

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
May 3, 2012, DNR Auditorium
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

Wildlife Board Members Present

Del Brady – Chair
Ernie Perkins – Vice Chair
Jim Karpowitz – Exec Sec
Jake Albrecht
Bill Fenimore
Calvin Crandall
John Bair
Mike King

RAC Chairs Present

Central – Fred Oswald
Southern – Steve Flinders
Southeastern – Derris Jones
Northern – Robert Byrnes
Northeastern – Floyd Briggs

Public Present

Byron Bateman
Reed Price
Clinton Martinez
Troy Justensen
Lee Tracy
Ryan Foutz
Lee Howard
Don Peay
Mike Christensen
Tye Boulter
Brett Prettyman

Division Personnel Present

Anis Aoude
Justin Shannon
Cindee Jensen
Staci Coons
Greg Sheehan
LuAnn Petrovich
Kevin Bunnell
Judi Tutorow
Bill Bates
Boyde Blackwell
John Fairchild
Teresa Griffin
Randy Wood
Dana Dolsen
Justin Dolling
Miles Hamberg

- 1) Approval of Agenda (Action)

Chairman Brady welcomed the audience and introduced the Wildlife Board and RAC Chairs.

The following motion was made by Bill Fenimore, seconded by Ernie Perkins and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda as presented.

- 2) Approval of Minutes (Action)

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Mike King and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the March 29, 2012 Wildlife Board Work Session as presented.

3) Old Business/Action Log (Contingent)

Ernie Perkins, Vice Chair presented this agenda item. He said the first item on the action log, Flexible General Season Deer Unit, Buck/Doe ratio proposal will happen today. The next current action item will be this fall on Nine Mile Range Creek.

The following motion was made by Calvin Crandall, seconded by Bill Fenimore and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we have placed on the action log that the Division look into a premium limited entry deer tag similar to the premium limited entry elk tag.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by Calvin Crandall and passed 4 to 1 with Jake Albrecht opposed.

MOTION: I move that we have placed on the action log that the Division look into the possibility and feasibility of a limited entry turkey permit holder who is unsuccessful to turn in their limited entry tag and purchase a general season tag.

The rationale is that in some years the limited entry hunters never really get a season because they can't get to where they have to hunt, due to snow and so forth.

4) DWR Update (Information)

Jim Karpowitz, DWR Director presented the update. We have a new regional supervisor in Southern region, Bruce Bonebrake. Spring fishing is in full swing and is very good around the state. They encourage the public to get out and enjoy the great fishing. Early spring is going to bring other problems. We've had several fires around the state already. We expect a fairly active fire season coming up. We could possibly be dealing with some drought conditions later in the summer. Most of the reservoirs are full around the state, but there will probably be problems with water shortages by the end of the summer.

On the coyote money that was appropriated by the legislature there have been lots of questions coming in. There is information on the website. We are asking people to be patient because we won't even have the money until July 1. We are glad to have additional money to do more control work on coyotes, outlining a multifaceted program in dealing with coyotes that are causing problems for our deer herds. There is a lot of talk about a \$50 bounty program for people to help kill coyotes. These people have to be willing to take coyotes in deer areas in targeted populations for it to do any good. They

have been working with sportsmen and the legislature this past year in preparation for this. They will put out this program in the next month or so. There will probably be some sort of season for coyote removal. It is most effective if we can do it late winter and early spring.

There have been questions about wolves and what do we have in the Diamond Fork/Strawberry area. We still don't know. We have some pictures of some animals that are obviously not coyotes, but not wolves either. We do not have any definitive answers. One of our biologists saw one of these animals and got it to howl. We are looking to capture, test and radio collar these animals as soon as we can.

Mr. Perkins asked about sage grouse.

Director Karpowitz said the committee that has been charged by the Governor to develop a state plan for sage grouse in Utah is meeting today. We are all working for the same objective which is to keep sage grouse from being listed under the ESA. We are optimistic that this committee will be able to put together a plan to avoid listing. Alan Clark is our representative on that committee. Jason Robinson our Upland Game Coordinator is a technical advisor to that committee.

The decision on Gunnison sage grouse which are found in San Juan and Grande counties is due out soon. We don't know where it will go. There is a lot of talk that they will get listed regardless of what happens with Greater sage grouse.

Mr. Albrecht asked if there is a replacement for the CWMU Coordinator.

Mr. Bunnell said they will have that person by the end of the day.

Director Karpowitz said the new Waterfowl Coordinator is Blair Stringham from Southern region.

Chairman Brady explained the protocol for public comment.

- 5) Deer Management Plan Amendment and General Season Deer Permit (Action)

Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator presented this agenda item. (See Powerpoint Presentation) He covered deer permits first with illustrations on general season buck harvest 2001-2011, fawn production trends 1998-2011 and buck:doe ratio trends 1998-2011. The Wildlife Board gave direction to recommend different buck to doe ratios on different general season units which requires amending the statewide plan. The Division recommends a two tier approach, 15-17 bucks/100 does and 18-20 bucks/100 does. After they came up with the two tier approach they had the regional managers hold open houses and get some feedback from the public and make them aware. He then went over GS buck to doe recommended objectives and permit number recommendations. Tables with all deer units were presented with recommended objective, 3 year average and

recommended permit numbers. All weapon types have to choose a unit and a split was set up to give enough rifle permits, but also put some of the permits into weapon types that would be a little less successful and allow to increase permits slightly. The division is proposing the same split for general season as for limited entry units, which is 60/20/20. He went over the weapon types and permit numbers in each.

Mr. Perkins pointed out the decrease of about 17,000 that would occur if the split is not adjusted.

Mr. Aoude then went over what the recommendation would look like if they did not make any changes, leaving the statewide plan as it stands.

Mr. Aoude went over some things that came through the RAC process that could be accepted if the Board wants to go that way. One of them came from the Southeastern RAC. They voted for two units to be in the 18-20 range. We felt if one were to be accepted it would be the San Juan, changing it to 18-20. It would mean a 400 permit reduction. This concluded the presentation.

Mr. Albrecht asked about the slide that shows fawn production statewide. Is there a breakdown of region, or unit by unit? Could we show that at a future meeting?

Mr. Aoude said they have that information and could show it for something specific, but there is not a way they could show all the data that they collect on every unit.

Mr. Albrecht asked what about a region breakdown.

Mr. Aoude said they could do that.

Mr. Crandall asked when they count the fawns as part of the classification.

Mr. Aoude said the classification takes place in November/December, so that's when they're considered, usually about six months old.

Director Karpowitz said what that slide doesn't show is over winter survival of fawns and this past winter survival is exceptionally high.

Mr. Crandall asked if they know how many fawns die during the period from birth to six months, when they do the count.

Mr. Aoude said on the Monroe, the study shows that pregnancy in mule deer is very high, 98-99%. Almost all of them will have a fawn, but many will be stillborn if conditions are not right. Of those that survive, many won't make it to two weeks due to many reasons, predation, disease and other things. If they make it to one month old, they usually make it to six months old.

Chairman Brady asked on the weapon split. Last year the muzzleloader was 13,000 and it is going to take the big jump this year. Do you expect them to be sold out or rolled over into the rifle?

Mr. Aoude said he thinks most of the muzzleloader hunts will sell out. That is not one we're worried about because the success rates are similar, but he believes it is a nicer time of year to be out and they will probably sell out. It is a lot easier to go from being a rifle hunter to a muzzleloader hunter, because it is a similar weapon.

Mr. Albrecht said in the Southern RAC there was a motion for those units to go to 20-25. What would be the decrease on the permit numbers there?

