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# State of Utah

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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### Division of Wildlife Resources

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## MEMORANDUM

Date: Nov. 2, 2020

To: Utah Wildlife Board / Regional Advisory Council Members

From: Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

Subject: **2021 regional deer unit plan revisions**

Traditionally, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) revises its mule deer unit plans from the five DWR administrative regions on a rotating schedule. This occurs in conjunction with the reports of the Utah Range Trend Monitoring Project. For 2021, the deer unit plans for the Southern Region and Southeastern Region have undergone full revisions based on results from the Utah Range Trend Monitoring Project. In addition, we have also revised deer unit plans in the other three DWR administrative regions based on provisions in HB125, which directs predator management in relation to unit deer population objectives and current population estimates.

The ongoing statewide deer-survival study has provided new insights into the relationship between deer, habitat and predators. As part of that study, we have been able to document cause-specific deer mortality factors and measure body condition scores annually on live deer across multiple units spread across the state. This information has helped us refine deer population models and get a better understanding of limiting factors and unit population carrying capacity. Taking that information into consideration, DWR regions have consulted with diverse constituencies on each deer unit and are recommending changes to the population objectives for several deer units (see table 1).

The DWR must obtain Wildlife Board approval for any deer unit plan with changes to unit boundaries, buck-to-doe ratio objectives or population objectives. Other deer unit plans contain only minor updates, will be approved by the Division Director and are presented for your information. None of the DWR deer unit plans contain proposed boundary changes. Only one unit is proposing a change to the buck-to-doe ratio objective: The San Juan, Abajo Mountains are proposed to change from 15-17 bucks per 100 does to 18-20 bucks per 100 does, postseason. There are several units or sub-units with proposed adjustments to the population objective, as shown in Table 1. Six units have a proposed increase, 14 units have no changes proposed and 18 units have a proposed decrease.

**Table 1. Proposed Utah Mule Deer Unit Population Objective Changes**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Current Objective</b>	<b>New Objective</b>
Box Elder	20,000	20,000
Cache	25,000	25,000
Ogden	11,000	11,000
Morgan-South Rich	18,000	16,000
East Canyon	13,500	13,500
Chalk Creek	10,500	12,000
Kamas	8,000	8,000
North Slope	10,000	10,000
South Slope, Yellowstone	13,000	11,000
South Slope, Diamond Mtn/Vernal	15,000	13,000
Book Cliffs	15,000	9,000
Nine Mile	8,500	8,500
San Rafael	1,000	No objective
La Sal, La Sal Mtns	13,000	8,000
La Sal, Dolores Triangle	5,100	3,100
San Juan, Abajo	13,500	13,500
San Juan, Elk Ridge	5,600	1,000
Henry Mtns	2,700	2,700
Central Mtns, Manti	38,000	28,000
Central Mtns, Nebo	22,600	14,000
Wasatch Mtns, West	22,600	22,600
Wasatch Mtns, Currant Creek	20,000	17,000
Wasatch Mtns, Avintaquin	5,000	4,000
Oquirrh-Stansbury	11,600	11,600
West Desert	11,200	11,200

Southwest Desert	4,000	3,500
Fillmore, Pahvant	12,000	7,600
Fillmore, Oak Creek	2,500	2,000
Beaver	13,000	14,000
Monroe	7,500	7,000
Mt Dutton	2,700	3,200
Plateau, Fishlake	10,000	7,000
Plateau, Thousand Lakes	3,000	1,400
Plateau, Boulder/Kaiparowits	12,000	8,500
Paunsaugunt	6,500	6,500
Panguitch Lake	10,000	11,000
Zion	15,500	19,000
Pine Valley	16,000	19,500
	<b>454,100</b>	<b>403,800</b>
* May investigate boundary change further within the life of the Plateau Thousand Lakes plan		

Key
Increased
Decreased
No Change