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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 bull elk permit recommendations

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources makes the following 2024 bull elk permit recommendations after evaluating 2023 harvest information and conducting post-hunt assessments of herd composition.

The proposed 2024 bull elk permits will help us achieve or maintain the objectives detailed in the Utah Statewide Elk Management Plan. Utah manages to three different age objectives for harvested bulls on traditional limited-entry units. Those age objectives are 5.5-6.0 years, 6.0-6.5 years and 6.5-7.0 years. Utah also has several limited-entry units managed for a month-long September archery season and a later handgun, archery, muzzleloader, shotgun, straight-walled rifle (HAMSS) season. The HAMSS season runs from late October to mid-November.

Below is a summary of the **2024 bull elk permit recommendations**:

- 1) General-season elk permits (approved in the statewide plan)
 - a. 15,000 spike bull elk permits, with up to 4,500 of these being issued as multi-season permits
 - b. 15,000 any bull permits (early any weapon and muzzleloader)
 - c. Unlimited any bull (late any weapon)
 - d. Unlimited general-season youth elk permits
 - e. Unlimited archery elk permits
- 2) The DWR recommends no change to the draw-only youth any bull/hunter's choice elk permits (750 permits). Permit numbers for this youth hunt were increased to 750 by the Utah Wildlife Board in 2023 and had previously been set at 500 permits.
- 3) We recommend 3,179 traditional limited-entry permits for 2024. This is an increase of 45 permits from the 3,134 permits issued in 2023. The most notable change in this category is the proposed reduction of 125 permits on the Wasatch Mtns unit, from 951 permits to 826 permits. We propose this 13% reduction to compensate for a decrease in the average age of harvested bulls.

- 4) The DWR recommends 105 December archery limited-entry bull elk permits. This is 13 more permits than the 92 permits issued last year.
- 5) We recommend 128 September archery and HAMSS permits (64 September archery and 64 HAMSS), an increase of 18 permits from the 110 permits issued last year.
- 6) The grand total of recommended limited-entry bull elk permits is 3,412 permits. This is 76 more permits than the 3,336 permits issued last year, a proposed increase of 2.3%

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