Mr. Aoude said it would not be a great decrease because these units are unique and the reason they are above objective is because of unique situations. Basically many of them are above 18 or 20 because they are hard to hunt, private land or they used to be limited entry. We as a Division didn't recommend more permits on them, although we could have. Really the change in the number of permits is only about 200, but opening up that third tier would require us to have it and then other units could go into it, greatly reducing the number of permits on a statewide basis.

Mr. Perkins asked about the San Juan and their local meeting. There appeared to be a lot of confusion over what SFW's position was.

Mr. Aoude said they met with the local reps and all the groups. They tended to want a 15-17 split. The motion at the RAC meeting was to go to 18-20 from another representative in that area. There are differences in what people want. At the initial outreach, they wanted 15-17, but it didn't bear out.

Mr. Bates said the meeting down in Moab where we met with representatives unanimously wanted 15-17, however at the RAC meeting there was one SFW member that said they hadn't asked him and then he made the motion for 18-20 and the RAC went with it.

Mr. Aoude said as a Division we weighed the options. We could go 18-20 without a great reduction in permits.

Mr. Fenimore asked about the La Sals being a CWD area. Is it risky to have that many more bucks in that type of area?

Mr. Aoude said that's another reason we would rather keep it at 15-17. CWD tends to be more prevalent in the older bucks and it spreads more quickly.

Director Karpowitz said we found our first positive CWD deer on the San Juan Unit last fall.

Chairman Brady asked if there were any questions from the RAC Chairs or audience.

Lee Howard asked how dedicated hunter and lifetime is going to affect deer permit numbers.

Mr. Aoude said they modified the lifetime license and dedicated hunter program rules to deal with that. Once we move through the next 2 years, dedicated hunters will be limited to 15% of any unit and lifetime license holders will still be able to choose a unit. If we see some issues with that, we can deal with it by limiting them as well. For the next 2 years those currently in the program can pick a unit, but once we work through the leftover dedicated hunters in the next 2 years and they transition to the new program, there will be no more that 15% dedicated hunters on any given unit.

Kent Strong said the success of doe getting pregnant is pretty high. If the doe cycle through a few times and then get pregnant late, how does it affect the late fawns in getting through a normal winter?

Mr. Aoude said there is no evidence that what was just described is taking place. Does most often cycle the first time and get pregnant if conditions are right. Usually it's yearlings or two year olds that don't cycle the first time but do the second time and that is usually due to nutrition issues. Research shows there is usually not a 2nd and 3rd cycle. Hopefully the study on the Monroe will show us when the peak of birth is. Presently the literature does not show that as a problem.

Ty Boulter asked if there is a direct correlation between fawn recruitment and buck/doe ratios.

Mr. Aoude said at the levels we carry buck to does, there is really no correlation. It is more nutrition driven than the number of bucks that are on the landscape. On the Monroe we captured 69 does with 11 bucks per 100 does, and 68 were pregnant. The problem is with fawn survival from birth to 6 months.

RAC Recommendations

Northern – Mr. Byrnes said they had two motions. Motion: To have a statewide 15-17 buck/doe ratio – failed for lack of a second. Motion: To approve as presented, passed 8 to 1.

Northeastern – Mr. Briggs said after discussion with the sportsmen's group, it was unanimous to manage 18-20 buck doe ratio statewide, passed 5 to 3.

Central – Mr. Oswald said 11 of 13 RAC members were present. The new facility they meet in is the Springville Library. It is a wonderful facility and is going to work out well for them. Three Wildlife Board members attended their RAC meeting. He thanked Mr. Perkins, Mr. Fenimore and Mr. Bair for their attendance. On this action item they had good discussion and lots of questions. They voted 7 to 3 to accept as presented.

Mr. Perkins said it was a pleasure to be at that RAC meeting. They have a great sound system and the audience seemed very happy and comfortable.

Southeastern – Mr. Bates said they had good attendance. Motion: To accept the proposal with exception of buck/doe ratio on the Manti, San Rafael and San Juan Units be changed from 15-17 to 18-20 buck/doe ratio and it passed 8 to 1.

Southern – Ms. Griffin said they had a great deal of discussion and input. They accepted the proposal as presented and then it was amended. Motion: To create a 3rd tier of 20-25 buck/doe ratio including those units which already fell within that, Zion, Southwest Desert, Plateau Thousand Lakes and Fillmore/Oakcreek. The vote was a tie and it passed with the vote of the Chair. Motion: To omit option of unsold permits to roll over from one weapon type to the next and it passed 8 to 4. Motion: To accept the original motion and it passed 10 to 2. Motion: To accept general season deer permit numbers as presented and it passed 11 to 1.

Public Comment

Email from Ben Lowder UBA – Director Karpowitz read it into record. UBA applauds the efforts of the Wildlife Board and the DWR in their efforts to restructure the general season buck/doe ratios. They have seen over the past few years the split in Utah hunters between trophy quality units verses more opportunity units. It is important that the top end of the buck/doe ratio be lowered to a more manageable level as is recommended by DWR. They support the DWR recommendation.

Mike Christensen said he was a member of the Mule Deer Committee. He wants to give the Board some background on why the buck/doe ratio is in the range it is. Back in 2008, they looked at unit by unit and regional management. They went with regional management. There were some units that if they had a banner year, their ratio could sky rocket and in turn raise the ratio for the whole region. To alleviate that, they raised it from 15-25. It created a scenario where they wouldn't see any tag increases which could then be placed on units in the region that might be struggling. When they went to unit by unit, there was not a reason to have the high 25 number. He would like to see the recommendation go back to right around 15-20. 25 is too high and this was only done in an attempt to protect lower end areas on regional management units.

Ty Boulter – United Wildlife Cooperative, said they have seen a steady trend in the decrease of hunters. If we are cutting people out of our sport, that will eventually fast track us to basic extinction. He sees that as inevitable. Interest is lacking and opposition is curbing hunting. If recommendations do not help wildlife, but just cuts our constituents out of it we are making a mistake. He thanked the Board, RACs and DWR and he supports their recommendations.

Lee Tracy, representing himself said he is from Southern Utah and was at the RAC meeting. His concern with the 3rd tier is it might establish a precedent of just slipping

units into it, instead of decreasing tags and putting it back into its assigned tier, as well as 25 really is limited entry buck/doe ratio. He appreciates the RACs and Wildlife Board and feels we should stick with the buck/doe ratios as outlined by the DWR.

Byron Bateman, SFW thanked the Wildlife Board. Their members are split on this issue so their fulfillment committee voted to go with the Division's recommendations. Different recommendations have been coming from different parts of the state and they need to be considered. Last year we went to 30 units and it was a major change. There are lots of things in the works to help our deer herds including the coyote money and the Monroe study. They are looking to transplant some does from the Parowan Front to find out survivability. We are getting closer to where we want to be and we want to maintain our deer herd populations. The SFW Fulfillment Board supports the Division's recommendation. Please look at the recommendations out of the regions and really evaluate them and make the best decision possible.

Derris Jones said since the RAC meeting he's had several calls from people concerned that if the Abajo/San Juan Unit changes and the La Sal stays as recommended, it will cause some problems with the locals never being able to draw tags in that area. The La Sals and the Abajos really need to be managed together as comparable units. Mr. Perkins asked how many inputs he has had on that.

Mr. Jones said on buck/doe ratios it is polarized, equally going each way. The opportunity hunters want to keep the ratios lower and the quality hunters want them higher, but they all seem to come together on this concern on the Abajos and La Sals. Those units are very popular with Wasatch Front hunters.

Board Discussion

Chairman Brady summarized the RAC recommendations.

Mr. King asked about the San Juan unit. Are they changing their recommendation?

Mr. Aoude said they didn't want to make a change in recommendation, but wanted to recognize that this did come up and they are willing to change it. It is a social issue. We would lose 400 permits.

