winter range in southern Utah because they just keep going on and they can find, and we have lots of area for them. We don't have the northern Utah problems. But anyway I appreciate all you do. If you could do those things I think it would be a great help to all of us. Thanks for your time.

Jake Albrecht: Mr. Hafen, so if I hear you right you want to see the archery discussed in all the regions.

Roy Hafen: Absolutely and have a cap on the regions so we don't get the whole state in the south region like we are getting right now.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, thanks.

James Edwards: Mr. Hafen this RAC has recommended that for the last three years and it gets to the Big Game Board and it doesn't pass because the other RACs don't answer it. And some of them want to keep it the way it is, especially the central.

Roy Hafen: And I understand that but you need to tell the Big Game, listen, the only reason you don't hear from everybody else is because the only person that's affected in the south region. So, I mean I can't help everyone wants to hunt down here, that's where I would hunt too but we need to have a fairness, it's not fair the way it is.

Jake Albrecht: Okay and we got that in the public comments and I'll take that up. The next one is Heath and I can't pronounce the last name, dedicated hunter, are you still here? I wouldn't think so either. Okay that concludes our agenda tonight. Our next meeting is Waterfowl Proclamation and Rule, Turkey Hunting Guide and Rule and maybe more. It will be on August 14 at 7o'clock. I assume that's a Tuesday. Motion to adjourn.

**Rex Stanworth made the motion to adjourn. James Edwards seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Jake Albrecht: Everybody. Thank you. Thanks for having us.

Meeting adjourned at 10:54 p.m.