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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Utah Wildlife Board / Regional Advisory Councils

FROM: Dax Mangus, Big Game Coordinator

DATE: April 3, 2023

SUBJECT: Overview of 2023 buck pronghorn permit recommendations

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources biologists and staff have evaluated aerial counts and ground-classification information to examine population status, sex ratios and reproductive rates in the state's pronghorn populations. The count and classification data — along with harvest data that includes the tooth ages of pronghorn bucks — have informed the DWR's recommendations for 2023 buck pronghorn permits.

The Utah Statewide Pronghorn Management Plan directs the DWR to manage for an average age of harvested buck in the range of 2-3 years old. After evaluating the collected data in the context of the age objective in the statewide plan, the DWR is recommending that limited-entry buck pronghorn permits be increased from 1,249 permits in 2022 to 1,372 permits for 2023. This is a proposed increase of 123 permits, or about 10%.

Utah has 28 buck pronghorn units, and all units are meeting or exceeding the 2-3 year objective for harvested bucks. We are recommending a reduction on two units — the Cache, Rich and San Rafael, North units — due to winter mortality. We are recommending no change on 7 units and permit increases on 19 units. These recommendations are designed to maintain or move toward compliance with the statewide management plan objectives.

Please see the buck pronghorn hunt recommendations listed in the hunt tables in this packet for a detailed breakdown of recommended permits for each unit. The hunt tables also show how permits are allocated among weapon types and split between residents and non-residents.