Mr. King asked if there is support for the 18-20.

Director Karpowitz said they haven't changed their recommendation, but if the Board decides to go that way it would be ok. We have real concerns with the Manti, and not as many with the San Juan.

Chairman Brady summarized the RAC recommendations.

Mr. Albrecht complimented Mr. Aoude on his RAC presentation in Southern region. The discussion to create a 3rd tier, buck/doe ratio 20-25, was voted on and passed there. He

then read from the RAC minutes, p. 42. It was a tie of 6 to 6. Mr. Flinders voted to pass the motion because of support from public on that issue. There was a large turnout that supported that additional tier.

Mr. Crandall asked if that 3rd tier is created is that going to cause problems down the road. Will it open the door for those with their pet projects, or special areas that they want in the 3rd tier?

Director Karpowitz said it is actually a 5th tier and it will overlap with tier 2 and 4. There's not that much difference in permit numbers so he doesn't see the reason to do it. There should be a distinction between general season and limited entry and not a continuum there. It is so close to limited entry, we might look at those units relative to that.

Mr. Crandall said he is inclined to oppose the 3rd tier and manage it in the 18-20, still maintaining some good hunts there.

Mr. Perkins said those units have high buck/doe ratios due to other reasons. We have four private land units in Northern region that are similar to the Zion Unit. Those have a three year average buck/doe ratio of 32 bucks per 100 does. It doesn't matter what we say the ratios should be, they're going to stay right where they're at. With the comparability, those are going to be 18-20 buck/doe ratio units and it doesn't matter what objective we set when it's another factor that controls the buck/doe ratio.

Mr. Bair asked how that ratio will affect the permit numbers.

Mr. Aoude said a 200 permit reduction because we've already taken a lot of the other stuff into consideration. Our concern is if you make that tier there's a chance of others wanting to go to that.

Mr. Albrecht said he is glad to be getting started on the unit by unit. A few years when we voted to go to 18-25, he tried to amend his motion to give the Division some flexibility to look at some things, but we weren't able to do it at that time. It comes back today, through the RAC process that the majority is happy with the Division's recommendations with the exception of a couple of items. He feels he should make the motion for his region for the 3rd tier, 20-24 for those four units.

The following motion was made by Jake Albrecht, seconded by John Bair and failed 4 to 2 with Jake Albrecht and John Bair in favor.

MOTION: I move that we establish a buck:doe ratio of 20-24 on Zion; Southwest Desert; Plateau, Thousand Lakes; Fillmore, Oak Creek Units.

Mr. Flinders said folks felt strongly about not back tracking on these units that are already in this area, given the low numbers of deer in the area and the limited number of bucks.

Mr. Bair seconded the motion to bring it to a vote to recognize the RAC's concern on this issue.

Chairman Brady said they'd now look at Southern RAC's motion to omit the leftover permits from rolling over from one weapon type to another. There was no discussion so the issue died. Next they'd look at considering the San Juan, Manti/San Rafael at the 18/20 buck doe ratio from the Southeast RAC.

Mr. Bair said all those he knows in Southeast region, the Manti people feel strongly and on the San Juan, there are varying opinions. There are benefits in the San Juan and La Sals staying the same. The Manti is more of a challenge in keeping a high buck/doe ratio. As much as he'd like to see Central region having a unit with a higher buck/doe ratio, he's not sure what we'd be giving up in opportunity to get that unit to 19 and keep it there. The trade off might not be worth it.

Mr. Crandall asked what the La Sal is at now.

Mr. Aoude said they are recommending 15-17. The issues are with the locals having a harder time drawing.

Mr. King said there is an issue with CWD on the La Sals, is that correct? What kind of trigger is there with the CWD?

Mr. Aoude said that is part of the issue. The trigger becomes important once you see a prevalence rate increasing. With only one case it is hard to calculate a prevalence rate. Even on the La Sal it is fairly low. It is hard to say and it may have been an isolated incident. If we start picking them up more on the San Juan, then it would enter in.

Mr. Albrecht asked Mr. Bair what he is hearing. Do they say they want it at 15-17?

Mr. Bair said it is about a 50/50 split on what he is hearing. He's not sure what to do.

Mr. King said that's the same thing he is hearing.

Mr. Albrecht said he's been getting calls on 18-20 and hasn't had any on the 15-17.

Chairman Brady said Northeast region proposed 18-20 buck/doe ratio, statewide. He said only one unit in Northeast would be other than 18-20 and that is South Slope Vernal, which is 15 bucks per 100 does. Going to 19 would be nearly a 40% increase. Next we need to consider a motion for the balance of the recommendations.

Mr. Bair said if we had a few more years of data on this program, we'd have more to talk about. He hopes if there are units that people want different this year, there will be time in the future to make adjustments.

Mr. Perkins said we have a responsibility to provide information back to the RACs. Four out of five RACs supported the DWR two tier concept and more than three quarters of RAC members supported it. The individual units like the San Juan and the Manti have hugely divided opinion.

Mr. Fenimore agrees with Mr. Bair in that shifts might be made in the future after we see how things work out. He would prefer to error on the side of opportunity relative to the San Juan.

Mr. Albrecht said he thinks the Division has done a good job. There will always be those who want something else, but a few years down the road we'll have more information.

Chairman Brady said when we went to unit by unit, it was to focus more on individual deer units. The RACs and the public have put their comments in and we need to recognize and be respectful of that. If he had a favorite he'd probably go along with Southern on those four units, especially Southwest Desert. Those units are probably going to stay at the buck/doe ratios where they're at no matter what our vote today is. The Deer Management Plan will come up for review in 2013.

Mr. Aoude said we hope to get at least two years data before we open it up so it may go into 2014.

The following motion was made by Bill Fenimore, seconded by Mike King and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Deer Management Plan as presented including all general season buck deer permit numbers.

Mr. King said when the Board makes decisions contrary to the RACs, how do we justify it to them?

Director Karpowitz said the decision was made to refer the RACs to the Wildlife Board meeting minutes and that would be the written response.

Mr. Oswald said 9 months ago, the Board asked the RAC Chairman to report back to the RACs relative to these issues and what discussion takes place at the Wildlife Board meetings.

Chairman Brady thanked the RAC Chairs.

6) Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule (Action)

Mr. Aoude presented these recommendations. He talked about how we manage premium limited entry deer units, specifically the Henry Mountains and the Paunsaugunt units. (See Powerpoint Presentation) They are recommending four additional permits on the Henry's and the permits will remain the same on the Paunsaugunt. On management buck

deer permits, 30 on Henry's and 50 on the Paunsaugunt were recommended. Limited entry deer units 2009-2011 post-season buck to doe ratio and permit recommendations were covered. They didn't increase permits on many units and the total number was 986 last year and shows a decline to 967. The reason for that is there used to be an additional limited entry unit, Thousand Lakes that was removed and now is general season.

Mr. Aoude then went on to present 2012 general season and limited entry elk permit recommendations. He discussed spike permits, general any bull including youth permits and then presented permit recommendations for limited entry in each age class relative to the objective on the various units.

Mr. Albrecht asked what the success rate is on the 4.5- 5 year old.

Mr. Aoude said he doesn't have that information with him, but he would guess 60-70%. He then went on to present pronghorn permit numbers for 2012 then OIAL permits.

Mr. Bair asked what is happening with the moose.

Mr. Aoude said there are a variety of reasons such as diseases and habitat. They are initiating a study to look at that.

Mr. Perkins asked if the moose decline is happening west wide.

Mr. Aoude said yes. Some relate it to wolves moving onto the landscape, but there are many things going on. They are recommending a reduction in moose permits. They are collaborating research with the surrounding states. He then went over bison, Desert bighorn, Rocky Mountain bighorn and Rocky Mountain goat permit recommendations.

