

Norther Region Wildlife Board Advisory Council

December 19, 2007

6:00 P.M.

Place: Brigham City Community Center, Brigham City, Utah

RAC Present

Darwin Bingham, Agric
Robert Byrnes, At-Large
Ann Neville, Non-Con
Brad Slater, Chair/Elected
Lee Shirley, Non-Con
Jon Leonard, Sportsman
Paul Cowley, Forest Service
Bill Fenimore, At Large
Ryan Foutz, At Large
James Gaskill, Sportsman
Bret Selman, Agric

DWR Present

Jodie Anderson
Ron Hodson
Mitch Lane
Randy Wood
Justin Dolling
Craig McLaughlin
Scott Davis
Kevin Bunnell
Drew Cushing
Walt Donaldson

Wildlife Board

Ernie Perkins

RAC Absent

Mark Marsh, Sportsman
Shawn Groll, At Large

Public Present - See Attached Roll Sheet

Meeting Begins: 6:00 p.m.

Number of Pages: 16

Introduction - Brad Slater, RAC Chair

Agenda:

Welcome and Introductions
Review and Action on Minutes and Agenda
Regional Update
Other Management Plan-Amendment
Prairie Dog Conservation Plan
Bear Proclamation Rule R657-33
Fishing Contest Rule R657-XXX
Other RAC Business

Item 1. Review and Acceptance of Agenda

Motion- Neville- Motion to approve the December 19, 2007, Meeting Agenda as published.

Second- Gaskill

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Item 2. Review of Meeting Minutes

Motion- Byrnes- Motion to approve November 19, 2007 Meeting Minutes as published.

Second- Fenimore

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Item 3. Regional Update

Ron Hodson, Regional Supervisor

- During the ice fishing season, people should be extra careful since the ice may be less thick in certain areas.
- Sleigh rides have begun at Hardware Ranch. There are 300 elk at the ranch
- Employee Changes: There is a new Aquatic Nuisance biologist, a new NRCS biologist. Adam Koslowski is leaving to work with parks in Vermont. Chris Schultz is going to become a Conservation Officer. Conservation Officer Rick Schultz will be retiring.
- Application Updates: Turkey applications are currently be accepted. Bucks and Bulls applications will be accepted in the near future. Applications are only being accepted online.

Item 4. Otter Management Plan Amendment

Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

Public Questions

Steve Gaskill- What was the Otter population been in the past?

Bunnell- Otters used to exist in all of the major waterways of the State. To the best of our knowledge, the Otter population began decreasing at the turn of the century as a result of deteriorating water quality. We do have reports of occasional Otter sitings but we have not been able to confirm those sitings. There may be some small populations that are still surviving.

RAC Questions

Cowley- What criteria was used to identify these locations?

Bunnell- These are recommendations that have come from the Regions. We also consulted with the Aquatic experts.

Cowley- Were habitat conditions considered?

Bunnell- The main habitat criteria for Otters is prey availability. According to the Southeastern Region, they feel there is adequate prey there to support them.

Byrnes- Are you aware of Otters migrating into Utah?

Bunnell- Yes, that is happening in a couple of places in the State. Colorado has made introductions so there will be Otters that come from those waterways.

Byrnes- Have there been provisions made to provide additional protection?

Bunnell- We have provided additional protection in areas where we have re-established them, such as the Green River, the Escalante, and certain areas of the Colorado River.

(In response to a question from Darwin Bingham)

Bunnell- Otters are a charismatic animal. They are playful and curious. Those who have experience along the Green River love the opportunity to see them. They interact within their family groups. Otters are sought after for their fur so there will be an interest in trapping them at some point.

RAC Comment

Gaskill- I applaud the Division for their efforts to expand the Otter population. We all agree the Otters are a fun and interesting animal to watch.

Motion: Bingham- Motion to approve Otter Management Plan Amendment, as presented by the Division.

Second- Gaskill

Motion Carries: Unanimous

Item 5. Prairie Dog Conservation Plan

Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

RAC Questions

Neville- How do private land owners feel about this type of plan?

Bunnell- We have tried to get comments from the private land owners but have not received many. They understand what we are trying to accomplish and they are supportive of our efforts to keep this species off of the Endangered Species list.

Neville- Is part of your objective to map which areas the animals are located?

Bunnell- We have predictive habitat models so we know where most of them are.

Neville- What percentage of the lands where the species are located are privately owned?

Bunnell- I do not have exact numbers but most of the properties are BLM land. I would estimate

that approximately 3-5% of the lands that are privately owned.

Gaskill- Do you think the closed and limited seasons are having an effect on the situation?

Bunnell- Several years ago we implemented a shooting closure on public lands from April 15th through June 1st to allow the species to reproduce. There have been several studies done on the effects of shooting which have produced mixed results. Most of the research is not applicable since it has been done on a different Prairie Dog species. The studies have shown that the density can be reduced within a colony but it does not impact the existence of Prairie Dogs in the area.

Gaskill- Are you going to do studies to determine whether that is a useful tool?

Bunnell- We have a list of tools that will be considered. It is yet to be determined whether that will be a useful tool.

Gaskill- On page 30, paragraph 3, there is a statement that indicates that many shooters are consistently accurate at 400 yard distances. I do not know any of those types of shooters.

Bunnell- People who are into this have custom guns with a higher velocity. There are people who are accurate consistently up to 700 to 800 yards.

Cowley- Could you address what impact livestock has on the Prairie Dogs.

Bunnell- There is some data that indicates that livestock grazing can be detrimental. It likely has to do with issues such as poisoning. Most of the grazing studies that have been done has been on Blacktail Prairie Dogs. There are some common sense type implications that we can assume.

Cowley- It seems like the plan highlighted livestock as a major impact to the Prairie Dog. I am concerned that there does not appear to have been a lot of research done to make that assumption.

Bunnell- The plan does not necessarily highlight the impact of the livestock. It is one of the things that is pointed out as a potential impact in a list of several others.

Fenimore- With the reintroduction of the California Condor that is spreading into the Colorado River area of Southern Utah, there is a potential for lead contamination from carcasses. Do the long range shooting hunters pick up the carcasses or do they leave them lay? Has consideration been given to this issue?

Bunnell- It is an active discussion in the Division, more in relation to Big Game hunting than to Prairie Dogs. It is a subject that is getting some attention but I am not intimately involved in those discussions.

RAC Comment

Cowley- I commend the Division for working cooperatively on the Conservation Agreements.

On the aquatic side, we have seen them be effective. It is good to see the terrestrial side progress, as well.

Bingham- I also commend the efforts of the DWR.

Motion- Byrnes- Motion to approve the Prairie Dog Conservation Plan, as presented by the Division.

Second- Foutz

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Item 6. Bear Proclamation Rule R657-33

Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

See Handout

Public Questions

Orin Midzinski- I was wondering why the Cache Unit spring pursuit season was taken.

Bunnell- The Cache working group was put together to address issues with the deer herd in the Unit. This recommendation came from that group. The Region agreed to support the recommendation.

Justin Dolling- The intent of the group was to reduce the disturbance of mule deer on the Cache Unit.

Kirk Robinson- Last night, you described three categories of nuisance bears. In two of the categories, the bears may be destroyed. Also in your presentation you mentioned that the bear management plan requires an emphasis on non-lethal methods of deterrents whenever feasible. What non-lethal methods were attempted on those bears were in trouble more than once, and what were the results?

Bunnell- First we try to eliminate the detractant, which is applicable at all of these levels. There are two other non-lethal tools. One tool is to track and trans-locate the animal. The second tool is hazing the animal which gives it an unpleasant experience to discourage it from coming back.

Robinson- Was that done with the category two bears that were put down?

Bunnell- Yes. We made several non-lethal attempts to remove the bears that were near the Mirror Lake Highway but had to remove the bears lethally because they were a threat to human health and safety.

Barrie Gilbert- I am a retired professor from the Utah State University. I think it would be helpful if, during the presentation, you identify where the incidences occurred on a map. 200 incidences are quite a large number. It would be useful to have concise data. Have you

considered the effects of climate change and consistent droughts in Utah and where the bears may be in the future since it could create a threat.

Bunnell- We keep close track of where the incidences occur. I have that data and would be happy to share it with you. Where we are using the surgical approach, those 10 units account for over 60% of the incidences we had in the State.

Margaret Pettis- It seems we have a whole new set of factors given global warming and climate change. A lot of the old management ways will not work on the same models. Are you working towards a broader scheme or are you building management based on what the field workers are seeing. How far out in the future are you looking for population changes- in specific areas or general populations as a group?

Bunnell- The question comes down to how many bears there are and where they are. We are still trying to determine whether our tools will give us accurate outcomes. If those tools prove useful, we will continue to use them. We will also use new technology that becomes available to us.

Pettis- We have had 6 to 7 years of drought in a row. How has the changed the ways you have offered numbers of permits.

Bunnell- We look at the data on two scales - long term and short term data. We do not consider the data of single years since it is not informative. We try to group 3 to 5 years together to see if there are trends. In 2006, there were hardly any bear incidences in the state. Within one year it went up drastically. The bear population did not change within the year but the conditions on the ground did. There will be environmental conditions that will contribute to the lack of food. We fully expect that and have seen it periodically in the past.

Pettis- Has the response of the Forest Service or their concessionaires been receptive to dealing with the DWR raising issues of bear problems? Are they a partner with you or what is the relationship?

Bunnell- They are a very attentive partner. In Kamas, they have already purchased 16 bear-proof dumpsters. In addition to that, the Utah Federation of Houndsmen has volunteered their time to retrofit several of the old dumpsters to make them bear-proof. Those are the types of activities we will continue to promote.

Pettis- It seems like pre-meetings were held before the public meeting. The Houndsmen's interests are to chase and/or kill bears. They are involved in the process in order to pursue their interest. Those meetings were held prior to considering public interest.

Bunnell- We receive recommendations from some of the groups that have a particular interest. We listen to those recommendations and many times they are very informative. Sharing information works both ways. It may seem to be more one-sided at this time than it should be. In the past, I provided Kirk Robinson with cougar data, as he requested. In turn, he offered feedback on the data. Anyone is welcome to do that.

Pettis- If Kirk's suggestions were ever to appear on your slide, it would give me more hope in that regard.

Gary Madson- Is there any data that shows the increased number of pursuit tags effects the number of bear incidences in an area. Do the dogs chasing the bears make them more wary of humans? Is there data that supports that?

Bunnell- That is difficult data to obtain. We do not have years of high incidences strung together. We have not had summer pursuit, in this State, for very long. At times, we do use hounds to pursue bears which has been effective. This year, when the summer pursuit season started, the number of bear incidences did appear to drop but we do not have adequate information to report that was the cause.

Robinson- What percentage of the added permits will go to nuisance and what percentage will go to depredation?

Bunnell- I would have to go through that unit by unit and would be happy to do that with you.

Robinson- It is primarily younger bears that are nuisances. If that is so, given that hunters prefer large bears as trophies, what reason do you have for thinking that allowing more permits to combat nuisance will result in targeting the nuisance bears?

Bunnell- We can not require someone to take a particular bear. In the letter we send out, we will strongly encourage the individual to harvest the bear regardless of the bear's age. In the end, it will be their decision.

RAC Questions

Neville- Do you have any information on the success rate of non-residents compared to that of the resident?

Bunnell- This is strictly in relationship to pursuit, not to harvest.

Neville- Will you define "chronic nuisance".

Bunnell- While putting the recommendations together, we went back 3 to 5 years to determine if there is a history of problems in particular areas in a particular unit.

Neville- It could be a history of problems, but it might not be the same bear?

Bunnell- That is correct. Over that time period, there could be turn over in the population.

Neville- It sounds like "chronic" has more to do with the severity of the incident.

Bunnell- It could be considered as the density of the incident. They may be clustered in a certain area.

Neville- When you send out letters to use the Houndsmen, will there be a tracking mechanism to see how effective it is?

Bunnell- It will be hard to track things to that particular strategy. We will be doing other things such as prevention and education. If we see a reduction, it will be difficult to determine which effort contributed the most.

Neville- You can track the age of the bears that are taken.

Bunnell- We can look to see if there is an age difference. We will know the age and sex of the bears that are taken. Every bear that is harvested in the State has to be taken in.

Neville- I do not want to lose that wealth of information.

Gaskill- Is there a concern with the fawns and the calves in the Cache Unit when you extend that pursuit time?

Bunnell- As I understand it, the issue on the Cache herd is unique to that area. It is an issue since there is a lack of transition range. That is less of a concern about animals being concentrated to an area in other parts of the State.

Fenimore- Are archers allowed to use bait?

Bunnell- Yes.

Fenimore- Does that practice potentially educate bears to become nuisance bears since they will seek food at other human establishments?

Bunnell- We do not have an indication that it does. Bears become conditioned to areas, not to the food. In addition to that, hunters have to receive approval from the local land management to place their bait. They have to determine that the location is not near campgrounds or other areas where humans may be.

Fenimore- Years ago, I did work with Gary Alden. He told us how bears overheat which is why they tree so rapidly. Will the summer pursuit have an impact on cub survival?

Bunnell- It potentially could. Idaho has run the summer pursuit season for several years but they have not seen an impact. It is illegal for cubs to be pursued by dogs. So long as people follow the rules, it will be less of an issue.

Fenimore- Are there ways, other than education to prevent these situations from occurring on private lands?

Bunnell- I am not qualified to answer whether there are laws that pertain to private lands that may help to eliminate these issues. We will be contacting boy scout camps and youth camps to help educate them and to try to offer assistance to retrofit their dumpsters.

Cowley- How much conflict will there be if we allow dogs to be run at 5 a.m. near campgrounds in heavily populated areas?

Bunnell- This is the third year of the summer pursuit season. We have had very few complaints of that nature. The houndsmen are aware of the potential conflict so they make an effort to be careful. It is an issue that we will monitor.

Selman- Are the chronic bear problems related to livestock issues or campground issues?

Bunnell- They are two different issues but we are addressing both. Our recommendation to address the livestock depredation is to extend the spring hunt for a week longer into June to try to shift the category that bear mortality falls into. We will try to take it away from depredation and into sport harvest.

Selman- Do these sow bears teach their young to kill sheep or is that a natural instinct?

Bunnell- A cub will learn from it's mother what qualifies as food.

Selman- We see more bears on our Wyoming properties. Are bears taught to kill sheep?

Bunnell- A lot of the depredation is adult males. They are usually alone so they are not teaching the young. It could simply be an issue of food availability.

Byrnes- On the extended seasons, will you track the data of the sex of the animals killed during that period.

Bunnell- Yes, we will.

Cowley- It looks like we are trying to attack this in a couple of different ways. We are doing an increase in harvest and an increase in season. It may be wise to run the different programs separately.

Bunnell- There are only two units where both programs will be active. In most areas, there will only be one program.

Public Questions

John Wall- Are there non-hunting organizations or individuals that donate time or money to the bear management programs?

Bunnell- The Kamas study has been run mostly by volunteers. The Back Country Horsemen Association has donated thousands of hours over the years to make the project successful but I do not know if those volunteers are hunters.

Motion- Cowley- *Motion to take a break before hearing the comments regarding the bears.*

Second- Neville

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Public Comment

Margaret Pettis- After the comments that have been made tonight, it seems bears are unwelcome in Utah. There is no justification to kill bears or pursue them with dogs. It seems the DWR is violating their mission which is to protect the American Black Bear. It was tragic that a bear killed a human but it is ridiculous to respond by unleashing the hounds on the general bear population. This proposal has no basis of bear biology. This proposal has to do with houndsmen fun and license sales. It does not offer protection for the bears. I want the bears and wild forests to survive. We can not treat bears like an enemy. It is time to consider the global and environmental changes and provide more creative management. It is not intelligent management to raise the kill number. I ask you to not adopt the volunteer houndsmen and spring extensions. I ask you to eliminate the use of bait in the bear hunt, the use of dogs and radio telemetry, and the leveling of the playing field should result in stalking only. I ask that the bear hunting unit on the north slope of the high units and the Cache and the Rich be closed to bear hunting. As a non-consumptive user, I ask the non-consumptive representatives on the RAC to adopt this non-consumptive position.

