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MEMORANDUM

TO: Utah Wildlife Board / Regional Advisory Councils

FROM: Dax Mangus, Big Game Coordinator

DATE: March 27, 2024

SUBJECT: Overview of 2024 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 2024 buck pronghorn permits.

The Utah Pronghorn Statewide Management Plan directs the DWR to manage pronghorn bucks for an average age of 2-3 years old at the time of harvest. 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 1,351 permits to 1,506 permits. This is a proposed increase of 155 permits, or about 11%.

Utah has 28 buck pronghorn units, and all units are meeting or exceeding the 2-3 year age objective for harvested bucks. We recommend reducing permits on three units — the Box Elder, Puddle Valley; the Cache, Rich; and the San Rafael, Desert units — due to long-term drought impacts and winter mortality. We are recommending no change on four units and permit increases on 21 units. These recommendations are designed to help us maintain — or make progress toward — compliance with the objectives in the statewide management plan.

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.