Mr. Bair asked about the Uintah units and Rocky Mountain goats. Is there any increase there?

Mr. Aoude said the numbers haven't necessarily changed, but the population seems to be shifting westward.

Mr. Perkins asked about the expansion of goats out of the Willard area. When are we going to see populations building up?

Mr. Aoude said that is an interesting thing, not just on the Willard, but on the Tusher's also, like down on the Monroe and the Dutton. Whenever you get goat populations exceeding what their area will carry, they start to make forays into near by habitat. Usually it's the younger animals that start that. We are working on the statewide goat plan and hope to have some transplant sites in place where we can start some populations and not just let them get there on their own. We will consider where we have good habitat and put them places where they'll do well. He then went over the recommended rule changes. (See Powerpoint)

Mr. Aoude also covered recommendations that came from the RAC meetings and the Division's response to each. The Division feels these are acceptable changes. Southern - Reduce the Mt. Dutton limited entry elk permits to 110 from 147. Reducing the Central Mtns Manti limited entry elk permits – Southeastern wanted to go to 360 and Central wanted to go with the status quo which is 452. The Division could go with either of those or a compromise. We'll leave that up to the Board. The Bookcliffs was voted on in the Northeastern region – Reduce the permits to 130 from the Division's 153. That would also be acceptable to the Division.

Mr. Bair asked about the low success rate on the spike hunt.

Mr. Aoude said usually it is about 16-18%. It might be because people are going into new areas since we opened up statewide so recently.

Mr. Bair asked if we know statewide how many spikes are surviving the hunt.

Mr. Aoude said 40-50% of them are surviving. As they learn that they are being hunted, they get better at evading hunters.

Mr. Bair asked how many bulls are on the Wasatch.

Mr. Aoude said we do a winter count and it always under estimates the number of bulls, because they're not as available to count and they winter in smaller groups. He can have someone look it up. He would guess it's around 1,500-2,000.

Mr. Albrecht said on the tracking issue with a dog. If someone has a permit for a spike or some other type of animal and they have their dogs with them. Is there going to be problems with being illegal?

Mr. Aoude said even during the deer or elk hunt there are some upland game hunts going on where hunters are using dogs, but for blood trailing, you have to have a dog on a leash. Obviously you have to have a permit for the animal that is shot, you have to have the dog on a leash and be trailing on a blood trail. There are different distinctions there.

Mr. Crandall asked if his dog comes with him to hunt big game, is that a problem?

Mr. Aoude said you cannot hunt big game with dogs. Relative to Mr. Bair's question, the estimate on the elk on the Wasatch is 1,775 minimum.

Director Karpowitz said be careful with that number.

Mr. Aoude said we don't use that number, we use ages in the harvest which gives a better indication of the harvest.

Mr. Bair said he was getting some questions on that relative to the number of permits.

Mr. Albrecht asked for the slide on the 4.5-5 year old bulls. Is the percentage of bulls being killed on that unit maintaining a high enough percentage to keep it fairly consistent or should it be increased more?

Mr. Aoude said it has been fairly stable. There is enough of a harvest to get an indication of the ages of the bulls there. We've added four permits to try to get within objective. There are more elk summering on that area, than winter on it. We'll get there if we increase it gradually.

Mr. Crandall asked what the statewide objective is for elk.

Mr. Aoude said about 68,000. We are over objective.

Mr. Flinders asked about Desert bighorn sheep permits. What are the recommendations based on?

Mr. Aoude said they are based on flight data. We do it two ways, 30% of older age class rams, or 12% of the total rams. Our recommendation on the Zion fits both of those and is actually on the conservative side.

Mr. Flinders asked about the radio collars on the elk on the Monroe. With the movement on and off the unit, are they seeing higher populations during the summer? How much of an increase occurs in the summer?

Mr. Aoude said it does increase quite a bit in the summer. The only elk we have collars on are coming off the Dutton, so we know the percentage coming off there, but we don't know on the other units. That unit summers more elk than it winters. We couldn't have the bull harvest we do if it was at the objective it shows. It is probably a winter range unit, but it does winter elk on other units. We'd like to investigate that further and will have a better idea when the study is done.

Mr. Flinders asked about a depredation situation on the Beaver Unit. Should we reduce permits because of this?

Director Karpowitz said there were five bulls killed with the possibility of as many as seven. They found two other blood trails. So that's the short answer to a long complicated problem.

Mr. Aoude said to answer the question of whether we should reduce permits, keep in mind we probably kill 5-15 more elk plus or minus on our spike hunt. Those 5 or 7 shouldn't make a big difference in the number of permits. They probably don't need to reduce permits.

Mr. Perkins asked about the counted population on the Zion, composition on the population, the hunting pressure and any other factors.

Ms. Griffin said on their last flight in the fall they counted 200 off the park which was an increase from 114 from 2 years ago then we assigned sight ability on that. Of the rams, 64% were class 3 or 4 rams also. Going by the guidelines in our management plan, 9 permits is still conservative and we are taking into consideration that likely the Sportsmen's permit and Conservation permit many also go to that unit. We still feel like we're being conservative. During the RAC, the sportsmen were concerned about crowding. It is a 54 day long season and she doesn't feel crowding will be an issue. There is enough area out there that has good sheep country where they can spread out.

Mr. Howard asked how many permits we have on the Zion Unit.

Mr. Aoude said a total of six.

Public Comment

Ben Lowder, UBA, in email, said they support the Division's recommendations as presented.

Lee Tracy said he is speaking for the United Wildlife Cooperative. They support the Division's recommendations on the hunt and permit numbers and seasons. They support them because they believe they are the experts in this field and those recommendations deal with the biological as well as social aspects.

Don Peay, SFW handed out some data he gathered. (See Handout#1) Out of 27 elk units they agreed with the Division on 24. On the Pahvant and the Beaver they said they have had a 43% reduction in permits to get to objective. Once you get below objective and have been on a steep decline, there is a substantial change required. The Division is recommending 45 bull permits on the Beaver and five dead bulls is more than 10%. It is not an insignificant number. The Mt. Dutton is the unit of most concern and it is well below objective with the graph line on a strong trend line down. The Division is recommending a small decrease, but it needs to be more. On the Book Cliffs the objective is 6.75 and now it is at 6.4 on a steady line down. There needs to be a reduction in permits like they presented to the RAC.

Mr. Peay went on to say that the Division's model uses a three year reverse looking trend. Adjustment needs to be made in the model. They say they're right at objective using a reverse looking model, but you're already below. The Manti is a steep downward trend, and we need to pull up now. The Manti has 12,000 elk with 400 permits and the Wasatch has about 5,000 elk and how can it sustain 680 permits? It doesn't make sense mathematically. There are fewer bulls on the Wasatch than the Division thinks.

Mr. Perkins said on the Pahvant, we haven't really overshot permits or overhunted there. The real factor is we changed the objective in 2010 and it showed up in 2011. We went from a 6-7 to a 7.5-8 age class. The Division was properly managing to get to a 6-7 in 2009 when the average age was 8, so they were issuing a lot of permits. In 2010 the

Board changed the objective and permits went from 112 to 85. It is not a matter of over harvesting, we're making a correction to line up with the objective.

Mr. Peay said he agrees. As the Division was going toward the management plan and now they're pulling up, it's a 40% change and is substantial. We are already below on the Book Cliffs and the Dutton, substantially. To get back where we want to be, a significant change is required.