Barry Gilbert- I have been working with bear/human interactions since 1974. The problem with most public agencies responsible for the management of their human situations is the unwillingness to instigate a preventive approach using both negative bear training and human control. This summer there was an explosion of bear/human interactions. We need the Division to provide a "bear aware" campaign. We do not have chronic bear problems, we have a problem where humans need to be educated. Transporting bears is not worth the man hours and budgets. It also leads to bears coming back or being eliminated. I would recommend that the program dealing with people be upgraded. It reinforces our need for some state funding for non-game wildlife. Bear Aware campaigns have been successful in British Columbia, Alberta, California and Alaska. Bears do not become problems unless people do not take care of their garbage, bird feeders, etc.

Byron Bateman- (Represents self and sportsmen)- Forty years ago, there was not a bear problem. At that time, houndsmen proposed that the bear be protected which is when it became a game animal. The bear management plan has been effective for the past seven years. The bear population has been growing steadily for years. The State has been conservative with the number of tags that have been issued. Houndsmen are giving back to the resource. Every person is a consumptive user. Bears need to be managed. We have a good management plan in place. We need to proceed with the Division's plan. Public awareness and education is key to bear management.

Ernie Milgate- (Represents the Utah Federation of Houndsmen)- We would like to applaud the Division's efforts to save bears. We appreciate the opportunity to build the bear proof dumpsters and believe it is an effective tool. The Utah Federation of Houndsmen supports the State's recommendation.

Kirk Robinson- (Represents Western Wildlife Conservancy)- I am not pleased with the proposal to increase the number of bear permits. I am pleased that we are not falling short of the

performance targets of the bear management plan, as is the case with the cougar management plan. It is a mystery to me since the number of bear permits and the length of the season have been increasing during a drought. The residents need to be educated about bears and taught to appreciate bears and their role in the ecosystem. My recommendation is that we should focus on education and not an increase in the number of permits. It would be beneficial if the Division would monitor the different tools being used to determine if they are effective.

Orin Midzinski- Based on my experience, I have not seen bears overheat and tree quickly. Hunters are usually the first to come to an animal's aid when they are in jeopardy. Houndsmen and hunters have worked to make sure there is a viable bear population in the State. I support the plans that have been made to use houndsmen and hunters to take nuisance bears and depredation bears. Bears and humans all recreate in the same areas so we have to manage them wisely. The Division's recommendations will keep the conflicts to a minimum. Houndsmen and hunters appreciate bears and enjoy seeing them in the woods.

RAC Comments

Cowley- I commend the houndsmen for their efforts to address the problem. The Forest Service has also been active to better educate the public about keeping their areas clean. The concern I have about the proposal is that it seems to test a lot of proposals to deal with a situation that occurred last spring. The proposal is to increase the permit numbers, the hunt season, the use of dogs, the use of adverse bear training and education. There are six different factors so it will be difficult for the Division to determine which method works. It may be better to try fewer factors so we will know what works.

Neville- I appreciate the Division's efforts but there are too many variables to create sound statistics.

Fenimore- I would love to see the Division incorporate partnerships with the BLM to educate the public about bears.

Bingham- Education is an important part of the success of having bears around. The only way the Division can know if this proposal will work is to try it.

Foutz- It does not seem that all of the components of the proposal are related to the same objective. If the tragedy would not have occurred in the spring, it is likely there still would have been an increase in the number of tags to address a different objective.

Cowley- How did the other RACs respond to this issue?

Bunnell- There are only two new things that are being tried: the use of volunteer houndsmen to focus harvest in certain areas and the extension of the spring hunt. They are not being instigated on the same units (except for two of the units) so we will be able to track the success of each tool. All of the RACs have voted to support the recommendation.

Motion- Foutz- Motion to approve Bear Proclamation Rule R657-33, as presented by the Division.

Second- Bingham

Motion Carries- 7 to 3

Item 7. Fishing Contest Rule R657-XXX

Drew Cushing, Warm Water/Community Fisheries Program Coordinator

See Handout

Public Questions

Steve Gaskill- How many tournaments and contests have there been over the years in Utah?

Drew Cushing- We do not have a track of the number of smaller contests. If a COR is issued, it may apply to a number of fishing contests. This proposal will improve our tracking abilities.

Gaskill- Have you performed any projections to see how this will effect fishing pressure on the Utah lakes?

Cushing- We will have biologists on the ground when a COR is issued. Many contests take place on State parks so they will inform us if there is a conflict.

Gaskill- Do you inspect any of the boats that come to the contests?

Cushing- One of our intents is to check all live weigh-ins. All live weigh-in contests need a COR so we know when and where they are taking place so we can have somebody out there to check them out.

Gaskill- Do you need a waiver to search the boats? It seems to be a constitutional issue.

Cushing- We can check the boats on the boat ramp but we can not perform a legal search. In the past, we have kept boats because they have had Quagga Mussels. Those are the types of things we are looking for.

Gaskill- You mentioned the gambling issues in passing. Has the Division's legal counsel written any opinions on this?

Cushing- Our lawyer, who works with the Governor's office, has been involved through the entire process. He laid the ground work for a lot of this to take place.

Gaskill- Is that input available to the public?

Cushing- Yes, I believe it is on the Division's website.

Gaskill- Have you done any impact studies on the habitat and the facilities where these contests are held?

Cushing- Will you please define “habitat” and “facilities”.

Gaskill- There will be a lot of boats motoring close to the shore and putting out pollutants. What type of impact will that have on the vegetation, the fish, the facilities, etc.?

Cushing- Those types of studies have not been done. The most beneficial study that has been done pertains to the mortality rate of the fish. The mortality rate has dropped in recent years, likely as a result of the increased handling and the new technology on boat live wells. Those studies are available to the public. The mortalities are fairly low but the delayed mortality rate is close to 27%. There is not a significant number of anglers that participate in this so the overall mortality is negligible.

Gaskill- What do you consider a low number?

Cushing- The mortality rate is between 5% and 7%. Most anglers police themselves. They do not hold live way tournaments in the summer when the mortality would be higher. Those are the kinds of things we regulate through the COR process.

Gaskill- What type of background checks do you do?

Cushing- It is impossible to do that which is why we will have Division employees on site interacting with the anglers. There are many anglers who do not sign up until the day before.

Gaskill- What can you do to check where the organizers have been?

Cushing- We know the organizers by name. We know them from previous history, not from doing background checks. We know who does good business and who does not, which is why we have included a revocation to remove those individuals from the pool.

Gaskill- I think the revocation is a great idea.

Rick Calder- I represent the Utah Bass Angler Sportsmen Society. Is every boat in the water required to participate in the certification?

Cushing- No, the certification applies to every boat in the contest.

Calder- Why are you only picking on the boats in the contest?

Cushing- We do not have the ability to contact every angler. We do have the ability through the COR process to make sure the contestants do it. It is a simple procedure. This is our way of knowing that the anglers are aware of the disinfection program. Many of the anglers visit several different waters within a month so they need to be aware of the protocol.

Calder- The same could be said with water skiers and jet skiers. They may visit different Utah lakes in the same week.

Cushing- That is true but they do not have to apply for a COR either.

RAC Question

Gaskill- How did you arrive at the "50" number?

Cushing- "50" is a number we have used since the rule was written 10 years ago. We have not had any problems or complaints that we can account for so we have continued to use it.

Gaskill- Is "50" simply a number that carried over without studies or rationale other than inertia?

Cushing- I would say that is true. This is a social issue. If there has not been a conflict arise within the past 10 years, it is unlikely that one will arise now.

Gaskill- If we are trying to reduce the hassle on Type II tournaments to increase the number of fisherman, it seems to me that tag contests would be as much a stimulus to increasing fishing and people's desire to learn to fish as a Type II contest. The COR can be filled out in 3 minutes or less. Why not have a COR for everybody?

Cushing- We do not want to be cost prohibitive on a small contest. At times, there may only be 5 or 10 contestants. If you have a fee for those individuals who do not have a conflict with anyone, you are prohibiting them or making it more difficult for them. The tag fish contests should have a COR because they do have an impact and they have some labor involved from the Division of Wildlife.

Gaskill- It seems the smaller contests should be monitored to see if "50" is an appropriate number. It seems on a small area, 50 fisherman is a pretty big impact.

Cushing- You are talking about 25 boats. On a weekend at Jordanelle, there can be up to 300 boats without a significant impact. As far as the "50" number, if we have not had an issue in the last 10 years, I am hesitant to think we will have an issue now.

Gaskill- Have you monitored enough to know if there have been issues in the past 10 years? Type II fishermen do not have any regulations at all. They could be on a Jensen Pond in Syracuse or on a one mile stretch of the Provo River which would be an impact.

Cushing- Under the current rule, that could take place right now.

Gaskill- Aren't we trying to make this better? I am not opposed to increasing regulations. What will this cost the Division? We know it will bring in \$105 per COR.

Cushing- The Division costs will not increase significantly since most of the tasks are already being performed by the Division. The aquatic nuisance species biologists will be at those locations because we want them to interact with the anglers.

Fenimore- In the Type I contest, where they have a live weigh-in, are the fish released at the dock or are they released where they were caught?

Cushing- They can not be released there. I believe they have to be moved 100 yards.

Fenimore- On the tag fish contest COR that would have the application in December, is the decision made directly thereafter? Do you decided whether you want to consider public comment?

Cushing- Yes, it gives us more than four weeks to get that done.

Fenimore- Who is responsible for the bonding and liability insurance?

Cushing- The responsibility is on the contest sponsor, not the Division.

Public Comment

Jim Morkin- (Represents Rocky Mountain Anglers)- We support this proposal. We know it is a work in progress. A great deal of credit goes to Walt Donaldson and his staff for putting this before us. There have been more than 15 public meetings where this has been discussed.

Steve Gaskill- I want to applaud the Division for starting to regulate this. I am concerned about tournaments in general. I do not want to wake up in the morning and wonder whether there will be a tournament being held on that lake, especially when we are talking about up to 50 extra boats. I would like to have public notice provisions so we know when the contests will occur.

Cushing- That is a really good idea.

Gaskill- I would like to see it limited to very few waters. I have concerns about allowing contests on Willard Bay, given the work that has been done on the damn. I have constitutional issues with it too. It is called a contest but it is mostly luck and there is a prize awarded at the end. I question whether it violate the constitution. I would suggest that contest sponsors post a liability bond to cover any liability that may occur, especially to non-participants.

Motion- Cowley- Motion to approve Fishing Contest Rule R657-58, as presented by the Division.

Second- Bingham

Amendment to the Motion- Gaskill- Motion to amend the previous motion to include “the date and time of the contest must be pre-published at least one week in advance”.

Second- Shirley

Discussion on the Motion

Fenimore- Are you suggesting that the notice be posted in the newspaper or at the location?

Gaskill- I do not want the notice to be posted in the newspaper or anywhere that will impose a cost. The notice could be posted on the Division’s website and at the location the tournament

will be held. I just want to make it so a reasonable person has opportunity to know that there will be a fishing contest at that location.

Cushing- It may be difficult for the Division to post notices at all tournament locations since they do not control all of the waters.

Gaskill- I am suggesting that the Division make an effort to post the notice. If notice can not be posted at the location, it should at least be posted on the Division's website.

Cowley- Could there be a provision in the COR that the tournament sponsors be required to provide notice to the public?

Cushing- I think we can work with the tournament sponsors or we could post the notice on the Division's website.

Motion Carries- 7 to 3

Amendment to the Original Motion- Gaskill- Motion to amend the original motion by stating that "Type II contests come down from 50 to 25 and from \$2,000 to \$500."

Motion dies due to lack of a second

Original Motion (Motion to approve Fishing Contest Rule R657-58, as presented by the Division) **Carries-** Unanimous

Meeting Ends: 9:15 p.m.

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Jr. High
165 S. 700 E. Springville
December 18, 2007 ⚡ 6:30 p.m.

Members Present

John Bair, Sportsmen
Calvin Crandall, Agriculture
Richard Hansen, At Large
Doug Jones, Forest Service
Ed Kent, Chair
Gary Nielson, Sportsmen
Fred Oswald, Non-consumptive, Vice Chair
Steve Perry, Sportsmen
Duane Smith, Non-consumptive
Allan Stevens, At Large

Members Absent

Byron Gunderson, At Large
George Holmes, Agriculture
Jay Price, Elected

-
- 1) **Approval of Agenda (Action)**
- Ed Kent, RAC Chair

Motion was made by Calvin Crandall to accept the agenda as presented
Seconded by Duane Smith
Passed unanimously

- 2) **Approval of the November 13th RAC summary (Action)**
- Ed Kent, RAC Chair

Motion was made by Fred Oswald to accept the summary as transcribed
Seconded by Gary Nielson
Passed unanimously

- 3) **Old Business**
- Ed Kent, RAC Chair

- 4) **Regional Update**
- Craig Clyde, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

- 5) **Otter Management Plan (Action)**
- Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

Calvin Crandall had to leave meeting

Questions from the RAC

Ed Kent – How long have otters been in the Green River drainage below Flaming Gorge?

Kevin Bunnell – Since the late 80s to early 90s.

Ed Kent – Have there been any complaints or have you seen any measurable decline in the quality of fishing in that section of the river.

Kevin Bunnell – No. In general anglers that are familiar with the Green River are supportive and enjoy the opportunity to see them. They are a very charismatic animal and fun to watch. There were some initial concerns about what the impact would be on the fishery. A graduate study was done and there really aren't any significant impacts to the fishery.

Ed Kent – I have enjoyed seeing them on the Green River has been that they are fun to watch. What are their migratory and territorial habits?

Kevin Bunnell – They are not overly territorial. They can move some distance over dry land but they will always be associated with water in one way or another.

Fred Oswald – Have there been sightings other than the Green River?

Kevin Bunnell – We have had reports on the Logan River, the Weber River and on the Provo River. Otters are native throughout the state and there may be other populations in other parts of the state.

Calvin Crandall – Where do they live?

Kevin Bunnell – They will take over beaver lodges. They can also live under over hangs or in thickets along the river.

Calvin Crandall – You say they will migrate. Is there any concern that they will over populate like raccoons?

Kevin Bunnell – I can't image that. They have been in the Green River for 15 years now. They have expanded their range rather than over populating a given area.

John Bair – The middle Provo is not a big section of river. If there were otters there would it be very long before they were in the lower Provo?

Kevin Bunnell – They will probably populate both of the reservoirs and eventually make their way down into the lower Provo. We will monitor that.

Richard Hansen – How big of a waterway do they need?

Kevin Bunnell – A prey base is critical. I know some of the streams we trapped otters from in Nevada were really just puddles in some places and the otters were doing fine.

Allan Stevens – Do you have educational materials and signs to educate the public about the new introductions?

Kevin Bunnell – As we gear up to start moving otters into these locations we will certainly try to get media coverage and signs along the river. This gives us an opportunity to educate people who use these areas about otters.

Allan Stevens – Is there any concern with lead poisoning or mercury levels?

Kevin Bunnell – Nothing that I am aware of. That may be a question we need to look into a little deeper.

Ed Kent – You indicated that you still have to work through some local governmental issues.

Kevin Bunnell – We do need to make sure that the local governments are comfortable with the proposal in all cases. If they have concerns there may be additional sites recommended. We will make sure that is complete before we go to the Wildlife Board.