Byron Bateman, SFW said their Fulfillment Committee voted 100% recommendation for the road part of the Book Cliffs to go with 130 tags. They want to keep the permits on the Wasatch the same as last year. On the Dutton they recommend 110, and on the Manti 360 bulls. To get back up to the age objectives you're looking at a 30-40% reduction in permits. He asks that they error on the side of caution. When we go into a steep descent, it takes longer to recover. Modify the descent until we get to the age objectives.

Mr. Howard said he is representing himself as a sheep advocate for the last 25 years. He would like to see a few more nonresident permits issued. We've had a die off on the north side of the San Rafael. There is possibly disease or predators that are causing that. He would like to see an increase in permit numbers on the Zion Unit to off set some of the tags to provide more opportunity.

Mr. Perkins asked if he's supporting the Division's recommendation on the Zion or suggesting a different number.

Mr. Howard said as many as we can get.

Ryan Foutz, Utah FNAWS said we have a lot of people who think we're over harvesting. But our permit numbers compared to other states are very conservative. He is encouraged that we have a place like the Zion Unit with a built in nursery in the park that will never be hunted. They are also happy with the study on the collared sheep on the north San Rafael in an effort to see what is happening there. He thanked the Board for all they do.

Mr. Bair said we know there are big sheep on the Zion. With the increase in permits do we expect to see a slight drop in the quality?

Mr. Aoude said no. The way we manage sheep in Utah is to maintain that quality and we are very cognizant of that.

Troy Justensen said he is very familiar with the Zion Unit. You might see a dip in quality or maybe concentrated pressure on certain areas. You have to take into consideration that the Zion is a new unit and guys are just starting to figure out how to hunt it. From what he's seen on that unit, the Division is not out of line in their recommendation.

Lunch Break

RAC Recommendations

Southern – Mr. Flinders said they had a lengthy motion. They recommend 110 limited entry elk permits on the Dutton. In an effort to clarify another item on Zion's sheep, the guide that is named in the minutes spoke specifically about the hunting pressure last year relative to the recommendation for an increase in three resident permits, from five to eight. The reference in the motion to reduce Zion sheep draw permits to five total – the motion was to support Mr. Johnson's comments, to hold the permit level at what they were last year, five total resident permits. The third proposal is to discontinue spike hunting on Monroe until it's at objective carried 11 to 1. The remainder of the Division's presentation was approved.

Southeastern – Mr. Jones said they had a motion to accept the Division's proposals with the limited bull elk tags reduced to 360 total permits on Central Mtns Manti. They had public comment to coast into the objectives on some of our elk units. The RAC discussion focused on bison. It was the first time in his almost 40 year history with the Southeast region and the Henry Mountains where the Henry Mountain Grazers came in and supported the DWR recommendation on bison. This was a monumental day. There was discussion on tooth data on elk and sample sizes and if it is accurate. Mr. Aoude does a good job explaining statistic sample sizes. The motion passed 6 to 4 with the local contingency not in agreement with the reduction in the elk tags.

Director Karpowitz asked if the Southeast RAC talked about the Book Cliffs / Bittercreek at all.

Mr. Jones said it never came up in the RAC. One of the SFW representatives might have mentioned it in their presentation. The RAC did not discuss it.

Central – Mr. Oswald said they had three motions. The first was to keep permit numbers on Manti the same as 2011 and it passed 6 to 4. The second was to keep the number of permits on Wasatch the same as 2011 and it failed 4 to 6. The third motion was to accept the remainder of the Division's recommendations and that passed unanimously.

Northeast – Mr. Briggs said this agenda item was the biggest topic of the night. It was approved unanimously with exception of the numbers. They had two motions. One was for the bigger numbers to be cut. On the second motion the discussion was on the decline in quality on the buck deer. Also on the elk, we're not up to objective. Therefore we came up with the motion that the deer tags be cut by 50 tags and elk tags at 130. It passed 5 to 3. One of the opposing votes was because he didn't feel the reductions recommended were enough.

Northern – Mr. Byrnes said the request was presented at their RAC to change the bull elk numbers as to what was presented at the Board meeting today. There was some discussion on that but they approved the Division's recommendations as presented unanimously.

Mr. Perkins complimented the Northeast RAC on the Chair asking why individuals vote against motions. That has two great benefits, one it lets people see why people were opposing a motion when they took a vote and it also helps the RAC craft the next motion. It is worth doing.

Chairman Brady summarized the RAC motions. He addressed the motions that passed that were different than the DWR recommendations.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by John Bair and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the reduction on the Mt. Dutton Unit for limited entry bull elk permits to 110.

Mr. Crandall asked what the Division's recommendation was.

Mr. Aoude said it was 147. This is one of those units where we are reducing to get back up.

Mr. Crandall said the age class is down.

Mr. Flinders said the three year age objective is right on but last year's harvest the age was down a little bit.

Mr. Aoude said the Dutton is right at objective. We issue quite a few antlerless permits there every year to keep it there. The reduction in bull harvest makes it so more bulls go into the higher age class.

Chairman Brady said they'll now discuss spike elk on the Monroe.

Mr. Albrecht suggested leaving that until the November meeting. Where the proclamation has already been done for this year, it would be better to address it in November.

Mr. Perkins said that would be a change for the hunts that are published and make it a consideration for the following year, not now.

Chairman Brady said they'd now discuss the Zion's sheep permits.

Mr. Albrecht said Mr. Johnson has always been very good to come to the Southern RAC meetings and voice his concerns on the sheep units. Sometimes he's actually recognized some problems on the sheep units that the Division then had to go back in and correct. He's really kept on top of the sheep units. Still with what has been said today he is going with what the Division is recommending.

Mr. Bair said he agrees with trusting the input they get there, but leans towards supporting the Division's recommendation.

Chairman Brady said now onto the limited entry Central Mtn Manti at 360 permits.

Mr. Bair said looking at how the RACs have voted, if we split the difference we would have 406 tags. That is a good compromise.

The following motion was made by John Bair, seconded by Jake Albrecht and passed 4 to 2 with Ernie Perkins and Calvin Crandall opposed.

MOTION: I move that we approve 406 permits on the limited-entry bull elk hunt on the Central Mountains Manti.

Mr. Perkins said he thinks that is too conservative. He would have gone with Central region recommendation.

Mr. Crandall said he would have split it between 480 and 390.

Chairman Brady said they'd now discuss the motion from Northeast region.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by John Bair and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we decrease the bull elk limited entry permits to 130 on the Book Cliffs .

Mr. Crandall asked what the Division's recommendation was.

Mr. Aoude said 153, but they are alright with the 130.

Mr. Crandall asked what the deer tags are total.

Director Karpowitz said they are 541.

Chairman Brady said now they'll consider the motion from Northeast to reduce buck deer permits by 50 on the Book Cliffs .

Mr. Bair said he spends a lot of time out there. He has talked to people out there and if he thought cutting 50 permits would eliminate some of the 3 x 4's he would be in favor of it. If we cut 50 permits it won't affect the quality, it will just cut people out of the opportunity to hunt.

Chairman Brady said he agrees with Mr. Bair. He can't see what 50 permits will do to help that area. It might even help to keep the 50 permits in place.

Mr. Perkins said there was a recurring theme in the RACs that antler quality was down last year so we should cut permits. Last winter was historically long and cold. The animals started at a deficit and the horn quality was down. It is important that we recognize that multiple factors affect horn growth and not jump to any conclusions based on last year.

Chairman Brady said the management bucks have been there for a long time.

Mr. Bair said he recognizes what they are saying relative to the Book Cliffs, but they do not agree with going about it this way.

Mr. Briggs said when he took the RAC Chair, he was told he should be objective. He doesn't believe the numbers have as much to say about the hunters' concerns, but the quality. What they're saying is waiting as many years as they have to, to draw, the option of doing nothing is not helping and they want to do something to increase quality.

Director Karpowitz said he has been associated with the Book Cliffs for a long time. For some reason there are a lot of deer out there that don't grow the same number of points on each side. There are big chunks of the area that don't get hunted. He doesn't see why we should restrict that opportunity when there is plenty of area to hunt. There are lots of nice deer to take. He doesn't think cutting 50 permits will fix the 3 x 4's and that type of buck. Years ago when the Book Cliffs was closed then came back in to limited entry, especially in the Northeastern region, they realized that the Book Cliffs will never be a Paunsaugunt or Henry Mountains unit. It's more a middle of the road limited entry area. There are lots of old bucks on the Book Cliffs, but they don't necessarily have huge antlers.

Mr. Bair said he does not understand how the Wasatch and the Manti can border each other and be so different. There are a lot of people concerned that we are heading for a big crash on the Wasatch.

Mr. Aoude said they share that concern as a Division and even though we are ramping up permits, there are yearlings coming up behind these bulls. We may see a one year dip, but at that point we'll start cutting permits. We are concerned but it is not as extreme as people are thinking. We are going to get there and then we'll back off. Because we manage on a winter count, there are more bulls there. We can't be harvesting this many bulls every year if they're not there. We are watching it and will respond the minute it drops off.

Mr. Albrecht said he'd like to address the Beaver unit. The three year average is 7.0. On this year's recommendations there are 10 permits on early and 16 on the late hunt which tells him they want to slow the age class down, but still have opportunity for hunters. With our problem in the Marysville area with at least five bulls dead, perhaps we should address permit numbers. He feels we should cut the permits by five. It would adjust out through the regular distribution.

The following motion was made by Jake Albrecht, seconded by John Bair and passed 4 to 2 with Mike King and Calvin Crandall opposed.

MOTION: I move that we reduce the limited entry bull elk permits on the Beaver Unit by five to be distributed through the weapon types.

Mr. King asked Mr. Aoude to respond to the recommendation.

Mr. Aoude said five bulls on a population of that size are not going to make a difference. If we counted everything that was killed on the roadways and everything else, we'd be reducing permits right up to the day we started the hunt. When we start reducing permits that far, we stop getting a representative of the population in the harvest, then our ages don't tell us a whole lot. We're getting close to that on the Beaver and the Pahvant. That is his only concern. He doesn't think five permits is going to do a whole lot, but if it makes the public feel better, it's alright.

Mr. Albrecht said he wouldn't have that concern if the Division wasn't concerned about the fact that they are reaching the age objective by switching the permit numbers from early to late. There is some concern from the biologist on that unit.

Mr. Perkins said he agrees with Mr. Aoude, but he will support the motion.

Mr. Crandall said five out of 45 will affect hunter opportunity. Will the hunters be upset about that?

Mr. Aoude said it depends on what hunters you ask. The majority that put in for these units know they wait a long time for the permits and expect a certain level of bulls when they get there.

Mr. Flinders said folks have brought this to his attention with a lot of email and discussion. He thinks the Board is wise to debate the topic.

Mr. King asked if this opens the door for requests like this to be made in the future.

Mr. Aoude said things that happen like this are usually more catastrophic with a large die off. It is fortunate it happened before the Board met so they can respond. This is a unique situation.

Chairman Brady said this happened because we had elk on private property. The landowner was quite upset and had been for quite some time. It might be more apt to help the problem in the future to leave the permits in the count.

Mr. Aoude said that is one approach, but there are opinions on every side.

The previous motion was then voted on.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by Jake Albrecht and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the remainder of the Bucks, Bulls and OIAL Permit Recommendations and Rule Amendments as presented by the Division.

7) Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2012 (Action)

Mr. Aoude presented these recommendations. (See Powerpoint Presentation)
He said he would start with deer. He showed a graph on fawn production trends 1998-2011 and a graph on statewide deer population trends. They are recommending 290 permits statewide for antlerless mule deer. 140 of those are dealing with depredation issues or agricultural areas. 150 permits are on the Parowan Front that are dealing with specific habitat damage. Since this recommendation has been made we are in the process of trying to do a study to see if we can transplant deer from that area to other areas. Given that, the Division still feels comfortable that we can have 150 permits that we can harvest which would be roughly 80-100 does and still be able to do the transplant study. We are not looking to change the level of permits. Realistically we could still issue a lot more permits.

Elk

Mr. Aoude showed charts illustrating elk statewide population trends and a bar graph for 2008-2012 antlerless elk permits. Elk control permits are offered to hunters who have any antlered or OIAL big game permit on the following units: Henry Mountains, North San Rafael and San Juan any bull unit. There are 5 units where, due to private land or tribal land issues, we are unable to harvest enough antlerless elk to control the population – Nine Mile Range Creek, East Canyon, Chalk Creek, Morgan South Rich and South Slope Yellowstone. Recommendations for doe pronghorn and antlerless moose permits were presented. No antlerless permits are recommended for moose this year. This concluded the presentation.

Mr. Albrecht asked about the Plateau Unit and if he's comfortable with 100 antlerless permits.

Mr. Aoude said yes. It's right at objective and 100 permits will get us started. When we fly it again we can see the rate of growth. We are comfortable with 100. We don't want to be getting on top of a unit that may be just recovering, so that's the rationale for only 100 permits. If we see it showing the same rate of increase we can come back with more permits next year.

Mr. Perkins asked about the Fish Lake elk.

Ms. Griffin said they flew this winter and got a low count on the Fish Lake Unit. Between the modeling and the count, we need to be conservative. The population objective for that unit is 4,800. Our modeling says we're about at 4,800. We still want to be conservative and we are recommending no antlerless at this time.

Director Karpowitz said there will still be some mitigation permits, archery hunters can take a few and one CWMU will take a few. There will still be some antlerless take.

Mr. Perkins said let's say hypothetically the population is 4,800, if the population went to 6,000, what would permits have to be to pull it back in?

Ms. Griffin said we'd issue maybe 1000 permits, hoping for 60% success. We'd have to push hard to get back on top of it.

Mr. Perkins asked what the reaction would be if we issued that many antlerless permits on the Fish Lake.

Mr. Flinders said you don't have to ask that question. There would be a lengthy meeting. It's a political unit and it's a touchy subject. You can do no right some days when it comes to cow harvest on the Plateau.

Mr. Albrecht asked if you're at approximately 3,000 elk, how do you come up with the additional elk on sight ability.

Mr. Aoude said you divide by the sight ability, the 70% into the 3,000 counted. He went on to explain how they determine these numbers. Usually we apply 85%, but they lowered it because of poor sight ability. Going back to Mr. Perkin's question, it would take roughly 800 antlerless animals killed to keep it at objective. That's what would be needed through the future annually to keep it at objective. You roughly would have to have 1,000 permits once you're at objective.

Director Karpowitz asked what if the flight is right.

Mr. Aoude said that's why we're recommending that number.

Mr. King said last year you had 860 tags, right? What was the number the year before?

Mr. Aoude said 1,200, but there was an emergency closure because conditions would have led to over harvest. There were 400 permits on the last hunt.

Mr. Bair said on the Fish Lake he would rather shoot more elk next year when we know what we have, than shoot 500-600 elk this year when we may not know.

Mr. Aoude said he was trying to help the Board understand that in the future permits would have to be increased just to maintain objective.

Mr. Crandall said someone from the Forest Service at the Southern RAC discussed degradation because of the over population of elk and he would be for taking a few more antlerless along the way to prevent this problem. There was also a comment about how many animals come back in each year with the new calves.

Mr. Byrnes asked if Mr. Aoude was able to look at the boundaries on the San Juan.

Mr. Aoude said they are correct in the proclamation.

Mr. Byrnes said the prior boundary was extended into the spike area, is that correct?