Questions from the Public

Kirk Robinson – What other efforts to promote public awareness and interest in otters do you have planned besides media coverage and signs along the rivers?

Kevin Bunnell – Nothing specific that we have in place at this point. We will take any opportunity or suggestions to try to increase people’s awareness of otters.

Kirk Robinson – What furbearer regulations you will have to protect otters?

Kevin Bunnell – On the Green River right now traps have to be modified. There have been studies that an otter can swim right through that trap. We also limit certain traps in other areas.

Robert Judd – Utah Aquaculture Association – We have three areas of concern. To our industry otters would be equivalent to a wolf being introduced into an area with livestock. The three things we would like you to look at are first, indemnification. Have you put together an indemnification for when otters get into private aquaculture facilities? Secondly, who is to take care of otters once they are in a facility and how much time will be allotted before otters are removed from a facility? Thirdly, because of disease regulations and issues, specifically concerning things like whirling disease and mud snails, what are the bio-security plans for these facilities when otters enter and potentially infect those facilities with a disease?

Kevin Bunnell – I agree that otters in somebody’s fish pond are an issue that we need to deal with. We would trap and move the animals as soon as we became aware of it. It would be a priority in terms of the response time. We will deal with that on a case-by-case basis and do what we can to alleviate those issues. In terms of bio-security as you put it, I am not aware of any documentation that would indicate that otters are a vector for those diseases. I don’t anticipate that they would be.

Robert Judd – I know there is some question about how otters were handled when they were found at the Jone’s Hole facility.

Kevin Bunnell – That is one of the places we are trapping and removing otters to put on the Escalante. I view that as a different situation where that is a government facility and I think the responsibilities of the facility are different.

Comments from the Public

Robert Judd – Consideration needs to be made into the fact that by introducing this species you could potentially take away someone’s livelihood or do damage to their facility or their product. We need to look closely at indemnification and what to do once otters are in a facility. How do you get them out without bringing a potential disease with waders or boots that are coming from a different place? I know disease issues are a high priority with the state facilities and it is also with private growers as well.

Kirk Robinson – Western Wildlife Conservancy – I would like to congratulate the division on this program. I do agree with this gentleman that efforts need to be made to protect fish hatcheries. On the other hand, this is a native species that belongs here. It is a natural part of the ecosystem. It is a charismatic species and people enjoy seeing them. I think the public in general deserves to be able to see them in the wild and enjoy them. If I can think of any way to promote interest and awareness I will let you know.

RAC Discussion

Ed Kent – What is the likelihood of otters invading a private fish growing facility?

Kevin Bunnell – I think it would depend on how far away they are from where the otters occur. Certainly if an otter finds an easy food source that is not secure he is likely to spend some time there.

Ed Kent – I am assuming in the event that an otter would invade one of these facilities you would handle them like any other depredation problem.

Kevin Bunnell – We deal with a similar situation with our own hatcheries. We remove the animal and we move on. We are familiar with handling the situation and we would respond quickly.

Richard Hansen – Do we know how many facilities there are adjacent to these water ways?

Kevin Bunnell – I am not sure. Our aquatics section keeps track of those and we could certainly look at that.

VOTING

Motion was made by Fred Oswald to approve the plan amendment as presented

Seconded by Doug Jones

In Favor: all

Passed unanimously

Ed Kent – As a caveat, these are wonderful animals and I have experienced their curiosity and charismatic nature on the Green River. Anything that the division can do to promote education and viewing of these animals would be a wonderful attribute to the reintroduction.

- 6) Prairie Dog Conservation Plan (Action)**
- Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Fred Oswald – What is the status of prairie dogs with regards to hunting?

Kevin Bunnell – The Utah prairie dog is protected because they are managed under the endangered species act as a threatened species. For the Gunnison and white tailed prairie dogs we have a shooting closure from April 15 to June 1 on public land to protect them during the pup rearing period.

Ed Kent – Can you shed some light on why it is important for the division to manage these species as a sensitive species rather than have them listed as an endangered species.
Kevin Bunnell - We want to maintain populations and viability of the species at levels so they don't need to be listed under the endangered species act. That is an act that is very important when it needs to be used. It is there to save species that are in peril and in danger of going extinct. With that added protection comes a lot of additional regulations. Management authority is removed from the state and goes to the federal government. To keep that from happening we need to conserve the species up front.

Ed Kent – So your management plan is proactive.

Kevin Bunnell – Both of these species have been petitioned in the past to be listed.

Duane Smith – How are the prairie dog populations holding up in the areas where they have reintroduced black footed ferrets?

Kevin – Good. Populations go up and down but that has not been due to black footed ferrets. That is a natural predator prey relationship that has existed for a long time.

Duane Smith – I know there was some concern as to whether we had adequate prairie dog base.

Kevin Bunnell - Overall the ferret recovery plan has taken some big steps forward right now. There are places in South Dakota and Wyoming where there are over 100 ferrets living in the wild.

RAC Discussion

Gary Nielson – I think it is good to be proactive with this.

VOTING

Motion was made by Gary Nielson to accept the plan as presented

Seconded by Duane Smith

In Favor: all

Passed unanimously

7) Bear Proclamation and Rule R657-33 (Action)

- Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

Calvin Crandall returned

Questions from the RAC

Duane Smith – You said your goal is to shift kills from depredation to sport harvest but how can you do that if hunters target older bears but most depredation problems are caused by younger bears?

Kevin Bunnell – That is not true in relation to livestock depredation. With livestock depredation the problem is largely older mature bears so it is the same portion of the population that the hunters will be targeting.

Duane Smith – What is the proportion of bears involved with livestock depredation versus nuisance bears?

Kevin Bunnell – It varies from year to year. This year there were 24 bears killed because of human safety issues and the other 44 for livestock depredation.

Duane Smith – So you don't think that will impact those demographics you are trying to look at?

Kevin Bunnell – No. The reason we think extending the season can be effective in addressing depredation issues is that hunters will be targeting the same segment of the bear population that usually cause depredation issues.

Duane Smith – What about the help from the houndsmen?

Kevin Bunnell – Those are two separate issues. We are trying to extend the season on units that have chronic depredation problems and the houndsmen will be used in areas where we have chronic nuisance problems such as public safety issues. In the letter that we will send out we will explain that. We can't force someone to harvest whatever bear they find but if they choose to be part of that program and go hunt a bear with a houndsman there to assist them and they have an opportunity to harvest a bear we will strongly encourage them to do so.

Doug Jones – The Nebo would be a unit you plan to use houndsmen on because it is an area with human conflict issues. I think maybe you should consider that area for an extended season because of access issues.

Kevin Bunnell – Craig plans to contact you at the Forest Service in terms of maybe allowing guys to get behind the gates to try to deal with this issue.

Doug Jones – If we let one we have to let them all and that is where we have to be careful.

Fred Oswald – You mentioned a study going on regarding the effectiveness of transplanting nuisance bears. Could you talk a little bit more about that in terms of how successful you think that program is?

Kevin Bunnell – It is something we just started studying. We have had some successes and some failures in the past. We are trying to understand if there is a portion of the bear population that translocation is likely to be more effective on/ We are putting radio collars on the bears and tracking their activity but it will be a couple of years before we have some results from that study.

Richard Hansen – Is there a population objective for bears in any given area?

Kevin Bunnell – Not unit by unit. The objective as outlined in the bear plan is to maintain the current population as it was when the bear plan was written in the year 2000. We use the data that we collect from the harvest such as the percent of females in the harvest, the average age of bears harvested, and what is the adult survival. We have different sample sizes depending on the unit.

Richard Hansen – Up until the last ten years I had not observed bears on the Nebo. How does an increase in the bear population effect the mortality rate of mule deer fawns? Some of the things that I have read indicate that they are very effective predators on fawns. Is that ever taken into consideration?

Kevin Bunnell – There have been studies done. There was actually a study done here by the former manager in the region, Steve Flinders. What the data indicates is that there is a narrow window when bears are effective in taking fawns and calves. Because the timing is so short I don't see it as a major impact on survival rates of big game. Certainly that will be different in different areas but there is no way for us to know that.

Richard Hansen – I am really concerned about the number of bears that might be out there. In some areas where we have struggling deer herds that is just one more thing that they have to deal with.

Kevin Bunnell – We have to consider the whole picture in all of our recommendations and that message is hard for us to get across sometimes. I am guessing that the increase in bear populations on the Nebo is largely in relation to the fact that there aren't sheep on the mountain anymore so we don't have depredation conflicts.

Questions from the Public

Stephanie – I know it is very hard to tell when you have a bear treed if it is a male or female. Are there any fines or penalties in place if we go over the goal of fewer than 40 percent of females in the harvest which might effect the reproduction of the species?

Kevin Bunnell – We would begin reducing permits. It is true that it is hard to tell males from females however everybody who draws a bear permit in the state has to go through an orientation course specifically designed to help them educate themselves on how to identify an older bear from a younger bear and a male from a female.

Stephanie – I am glad to hear there will be more population studies but you said it is very costly. Are you considering at all involving volunteers from the general public to help with such an undertaking?

Kevin Bunnell – The effort I told you about has almost completely been accomplished through volunteers. The Back Country Horsemen Association in Kamas has put in thousands of hours. We would certainly like to use volunteers in other areas.

Stephanie – That’s great. A lot of the problem with nuisance bears is actually bad campers or people who live in the area and keep trash in a bad way. Are there any plans to work with other groups like the Forest Service to instate fines if people leave a campsite in disarray? Can we look at making the people be held responsible?

Kevin Bunnell – There are littering laws on the books that could potentially be instigated. Maybe our law enforcement guys would be more qualified to answer in terms of how often that is used. The best way to address that is to try to convince people do the right thing to begin with.

Paul Davis – Most of those issues would be addressed by the Forest Service. I have written littering tickets but when it gets to court all they have to do is say I wasn’t the last one in my group to leave and therefore was not responsible.

Kirk Robinson – Would you review the policy for dealing with nuisance bears?

Kevin Bunnell – When we receive a call about a bear we go through a process to determine what the potential threats are. We classify bears according to three levels. Level one bears are largely first time offenders. They are the ones we can deal with most successfully by removing the attractant and educating people because we haven’t developed an animal that is conditioned to the area yet. A level two bear is a bear that has either caused damage to an area or is a repeat offender. Another thing we look at is if a bear is day time active or night time active. In that situation the tools we use are translocation. In some instances we end up putting down level two bears. In a lot of cases we try to deal with level two bears with hunters. A level three bear is a bear that we have determined is a significant threat to public safety and we will be very aggressive at trying to remove it lethally.

Kirk Robinson – I infer from that that the increase in mortality due to nuisance problems involved bears in the second two classes. In your presentation you said one of the points in the bear management plan is an emphasis on non lethal methods. What sorts of things have you done this last season to try to deal with bears in a non lethal way?

Kevin Bunnell – We did several things. First, we translocated 26 bears which is the most ever. We hazed some bears in trying to condition them away from the problem areas. That was successful in some cases and wasn’t in others. The conditioned taste aversion study that we have going and are putting thousands of dollars toward is specifically trying to develop non lethal tools for dealing with nuisance bears.

Kirk Robinson – What are you looking for as a measure of success for increasing the number of bear permits in an attempt to reduce conflicts?

Kevin Bunnell – As I mentioned, we are not specifically increasing permits to try to reduce conflicts. We are trying to focus the harvest into areas and that will be hard to measure because we have all these other things that we are trying to do as well in terms of education and prevention and working with the Forest Service. It is an overall plan to try to reduce the magnitude of the problem next time we have a summer similar to last

year. We won't be able to pin point what part of that was successful but we think all of it will contribute to an overall reduction in the number of bear incidents.

Kirk Robinson – I gather if it doesn't do that that might be at least some evidence that it didn't work.

Kevin Bunnell – We always reevaluate what we are doing and manage things in an adaptive way and we will continue to do that.

Kirk Robinson – But you are increasing the number of permits.

Kevin Bunnell – We are increasing the number of permits but that is not necessarily in response to an increase in bear incidents.

Kirk Robinson – What is it in response to?

Kevin Bunnell – It is in response to the data we collected last year in relation to those management targets in the bear management plan.

Kirk Robinson – So it is in response to hunters demanding more permits and you say you think you can afford that.

Kevin Bunnell – That is part of it. Certainly we don't ignore what we learned from last year in terms of realizing that there may be more bears in certain areas than we realized. We put it all together when making our recommendations.

Comments from the Public

Mark Natt – I would like to commend the division with the educational aspect that they are showing in their proposal. I feel it is the right direction to go. We need to educate the people of Utah that bears are there. We need to be aware of them and be responsible for our own actions. I am an avid outdoorsman and a hunter but I disagree with the decision to increase bear permits. I understand your concerns about public safety and rightly so but I feel that this decision is the easy way out to try to solve the bigger problem. Killing bears will obviously not stop human bear conflicts. Public education is the direction we need to go and we need to put money and resources into that. Frequent drought conditions and people building homes and recreating further into the wilderness is bringing bears and humans together. Bad human behavior such as improper garbage containment, feeding wildlife and leaving filthy campgrounds together is a recipe for a conflict. Utah must increase its wildlife education program. Other states such as Idaho, California and Colorado have done so. They have provided bear proof garbage and food containers and formal public outreach programs and their numbers of bear nuisances has declined. Fewer bears are removed and killed. People need to be educated on how to change behavior to lessen conflict. It is time that Utah steps up and spreads the word that we have bears in our backyards. Non lethal methods should be made available to farmers and livestock owners also. I feel we should do as they do in Yellowstone and immediately close camping areas and post warning signs when bears are seen in camping areas. Pamphlets on bear awareness should be made available through the Forest Service and DWR. We should be doing this now to prevent another summer like we had this year. As my wife spoke, there should be fines that are posted. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and I hope we can remedy this situation.

Kirk Robinson – Western Wildlife Conservancy – I agree with everything the previous speaker said. I am aware that this is a difficult problem for the division to deal with. Mountain lions and bears are perhaps the most difficult species to manage because the public gets really concerned about increases in numbers of permits. I recreate a lot in the greater Yellowstone area and have for 40 years. My impression is that the general public

is more bear aware than they are here in Utah. That may be because for a long time most people didn't have much contact with these animals. That is changing and I think the paramount issue is how we are going to educate the general public and make them aware of the importance of these species to the ecosystem and how they can protect themselves and not invite problems. I won't say that the method that the division has taken by increasing the number of permits won't be effective in reducing the number of nuisance bears. Kevin just said that isn't the reason but I believe it is part of the reason. I don't think it is a well reasoned approach. I don't think there is a very high chance of success and I don't think that it is measurable. It is simply reactionary and in my view not the best approach. I do understand that if it works the result will be not much more total mortality but on the other hand it still seems to me to be a misguided effort. So I am opposed to an increase in the number of bear permits. Thank you.

Jason Binder – Utah Federation Houndsmen – We would like to thank Kevin Bunnell for all his hard work with the bear issues this year and for working with the Utah Federation of Houndsmen. Many of us don't agree with increase in tags but we are willing to support the recommendations for the 2008 season. Thank you for your time.

Chad Coburn – I am a houndsman. I am very concerned. We just watched a presentation that showed we had quite a bit higher and more significant numbers of harvest this past year in the drought. The acorn crop froze and that is why we had the bear encounters we did. I agree with these people here. We don't have a bear problem we have a people problem. It is not so much a problem that they leave the campground dirty. The Forest Service people I talked to said they have more problem with people while they are camping leaving their trash everywhere which leads to a bear encounter. I don't support the 20 percent increase myself.

Ben Lowder – I would like to show my support for the division's recommendations including tag numbers. I believe we have the bear population to support it and I definitely support the efforts that are being made with the extended season in select units as well as the volunteer houndsmen. I think this is a good move for the state.

RAC Discussion

Ed Kent – It is my understanding that we have a management plan that was worked out by a number of different participating organizations as well as the division and your recommendation falls well within that framework.

Kevin Bunnell – Yes. The recommendations follow the bear management plan. If we get to a point that we don't meet those performance targets we will recommend a reduction in the number of permits. We are confident that our bear population can withstand a moderate level of increased harvest and still maintain our bear population.

Ed Kent – Your overall objective is to maintain a healthy bear population not only for the enjoyment of the sportsmen but also for the enjoyment of the recreationalist. It appears that based on your presentation you are looking at number of different options not only increasing bear permits but also educating the public. I spend a lot of time at Yellowstone and they focus on educating people who visit that park on the importance of keeping a clean campground and things of that nature. Are these the types of things the division is looking as part of the education process in an attempt to eliminate potential human bear casualties?

Kevin Bunnell – Absolutely. That is not something we can accomplish by ourselves. That is why we are visiting with the Forest Service and the administrators of youth camps and other things. The fact of the matter is we really have an opportunity here. People are willing to listen to us right now unlike they ever have been in the past. We need to take advantage of that. There has been a natural assumption people have made tying the increased incidents to increased bear permits. That is certainly something we consider but it is only part of what we go through. We are going to manage our bear population in accordance with the bear management plan. Where we can increase opportunity we will. If we start crossing those thresholds we will back off. It is an adaptive thing every year.

Ed Kent – I just wanted to make sure that the public is aware that because of the people going deeper into more primitive habitat the potential of bear incidents is much greater. We are encroaching on habitat and have suffered a drought. All of this comes into play but I also wanted to make sure that the public was aware that not only are you looking at this from a biological aspect but also mounting a significant educational program in an attempt to eliminate the conflict on that side of the spectrum as well.

Allan Stevens – I am glad to see that the division is looking at different methods for looking at populations. I know there are studies regarding the presence and absence with hard to observe species. I would encourage you to look at those studies.

Fred Oswald – I am representing a constituency that is much more involved with this particular species than others that we talk about. This is a very conflicting issue for me. I have spent the last year really trying to educate myself about bears and about how the division deals with bears. I have had a chance to go out with Kevin and I feel like I have been educated in the last year about that. The conflict arises because my constituency, whether it is appropriate or not. They are reading editorials in the tribune basically suggesting that the division is raising the number of permits by 20 percent and the reason being is that is their way of dealing with human conflict issues. This evening we have heard from Kevin and he has indicated to us that is not the case. Nevertheless, perception often times is not necessarily reality. I have to deal with a constituency that has a perception that that is what is happening. I don't know what to do about that. We don't have very many tools available to us as a RAC to send those kinds of messages. I think we got some awfully good recommendations tonight from the audience and from Kevin about things we ought to be doing to reduce the number of human conflicts as well as reducing the number of depredation kills that we have to have with our bear populations. I am sure there are lots of other creative things that we haven't even thought of before that would help us maintain a healthy population of bears while at the same time protecting our domestic animal population and protecting our human population. We are going to have to all work together to do that. I think Kevin has made a real strong case for us to support the recommendations and I am inclined to do that but on the other hand I am inclined to try and make some sort of a vote that would indicate that the public has an obligation to get more involved in terms of doing this. We need to have our campgrounds cleaner and we need to have our public and our Forest Service and law enforcement try and make sure that that happens. I would like to make a motion...

VOTING

Motion was made by Fred Oswald to accept the bear proclamation and rule as presented with the exception of a 10 percent increase in permits instead of the proposed 20 percent increase in permits

Fred Oswald – The reason I am saying that is that I don't think the biological numbers aren't correct but I believe that by voting for a 10 percent increase rather than 20 we are sending a message that we need to do a lot more than just increase permits to begin to solve the problem.

Ed Kent – To clarify, reducing the recommendation from 20 to 10 percent and have that allocation made at the discretion of division?

Fred Oswald – Yes.

Seconded by Duane Smith

Gary Nielson – 20 percent is not a number we need to change. They are not trying to increase the number of bears killed. They are trying to shift how it is done. Stupid people are not going away. I think we are taking a step in the right direction trying to shift mortality from depredation bears to sport harvest.

John Bair – I would like to second what was just said. I also want to commend Kevin. I think this is spot on what we have needed for years. To try to shift the harvest where we have had depredation problems and try to target some of these areas. Now that we have the spring hunt and are willing to extend the season a little bit I think that really opens up that option. By gearing the sport harvest toward depredation areas we could in reality be saving bears. We are taking problem bears that would be taken by Wildlife Services probably anyway. I think the division has done a good job. This is a great example of trying to take sport harvest and use it to manage a nuisance bear that Wildlife Services would have to deal with anyway. Education is great. Bear proof garbage cans would be great. I would like to see someone recommend that while they are signing the check to pay for it. 20 percent may sound scary but it is a few permits and really only 15 or 20 additional harvested bears that would probably be harvested by Wildlife Services. They have done a good job and I think we need to go with the division's proposal.

Duane Smith – I would feel more comfortable if we had a better idea about if we are really going to get the bears we are after. Again we have heard from the non-consumptive users that believe this is in response to the high media coverage we had this year. I would like to see us go a little slower particularly because this was such a high harvest year anyway.

Doug Jones – To sum it up for me, what I am hearing is that the survival rate the last two years has been high. In talking with my staff that works on the ground places they never saw bears in years they see bears all the time now. There is a higher bear population. I work in the Spanish Fork Ranger District. Craig Clyde and I got to know each other quite well this summer. I don't buy this syndrome of dirty campgrounds. People patrol and work with the campers every night. This has been a tough year and a drought year. Bears went places they normally didn't go. On the other hand the bear population is higher. I see this as a reaction to a higher bear population and we are trying to manage the numbers.

Ed Kent- We have a motion and a second on table.

In Favor: Duane Smith, Fred Oswald

Opposed: Gary Nielson, Richard Hansen, Allan Stevens, John Bair, Doug Jones, Calvin Crandall

Motion failed 6 to 2

Motion was made by Fred Oswald to approve the proclamation and rule as presented

Seconded by Duane Smith

John Bair – I worked on the last draft of this and it is good to see. I would like to thank Kevin for taking the data and trying hard to address problems and manage the population. I think the division is doing a great job.

Richard Hansen - I would like to say that I think Doug is right on. The increase in the bear population has as much to do with problems as anything. It is not that we are trying to eliminate bears. I think the division is doing their very best to try to make this a situation where it is manageable and tries to balance all aspects. I applaud their efforts.

In favor: all

Motion passed unanimously

8) Fishing Contest and Rule R657-XX (Action)

- Drew Cushings, Warm Water/Community Fisheries Program Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Ed Kent – I know this has been thoroughly hammered out by most of the angling organizations.

Drew Cushings – We have a lot of input from those folks and gratefully so.

Fred Oswald – Why not charge the organizations a fee for tagging fish?

Drew Cushings – Basically we will cover that with the COR fee.

Comments from the Public

Doug Viehweg – I represent Jordanelle State Park. We are planning on hosting a tagged fish contest in June for trout. We think it will be a great opportunity to promote fishing and provide a unique activity. We are planning on co-sponsoring it with the park concessionaire.

Robert Judd – I would like to commend Drew and the division especially with the idea of trying to look at some of the aquatic nuisance species and ways in which through their CORs they are able to manage that a little better. My question is are you going to have some of those disinfecting stations that are moveable at those locations during those fishing contests?

Drew Cushings – That is the intent. We are still purchasing the equipment.

VOTING

Motion was made by Calvin Crandall to accept the rule as presented

Seconded by Richard Hansen

In Favor: all

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

75 in attendance

Next board meeting January 8, 2008 at the DNR Auditorium

Next RAC meeting February 19, 2008 at Springville Jr. High School

NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

U.B.A.T.C. Roosevelt

Dec 13, 2007

Started at 6:35pm; Adjourned 8:00 pm

RAC MEMBERS PRESENT:

Karl Breitenbach-At Large
Floyd Briggs-At Large
Curt Dastrop-Agriculture
Bob Christensen-Forest Service
Kevin Christopherson-NER Supervisor
Beth Hamann-Nonconsumptive
Rod Harrison-Elected Official
Rod Morrison-Sportsman
Amy Torres-Chair
Kirk Woodward-Sportsman

UDWR PRESENT:

Randall Thacker-Reg. Wildlife Bio. II
Drew Cushing-Wildlife Biologist
Dax Mangus-NER Wildlife Bio
Maryann Wangsgard-NER Cons. Officer
Roger Wilson-Wildlife Pgm Coordinator
Ron Stewart-Cons. Outreach
Rose Fedelleck-NER Office Tech
Brian Maxfield-NER Wildlife Bio
Kevin Bunnell-Mam Pgm Coordinator

UNEXCUSED RAC MEMBERS:

Floyd Briggs-At Large
Carlos Reed-Ute Tribe

1,2&3. REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA AND MINUTES AND OLD BUSINESS: Amy Torres

MOTION by Bob Christensen to accept the agenda, minutes and old business.

Second by Rod Harrison

Passed unanimously

4. REGIONAL UPDATE: Kevin Christophersen

The turkey application period is open until December 28th, all applications are online now. Dave Olsen has accepted the Upland Game Coordinator position in the Salt Lake Office, and we are now in the process of finding his replacement. One of the biggest things we deal with this time of year is Depredation, with all the snow and cold weather we are experiencing we have been very busy, the elk have moved down to the valley. We have already exceeded the depredation budget. The Bison plan was approved and we will be moving forward with the introduction.

5. OTTER MANAGEMENT PLAN-Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator (action)

DWR is recommending that the following 3 locations be added to the Utah Otter Management as approved potential release sites. Reintroduction of otters into the Weber River, Joes Valley/Straight Canyon & Middle Provo Canyon.

Questions from the public: none

Questions from the RAC: none

Comments from public:

Clay Hamann: I saw 2 otters in the Provo River with 3 pups.

Comments from the RAC: none

Motion by Karl Breitenbach to accept as proposed

2nd by Kirk Woodward

Passed unanimously

6. PRARIE DOG CONSERVATION PLAN- Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator (ACTION)

Both Gunnison and whitetail dogs are due to be put on the endangered species list. After petitions were submitted and evaluations made, we want to do all we can to keep them off the list. We want to maintain an occupancy rate of 60%, triggering a 40% loss. We will also work to maintain our partnerships with the BLM, NRCS and the Farm Bureau.

Comments from the public: none

Comments from the RAC: none

Questions from the public: none

Questions from the RAC:

Rod Harrison: How do you get accurate surveys without including Tribal lands?

Kevin Bunnell: We are trying to work with the Ute Indian Tribe, but with the amount of petitions we received we needed to move on this.

Karl Breitenbach: Are there good things about prairie dogs?

Kevin Bunnell: Yes, they are a key species; they are like owls, hawks etc... in that they are sensitive species, bringing other species under the umbrella.

Karl Breitenbach: It seems there is a lot of room for education.

Kevin Bunnell; Yes, there is.

Bob Christensen: About the management actions - is there a predicted range model, will this affect lands within prairie dog colonies only?

Kevin Bunnell: There is a range wide trigger with other states. Some lands will not be suitable.

Bob Christensen: On the map there is a lot of BLM ground (Federal lands).

Kevin Bunnell: This is a broad range effort we are in the process of narrowing it down. Brian Maxfield can shed more light on this.

Brian Maxfield: There is very little Forest Service land in question; there are only small colonies. The occupancy will need to be refined.

Bob Christensen: The outline says no grazing in NRA when there actually is grazing at Flaming Gorge; we need some clarification on that.

Kevin Bunnell: That actually refers to Lake Powell, we will clarify that.

Karl Breitenbach: Concerning the Ute Tribe, will there be a difference if they go along with this plan?

Kevin Bunnell: They are affected, but how they govern is up to them.

Karl: Under the present plan there are no restrictions on taking?

Kevin Bunnell: Under the present plan there are no restrictions.

Bob Christensen: On page 29, will this be up to the land management agency?

Kevin Bunnell: Yes that is why BLM is in the plan.

Motion by Kirk Woodward to accept as proposed

2nd by Beth Hamann

Passed unanimously

7.BEAR PROCLAMATION RULE R657-33-Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator (ACTION)

-Volunteer Hounds men will be used to increase harvest in areas with chronic nuisance problems.

-Spring harvest will be extended by one week on chronic depredation units. More units open to summer dog training.

-Add Fillmore/Pahvant to the beaver unit.

-Make archery equipment and firearms regulations consistent with big game proclamations.

-365 day pursuits.

Population Goal

- To maintain healthy bear population in existing occupied habitat; expand distribution while considering human safety, economic concerns, and other wildlife species.

Population objective

- Maintain current bear populations with reasonable proportion of older age animals and breeding females, balancing population numbers.

Questions/comments from the RAC:

Karl Breitenbach: Doesn't that overlap the archery deer?

Kevin Bunnell: By one week.

Questions/Comments from public:

Jason Bider: President of the Hounds man Assc. Fully supports plan.

Motion by Kirk Woodward to accept as presented

2nd by Rod Morrison

Passed unanimously

8. FISHING CONTEST RULE R657-13-4-Drew Cushings-Warm Water/Communities Fisheries Program Coordinator

Requirements for Type I, Type II and Tagged fish contests.

Questions/Comments from the RAC:

Karl Breitenbach: Good job, much better.

Questions/Comments from the public:

None

Motion by Karl Breitenbach to accept as presented

2nd by Bob Christensen

Passed unanimously

MOTIONS MATRIX
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL WILDLIFE ADVISORY COUNCIL
JOHN WESLEY POWELL MUSEUM IN GREEN RIVER

December 12, 2007

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: to approve the agenda as written

PASSED: unanimously

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: to approve the minutes as written.

PASSED: unanimously

OLD BUSINESS

MOTION: N/A

PASSED:

OTTER MANAGEMENT PLAN

MOTION: to approve the otter management plan as presented.

PASSED: with a majority vote. Two members voted in opposition.

PRAIRIE DOG CONSERVATION PLAN

MOTION: to approve the Prairie Dog Conservation Plan as presented.

PASSED: with a majority vote. Two dissenting votes.

BLACK BEAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-33

MOTION: to approve the Black Bear Proclamation and Rule as presented.

PASSED: with a majority vote. One opposing vote.

FISHING CONTEST RULE R657-XX

MOTION: to approve the Fishing Contest Rule as presented.

PASSED: unanimously

SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

John Wesley Powell Museum in Green River

December 12, 2007

Commence at 6:30 p.m. Adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

RAC MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

EXCUSED RAC MEMBERS:

Bayles, Lyle	At Large
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UNEXCUSED RAC MEMBERS:

Adams, Bruce	At Large
Lewis, Kurt	Agriculture

UTAH WILDLIFE BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

(None)

DWR PERSONNEL PRESENT:

Bates, Bill
Bunnell, Kevin
Cushing, Drew
Larson, Rick
Robertson, Tj
Stettler, Brent
Wilson, Roger

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE 5

CONDUCTING THE MEETING

-James Gilson, Chairman

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

-James Gilson, Chairman

Questions from the RAC:

Questions from the Audience:

Comments from the Audience:

Comments/Discussion from the RAC:

MOTION by Wayne Hoskisson to approve the agenda as written.

SECOND by Kevin Albrecht

PASSED unanimously

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

-James Gilson, Chairman

Questions from the RAC:

Questions from the Audience:

Comments from the Audience:

Comments/Discussion from the RAC:

MOTION by Walt Maldonado to approve the minutes as amended.

SECOND by Verd Byrnes

PASSED unanimously

OLD BUSINESS

-Terry Sanslow, Vice Chairman

Terry summarized actions of the last meeting of the Wildlife Board, which may be reviewed at:
www.wildlife.utah.gov/public_meetings/board_minutes/

Questions from the RAC:

Jordan Hatch expressed surprise and disappointment that Scofield and Hiawatha CWMUs failed to receive an extra bull elk permit apiece as he had supposed.

Bill Bates reviewed the DWR recommendation, which did not approve any extra permit.

Terry Sanslow reviewed the RAC minutes, which showed our RAC's approval of the Division's recommendations.

Verd Byrnes asked about the timeline for possible implementation of a competency test for archers and muzzleloaders. Terry replied that the motion had been passed, but no timetable had been established.

Jordan asked about the outcome of the proposal to develop a bison herd in northeastern Utah. Terry indicated that the Board had passed the bison plan with the stipulation that the interagency team remain in force to resolve any conflicts which may arise as plan implementation proceeds.

Questions from the Audience:

Comments from the Audience:

Comments/Discussion from the RAC:

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:

OTTER MANAGEMENT PLAN

By Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

Questions from the RAC:

Drew Sitterud expressed concern about the proposal to bring otters to the Joes Valley Reservoir drainage. Plan preparation failed to include consultation with the Emery County Lands Council. There were concerns about the possibility of future restrictions and regulations for the protection of this species, which should first be addressed.

Jordan Hatch expressed concern about the otters' presence in and around stock ponds and canals, and how their presence might interfere with livestock and farming operations.

Questions from the Audience:

Comments from the Audience:

Comments/Discussion from the RAC:

Drew protested the fact that DWR planners failed to consult with local government and other entities affected by the proposed introduction of otters in the Joes Valley drainage.. Kevin Bunnell replied that he would carry forward Drew's protest to DWR's administration.

MOTION by Terry Sanslow to approve the Otter Management Plan as presented.

SECOND by Pam Riddle

PASSED: The motion carried with opposing votes cast by Drew Sitterud and Jordan Hatch.

PRAIRIE DOG CONSERVATION PLAN

By Kevin Bunnell, Mammals Program Coordinator

Questions from the RAC:

Jordan Hatch expressed concern about the impact of the conservation plan on ranchers and farmers, and asked questions about the "trigger point" for implementation of management action. Kevin Bunnell responded that the intent of the Division's management plan was to prevent federal listing as threatened or endangered, which may would result in serious consequences for the livestock industry.

Kevin Albrecht asked for examples of possible management actions. Kevin Bunnell responded that dusting for plague might be included, depending on the cause of the population decline. Wayne Hoskisson challenged the veracity and validity of the conservation plan. Wayne encouraged more proactive research and management, and urged to DWR to provide more detail in the plan.

Questions from the Audience:

Comments from the Audience:

Comments/Discussion from the RAC:

Drew Sitterud complimented the DWR for bringing the Prairie Dog Conservation Plan before the Emery County Lands Council in advance of the RAC meeting.

MOTION by Terry Sanslow to approve the Prairie Dog Conservation Plan as written.

SECOND by Verd Byrnes

PASSED with a majority vote. Opposed to the motion were Wayne Hoskisson and Jordan Hatch.

BLACK BEAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-33

-Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator
& Bill Bates, Regional Wildlife Program Manager

Questions and Comments from the RAC:

Terry Sanslow asked how many houndsmen had agreed to provide the guiding service mentioned by Kevin Bunnell during his presentation.

Kevin answered that the Utah Houndsmen Association had volunteered the services of its members.

Terry Sanslow expressed dissatisfaction with the conflict that exists between spring bear hunters and limited entry turkey permittees on the LaSal and San Juan hunting units.

Kevin Bunnell acknowledged the problem, but didn't offer a solution.

Bill Bates identified non-resident bear pursuit as a contributing factor to the problem.

James Gilson asked questions about the bear management plan, and harvest by sportsmen and government entities. He queried the process for drawing a houndsman-assisted bear permit.

Kevin Bunnell and Bill Bates answered questions about the plan, and elaborated on the houndsman-assisted bear hunting opportunity.

Laura Kamala asked for additional detail on bear-human incidents that occurred this year, and about DWR's response to varying levels of threat to human life. She also inquired about population monitoring techniques.

Wayne Hoskisson asked about the point at which spotlighting becomes an illegal practice.

Kevin Bunnell and Officer Tj Robertson responded to Wayne's query.

Several RAC members asked an assortment of questions about a bear's life history, longevity and age and gender composition of the harvest.

Wayne Hoskisson challenged the completeness of DWR's data in the face of its recommendation to increase the number of permits around the state.

Various answers were offered to appease Wayne's discomfiture.

Kevin Albrecht expressed appreciation for the Division's effort to coordinate bear proofing with federal land managers.

Walt Maldonado asked Bill Bates about the status of the nuisance bear that had been such a problem in Green River. The bear had not since been located.

James Gilson urged the Division to make special efforts to keep bear populations from becoming more of a threat to big game animals.

After a motion had been made, and Chairman Gilson had called for a discussion on the motion, Wayne Hoskisson voiced his opposition to the proposed black bear management plan on grounds of its insufficient detail, and DWR's inability to provide an accurate estimate of the size of the bear population.

Questions from the Audience:

Comments from the Audience:

Guy Webster of the Utah Federation of Houndsmen voiced support for the proposed plan.

MOTION by Drew Sitterud to approve the Black Bear Proclamation and Rule as presented.

SECOND by Jordan Hatch

PASSED with one opposing vote cast by Wayne Hoskisson.

FISHING CONTEST RULE R657-XX

-By Drew Cushing, Warm Water Fisheries Program Manager

Questions/Comments from the RAC:

Wayne Hoskisson asked for additional detail on the types of warm and cold-water contests and tournaments.

Walt Maldonado asked questions about the on-going tournaments at Lake Powell.

Walt commented that the proposed registration fee was too high for small clubs to bear.

Drew Cushing acknowledged Walt's opinion, and said that he was working on a sliding scale to accommodate smaller clubs and organizations. Drew also indicated he would require only one registration fee for the on-going tournament at Lake Powell.

In behalf of the Bass Federation, Walt Maldonado complimented Drew Cushing and Roger Wilson for their accessibility and cooperation.

Drew Sitterud and James Gilson asked questions about the Emery County tagged fish contest, planned for Millsite State Park.

Drew promised his cooperation in helping the contest take place as scheduled.

Questions from the Audience:

Comments from the Audience:

MOTION by Kevin Albrecht to accept the Fishing Contest Rule as presented.

SECOND by Terry Sanslow

PASSED unanimously

OTHER BUSINESS

-James Gilson and Terry Sanslow

James and Terry introduced a proposal to keep track of questions and concerns raised by RAC members in the course of a meeting. Terry indicated that the Wildlife Board already does this, and call it an "Action Log." Apparently, the Board votes on each item listed in the log, and asks the Division to follow-up on approved items, as needed. Terry then read a list he had made of questions and concerns aired by RAC members this evening.

Questions/Comments from the RAC:

Rick Larson cautioned the RAC against formally implementing the Action Log tonight, saying that it would be best to first determine the proper procedure with Staci Coons.

James Gilson thanked RAC members for their attendance at RAC meetings during the year, and for the effort they make in preparation for each meeting.

MOTION by No motion was made.

SECOND by

PASSED

ADJOURNMENT

James Gilson adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

**Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Beaver High School
Beaver, UT
December 11, 2007
7:00 p.m.**

REVIEW & ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

MOTION: To accept the November minutes as written.

VOTE: Unanimous

REVIEW & ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

MOTION: To accept the agenda as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

OTTER MANAGEMENT PLAN

MOTION: To accept the Otter Management Plan Amendment as presented by the DWR.

VOTE: Unanimous

PRAIRIE DOG CONSERVATION PLAN

MOTION: To accept the Prairie Dog Conservation Plan as presented by the DWR.

VOTE: Unanimous

BLACK BEAR PROCLAMATION AND RULE R657-33

MOTION: To accept the Black Bear Proclamation and Rule R657-33 as presented by the DWR.

VOTE: Unanimous

FISHING CONTEST RULE R657-XX

MOTION: To accept the Fishing Contest Rule as presented by the DWR with the exception that the fee for the COR be high enough to cover all management costs that may be incurred by the division.

VOTE: 6 in favor, 1 opposed.

**Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting
 Beaver High School
 Beaver, UT
 December 11, 2007
 7:00 p.m.**

RAC Members Present	DWR Personnel Present	Wildlife Board Present	RAC Members Not Present
Jack Hill James Edwards Rex Stanworth Clair Woodbury Chairman Jake Albrecht Steve Flinders Sam Carpenter Del LeFevre	Douglas Messerly Lynn Chamberlain Heather Perry Giani Julander Teresa Bonzo Kevin Bunnell Drew Cushings Micah Evans Brent Farnsworth Roger Wilson	Paul Niemeyer	Steve Dalton Gary Hallows Cordell Pearson Harry Barber

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. There were approximately 23 interested parties in attendance in addition to the RAC members, Wildlife Board members and DWR employees. Jake Albrecht introduced Wildlife Board Chairman, Paul Niemeyer. Chairman Jake Albrecht asked the RAC to introduce themselves and whom they represent.

Jack Hill: Jack Hill, from Cedar City. I represent the non-consumptive.

James Edwards: Jim Edwards, Delta. I represent the sportsmen.

Rex Stanworth: I'm Rex Stanworth, from Delta. I represent at-large.

Clair Woodbury: Clair Woodbury, Hurricane. I'm an at-large representative.

Douglas Messerly: I'm Doug Messerly, Regional Supervisor for the Utah Division of Wildlife out of Cedar City. My staff and I act as executive secretary to this committee, non-voting.

Steve Flinders: Steve Flinders, represent the Forest Service, Fish Lake and Dixie, live here in Beaver.

Sam Carpenter: Sam Carpenter, Kanab, Utah. I represent sportsmen.

Del LeFevre: Del LeFevre, Boulder, Escalante. I represent agriculture.

Jake Albrecht: Okay our next item of business is procedure for dedicated hunters to receive RAC credit. This is informational. And I assume Heather is going to take care of that.

Procedure for Dedicated Hunters to Receive RAC Credit (Informational)

- Heather Perry, Southern Region Dedicated Hunter Coordinator

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Heather. Our next item of business is the review and acceptance of tonight's meeting agenda.

Review and Acceptance of Agenda (action)

Questions from the RAC:

None.

Questions from the Public:

None.

Comments from the Public:

None.

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Jake Albrecht: Do we have a motion on that?

Rex Stanworth: Yeah I'll make that motion.

Jake Albrecht: Okay we have a motion by Rex Stanworth to accept tonight's agenda. Do we have a second?

Steve Flinders: I'll second.

Jake Albrecht: A second by Steve Flinders. Any other discussion? All in favor please say aye. Any against? Okay that motion carries.

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

Jake Albrecht: Our next item is review and acceptance of last minutes, RAC minutes. Do we have any discussion on those?

Review and Acceptance of RAC minutes (action)

Questions from the RAC:

None.

Questions from the Public:

None.

Comments from the Public:

None.

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Jake Albrecht: Seeing none we need a motion.

Jack Hill: I'd so move.

Jake Albrecht: Motion by Jack Hill to accept the minutes.

James Edwards: I'll second it.

Jake Albrecht: And we have a second by James Edwards. Any other discussion? All in favor? Any against? Motion carries.

Jack Hill made the motion to accept the minutes from the November meeting as written. James Edwards seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Jack Hill: We at uh, old business Mr. Chairman?

Jake Albrecht: We're not quite to that yet.

Jack Hill: Okay.

Jake Albrecht: Okay I'm going to take a few minutes. Our next item is a report of board actions from the November Wildlife Board meeting.

Wildlife Board Update

-Jake Albrecht, RAC Chairman presented information regarding the November Wildlife Board Meeting.

- We discussed the deer units, unit-by-unit, deer management. And the Wildlife Board passed that the State of Utah continue to look into that and bring it into an action item.
- They also did the same thing with the statewide spike elk and to bring it as an action item next year.
- The hunting and fishing accommodations for people with disabilities, which we passed, passed unanimously up there.
- The hunter education rule was the same.
- The CWMU pertaining to the Southern Region, the Wildlife Board listened to the Indian Peaks representatives and ended up giving them two premium tags. They were asking for three up there, three regular tags, and they ended up with two premium tags. So what that means is they can hunt like all three seasons. Anyway that passed.
- On the CWMU committee review permit allocations for landowner association, which we talked about, they're going to go in and visit that, which, I can't remember which one of our RAC members suggested that, but they are going to do that.
- They passed the Book Cliffs Bison Management plan. They also passed that they keep the bison committee together on that unit also, the working group.
- The Bucks and Bulls, they made a motion to leave the Thousand Lakes and the Oak Creek units as limited entry units.
- Retain the 5-day general season in the Southern and Southeastern regions.

- Moving the Deloris Triangle rifle hunt dates to correspond with the Crawford Mountain muzzleloader deer hunt.
- A boundary change on the Wasatch sheep unit for the public draw.
- The Management Bull Elk Hunt permittees will lose their bonus points and incur the waiting period. So if you put in for that next year and you have lots of points and you draw out well you'll end up losing those.
- The general archery elk hunt and the limited entry bull elk archery hunts opening day be moved forward and open on the third Saturday of August. Also, that the general archery spike bull units elk hunt would be a 23-day hunt period, which would then close on the 4th Sunday after the opening day. Also, that the limited entry archery bull elk hunt, unit hunts, be extended by 5 days to become a 28-day hunt, closing on the 4th Friday after the opening day.

Jake Albrecht: So that's pretty much what happened at the Wildlife Board. If you have any questions why I'd try to answer them. Go ahead Clair.

Sam Carpenter: Did I understand you correctly that the Southern, Southeastern units are 5-day hunts?

Jake Albrecht: What's that?

Sam Carpenter: The Southern and Southeastern units are going to be 5-day hunts as they have been in the past? Is that what you said?

Jake Albrecht: Okay I apologize for calling you Clair. I always get you two mixed up. It's Sam. What happened is when we got up there, and I think it was the Central region and it was either the Northern or the Northeastern region had made a motion to leave the Southern unit as a 5-day hunt also. So when the motion came out it was to be, you know we voted for a 9-day here and it was 5 to 4, it was a close vote. But they voted to leave it a 5-day hunt for next year.

Sam Carpenter: Okay, one more question. You stated that the limited entry archery elk hunt was extended by 5 days. Does that mean they will spend the last 5 days hunting with the rifle hunters?

Jake Albrecht: I think what they wanted, the way I remember it, is they wanted the first 5 days without any rifle. And Doug maybe you'll have to help me on this because I can't remember exactly how that went, but hold on.

Douglas Messerly: The concern primarily was on the units that have general season spike only archery hunters in addition to limited entry archery bull elk hunters and the overlap that occurred there. In the end what they did was they made it so that there was at least 5 days where the limited entry archery bull elk hunters did not have to compete with the spike bull elk hunters. Obviously they didn't have to do that at all on the straight limited entry units anyway because there were no general season archery elk hunters there. There are general season archery deer hunters on the limited entry units. The problem is there just aren't enough days in August and September to give everybody an exclusive hunt. But there were some adjustments made. I'm confused too on exactly what happened but there's some dates that will come out there and the archers seem to be happy with the results in any event.

Jake Albrecht: Del, you have a question?

Del LeFevre: What happened with the Book Cliff buffalos?

Jake Albrecht: Book Cliffs buffalo was discussed quite a bit. I believe the motion was made and it passed 4 to 1. I'm sure you're wondering about the commissioners being, the way I remember it Tom had visited with those people and they weren't completely in favor of it but it went ahead and passed 4 to 1.

Jake Albrecht: Clair, have you got a question?

Clair Woodbury: On this, uh, there's a couple of things, the Indian Peaks, did they come before our RAC for their proposal? They just bypass us and go right to the board.

Jake Albrecht: There wasn't anybody here that we had discussion on other than the DWR, if you'll remember last month.

Clair Woodbury: Is there uh, aren't there rules that they're supposed to come to us first? Or is that just, are we wasting our time here?

Jake Albrecht: I would strongly suggest, I don't know what the rules are, but I'd strongly suggest that the people come here first before they become an action item with the Wildlife Board. Not only does it bring out some other questions that maybe the DWR needs to find out but don't put other people on the spot at the spur of the moment.

Clair Woodbury: I've heard rumblings in the past, and tonight that to get things really done you just go right to the Board meeting and forget the RACs. We're kind of impotent. Is that the feeling that I'm getting from everybody here? I think it's, and Paul I don't want to put you on the spot but you've got a lot of upset RAC members here. Our 5-day hunt that we voted to support the DWR. They've proposed it 3 straight years. We supported them this year. Are we wasting our time here?

Paul Niemeyer: Well on that, you've got to remember, we get a lot of pressure from others, and I had more phone calls in my motel that night on this 5-day hunt deal. And I don't even vote now unless there's a tie. But there's a lot of pressure besides just the RAC on some of these things. Now the Indian Peaks deal, I'll take responsibility for that because I was not at the RAC meeting. I thought they'd been there. Normally, you know, we try and make them come. But there's nothing in the state statute or anything else, they don't have to come to the RAC and then the Board. They don't have to do that. It's something that we like them to do but we can't force them to do it. And I guarantee in another year we'll handle that a little different with those guys. But as far as the 5-day hunt, you know, we're getting pressure from, I mean you can't imagine, I'm still getting e-mails on the 5-day hunt. Even today I got some that are for and against. Congratulations that we went for 5, and some guys that are mad because we didn't go for 9. So we get a lot, and that's what we're supposed to do as Board members. We, you know, we give the RAC as much credence as you can, obviously, but still there is other factors that come into this. And that's a real split issue, this 9-day, 5-day hunt thing. And I think that uh, you know it was a split vote with you guys. I mean you guys had a split vote here.

Clair Woodbury: Let's look at it from this perspective right here: the Division has felt strongly enough for 3 years that they get a bigger kill in 5 days than they do in 9. They brought it 3 straight years.

Paul Niemeyer: Now how many times has the RAC voted for a 9-day hunt?

Clair Woodbury: This is our first year.

Paul Niemeyer: That's right.

Clair Woodbury: Now as far as I understand this is the process. Those people could have been in Hurricane to that meeting. I think there were 2, I think 2, maybe 3 that stood up at that mic for the 5-day hunt. There were several against it. Now I represent the people at-large. I haven't yet had one person come to me and say I want a 5-day hunt. It's been 100 percent 9-day. And as an at-large, you know it's a pretty big population in Southern Utah, you know, several hundred thousand. They know who I am. The processes here that they come to the RAC meetings, that's how the legislature set it up. It's not behind the scenes phone calls to you in your motel room, how this should work.

Paul Niemeyer: Well there's 5 RACs you know that are voting on this too.

Clair Woodbury: I understand that. But for the Southern RAC, we felt strongly enough to follow with the Division on this one. Yeah it was split, but still it was a yes vote. We buy into it now. And I'm just, maybe I'm just the idiot taking the heat for everybody here but it's almost unanimous, we're ticked. So that's all we've got to say.

Paul Niemeyer: Well and I'm sorry that, but you've got to understand that you've got to agree to disagree here because we do get, you know you've got 5 RACs that we're dealing with plus all these other things that come into it. And you guys weren't 100 percent on it either so it's pretty hard to . . .

Clair Woodbury: I understand that but when we're voting on a Southern RAC or a Southern Region issue I think we should carry a little more weight than the other regions voting on our issue.

Paul Niemeyer: You do (unintelligible).

Jack Hill: It doesn't seem like, excuse me.

Jake Albrecht: Do you have a comment Jack?

Jack Hill: Yeah I sure do. A couple of things, it doesn't appear to me that this RAC has as much say as other RACs over what happens in the Southern Region. I think the action of the Board dictates that.

Paul Niemeyer: Okay how many items did you guys get turned down on? Of all the things you voted for what was it, 1 or 2? The Board supported you in almost everything you guys asked for. So I don't think it's fair to say we don't ever listen.

Jack Hill: Oh I believe you listen.

Paul Niemeyer: Well we went with, you know, go down the list of them how many we went for. There's only a couple that we didn't.

Clair Woodbury: Paul, there's one thing that drives the paychecks of our Division in Utah, and that's the deer hunt. That's the flagship in the state of Utah. The elk hunt's good, the fishing, deer hunt's what brings out the passions in everybody. We can't lump that into every little item that we approved and

disapproved. This is a big thing. It's not just some small little item that, yeah, there's only a couple of them, but this is a big one.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, Rex do you have one comment then we'll move on?

Rex Stanworth: Well I was going to point out to Paul, this specific question in regards to the 5-day, 9-day hunt and the other RACs being able to vote on it, that was exactly my point at Cabela's when we had all of the RACs there, is that there are areas where we as a RAC speak but we're only 20 percent of the vote. And I realize that those other folks have got a vested interest in the state of Utah but at some point in time the RAC in that region has got to have some sort of ability to control what goes on in our own back yards. And that doesn't mean that the guys in the north shouldn't be interested in it but I remember a few years back when they wanted us to kill, I think it was 1500 elk and deer up by Vernal because the sagebrush had died. We didn't have any information. How could we, it would have been easy for us yeah kill em, but we didn't, we said let's go in, we'll take half and let's put half on a call basis. And that was our recommendation, kind of a little bit slower. But that was my point at Cabela's last summer was, how do we get this RAC or any other RAC to have more ability to speak in behalf of that RACs location, instead of only a 20 percent? So that was my comment.

Jake Albrecht: All right, Jack, have you got something on this or something else?

Jack Hill: No, on this. There's even a bigger issue here that kind of really gnaws at me, and that is that in a democratic process when a group of people come together and vote, then, and even if it was a 5 to 4 vote then everyone supports that decision, as I understand it. And so simply because we had a split in the vote, I think everybody on the board, on this board, agrees that we would support that. Well how come we didn't get informed from someone why our vote was not accepted? I don't understand that at all. I mean if we're going to function as a arm of the Big Game Board then I would think that the Big Game Board would show us the courtesy of letting us know why they didn't accept what we decided we would like to see happen? I don't understand that. Thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Okay. We're going to move on to a regional update with Doug Messerly right now.

Regional Update (informational)

-Douglas Messerly, Regional Supervisor, presented information regarding Southern Region activities. Thank you Mr. Chairman I'll try to be brief.

- Turkey applications are open. They close on the 26th of December. The landowner turkey application process has changed a little bit this year. For any one that's interested in pursuing that give our office a call and we'll explain that procedure to you.
- Since we met last time we had the Management Bull hunt. Our officers and biologists collected information from the animals that were harvested there. I have a series of photographs of every one that was harvested. If anyone is interested in that they would be welcome to contact me and I'll send you a web link to look at those. We're sending the teeth off for age classification and we'll present a report on that when it comes to the numbers portion of the Bucks and Bulls Proclamation, which is next spring. What the results of the hunt were in terms of the age of the harvest will probably have a significant impact on the number of permits that we request for the fall of 2008. And we'll see what that turns out to be when we actually have that data.
- Habitat projects are in full swing right now. Our habitat guys are working themselves to death trying to get things done. This moisture is sure welcome. Somebody said to me the

other day it makes us all look like geniuses when it rains and snows. I hope that continues because I like looking like a genius as much as I can.

- You have in front of you a draft, and this is just for the RAC members, a draft meeting schedule. This is what we decided on last time. The reason it's a draft is because I don't think we have all the meeting locations finalized at this point. But these are the dates and towns, anyway. If you see any problems with that now would be a good time to raise those before we finalize it before our next meeting. We'll pass this out either by e-mail or here at this meeting in our February meeting, which is our next meeting.
- The last item would be information items. We recently had a discussion in the leadership team of the Division regarding this. And I would offer Mr. Chairman to start up an action log. If the RAC has specific information requests that they would like to get more information on an item from my staff that I can help with, that would be a regional issue, I'd be glad to, particularly if the committee would make a motion to that effect, to write that down as an action item and report back to the entire RAC in the next meeting where I'm able to get that information together. I would like to separate that from information requests from individuals. If there's an individual RAC member that just would like, or wants some specific information you can write to me any time. It doesn't have to be here, but write to me or call me any time and I'll be glad to get what information I can for you and send it to you. In any event I'd like to offer that. If there's something that comes up that we can look into. If it's a statewide issue it might be better taking it to the Board to be considered on a statewide level. But if it's a regional issue I can certainly prepare a presentation with regard to that.

Douglas Messerly: So unless there's any questions Mr. Chairman that's my presentation.

Jake Albrecht: Okay thanks Doug. Sam, you have a question?

Sam Carpenter: The elk management hunt you spoke of, was this the one that we had the five- point restrictions on that we were talking about earlier in the earlier RAC meetings?

Douglas Messerly: Yes it is, that's the Management Bull hunt, is what it was termed in the proclamation. And it will also be in the 2008 proclamation. This year we had 69 permits across 3 units. And I think you can probably expect a significant reduction in that for next year based on what I've seen so far anyway. We don't have all the information in and we'll evaluate that fully when we get it. But, yes, that's the hunt we're talking about.

Sam Carpenter: Okay, then my question would be, did we have any violations or have to issue any citations to people with this antler restriction hunt?

Douglas Messerly: We had, to my knowledge, one person who actually surrendered a 6-point bull, it was 6-point on both sides. And I'm aware of at least 2 other bulls that were shot and left. But I don't have final details on that. We'll never know the total number; I think is what it boils down to.

Lynn Chamberlain: Doug, do you want to see this video?

Douglas Messerly: Pardon me?

Lynn Chamberlain: The video. The seeding video.

Douglas Messerly: Oh. How long?

Lynn Chamberlain: Five minutes.

Douglas Messerly: Mr. Chairman, Lynn has a 5-minute video showing our seeding efforts on the Milford Flat fire if you can indulge us for that amount of time we'd be glad to show it. Okay, go ahead Lynn.

Lynn Chamberlain showed video on the Milford Flat reseeding.

Douglas Messerly: Thanks for that time Mr. Chairman. That was put together by Lynn Chamberlain, and the star of the show was our man Gary Bezzant, who you've seen here before as the dedicated hunter guy. So anyway, thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Lynn. Thanks Doug for your update.

Jack Hill: I've got a question.

Jake Albrecht: What does it pertain to?

Jack Hill: This, that seeding.

Jake Albrecht: Okay.

Jack Hill: Do we know what kind of seed they planted or broadcast?

Douglas Messerly: Yes we do, but I don't. We have numerous seed mixtures that went, depending on soil types, precipitation, range, whether it was on the east side or the west side. But a lot of thought went into that, yes, in conjunction with the BLM, private landowners and State Lands.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, before we get into our main agenda I'm going to take a minute and let the public know about the comment procedures. If you want to make public comment you need to fill out one of the little, I assume they're yellow cards tonight, some white and yellow cards. The DWR officers have those with them. If you are speaking as an individual you have 3 minutes and if you're speaking as a group we'll give you 5 minutes. And they must be on agenda items with action, which I think everything we have tonight is. Uh, but anyway fill those out and get them to those people. We need your name on there, what you want to talk about and which agenda item. Okay, moving right along then we're going to go to the Otter Management Plan, Kevin Bunnell. You've got the floor pal.

Otter Management Plan - Amendment (Action)

-Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator presented the Otter Management Plan.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, do we have any questions from the RAC? Rex Stanworth.

Questions from the RAC:

Rex Stanworth: Kevin you said these will eat fish, correct?

Kevin Bunnell: Yes they will.

Rex Stanworth: Do you uh, I mean whenever you talk about the Provo River or any thing to do with the Provo River becoming a pretty big fishery up there, is there any problems with fisherman, otters and the taking of those fish by those otters?

Kevin Bunnell: Well I won't say that there aren't some people that are concerned but when we have an opportunity to explain it to them most of those go away. And we're really benefited by that by having otters on the Green River. A lot of the people that fish the middle section of the Provo have experience on the Green, they've seen otters, they enjoy the opportunity. They've seen that it hasn't had a huge impact on that fishery, there's still tons of fish to catch in the Green River. And so because a lot of people have had that experience it kind of, it's more positive than negative from the angling community, I guess would be the bottom line there. People's sentiment anyway. Do you agree with that Drew and Roger?

Jake Albrecht: On the one over to Ferron, Joe's Valley, is that what it is?

Kevin Bunnell: Yeah.

Jake Albrecht: Have you guys worked with the, oh like the Forest Service and other people on that? What's their feelings towards it or? And will it affect the reservoir?

Kevin Bunnell: Um, we worked really closely with our own aquatics folks, within the regions. I asked the region's to provide these recommendations. I don't know what extent they involved the land management agencies in those consultations. I can find out if you would like Jake.

Jake Albrecht: Well I was just wondering what, kind of what their feeling were over there because we don't hear a lot about it, you know, with our RAC here. So I was wondering if there was any feedback there that we could make decisions on while we're listening to it.

Kevin Bunnell: Uh, you know, we were really careful, that's why we took a couple of years to make these recommendations because we have, you know we have a lot of sensitive species or endangered fish species in the state and so we wanted to, we didn't want to cause bigger problems for that program by trying to work on our own. And so I feel comfortable in the recommendations. They took the time, they did it right and we've got sites that everybody's comfortable with from that standpoint, from the aquatic side and the terrestrial side.

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

Sam Carpenter: How do we control the population on these? Are these trapped or anything to do as a game animal that the public participates other than just viewing?

Kevin Bunnell: We hope eventually, they're really a highly sought after furbearing species. Right now our populations aren't to the point where we're allowing that in the state. Like I said, one of the objectives of our current management plan is to evaluate the feasibility of allowing some of that in the future. There's, a lot of our trappers in the state would really love the opportunity to trap otters.

Jake Albrecht: Kevin, will this affect other trapping opportunities like for bobcat and whatever in the region?

Kevin Bunnell: You know we put some real basic restrictions on the areas where we have otters. But the trapping association has been very supportive of this program so far. It's just right around within, I think it's within a hundred yards of the river and it's tributaries. There's a, you can't use conibears and some things like that. But it really hasn't been a big deal, at least that we've been made aware of.

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

Questions from the Public:

None.

Comments from the Public:

Jake Albrecht: Okay, we have one comment card, Norm McKee. Come on up Norm.

Norman McKee: Thank you Mr. Chairman., members of the RAC. I appreciate this time. My name is Norman McKee. I'm a retired Division of Wildlife biologist but I only speak for myself here tonight. I do, I am a member of the advisory counsel for the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument, representing wildlife. So this is an interesting issue but I do not speak for the advisory counsel tonight, just for myself. But I've had an interest in otters for some time, since years ago when we first started talking about promoting reestablishment of the river otters in the Escalante drainage. And so I support Mr. Bunnell's recommendation for expanding this program into other appropriate areas in the state. I would like the Division, along with this plan, to consider the role that perhaps beaver might play with regard to otter. I'm not an expert on otter but I understand in the areas that they're proposed right now or in larger river areas which probably have their own riparian habitat, but in some of the smaller drainages, and we've had history on the Raff River and other places in the state as well as other states, the presence of beaver in the ponds and the biomass that they create with fish and birds and other mammals is important in expanding or allowing otters to exploit that sort of habitat also. Beaver are gaining interest in the state here, as well as some neighboring states, in not only the ecological conditions that they create on a stream but also the benefit in expanding the healing of riparian zones. And as we enter what we are predicted to be a drier type of climate it's important that we preserve these water resources in our mountains as best we can. And I feel like the beaver would be a part of that and the otters would be able to exploit that habitat also and do well. Thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Norm. Good to see you again. Okay, do we have any other comment cards in? None. We will go to comments from the RAC.

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Jake Albrecht: Rex Stanworth.

Rex Stanworth: I guess Norm brings up an interesting comment. Is there a place for both otters and beavers? And are you looking at transplanting beaver? We've had beavers on the Sevier River clear to Deseret and some very unhappy landowners I may tell ya, in regards to beaver. So if you're looking for transplants I may get you in contact with some folks if they show up again.

Kevin Bunnell: As you're well aware, beavers cut both ways. They do as Norm indicated; create habitats of their own that are real beneficial in some areas. But in areas where they are appropriate and they're not causing problems with irrigation ditches and that sort of thing then we certainly support beavers.

And beavers are, they're distributed throughout the state. I don't think we have a problem with our beaver population right now. But there certainly is some symbiotic relationships there between beavers and otters. To what extent, you know I'd have to look into the literature a little bit more.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, do we have any other comments? Okay, I'm going to call for a RAC motion, a discussion and a vote, if somebody's got a motion now. Rex Stanworth.

Rex Stanworth: Mr. Chairman, I'd make a motion that we accept the amendment Otter Management Plan as presented by Kevin Bunnell.

Jake Albrecht: Okay we have a motion by Rex to accept the Otter Management Plan. Do we have a second? Sam Carpenter. All in favor, is there any other discussion first? All in favor please raise your right hand. Any against? Vote unanimous.

Rex Stanworth made the motion to accept the amendment to the otter management plan as presented by Kevin Bunnell. Sam Carpenter seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, our next action item is Prairie Dog Conservation Plan. Kevin.

Prairie Dog Conservation Plan (Action)

-Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator presented the Prairie Dog Conservation Plan.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, any questions from the RAC. Rex Stanworth.

Questions from the RAC:

Rex Stanworth: On these private tracts of land are the landowners going to, are they accepting a liability here by having those identified on their property?

Kevin Bunnell: I don't think so. It's kind of a risk benefit analysis that they have to do. They can be, and most of them have taken the approach that they'd rather be part of the solution of keeping them off the list rather than having them become listed on the endangered species act and then you know, people's hands get tied on what they can do.

Rex Stanworth: I guess my concern for landholders and farmers, and I'm sure these folks down at the end of the table will make a comment, but I guess the concern I would have is if there's penalties attached to something, if something was to happen to some of these prairie dogs, if that landowner is going to be out of business or consumed in court.

Kevin Bunnell: Um, no, we've really tried to keep the flexibility of people that have these, you know, the ability to, you know there's some poisoning that takes place and it's needed. They can shoot prairie dogs on their land. We haven't done anything at this point in terms of regulations to try to reduce that.

Rex Stanworth: Now Kevin is there any truth to the fact that this is the next generation trophy animal that you'll sell tags on in the next 5 or 10 years? Niemeyer, this may be the only tag you and I could draw, is the Utah Prairie Dog.

Kevin Bunnell: You will probably agree with me that we'll do anything to raise revenue.

Rex Stanworth: Okay.

Jake Albrecht: Jack Hill.

Jack Hill: Yeah, I think I read the plan pretty well. It didn't say anything about limitations on shooting. I have a son and a nephew that takes these prairie dogs.

Kevin Bunnell: We already have a closure that's been in place for a while on public land in the spring during the reproductive period. That will, we'll maintain that. But right now we don't have any plans to add further restrictions. And that's only for public land. Right now private land it doesn't apply to.

Jack Hill: Right. The other question, what's been the involvement of communities in the areas that have these animals? And the thing I'm afraid of is what takes place in Cedar City with the prairie dogs down there on the golf course and all of the machination and the gnashing of teeth that goes on down there.

Kevin Bunnell: Well that's what we're trying to avoid is more of that. And so right now it's been mostly interaction with, like I said, the county commissioners, the agricultural interests, and through the soil conservation districts and that sort of thing. We've tried to make the public aware of when we're presenting this, and what we're doing, and we haven't had a lot of interest so far.

Jake Albrecht: Del LeFevre.

Del LeFevre: Are there any push, any organizations to put these on the endangered species right now?

Kevin Bunnell: Yes. It's very timely right now. In fact the Fish and Wildlife Service just lost a lawsuit to revisit their finding on the Gunnison Prairie Dog. They came out with a non-warranted finding about a year ago. There was a bunch of stuff that went on that probably shouldn't have that came to that conclusion and so they were sued and they lost. And so they're revisiting that. It will be published in February. And so the states being able to show a real strong effort right now could go a long ways in keeping them off the list because it's eminent right now.

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 don't have any comment cards from the public so we'll go to comments from the RAC, James.

Comments from the Public:

None.

RAC Discussion and Vote:

James Edwards: I'd like to make a motion.

Jake Albrecht: Go for it.

James Edwards: Yes Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion that we approve the Division's Prairie Dog Conservation Plan as presented by Kevin.

Rex Stanworth: I'll second that.

Jake Albrecht: Okay we have a motion by James Edwards to accept the prairie dog conservation plan, and a second by Rex. Is that correct? Any other discussion? Okay, all in favor please raise your hand. Looks like it's unanimous.

James Edwards made the motion to approve the division's prairie dog conservation plan as presented. Rex Stanworth seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Jake Albrecht: Okay Kevin, let's go to black bear.

Black Bear Proclamation Rule R657-33 (Action)

-Kevin Bunnell, DWR Mammals Program Coordinator presented the Black Bear Proclamation Rule.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, thanks Kevin. Question from the RAC. Rex.

Questions from the RAC:

Rex Stanworth: Kevin, on an out of state person that wants to come in and pursue, get a pursuit permit that you're talking about, are they required to buy any other license or is it just a pursuit?

Kevin Bunnell: Just a pursuit permit.

Rex Stanworth: So even though they're considered a big game animal they're not required to have a license, just a pursuit permit.

Kevin Bunnell: It's just a pursuit, just like there's, you know the deer permit's different than an elk permit. Because it's not putting, they don't have to put in for a draw, they don't have to have the hunting license that are required for the draws now.

Rex Stanworth: Okay. One other question that I had for you, in the past I've asked this question and it looks like this year it may even be worse, but in the past the revenues that are generated from bear tags have not equaled what we've expended in bear problem monies. Is that, would that be worse this year than it's been or?

Kevin Bunnell: I wouldn't agree with that in the past. This year that is probably the case. But because of our conservation permits that are auctioned off through the conservation organizations, they raise a substantial amount of money that comes back into the bear program. Probably not enough this year to cover the cost of people's time and all the effort that went in, but on most years that probably does equal that or more.

Jake Albrecht: Steve Flinders.

Steve Flinders: Hey Kevin, couple of questions. I assume the land management agencies will have some input as to these areas where you're going to allow people to come with guides or volunteer houndsmen.

Kevin Bunnell: Well we have the maps, we'd certainly be willing to make those available to the land management agencies if they have some comments or.

Steve Flinders: Are they already created?

Kevin Bunnell: We have recommendations already created that we can pass on to you.

Steve Flinders: Yeah, I'd like to have a look at that for this mountain up here. Is it too late?

Kevin Bunnell: I don't think so. As long as we have it nailed down before we send those letters out and people start hitting the ground. I think you'll probably be pretty supportive of what we've got up on this mountain. But I can show you that map tonight if you want.

Steve Flinders: Yeah, you guys probably got a feel for where the problems were especially recently. And my other question was how do you determine who, what houndsman gets to go? Are you going to have a first come first served list or?

Kevin Bunnell: Well it's going on during the spring pursuit season, so the houndsmen can be out anyway. What we're asking is for guys to kind of restrict where they're going and take somebody with them. We hope that the local biologists have relationships with some of the houndsmen, with guys that they trust and that will be the first route that we take. If we don't have enough from there we have a commitment from the Utah Federation of Houndsmen that they will supply volunteers to go out and help us on these units where we, that we've identified.

Steve Flinders: I think it's a great idea. Does it also include depredation areas or just human contact areas?

Kevin Bunnell: No we've tried to separate the two issues. We've tried to extend the season in the depredation areas and then try to use the houndsmen in the human conflict area so we can kind of keep the issues separate and see what's working and what's not. There are those two units where we have both programs going on though in the state, that Mirror Lake area and then Unit 17, I think, is the other one, Wasatch Mountain west.

Jake Albrecht: Del LeFevre.

Del LeFevre: Okay over there on the south Boulder, is there any way that you can get these hunters up and ready to go just as soon as one of them bears kill a calf, instead of, you know, you guys going out and taking him? Is there any way that we can have somebody, it's kind of a waste when we just take one out.

Kevin Bunnell: It is, um, we try to do that when we can Del. A lot of times it's a timing issue, especially in the summer when the wildlife services guy is right there. A lot of times it may take us a couple of days, but if we could come up with a way to do that I would support it 100 percent. Because I agree, I think it is a waste. One question I have for Del, for you and Steve and Gary, is would you like us to send a letter out again to the people on the Boulder so they could contact the permittees up there and get some help on areas where it's needed?

Steve Dalton: Yeah, I got quite a few calls. But the problem I've got, they're taking the little bears. You know they're not getting the old big bears that we want gone. And I don't know how you're going to arrange that.

Kevin Bunnell: Well we, you know everybody that draws a bear tag has to go through an orientation course where we try to give them the information that they need to be able to identify the age and sex of a bear. The problem we have there Del, is that most people they want to hunt a bear once or twice in their life and so we have a lot of, so you know they'll draw a tag, they don't have a lot of experience, they haven't seen a lot of bears, unless they're a houndsman and they've been doing it, you know, they don't know how to distinguish a male from a female, or a big bear from a small bear. We try to do that through our orientation course, I'm not sure how effective we're being right now.

Steve Dalton: Number 2. You're loading up with bear down, almost down to the Smoky Mountain down in Kane County. Them little guys are living on cedar berries. How are you going to get them pushed back up on, they've been born there. Basically there's not a whole lot for them to eat down in there. Last spring them little cubs, or yearlings was eating straight cedar berries.

Kevin Bunnell: I guess I'm not familiar, where's . . .

Steve Dalton: South of Escalante about 40 miles.

Kevin Bunnell: Out on the Kaiparowits?

Steve Dalton. The Collets, down on the Collets Kaiparowits area.

Kevin Bunnell: You know, just the environment down there is going to limit that population. Like you said, there's going to be years when they can reproduce and you'll have some young bears on the ground. But you know that environment will in the end limit the number of bears that can survive there.

Jake Albrecht: Question on the, on those units where you're going to use the help of the houndsmen, there's a certain area that the people have to hunt. If there's nothing in there can they move to other areas to hunt on that mountain then?

Kevin Bunnell: Certainly. We're not telling, they can hunt the whole unit if they want. If they sign up for the program we're not telling them this is the only place you can hunt. What we're saying is if you're willing to hunt in this area there's a houndsman that's going to take you. If you go outside of that area they'll be on their own like they would be otherwise. And so yeah, if they go out and they don't find anything they're welcome to go hunt the rest of the unit but they'll be on their own or hiring a guide.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, the management plan ends in 2010, is that correct?

Kevin Bunnell: Yes.

Jake Albrecht: And then on the problem bears here in Southern Utah, other than the Beaver, where were some of those other complaints at?

Kevin Bunnell: You know I'll probably bet Teresa could probably handle that better than I can. You know the Boulder; we always have some bear problems on the Boulder.

Jake Albrecht: While she's coming up I noticed that you have a lot of signage everywhere. Were those put out because of the problem statewide or were they put out because there was problem bears there?

Kevin Bunnell: We try to be proactive with that and put them out before hand. I think there was certainly some extra signage that went up this year when things got rolling and we realized what kind of summer we were headed for.

Teresa Bonzo: I think our biggest area; the Beaver was surprisingly one of our hot spots this year. Uh, and we did put a ton of signs up to let everybody know that there really was a bear in the area. We also gave them to the land management agencies to put them in campgrounds where there had been sightings. We also had a lot of issues up on the Boulders. There was probably one or two issues on Dutton, one that I'm aware of on the Pahvant, a couple in the Zion unit, a few on the Fish Lake. It was pretty spread out. The Beaver was the hot spot. Does that answer your question?

Jake Albrecht: Thank you. Any other questions? Do we have any questions from the public? Norm, come up and speak into the mic if you would.

Questions from the Public:

Norm McKee: A question on the Mt. Dutton that I was curious on, 40 years or so I've been on that mountain. I've seen one bear and I've seen scat, tracks maybe only five or six times. Is there some evidence in recent years that that population is increasing to where we can start harvesting bear off of there? I always thought it was kind of a transit, what few might have been there. There's no campgrounds and there's no residences or anything on the mountain. So is there something happening there that we ought to start taking bears off that unit that I'm not aware of? Thank you.

Kevin Bunnell: Norm, I agree there's probably not a real robust bear population on the mountain. This is another one of those depredation things; we've had bears getting in the sheep up there. And you know, if we can allow a hunter to harvest a bear up there and potentially save a situation with depredation in the summer. We may never have, we may not have harvest up there. It's going to be a hard unit to hunt if anybody draws the tag. But that's kind of the motivation that we've had over the last couple of years with bears getting into the sheep on that mountain. Do you want to add anything to that Teresa?

Teresa Bonzo: It is kind of a transient unit, they're moving back and forth a little bit. The depredation issues that we had last year, and a few sightings, we do feel that it is increasing a little bit. It may have been the year as well. But the success on there will probably be limited by the number of bears on there so we're not terribly concerned by any over harvest.

Jake Albrecht: Any other questions from the public?

Comments from the Public:

Jake Albrecht: Okay, I have one comment letter that I received, and I think everybody probably has a copy of it. It's from the Utah Federation of Houndsman. (See attachment 2) It says, Dear Southern

RAC members. The UFH has worked closely with the Division of Wildlife Resources on the upcoming 2008 bear proclamation and we fully support the DWR's proposal. We'd like to thank each of the RAC members for the dedication and support of Utah wildlife. Thank you, Craig Edwards, Harriman, Utah. Okay we got that read in. I don't have any other comment cards so we'll go to comments from the RAC. Del, have you got anything?

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Del LeFevre: I've really been smiling. You guys are furnishing a food chain now for your bears. The old sow got into your turkeys up at Deer Creek Lake last summer. She did a good number on them.

Jake Albrecht: Steve Flinders.

Steve Flinders: Teresa thanks for making all the changes that Sean and I talked about. I think we did it in one year. It's a good time to be a bear hunter.

Jake Albrecht: Kevin, on the Boulder unit, are we increasing those tags because of population or because of problems, or is that a conservative increase or, what do you think there?

Kevin Bunnell: I have to look and remind myself what the increase there. We increased, went from 10 to 12 in the spring, and from 11 to 12 in the fall. I think that's a fairly conservative increase. You know we increased that, the permits on that unit substantially last year on a recommendation from this RAC. I think that population can certainly withstand some harvest. Our problem on the Boulder has been really low success. We tried to address that last year with these letters that we sent out. We did increase success. It looked like that helped so we'll continue that program. And you know and we'll adjust. We'll manage the unit according to the bear management plan and adjust, as we need to.

Jake Albrecht: The problem, and I'm speaking as a camper, okay, the problem we have out there is if there's anywhere that you want to go in the higher altitude it's not safe to be around with family and kids, and you know what's happening there. I'm wondering if there's a way that we could make it so that the person who's not a bear hunter or out there for some other reason can go back to the hills and enjoy themselves.

Kevin Bunnell: I disagree that it's not safe. I think if you store your food properly, and you don't have anything out to attract a bear to your camp I think it's perfectly safe to be up in those areas. We have, you know there's places in the US that have a lot more bears in a lot denser bear populations than they do on the Boulder and people are out camping all the time, mostly without incident. But this program with providing houndsman to go out with hunters, we do have that program on the Boulder Mountain. We are going to try to focus some of the harvest into the areas where most of the campgrounds are and see if we can prevent some problems later on in the summer.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, thanks Kevin. Any other comments Del?

Del LeFevre: How many did we kill on the Boulder this year? On the east Boulder? Count the three you guys took.

Kevin Bunnell: Well can I see your thing there where I, I'd have to look. Can you give me just a minute and I'll pull it up?

Del LeFevre: When you get as old as I and you are Paul, you got to have big letters.

Kevin Bunnell: Okay, there it is right there. You can see our, we went from 16 to 22 permits last year. We increased the harvest from 4 up to 11. So we increased the success rate, also, from 25 percent to 50 percent, so a pretty sizable increase in the harvest.

Del LeFevre: Thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, any other comments? Sam Carpenter.

Sam Carpenter: Is it too late to ask a question? I just want to know the difference, you've got the guided hunt, how do you determine the guided hunt as opposed to the other hunts? Where do those numbers come from?

Kevin Bunnell: Those are the, that's this program we're actually, where we have houndsman that are going to volunteer to take people out. That column, that's the number, so you take the total number of spring permits, so if you look at the Beaver unit, on your paper, there's 4 spring permits, then in the guiding column it says 2, so 2 of those 4 people will have that opportunity. And that will happen on a first come first served basis.

Jake Albrecht: Rex.

Rex Stanworth: Are you ready for a motion?

Jake Albrecht: Yes I am.

Rex Stanworth: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make the recommendation that we accept the Black Bear Proclamation Rule and support the Division in getting more sport, sportsman involved in the taking of these problem bears than to go to depredation hunts.

James Edwards: I second.

Jake Albrecht: Okay we have a motion by Rex and a second by James Edwards. Any other discussion? All in favor please raise your hand. Any against? Motion carries.

Rex Stanworth made the motion to accept the black bear proclamation rule as presented by the division. James Edwards seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Jake Albrecht: Kevin thanks for your presentations. You do a good job. We appreciate your time.

Kevin Bunnell: Thank you.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, our next item is the Fishing Contest Rule. Drew, you've got the floor.

Fishing Contest Rule R 657-XX (Action)

1:41:05 to 2:02:02 of 2:22:29

-Drew Cushings, DWR Community Fisheries Biologist presented the Fishing Contest Rule (8:45-9:05)

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Drew. Questions from the RAC? Rex.

Questions from the RAC:

Rex Stanworth: One these species of fish, for example at Flaming Gorge you're asking for burbot, so they're required to keep all burbot that they catch, they can't release any of those, they're required to keep those in the boat until they get to the marina.

Drew Cushings: That's right, it's a catch and kill.

Rex Stanworth: Okay. And uh, on the live weight fish, those are fish that are brought to the scales alive. Is that in hopes that you could possibly pick and choose and transplant some of those fish to other waters?

Drew Cushings: No, they release them back into the reservoir. And there are some rules about how that takes place. People who have those kinds of tournaments, they don't want to keep them anyway; and so what they do is they just, it's kind of a bragging right for them, they bring them in, show them off to spectators and other contestants and then they release them.

Rex Stanworth: At the last discussion I was of the impression that there may be opportunities for the Division to take, for example, blue gill or whatever it might be, if there was an area where they wanted to go in and, say into a community pond, and put some of these fish. Is there any place in here that gives, which basically says we have the right to tell you what we're going to do with those fish that are captured and brought in live?

Drew Cushings: Uh, you know we work a lot with angling groups. And I think Mike Ottenbacher does down here a lot. And I'm sure that he would be interested in that. I know that he has some places that basically had a fish loss this summer and transplants would be ideal.

Douglas Messerly: Rex, I'd like to add to that. Before we can move fish the particular water has to be disease free certified. So, and that's an expensive time consuming process and certainly not all waters that we're going to have contests on qualify for that. So it's not easy to move fish, in many instances. But if all the stars aligned that would be possible.

Rex Stanworth: Well I just didn't see anything in here, and I know that was one of the discussion points that we had was would there be a chance that you could have these folks capture the fish, I think blue gill was one of the things we talked about, and those could be moved into some of these community ponds. I guess one of the questions I've got is in all of this it looks like there's a huge amount of labor that could be put in by the Division. Is there any cost, I mean is the cost of COR? In other words if they say, hey we're coming and we're going to bring, we're expecting 5,000 and we want you to tag, is there any cost that the Division is going to put back on this contest to say it's going to cost you \$3,000, \$4,000, \$500, whatever it may be in order for us to make this thing happen for ya?

Drew Cushings: Yes. That's step two. This is step one. We're going to review the COR and restructure that because that's the way that you recoup costs involved in these kinds of things, the administration. So, those costs are antiquated as well, much like this rule was, and so those need reviewed.

Rex Stanworth: And then I'm assuming, because I've never ever been around these things, but you hear of all these horror stories, I know you mentioned something about making sure the boats come in without the mussels attached to them, and I'm assuming that somewhere along the line livewells are inspected so

that there's no fish transfer from one pond to another pond. So I'm assuming that would take place. One of the other questions, are you going to require any of these contests managers that are putting these on, are you going to require any kind of a bond?

Drew Cushings: There's been discussion of that. I think, you know, as far as the tagged fish contests that that's going to need to take place anyway because otherwise I don't know that you could have one. The other ones take place right now and they're not bonded, they're basically a sponsored by the Utah Bass Federation or Rocky Mountain Anglers or who have you, and they basically take care of themselves. They're members of that club that participate in those contests. I think that answered your question.

Rex Stanworth: Okay, yeah. I was concerned that if some catastrophic thing happened in one of these contests and all of a sudden there was damage to the lake or whatever it may be, the Division would have to have some sort of recourse to go back to regain some of their expenses for whatever it would take to replace stuff. So I, bonds seem to be appropriate for that.

Drew Cushings: Well there's a fine line. And the reason that we went to having a COR that's required, at least proposed here, for each live-weigh contest because those are the ones that attract a wide crowd. There are people from Nevada, people from Colorado. They go to Lake Powell and fish in these live-weigh tournaments down there, these live-weigh contests. And those are the ones that we want to know when they're taking place. We want to know how many people are going to be there. And with this aquatic nuisance program that just go underway the Southern Region has some biologists that just came on, so does the Southeast, that could go down and actually interact with these folks and to let them know the dangers and make sure that they're following the procedures in place. So that's the intent. And this is a way, this is the first time that this has been reviewed, this rule's been reviewed for 10 years. It was due, especially with the aquatic nuisance species. You know, these folks, I know that they care but it just gives us a better opportunity to interact with them.

Rex Stanworth: Okay, thanks.

Jake Albrecht: Jack Hill.

Jack Hill: It would appear that you pretty much have the bases covered but there's an aspect of fishing tournaments that, as I see them and have heard about them, they're really isn't any way to address the problem, and that is cheating in the tournament. Who polices the contestant and what's the punishment by the State of Utah for those people that flagrantly misuse the wildlife?

Drew Cushings: Well if we see a tournament, if we see a violation of this rule, and I think you each got a copy of the rule, anybody in violation of that will no longer be able to hold a tournament. That's the bottom line. As far as cheating that's really their concern, the tournament sponsor and the participants. If a guy cheats in a contest basically, well hopefully, they won't let him back in to hold, to be involved in another tournament. But it's our responsibility to protect the resource. And so the resource is, you know, that making sure that this rule is followed closely. If they have a live-weigh tournament and their mortality, if they don't release the fish well, if the fish die, so on and so forth, you know they don't follow the protocol for aquatic nuisance species, they don't apply for a COR, any number, any one of those their ability to host a tournament will be revoked.

Jack Hill: Well the issue of stuffing fish, I've heard about on several occasions, and no one ever gets punished for that. Fill a bass full of lead shot and take it in and weigh it. And no one ever seems to get punished. And these guys continually go back to fishing tournaments and participate in them. That's

one issue. The other issue is I am really opposed to cold water fishing contests because there are so many opportunities to injure the specie in terms of putting them back. If I understand it correctly, if you catch a fish in a cold-water tournament you caught a fish, right?

Drew Cushings: That's right.

Jack Hill: What the heck is, especially on Scofield Reservoir, when you're out in the middle of the lake and you catch a 2-pound, 2-ounce fish and you need 3 pounds to win the tournament. That guy's going to set over that 2 pound 2 ounces . . .

Drew Cushings: Well you can release the fish immediately. That's within your rights as an angler. You cannot possess it, which means you can't put it in your livewell. But you can, if it's a 2-pound fish you can immediately release it and go pursue a larger fish. If you noticed the cold-water contests had much tighter hold on it than the warm-water, and it's for a reason that the cold-water fish are much more sensitive and should be treated differently. And they are here. And the intent of the, kind of the guidelines of the cold-water fish is to limit the size of those contests because the larger the contest the more problems you're going to have, potentially.

Jack Hill: Okay, thank you.

Drew Cushings: You're welcome.

Jake Albrecht: Any other questions? Okay I have one question. How did you choose the waters?

Drew Cushings: We worked with our regional managers they recommended waters. We worked with State Parks. If you noticed State Parks were a large number of the waters on that list. They're a sister agency to us and basically they're all under the DNR logo or umbrella. And so potentially these would benefit them as well. And the species of fish in there were recommendations from our regional managers.

Jake Albrecht: I see a potential here for travel counsel people to jump on some of these. If those weren't in some of those counties would additional waters be added on at a later date if you thought they could meet your criteria?

Drew Cushings: I think so. Definitely, what we wanted to do was start small. And we don't know how labor intensive this is going to be for our regional folks or our (unintelligible) for that matter. This tagged fish idea is new. It seemed to have a lot of energy and you don't want to overwhelm your staff and have everybody in the regions doing nothing but tag fish. And so we have to see, you know, what workload this is and how it goes this first summer before we really branch out.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, any other questions? Questions from the public? Those who stayed. Norm, have you got one? Come on.

Questions from the Public:

None.

Jake Albrecht: No cards for comments.

Comments from the Public:

None.

Jake Albrecht: Comments from the RAC? Rex Stanworth.

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Rex Stanworth: I would just like to say that I'm in favor of the proposed rule. The only one thing is the, I just don't want to see the regular sportsman have to bear the cost of this contest. So as long as we're looking at this and saying, you bet, we'll let you put on the contest but this is what our cost is to put it on and that's not going to be paid for by the sportsman, it's going to be paid by you. Then I have no problems with that, so. And I'll make that in a motion if you'd like.

Jake Albrecht: What's the motion?

Rex Stanworth: The motion is to approve the Rule as suggested on the Fishing Contest Rule, 657, with the stipulation that no cost be borne by the Utah sportsman.

Jake Albrecht: Okay, if I get you right then your motion is to approve Fishing Contest Rule with the stipulation that there be no cost to the sportsman. Is that correct?

Rex Stanworth: Correct.

Jake Albrecht: And we had a second by who? Del LeFevre. Okay, any other discussion on the rule or the stipulation?

Steve Flinders: I'm just confused about that stipulation. When a Division employee starts his truck the costs are incurred by the sportsman. You mean any extra?

Rex Stanworth: Right.

Steve Flinders: CORs be (unintelligible) with labor involved or something?

Rex Stanworth: Right. Expenses to the tournament should not be borne by the Utah sportsman.

Jake Albrecht: So what you're saying is, if somebody puts a tournament on the people who are doing it should have to pay the cost of what the Division's got into it, is that what you're saying?

Rex Stanworth: Expenses of what the Division incurs.

Douglas Messerly: Thanks for the opportunity to comment Mr. Chairman. I guess it would be difficult to account for that and show that Rex, because as Steve correctly points out, you know a conservation officer may stop by to check or visit with the folks at the contest, which he's doing now anyway. We're already reviewing CORs for many of these contests now. And I think, you know I understand the gist of your stipulation and I appreciate that. You may want to modify it so that the people who put the contest on contribute toward the administration of it or something like that, because if the stipulation is that we don't spend any more than they give us then that means we have to track how much we spend in addition to how much they give us and that might be difficult to do.

Rex Stanworth: My thoughts were you're going to have tagging expenses. And if you are going to have additional law enforcement there for that particular day, it looks like to me there's going to be expenses there. As far as having somebody visit with them or, at the water, I'm assuming that's in a normal day job. But I'm talking about expenses that would not be there if the tournament itself was not there.

Jake Albrecht: Drew go ahead.

Drew Cushings: The tagging equipment and the tags will be incurred by the tournament sponsor.

Rex Stanworth: But you're doing the tagging.

Drew Cushings: And that's why, if you notice that the window where they have time December 1st through the 31st to apply for their COR, that's so that we can go to the work plan or work planning meeting with the regional aquatic folks and hopefully fit this into their work schedule. And the COR cost is something that we're going to review and hopefully we can offset some of the costs that way, but the thought is to put that in line with their sampling that takes place anyway. Or if it's trout have the hatcheries tag them at the facility and then transport them in one of their loads that they do anyway. So that's the thought behind that. Does that help?

Rex Stanworth: Yeah.

Jake Albrecht: Just a comment on my part, you know if you get a tournament of any kind it comes into a community, there's also lots of additional things it brings into the community that brings dollars to businesses or taxes to the county or whatever. So there are also some additional things to think about there. Okay, we had a motion and a second. Do we have any other discussion?

Jack Hill: Was the motion changed?

Jack Albrecht: I haven't had an amended motion, no.

Steve Flinders: It's still unclear to me what this addendum we've added on here is. Is this, are you're referring to more to like a clean up or, like they make a terrible mess on the lake and it's going to incur a bunch of additional support to clean up after a contest?

Rex Stanworth: No.

Steve Flinders: And the cost of tagging and these things?

Rex Stanworth: My motion is such to give instructions to Drew here that when they put together their COR costs for these tournaments they're going to have to come up with some sort of a guideline that says this is our estimated costs and those costs should be borne by those people participating in that tournament and not by the Utah sportsman. They haven't even got to the point, you haven't even got to the point of coming up with fees yet, am I correct?

Drew Cushings: We have some ideas.

Rex Stanworth: Right, but I mean no formal thing that you're ready to present.

Drew Cushings: No, not yet.

Rex Stanworth: And that's all I'm saying to him is that we just want to make sure that the sportsman of Utah are protected and the costs of putting on these tournaments is borne by the participants in that tournament. That's all I'm saying. That's, that's my instructions to him, I hope.

Drew Cushings: Yeah, I think I heard you clear as to review the COR costs and make them incur the costs through the, of their contest through the COR process.

Rex Stanworth: And I'm not here to tell you what those costs are, that's going to be your job. I'm just making a blanket statement that we want to protect the sportsman of Utah.

Drew Cushings: Yeah. Thank you.

Jack Albrecht: Any other discussion? Seeing none we'll vote on the motion. By the show of the right hand all in favor please raise it now. I count six. All against?

Jack Hill: I vote no.

Jake Albrecht: Jack Hill votes no. Okay, motion carries.

Rex Stanworth made the motion to accept the Fishing Contest Rule as presented by the DWR with the exception that the fee for the COR be high enough to cover all management costs that may be incurred by the division. Motion carried 6 in favor 1 opposed. Jack Hill opposed.

Jake Albrecht: Thanks Drew.

Drew Cushings: Thank you.

Other Business (Contingent)

Jake Albrecht: Okay, knowing of no other business our next meeting will be February 12, 2008, 7:00 PM, Beaver High School, CIP Proclamation and Rule, 5-Year Rule Reviews. So when you get those why make sure you go through them.

Jack hill made motion to adjourn. Steve Flinders seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:24 pm.