Mr. Aoude said it had never been that way. He went back and looked at it.

Lee Tracy asked about moose cow permits. Does the Division anticipate when they might be put back on line for the benefit of those with 12-13 points.

Mr. Aoude said we will have moose permits when the population comes up. It is slightly declining at this point. He doesn't know when it will rebound, but we are looking into some of the reasons for the decline.

Mr. Tracy said the 150 doe tags on the Parowan Front was the recommendation, but there should be opportunity to remove more of those deer.

Mr. Aoude said the biologist there would probably feel comfortable with doubling those numbers, but they prefer to start conservatively. This is their starting point.

RAC Recommendations

Northern, Central and Southeastern accepted the recommendations as presented unanimously.

Northeastern accepted the recommendations and it passed 7 to 1.

Southern – Mr. Flinders said they passed the antlerless recommendation 9 to 2. The BLM representative abstained. Two issues are the additional antlerless antelope permits, with instead of 100, 250 is proposed and 500 antlerless elk permits. We have RAC representatives that live in the vicinity of the two units that run domestic livestock in these areas and they can't believe how low the proposed permit numbers are. They feel like they have some low level Division support in making these recommendations. Other things that were discussed is some fairly strong undercurrents about CWMUs and lack of public opportunity to harvest cow elk on the CWMUs on the Plateau Unit that are now harboring a lot of elk. It is a large public resource and folks would like to take advantage of it.

Public Comment

Lee Tracy is representing United Wildlife Cooperative and himself. They approve and support the recommendations as presented. As himself, he was on the range ride on the Parowan Front. They were taken to an area where the deer were concentrated near water. That area is in bad shape. They had a broad representation of groups present. They asked what it would take to turn this area around. First of all there needs to be a lot of

habitat work done and the taking of 400-600 deer from that area to allow it to come back. If they are able to work with the SFW to remove some of those deer, it still leaves a lot of them there. He personally recommends doubling the Division's recommendation to 300 whether it is by hunt or transplanting. That's the only way to get some results.

Byron Bateman, SFW said they are opposed to any increase to the cow permits on the Fish Lake, because in 2010 we had an emergency closure. We need to back off. They are opposed to the 250 increase on antlerless antelope on the Plateau and Parker Mountain. They are looking to transplant deer from the Panguitch area. Population objective on the Book Cliffs is at 41%. We can take these 100 does and do a lot of good in other areas, working to bring the herds back. We are glad we can fund that. A lot of the money to fund that is from the Western Hunting Conservation Expo and some other SFW money. They are not using any conservation permit money to fund that study.

Mr. King asked what the objective is on the study that he referred to. Is it to determine survivability of transplanted does?

Mr. Bateman said that is part of it. There have been some studies done where translocations have worked, but there hasn't been the detail of information that goes along with what Dr. Randy Larsen put into that study on moving deer. Timing is a big issue they will move 50 in December then 50 more in March to see what effect that has. They are also going to check the condition of the deer when they're captured, so they can determine the survivability. They will collar all the deer they move. The Division is very cooperative in helping with that study.

Chairman Brady asked about taking the 100 does and what happens to the fawns that are running with them.

Mr. Bateman said the fawns are old enough at that point to survive on their own.

Mr. Bair asked how they'll catch the deer.

Mr. Bateman said they're going to use helicopters because you can catch them all at once. Their original intent was to use drop nets and bait them in with alfalfa, but to get them all caught in a short period of time they're going to use the helicopters. It will be more expensive, but we want to get this going. They have also allocated \$40,000 to an upcoming study on the moose study that is coming up. The conservation permit money really helps a lot with our wildlife populations in the state.

Mr. Albrecht said on the Parowan Front, has Ashley done any work to the north of Cedar in the Parowan area to see if there was a way to get the deer to migrate across the freeway?

Director Karpowitz said the deer there don't use a lot of the bypass structures. There is not a lot of movement and more deer stay on the east side of the freeway. There is habitat for them west of the freeway but for whatever reason they don't go there.

Mr. Albrecht asked if they used over passes better than under passes.

Director Karpowitz said they use underpasses better. Big wide underpasses are used more by deer and elk. It takes time for them to use those structures and get used to them, if they are properly designed.

Mr. Perkins asked Mr. Aoude to respond to Mr. Tracy's recommendation to double the doe permits on the Parowan Front to 300. Then, is there somebody who could speak to how many years it will take to restore winter range down there.

Mr. Aoude said obviously as far as increasing permits we wouldn't recommend it this first year where we're going to harvest and transplant them. He can't really say because he's not the biologist in that area. We'll probably move around 200 deer and see how that works. The tricky thing about winter range use is sometimes when you hunt animals you move them as well as kill them. They would rather take an incremental approach, move 100 and shoot 100 and see if there is response from the established brush. We need to create more winter range, mostly juniper pg encroachment issue. As we open up more of it, they'll be able to utilize more of it. It will be long term. Once we have conditions that will grow more deer, then we'll have to harvest more. We don't know how this study is going to work out. Harvest is our best tool to remove deer.

Chairman Brady asked him to define the Parowan Front.

Mr. Aoude said it's Highway 20 to about Cedar City.

Chairman Brady asked where Cottonwood is.

Ms. Griffin said Cottonwood is just north of Paragonah. They have had it divided into two different hunts so they can put pressure on the entire area. There are some livestock enclosures, but outside enclosures the land is totally depleted. Any mouths we can get off the range will help. Jason Nichols, the biologist would feel comfortable with up to 500 mouths being removed. We've had steady antlerless pressure along this area for the last several years.

Chairman Brady asked about number of lions in that area.

Ms. Griffin said there are some lions, but they don't come down too far, plus there's pretty steady pressure from hunters on that unit also.

Mr. Tracy said the issue of over or under pass was discussed also, but the expense is a problem at 1.3 million per structure. The problem would also exist on the other side of the freeway. There is not as much winter range on other side of the freeway, plus the fear of them invading agricultural areas and then comes the depredation problem.

Board Discussion

Chairman Brady summarized the Southern RAC recommendations.

Mr. Bair said he can't get past the fact that both these recommendations are on units where we've had emergency closures in the recent past and the Division is saying move forward with caution. He is not in favor of raising antlerless permits.

Mr. Crandall said relative to the local people, they want to weigh in and they think there are more numbers there than we're counting. That's why they want 250 antelope and the 500 antlerless elk permits. He would be inclined to go along with that. The antelope can multiply as fast as rabbits and he's seen that on his ranch. Elk populations have come back very quickly in the past also. To keep from having the big swings, we need to issue permits all the way along. The emergency closure on the elk was because of snow conditions.

Director Karpowitz said we were headed toward a repeat of what got us into trouble before on the Fish Lake, elk concentrated on the winter range, deep snow and a very late antlerless hunt. The antelope situation is quite different. The count in 2010 was 800 and we had 200-300 doe/fawn permits scheduled for that hunt on a low count. It warranted an emergency closure. He's glad to hear we're getting back to objective. He would hate to see a repeat on the elk. We all thought it was hard to over harvest elk, but it happened. He was very disappointed in the Forest Service letter. He then read from the letter. A couple of things it said were elk appear to be having a negative impact on our ability to regenerate aspen communities and elk grazing in riparian areas in the spring is having a negative impact. Director Karpowitz wants them to show the data on these statements. Two months ago he met with the Monroe Aspen group and they said they did not have the answers. They were looking for answers on the Monroe, which is closely associated with the Fish Lake. We no sooner leave that meeting and they've decided the problem is elk grazing. The other thing was an omission in that letter. There was a passing reference to the habitat work that's been done on the units in question. What is being done is 236,000 acres at the cost of 16 million dollars that has been done in the last several years on those units in question. The Forest Service seemed to have discounted this. There was quite a bit made in the letter about units being over objective. Two of the units are 25 and 50 over objective and they all have substantial numbers of antlerless permits. This is a good time to proceed with caution, because of what happened on the Fish Lake and the Plateau. It's curious that the two units we were so concerned about two years ago, we're ready to go back at them again.

Mr. Perkins said he agrees with the Division with the antelope issue. He is really concerned with over objective elk units. We have lived with a bunch of them in Northern region for two decades. It is really tough to get these over objective elk units back down. The public doesn't like it and we've watched that with the Southern region RAC for years. He wouldn't support 500 antlerless permits, but he would support 250. You can recover 250 elk in a heartbeat.

Mr. Albrecht said he feels like if they'd have had two different motions with the antelope separate from the elk, it would have been different results. He has had some of those RAC members call him since then. He's had people calling him on the Fish Lake telling him the numbers are lower than they should be. He cannot support the 500.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by Calvin Crandall and failed 4 to 3 with Chairman Brady breaking the tie voting against the motion. Mike King, John Bair and Jake Albrecht voted against the motion and Ernie Perkins, Calvin Crandall and Bill Fenimore voted in favor.

MOTION: I move that we go with 250 general season antlerless elk permits on the Fish Lake Unit.

Chairman Brady said he voted against the motion because he wants to see less than 200. He's more in favor of what the DWR has presented. He wants to be cautious.

The following motion was made by Jake Albrecht, seconded by John Bair and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Antlerless Permit Recommendations for 2012 as presented by the Division.

8) Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2012 (Action)

Kevin Bunnell, Wildlife Section Chief presented this agenda item. (See Powerpoint Presentation) Through this presentation you'll see vouchers and permits. Vouchers are the private vouchers the CWMU operators receive and permits refers to the public permits that are in the draw. There are 14 CWMU CORs that have been approved by the Board, with 50 vouchers and 97 permits. A total of 62 CWMUs are requesting 388 vouchers and 1258 permits, totaling 1,646. An overview was presented on the CWMU antlerless vouchers/permits for 2011 and 2012 for comparison.

RAC Recommendations

All but the Northern RAC accepted the Division's recommendations unanimously. Northern RAC accepted the recommendations, 8 to 1, which was an abstention.

Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Bill Fenimore, seconded by Jake Albrecht and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Antlerless CWMU Permit Recommendations for 2012 as presented by the Division.

9) Bonus Point Rule Amendments – R657-62-9 (Action)

Greg Sheehan, Administrative Services Section Chief presented these amendments. (See Powerpoint Presentation) It is part of the Drawing Application Procedures Rule. The Division proposes rescinding R657-62-9 Bonus Point Forfeiture. He explained the original intentions and the surfacing outcomes that led them to delete this from the rule.

RAC Recommendation

All RACs voted to accept the Division's recommendation as presented.

Board Discussion

The following motion was made by Mike King, seconded by John Bair and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that the Bonus Point Forfeiture section: Administrative Rule R657-62-9 be rescinded.

10) Nine Mile Moose Management Plan (Action)

Justin Shannon, Wildlife Manager presented this plan. Currently we have 20-30 moose on this unit. It seems like with every elk survey we count a few more moose, so this led us to write a plan for the unit. No transplants have ever occurred on this unit, but by writing a plan we can take it through the public process and potentially induct augmentations and transplants in the future. They are proposing a population objective of 100 moose. The DWR will monitor and manage habitat and combine efforts to minimize depredation if it occurs. This plan has the support of the private landowners and also our federal partners. Although 80% of crucial moose habitat is on private land through the CWMU permits in the future and public permits that will be available, greater than 50% of the hunting opportunity will go to public hunters. These are the highlights of the plan and this concluded the presentation.

Mr. Perkins asked about input from county commissioners.

Mr. Shannon said they took it to them and there was no opposition.

Mr. Fenimore asked if the moose had colonized this area on their own.

Mr. Shannon said yes. It used to be we'd just see a handful, but now about every three years there are a few more showing up. That's what led us to write a plan and get some direction.

Mr. Albrecht asked where this unit is.

Mr. Shannon said it's the Nine Mile Unit, east of Price and north of Green River. As you follow Highway 6 down to I-70, it's the north and east portion of that unit. The Green River is the eastern boundary.

Chairman Brady asked where the moose may have come from.

Mr. Shannon said most likely Northeast region through the Avinaquin and down.

RAC Recommendation

Southeastern – Mr. Jones said they voted unanimously to support the Division's recommendation. It is mostly private land and he commended the Division for working with the private landowners to put this together.

The following motion was made by Mike King, seconded by Ernie Perkins and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Nine Mile Moose Management Plan as presented by the Division.

11) CRC Recommendation – Utah Lake Fishing Contest (Action)

Staci Coons, CRC Chairman presented this recommendation. This is a variance request from Kevin Hunt, Director of FLW College Fishing. (See the Memorandum for details) Briefly, the request is for two types of variances. They need a variance to transport live fish so they can have a live weigh in away from the catch site and they need a variance to possess five bass over 12 inches during the fishing contest. The Committee met last week to discuss this. There were not any significant concerns about how this corporation runs their fishing tournaments. It is a new area for the Division. The Committee was very confident in what this corporation has to offer. She then went over the stipulations. There are some members present that can answer any questions the Board might have. The dates for the contest are the end of August.

Director Karpowitz asked if this needs clearance from the Fish Policy Board to transplant live fish.

Ms. Coons said yes.

Roger Wilson said their meeting is in June and they were waiting for the Division's decision.

Director Karpowitz said he has a letter from President Matt Holland of Utah Valley University supporting this request.

Mr. Perkins said we don't have experience with moving fish that far for the weigh in. What is the mortality experience that the organization has? What kind of equipment do they use?

Reed Price of the Utah Lake Commission has been working with FLW Outdoors. This corporation runs numerous fishing tournaments around the nation. This one will be a regional final at Utah Lake and you can tell they have sound methods to transport the fish. The fish stay in the live wells of the boat and are transported to the weigh-in, in aerated live wells, weighed and then brought back. They experience very low mortality. He thinks the letter sent to the Division stated 98% survival. They run a class operation. Their show is viewed by millions on television and is a great way to showcase Utah Lake. Utah Lake is very under utilized and this is a great way to get the word out in promoting Utah. We are working with FLW and looking to facilitate their requests.

Mr. Bair said he has heard about this on the UVU campus and they are very excited.

Mr. Price said they have had two victories out of UVU and then to have a regional tournament here in our backyard will help us promote Utah Lake.

Clint Martinez is the advisor for the Bass Club at UVU. They are very proud of this. He is strongly in favor of this proposal. Their club started in November. KSL.com did an article on them yesterday.

Mr. King asked how many teams they expect and from how many schools.

Mr. Martinez said there are four qualifying events. Each event places the top five teams into these regional championships. UVU will send two teams to this event. There will be 20 teams competing.

The following motion was made by Ernie Perkins, seconded by John Bair and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we grant the variance request for the Utah Lake Fishing Contest as presented by CRC.

Mr. Fenimore said since the 20 teams are coming from all over the country, they would all have to pass the quagga mussel inspection and all that before they can bring a boat in.

Ms. Coons said yes and that is standard on the COR they would be issued.

12) Other Business (Contingent)

Ms. Coons said the next Board meeting is Wednesday, June 6th. Mr. Bushman has asked for four Wildlife Board members to be present on Tuesday, June 5th for a Board appeal. Calvin Crandall, John Bair, Mike King and Ernie Perkins agreed to be present.

Mr. Bair thanked the RAC Chairs for the great job they did this round of RACs. The RAC input is going to be huge as we go forward with 30 units.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved