Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Beaver High School
Beaver, UT
July 31, 2012
7:00 p.m.

1. REVIEW & ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

MOTION: To accept minutes and agenda as written.

VOTE: Unanimous.

2. BOBCAT HARVEST RECOMMENDATIONS

MOTION: To accept the Bobcat Harvest Recommendations as presented by the Division.

VOTE: Unanimous

3. WATERFOWL GUIDEBOOK AND RULE R657-09

MOTION: To accept the Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09 as presented by the Division with the added proposal that the Division look into additional opportunities for expanding hunting of Sandhill crane and Tundra swans to more parts of the state.

VOTE: Unanimous

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RAC Members Present	DWR Personnel Present	Wildlife Board Present	RAC Members Not Present
Dale Bagley	Bruce Bonebrake	Jake Albrecht	Rusty Aiken
Dave Black	Stephanie Rainey		Brian Johnson
Harry Barber	Teresa Griffin		
Sam Carpenter	Blair Stringham		
Chairman Steve Flinders	John Shivik		
Mack Morrell	Riley Peck		
Cordell Pearson	Lynn Chamberlain		
Mike Staheli	Jim Lamb		
Layne Torgerson	Heather Grossman		
Clair Woodbury	Lynn Zubeck		
Mike Worthen	Zed Broadhead		

Steve Flinders called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. There were approximately 16 interested parties in attendance in addition to RAC members, members of the Wildlife Board, and Division employees. Steve Flinders introduced himself and asked RAC members to introduce themselves. Steve Flinders explained RAC meeting procedures.

Steve Flinders: I represent the Fishlake and Dixie National Forests. I want to recognize Jake Albrecht from the Wildlife Board in the audience. And let's introduce the RAC starting on my right tonight, Mack.

Mack Morrell: Mack Morrell, Bicknell, representing agriculture.

Cordell Pearson: Cordell Pearson, Circleville, representing at-large.

Mike Staheli: Mike Staheli, Delta, at-large.

Dave Black: Dave Black, St. George, representing at-large.

Dale Bagley: Dale Bagley from Marysvale, representing an elected official.

Bruce Bonebrake: Bruce Bonebrake, regional supervisor, Division of Wildlife.

Layne Torgerson: Layne Torgerson, sportsman's representative from Richfield.

Sam Carpenter: Sam Carpenter, sportsman's representative, Kanab.

Clair Woodbury: I'm Clair Woodbury from Hurricane. I represent the public at-large.

Mike Worthen: Mike Worthen from Cedar City, public at-large.

Harry Barber: Harry Barber, I represent the BLM. I work out of the Kanab field office where I'm the manager there.

Review and Acceptance of Agenda and Minutes (action)

Steve Flinders: Thank you. As far as the order of the meeting tonight we'll first have presentations by the Division of Wildlife. I ask you to be patient and respectful and let them get through the presentation. We'll then proceed on to questions from the RAC and then questions from the public, and then comments from the public. Fill out a comment card if there's an agenda item that you'd like to speak to. We'd love to hear from you. That's what we're all here for. Then we'll proceed to comments from the RAC and motions and voting. With that I have one switching of the order on the agenda, if everybody's got one in front of them. Because of audio visual needs down here and what information's on which machine we'd like to switch waterfowl with predator control. So we'll go bobcat harvest, then predator control, and then waterfowl. So 5,7,6, if no one objects. We need a motion and we'll approve this agenda. So moved by Mike. Second by Mack. Those in favor? It's unanimous.

Mike Worthen made a motion to accept the minutes from last month's meeting as presented. Mack Morrell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Steve Flinders: I've got a comment card here about the Cougar Guidebook and Rule, which is often on this meeting. We don't have it on the agenda tonight. But we're here to take public comment and so I think what I'd like to do is sir if you want to stick around we'll do this under other business and we'll get it into the minutes and then we'll make sure the Wildlife Board hears about it. Yeah, I think it's one of the multi-year proclamations. You know it, maybe it shouldn't be multi-year proclamation. Maybe it should be something addressed every year. We'll let the powers that be decide. Appreciate you being here.

Wildlife Board Update:
-Steve Flinders, Chairman

Steve Flinders: With that let me talk about the Wildlife Board meeting. It seems like it was a long time

ago back in that hot dry month we had of June. One thing I wanted to let the RAC and folks know about that Board meeting, there's an action log item, sometimes we ask for items to be added to the action log. This one may be of interest; a motion that they asked the Division to give a presentation on the preference point system relative to the new thirty deer unit plan. So how would this preference system look like across the thirty deer units? You know usually there's a discussion about how many people have points and how they are scattered, whether that needs to be readdressed. Moving on to the substance of stuff that we discussed here and was contentious; the deer management plan was passed as presented, after a fair amount of discussion. After lots of discussion, and I want to recognize Mack Morrell for traveling to the meeting, as well as several other folks from the southern region, we spent a lot of time talking about the Wildlife Board debated the elk management plan. And it was a vote in the end of 4 to 2 that passed as was presented by the Division. There were actually other motions that didn't carry but that's what passed 4 to 2. So it was controversial, not necessarily contentious but thorough discussion. I think that's all. Anybody have any questions about the Wildlife Board meeting? Mack, again, thanks for being there and supporting the RAC and the Fishlake management plan process. I don't know how you felt about the meeting up there. They were ringing their hands. I'll turn it over to Bruce, regional update.

Steve Flinders: I will turn it over to Bruce.

Regional Update:
-Bruce Bonebrake, Acting Regional Supervisor

Bruce Bonebrake: Okay, I don't have too much to report. We have had a one personnel change. We now have a new regional fisheries manager, Richard Hepworth has accepted that position and he's in place and up and going. We'd like to welcome you to the region. I don't know how many of you here remember his dad, Dale Hepworth, but I worked with him for many years, so it's kind of a continuation. And we have a new biologist out of Fillmore and Beaver area, Riley Peck. Riley could you stand up and just so everybody could see who you are. Riley's a new employee down here. He's worked for the Division for . . . how many years Riley? Four or five, okay. And so we're happy to have him down here. I'm sure he's going to do us a good job. Other things in the region, we will be conducting interviews in two weeks for the regional habitat manager position. We've got some really strong candidates for that so I feel like we're going to, we'll end up with somebody very good in that position. And we'll be conducting those on the 15th. And lastly, I'd like to report I found out just today, and I talked about this I think last time, about US-89 the highway project down there. A federal grant has come in for a million and a half dollars to add on to that project. So I think I reported last time that we would probably be doing that more (unintelligible). It will still be somewhat that way but we've probably got about ¾ of the money needed for that. So that project, hopefully, they'll be starting to let the contract sometime this winter and they should be able to make a big push and get the majority of that done pretty quickly. So pretty happy about that. The Grand Staircase Escalante is the one that put in for the grant and got the money. And that's about it.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Bruce, any questions? Seeing none let's move on. Come to the mic.

Lee Tracy: Lee Tracy, United Wildlife Cooperative. Could you give us an update on the Navajo Lake dike project and also what's happening with that proposed transplant of the deer on the Panguitch Lake front, or the Parowan Front unit?

Bruce Bonebrake: Okay um, since there is nobody from fisheries here I'll answer the one on Navajo Lake and then I'll defer the other one to our wildlife manager, Teresa Griffin. As far as Navajo Lake that's moving along about as fast as you could expect. They're waiting for it to dry up as much as they need to to do the core samples to find out how sturdy the dike is and what exactly we need to do. I think we're all kind of suspecting that we're going to need to replace that dike eventually but the procedure right now is to try to repair the hole that's in the dike. We have enough money, I think with what we've collected so far, to probably do that repair. We don't have enough to replace the dike but we're working on that on several fronts. Hopefully, I mean the goal there is to completely replace that dike. The problem is that dike gets inundated with water from time to time and anybody that knows anything about dams and dam repair, that's not a good thing for a dike. You get all kinds of piping. And that dike's actually, I mean it was put in shortly the turn of the century. It's been there a long time, it's held up pretty well. We have repaired it, though I can't remember exactly, it's like four or six times, something like that. What's that? Turn of the century. So anyway I'm pretty happy with the way I'm seeing that go. We've got a lot of partners on that. Those counties, Kane County and Iron County have come in as partners. Kane County actually came up with $50,000.00 dollars towards the repair. So I feel pretty confident we'll probably get that repaired about as quickly as possible, which probably means about a year and a half, something like that. And the complete replacement of that dike would take several years but we're trying to move in that direction. So does that answer your question on Navajo? Okay, Teresa could you, would you address where we're at with that.

Teresa Griffin: Yeah, we just got a proposal from BYU kind of outlining what we're going to do. They're overseeing the study. Each deer will be collared. I think we will probably break it into two groups, maybe fifty in the winter and fifty in the spring. Each one does have to have a live CWD test conducted but it won't be too complicated. So it will probably happen about mid December, the first fifty taken off the Parowan Front where you've toured before, the north end of the Parowan Front. And our new biologist Riley is looking at areas to put them on probably the north end of Pahvant up near Holden. So we'll keep you informed, I'm sure the volunteer help. It will be net gun capture.

Lee Tracy: We want to be part of the volunteers

Teresa Griffin: Absolutely, we will need people to help us. We'll be hauling a lot of horse trailers up there and a lot of animal handling. So we'll keep in touch

Steve Flinders: Thanks Teresa. Let's get into this agenda then. Agenda item number 5, Bobcat Harvest Recommendations. Welcome John.

Bobcat Harvest Recommendations (action) 12:18 to 15:22 of 1:02:07
-John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator

(See attachment 1)

Questions from the RAC:

Steve Flinders: Thank you, questions from the RAC? Sam.

Sam Carpenter: I probably should know this but uh, when you put this the .42, .65 and these different numbers, how do you correlate that to numbers? Is that something to do with the population or age? What do those numbers mean?

John Shivik: Let me see if I can find, is that right, is that what we are looking at? So just these target ranges? So for, this is the proportion of kittens and yearlings, that's out of the harvest take.

Steve Flinders: That's a percentage, essentially.

John Shivik: That's a percentage, sorry, proportion, yeah. Uh huh. Yeah, I guess I should say proportion females. Yeah, sorry.

Steve Flinders: Yeah, there is a big lengthy management plan behind that that describes all that. Any other questions? Good question Sam.

Questions from the public:

Steve Flinders: Questions from the public?

None

Comments from the public:

Steve Flinders: I don't have any comment cards for furbearer.

None

RAC Discussion and Vote:

Steve Flinders: So, it's ours to deal with, no changes essentially. Layne.

Layne Torgerson: I make a motion that we accept the bobcat recommendations as presented by the Division.

Steve Flinders: Motioned by Lane, seconded by Sam. Any discussion? Let's vote, those in favor? Any against? Unanimous.

Layne Torgerson made the motion to accept the Bobcat Harvest Recommendations as presented. Sam Carpenter seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Steve Flinders: So let's move on into agenda item 7, a Predator Control Program. This is informational so we won't be looking for a motion, voting, but you're welcome to ask questions. Go ahead John.

Predator Control Program (informational)
-John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator
(See attachment 2)

So I put this together fairly quickly today. We realized this program has been a real whirlwind tour of trying to get something pretty big up and running. So I wanted to put together kind of the basics of what

we've got going and what we've got started up so at least you guys and anybody interested in the public can see where we're going with this. So it's not too complicated but there are some different aspects of it that are kind of interesting. Predator control incentive program, just to give a little background and history in terms of what we're doing with predators inhabiting this state, this graph shows last years numbers in terms of what we spent for predator control in Utah relative to some of the other neighboring states. As you can see historically we've already been more than all the four neighboring states combined. What's going to happen this year is that's going to go off the graph, so we're going to go up to 1.1 million relative to what we've been doing before. So it's a really aggressive removal or predator control program relative to some of the other states. Okay so they get some context. And what happened here last year, two bills came up to the legislature: predator control funding by Senator Hinkins, in essence that's the one that puts the $5.00 fee on big game hunting licenses with the purpose of removing predatory animals, and the mule deer protection act by Senator Okerlund which requires the Division to reduce coyote populations for the benefit of mule deer. And it does this by authorizing the DWR to contract with members of the target to remove coyotes from places where they can impact mule deer. Pretty specific. What we're doing with the funds, predator control funding all that's going to go over to Wildlife Services. We're going to contract with those guys to hit the high elevation sensitive areas, which we have done in the past, that's where most of the funds went before. And then the mule deer protection act is going to fund our public contracts that we're getting up and running right now. The way the law is designed, the mule deer protection act actually has two tiers, of a general predator control program and a targeted predator control program. Now in the general predator control program this is designed to have contracts for coyote removal from people, the general public. This is going to get up and running, it's actually already started now, aspects of it have started now. This is the part that most people are thinking about, the $50.00 per coyote thing that's got all the press right now. The other half of it, and this is kind of interesting, is the targeted predator control program. And this one allows us to, or it instructs us actually, to target specific areas and specific places using preferred vendors. And what we mean by preferred vendors are specific members of the public. So hiring people to go out and do the work rather than just take any coyote from anywhere. So the biology on it, so we have made some recommendation and we're trying to get the message to the public as good as we can that it's called mule deer protection act, it's about deer, it's not about just removing coyotes, it's about trying to help the deer herd as best we can. We try to remind people of that. So what we're doing is we're trying to recommend locations for removal and targeting places where the removals might have the best benefit. Obviously deer fawning grounds, those elevations are going to do more benefit than a coyote from a lot of parts of the west desert, or Nebraska, or Kansas for that matter. So we want to keep people focused on places that are going to help Utah. And then we're also asking people to time their removals for the best times of the year where it has the most chance of impacting coyote populations. And the most efficient removal is going to be after the coyote's social groups have formed. When they've got their territory stable. That means they're going to be there when fawns hit the ground and it's also the time before the coyotes, the pups have been produced. You'd want to remove two or one versus six, six pups. So we're trying to get people thinking that way. Okay, we've put together the map of general locations, you can download this from the web, but the pink areas are areas where our deer herds are most problematic. We're trying to focus people on those places. And in order to participate in the program we try to keep this really simple but at the same time make it so it's really accountable and we know what we're doing with all these funds, it's quite a bit of money. What we have people do is register first. They have to take an informal test and agree to the requirements. And basically the test just shows you the map and where you should go. It talks about the seasons. It talks about the biology. It's ten questions just to get people so they know everything they need to know in order to get reimbursed for the coyotes. Get that all up front. They have to turn in some information, their address,

social security number, because this is taxable income. We'll have to send 10-99's and all that kind of stuff out too. It's kind of a big deal so we have to follow the state's purchasing rules in order to make this all happen. So in terms of requesting compensation, then people would have to come in with their scalp, with the ears on it or a pelt with the jaw. What I'd really encourage people to do is if they're going to come in I'd like to have them do it December or January. We'd like to do it the right time of year and also take the pelt that they can still sell, and sell their pelt and collect the $50.00 from the state as well. So it would be really be nice if we could get people to maximize the use of this resource. And they have to come with the lower jaw that we can use; we want to get some population information on the coyotes. We also want to get some tissue on these guys too because I'm going to put together a data base of genetics, and the hope is to identify regions what coyotes have come from. What I'd really like to be able to do is make sure we can document what's a genetic Utah coyote versus one from Kansas or wherever else in the state, and again try to help people be a little more honest about this, because if they're cheating it's not going to help Utah deer at all. It's going to be important for them to go only to posted locations. They can't just go into any Division office, or just show up in my office, or show up to law enforcement personnel and then they'll get their $50.00 per coyote. Again, recommending submitting in December. You can collect coyotes right now. It started July 1st, that's when everything went into effect. They'll need to hold clean scalps and everything until we're ready to do it, and locations and times will be updated on the web at our predators website that we have set up. So that's all up and running and good to go right now. And it's been a little frustrating for folks because hey this law hit the books, why is it taking so long? One is it's a new big statewide program; no one has ever done anything like this before. $500,000.00 to thousands of people, there's a lot of potential for cheating or a fraud and that kind of thing so we have to be on top of it. We have to follow our state purchasing rules. And also we're trying to set up our locations such that nobody has to travel, people from Southern Utah, we're not going to have to travel up to Logan or someplace like that, we're going to try to set it up so no one has to travel more than an hour to turn in their coyotes. And we're trying to do this without hiring any additional people, or very few additional FTEs in order to meet the guts of the program, the $500,000.00 all would just go towards reimbursements versus inflating what we're doing. So it's been complicated. But we should be going here in a couple of weeks. The targeted predator control program is going to start the fall of 2013, remember this is the other half of the law. People will need a track record, so one of the other reasons we're collecting information from people as they turn animals in, they will then have a track record. Folks that are really good at doing this that gather good information that are able to turn in good stuff and good forms, we can put them on a list of approved vendors and then we can go back to them and give them private contracts to hunt in places where we might have missed. One of the things we are collecting are GPS locations, I'm going to gloss over that, we want a GPS or a good solid location from each coyote. And one of the reasons for that is is so we can see which places we're hitting, which places we're missing, and if there's those doughnut holes in the middle then that's what we use this program for to fill in those places where the general public is missing. So it's a pretty well thought out and put together control program. Finally a lot of questions about is this going to work, is this not going to work, what should we be thinking about? The fact is the science sometimes predator removal works, sometimes it doesn't. We're giving this one the college try. We're putting a lot of effort and time into this and we've been publicizing this and getting as many people as we can. So far to this day 2,970 people have signed up for the program. So we're going to have somewhere on the order of 3,000 people starting right now. One of the things that we have to remember is it's not just coyotes that are impacting deer, there's habitat, there's weather, there's a lot of other factors that are important as well, so you can't just expect just one thing to do everything. If you want to remove all the coyotes in the state, we're trying to manage people's expectations, it's pretty unlikely we're going to remove 70% of coyotes for several years in a row and remove coyotes from the state, that's not going to happen. But

they can impact coyotes in smaller populations, in smaller areas. We hope that the populations are reduced and our fawn survival will be increased. We're on the edge of our seat watching to see how this works out. And again, we're going to use the location, the age of coyotes, population data in order to evaluate the program and see is this worth the, you know, the $500,000.00 a year, is it really helping stuff out? So we're gathering the information on it. And that' was kind of the run down for y you guys.

Questions from the RAC:

Steve Flinders: Any questions for John? Sam.

Sam Carpenter: The registration test that you referred to, is that web based?

John Shivik: It's web based, yes sir.

Sam Carpenter: Okay.

Steve Flinders: Harry.

Harry Barber: How do you envision in terms of the locations, for example somebody from Kanab, are you looking at relatively close to these smaller cities? They might have to travel to Cedar City or something like that?

John Shivik: Right, exactly, and that has been the struggle. So what we are working with all the managers and everybody right now; each region is setting up their plan to figure out how best to do it, you know to spread out. Southern region is a tough one because this is big down here. So Teresa is working on trying to do, what are you up to like 8 different locations? And it won't be every . . . The thing is, the trick is they won't be 8 hours a day, every day at 8 locations. It's going to be one place for half a day, another place for half a day, and another place for half a day. So people could either travel a way or they can wait and turn it in on a day. But we'll get that posted so people can plan ahead. And we're trying to get that up and running as soon as we can right now. That's the plan.

Steve Flinders: Another question.

Sam Carpenter: What kind of participation are we getting on this so far?

John Shivik: We've got almost 3,000 people signed up so far.

Sam Carpenter: And we haven't done anything on the coyotes yet as far as having them turn in? When is it we start doing that?

John Shivik: No, we, our target is September 1st to start having our locations up and running. If we can get something before that we'll try. But we've got a lot of software. The process is someone will show up to the designated location. They have a little form that says that I've taken the test, or whatever, I've registered, and another form that has coyote date, location, and their name at the top. Then we process that form, we run through the software, it says 6 coyotes, $300.00, puts their information through the web, and then we hand them a receipt and then they get a check mailed to them. So that's what's kind of

leading us towards, we've got people can collect coyotes now but we're not going to be ready until September. And I think what you're going to see in September, at first, the flood gates open and a bunch of people show up and then we'll adjust dates, times and locations depending on where most people are turning coyotes in to. So this will evolve still a little bit.

Sam Carpenter: Okay and what about coyotes that are not taken in specified areas of the counties, and I believe it is through Wool Growers, or Cattleman, they have bounties. Is that still going to be active during this period of time as well?

John Shivik: Some of the counties are still doing it, some of them aren't. So it's up to the counties. That's the Department of Agriculture. That money goes through them then it goes to the counties. And a lot of them have said, why are we, the state's doing this $50.00, they were doing $20.00 I think. So most of them have said, there's really no need and they dropped out of it. But I don't know what the count is on how many are doing it and how many aren't.

Mike Worthen: I think that a lot of the counties we encouraged to use the money that they had in their budgets to push into predator control with Wildlife Services during their budget year. And I don't know how many did that or not.

John Shivik: Right, thanks Mike.

Steve Flinders: Other questions? Questions from the public?

Questions from the public:

None

Comments from the public:

None

Comments from RAC:

Steve Flinders: Again, it's an informational item. I appreciate John putting that on. With a lot of discussion and questions I hope as RAC members you can disseminate better information now after having that. Thanks a lot John; it was excellent.

Steve Flinders: Waterfowl. You're up Blair.

Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09 (action) 31:15 to 38:38 of 1:02:07
-Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator
(See attachment 1)

Steve Flinders: Thanks Blair. Any questions from the RAC?

Questions from the RAC:

None

Questions from the public:

Steve Flinders: Questions from the public?

None

Comments from the public:

Steve Flinders: I've got one comment card from Paul Niemeyer. Sure, just for you.

Paul Niemeyer: How many trumpeters do they kill in the state in a year do you think? What do your records show on that?

Blair Stringham: In order to actually have our swan season the Fish and Wildlife Service requires that we monitor the take of trumpeter swans; and so in a given year, it usually ranges between anywhere from zero up to about five. I think the highest we have ever had was there were seven trumpeters actually taken. And that was in a year when we had done our release earlier in the year and so there were more trumpeters in the area. But on a given year it's probably maybe three or four.

Paul Niemeyer: Are the trumpeters doing pretty good nation wide?

Blair Stringham: They are, they continue to increase. They become kind of a focal species for the pacific flyway and so we've done a lot more monitoring and assessing their populations and they continue to increase, not to the point where you could actually harvest them or have a season. But they are doing fairly well. And it's not really much of a concern, if we did harvest a lot of trumpeters it would be and that's why we have some of those triggers in place to actually close the swan season if we do harvest too many of those.

Paul Niemeyer: I guess where I am coming from on this, we use to could hunt swans in this end of the state. And then they came out and said, well there's a bigger chance of killing the trumpeter in this end of the state. And then they shut it down and the only place you can hunt them in a few of those areas up north. But I guess I would like to recommend that we look at reinstating some swan tags down here. Maybe you could limit it so many to this Southern Utah or in the zone. Is it still zone one and two now?

Blair Stringham: It's not, it's just a statewide season.

Paul Niemeyer: But I mean is the State, you know we had the zone one and two; I don't know what they even call it now. You know like your duck season ends different, or you goose hunt ends up there a week earlier before it does here. I think they call it zone one and zone two. But anyway, I'd like to see them look at reinstating some swan hunting opportunity down here. And then the other thing is we're starting to get more sandhill cranes down here all the time. I counted over 400 in one day last year. And I'd like to see them, and I know this is going to have to go through the Pacific flyaway council but still we need to, if you're ever going to get anything we've got to start here at the RAC and work through and try and . . . best case scenario it would be probably next year to even do anything. But these cranes are on the increase. You're seeing more that are raised here and plus the ones that are migrating through. And

the crane hunt would probably be better down here later than it is up there. Up there they're doing it in about September. When we really see them down here is about from the middle of October to about the middle of November. There were some I know that wintered, I think they wintered, I saw them the last of January at Piute. But you know I would like to see, it seems kind of unfair that we always have to go up north. Sometimes I think the whole state of Utah thinks they end at Provo. But I would like to see some opportunity for the people down here. You know these cranes, you know, I'm sure nation wide they've got to be on the increase from everything I can see, you know, clear into Canada and in uh, you know all the Prairie Potholes and the (Unintelligible) Forest and all that. But I would like to see, you know, some recommendations for some seasons to be able to hunt both of those species somewhere besides just up there. Thank you.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Paul. Follow up Blair, what is the process for expanding that Tundra Swan hunt or?

Blair Stringham: Yeah, both of those are both species covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. And so in order to change the seasons, and a lot of the actual areas or dates that you can hunt you have to go through the federal agency to do that. And so for our swan, we have a pretty tight contract with the Fish and Wildlife Service to only hunt in the Great Salt Lake area. It's something that could be looked at in the future if that's something that you guys wanted to pursue. You know it could possibly be, we would have to negotiate with the Fish and Wildlife Service and allow them to actually give us permission to do that. Um, as far as the cranes, that's also a possibility. Right now we do it in the highest populations of cranes we have in the state; so those four counties in Northern Utah. We have started looking at cranes more in Southern Utah trying to get a feel for what the population numbers are and so that's something we're continuing monitoring and could definitely be a possibility in the future as well. The Fish and Wildlife Service does give us a certain allotment of cranes though that we can harvest every year. And so if we were to open up a season down here you would be pulling permits from other parts of the state: tell them we harvest that certain number of cranes, so . . .

Steve Flinders: Great, thanks. RAC discussion? That concludes public comment.

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RAC Discussion and Vote:

Steve Flinders: Further discussion by the RAC? Mack.

Mack Morrell: Did you say on the Sandhill Cranes they're a maximum number of permits so you say you'd have to move some from the north down to the south to use it?

Blair Stringham: Yeah the Fish and Wildlife Service only allows us to harvest a certain number of cranes. And so like for instance with this year we could only shoot 127 total cranes. And so if we were to open up a season down here it would have to adjust permits accordingly so that we didn't harvest more than that 126. And so in order to do that you'd probably have to take permits from, like the Box Elder County hunt, or the Cache hunt, or the Rich hunt or something like that. But it's also in proportion to our cranes populations and surveys that we do every year in September. And so depending on how those populations fluctuate, I mean some years we could have more permits and so it, you know just depending where the cranes are at is where we'd like to hunt them. So . . .

Mack Morrell: How do you get more permits?

Blair Stringham: It's basically just in proportion to how many cranes you actually have in your state during the survey period. And so if our number of cranes were to increase we would be given a larger allotment of cranes that we could harvest.

Mack Morrell: When do you count the cranes for Southern Utah? I think we have plenty.

Blair Stringham: Yeah, they are specified dates that the Fish and Wildlife Service gives us every year and they are September, usually 10th through the 15th. And so that's when we conduct our survey and so depending on when the cranes actually move through down here, if it's later in the year then we're probably not counting as many of those cranes. And they may be cranes that are moving from Northern Utah down or you know, it's hard to say.

Mack Morrell: What about the cranes that stay year round?

Blair Stringham: Um, we have done some surveys in the past. And so if they were here year round we would be detecting them. I know Vance Mumford did some surveys last year around Richfield and counted some. I couldn't tell you how many for sure. If there's areas in the state where we're starting to see more and more cranes we'll probably start to do more and more surveys in there to try to get a better idea of how many cranes we have statewide.

Mack Morrell: You better come down to Bicknell Bottoms, there's some year round. All you've got to do is plant your grain in your field then they show up.

Blair Stringham: Yeah.

Steve Flinders: Mike.

Mike Worthen: Is the number of permits tied to, or are there permits for depredation on crops? I know some states do that like Idaho.

Blair Stringham: Yeah, and again, it's something that goes through the Fish and Wildlife Service. In the past we haven't really done much of that. We've issued cracker shells, or propane cannons, and things like that to try to deter cranes from feeding in fields like that. We haven't ever done any kind of lethal removal like that for cranes.

Steve Flinders: More discussion? Anybody ready to make a motion? We can certainly ask the Wildlife Board to put it on the action log. Go ahead Cordell. Sam.

Sam Carpenter: I move that we accept the DWR proposal on the waterfowl recommendations but I would like to add to the action log or whatever we need to do to get Paul's concerns addressed. I'm not exactly sure how to word that Paul on what you want on there. I know it had to do with the swans . . .

Steve Flinders: Just look for additional opportunities with swans and crane's in Southern Utah.

Sam Carpenter: That sounds great, what Steve said.

Steve Flinders: Second on that motion? Seconded by Clair. So you want to read something back Stephanie so we know what we're voting on? Yeah for cranes, Sandhill Cranes and swans, Tundra Swans. Discussion on the motion? Let's take a vote. Those in favor? Any against? That looked unanimous. Thank you.

Sam Carpenter made the motion to accept the Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09 as presented with the added proposal that the Division look into additional opportunities for expanding hunting of Sandhill crane and Tundra swans to more parts of the state. Clair Woodbury seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business
-Steve Flinders, Chairman

Steve Flinders: Moving on to other business. Dan, do you want to talk to us about changes you would like to see in the cougar guidebook.

Dan Cockayne: (Attachment 3) I would, I appreciate the opportunity. My name is Dan Cockyane. I'm a houndsman and also the lion coordinator for the Utah Houndsman Association. We realize that cougars aren't on the agenda. They're listed on the DWR website as the guidebook changes for this RAC and so that's why we wanted to be here for sure. But cougars are kind of a unique species. I've been in the woods all my life and I've never seen one except with my hounds. And so they are hard to count, it's hard to know how many there are and where they're at. There is science, and I know this managing cougars in North America is part of the management plan. So as the lion coordinator I've traveled all over this state pretty much end-to-end, side-to-side in the past four or five months talking to houndsman because they're very concerned about the lion populations, mostly the harvest of females. The records are showing that the female harvest is increasing and the age is decreasing. So basically we're killing the young females, which is, can devastate a population. The target for harvesting, or for adjusting the tags is between 17 and 20 percent harvest on females. In 2011 we harvested 39 percent females. In 2012 we harvested 34 percent females. And then if you also take into consideration, I emailed most of you, or tried to, this and I've got a copy and I'll leave it so that everyone gets one, but a study recently in Montrose Colorado they had three collared females that were taken, it was legal to kill a collared female, they orphaned eight kittens. And they were all euthanized and their collars taken off because they weren't old enough to survive. So if you take the numbers of the females that we've harvested in the last two years of our three year plan and even if you consider half that many kittens are going to be orphaned and die we're taking females at the rate of about 50 percent, females and kittens. And we're alarmed. The houndsman, some of them 30, 40 years of experience in the field, everywhere I go are saying there's no lions. We can't find lions. These aren't amateurs. These are men that have been riding their mules, running the roads. They're just dwindling. I think we've targeted lions as a predator for the deer and with very few results and we need to look at the lions before we take them all. The other unique thing about the lions is they're not only hunted they're also, the opportunity for a non-consumptive tag to just go pursue the lion; and if there's no lions that's not happening. That's a lot of dollars. Typically for me I buy a rifle, a couple boxes of shells, I take a couple tanks of gas and go hunt a deer a couple weeks a year. My hounds I feed them day after day after day, I buy gas, I travel, I train them. I bought coyote dogs because there's coyotes everywhere. And it's tougher and tougher to find a lion. And based on the science and the experience of the houndsman we feel like we're at a serious critical point and so we would like to see things done to protect the females. Whether it's lower the tags, which we'd love to see,

and revert the harvest objective to a male only. We could still have the numbers but preserve that base to take care of the population. A couple of other things that we would like to see and that could be done when we adjust the guidebook for the dates and stuff this year, there's a voluntary cougar orientation course for to identify, it's excellent materials and hardly anyone is using it, we'd like to see that mandatory for any permit holder, anyone guiding a permit holder, any outfitter that's outfitting a permit holder, that that course is mandatory. We do it on almost every other species and it doesn't, it doesn't cost anything to do that. We'd like to also, and I've met with John and talked to him about updating that and putting more of an emphasis and helping the hunters understand how we effect the population by taking a female. If we take a male cougar another male will move into that area and take care of the breeding. If we take a female, she averages 12 kittens in her lifetime that survive. If half of those are females by the third generation killing that one lion is taking over 2,000 cougars. It's a huge impact to take those females. We'd also like to see the split moved up to April 1st, so it's not a . . . What we find is in the spring is the ideal time to take a cougar so you wait 8 to 10 years to get a limited entry tag and then right when all the good storms are hitting and the good conditions to take a lion it switches to limited entry and a lot of females are taken. If those guys who have waited all that time to take a trophy animal have a little more time their odds of taking a mature male increases by doing that. The other target for, or the other trigger for adjusting the numbers are the pursuit numbers. Right now we do a random survey on pursuit holders. We'd like to see that mandatory for everyone who holds a pursuit tag to take that. It's five minutes on the computer. I took it this year. The information collected is really good and it just makes for better science and better management doing that. There's a study on the Oquirrhs and a study on the Monroe. On the Oquirrhs a collared cougar is not legal to take. On the Monroe a collared cougar is legal to take. So we're taking our hunters dollars, our taxpayer dollars and paying these guys to go track these cougars, tranquilize them, collar them and then we're killing them. We're not studying anything; we're just killing them. I think Clint Meacham told us that four or five of the females that he collared were taken this year. It doesn't make any sense to not protect those collared cougars. So we'd like to see that statewide; a collared cougar is off limits. And then finally we would like to see it mandatory that all the kill sites are GPS and that information is recorded. There's um, there was just recently a case down here over by Moab, I believe, where they were taking, I believe they were actually killing cougars in Colorado and tagging them with Utah tags, but regardless because during the limited entry season and the harvest objective season there's also, they coincide and so there are a lot of incidents where a cougar is taken off of a limited entry area depriving that guy who has a tag for there and tagged with a harvest objective tag on another one. It would be a law enforcement tool and it would be a good tool for the biology so we know exactly where these cougars are being taken. All of the last five of those things could be adjusted in the guidebook without changing anything with the management plan. They're just little housekeeping things that will save some females. And we feel, and I feel personally that we need to take care of those females. We're killing too many of them. Three years may be too long, I don't know. That's all I have.

Steve Flinders: Thanks Dan. Follow up question for John Shivik. Remind us John of the process or the timing that we're in with the Cougar Proclamation. I think what Dan was talking about, I pulled out my copy of the 2012 Wildlife RAC Board schedule off of the Internet and it shows a place holder there for Cougar Guidebook and Rule in this meeting where it's traditionally been done. We're at the first year of a 3-year proclamation, right?

John Shivik: No, we are at the 2nd year of the 3- year proclamation on cougars. And the placeholder is just that. So when they put together the schedule they put in what's traditionally there and then use it just as a placeholder. And then what actually happens is, you know, it's the agenda that we put together. So

it's the 2nd year. And this is actually, I mean it's great that Dan's here. We've been communicating; we have visited at the offices and things to address some of his ideas. He's got some actually pretty relevant and good ideas and things I think that we'll talk about. And this is, I mean it's a little early but what I'm hoping to do is I'll keep working with the houndsman, we'll put stuff together so by the time we're actually hitting cougars again this time next year I think they'll have kind of a nice package of stuff to throw out, to present, and stuff that we can work with them on too. So I'm actually looking forward to this process.

Steve Flinders: So hypothetically if the harvest this year were way out of the performance targets. . .

John Shivik: Right, next year we would do some; yeah we would do the adjustments.

Steve Flinders: But you wouldn't change it midstream?

John Shivik: We haven't really hit any kind of a threshold to make us change midstream. And again, the 3-year recommendation, the reason for that, as you know in any given year you've got, oh especially with these cougars, a late snow versus an early snow, they're the same kind of thing, it really impacts how many of these animals are taken. So any one-year isn't the population. It really helps us to have a 3-year block so we can be pretty reliable about the information that we have so we can make informed decisions going forward versus kind of chasing our tails. So that's why it was set up that way. It's a good process; and there's no plan right now to do any kind of an emergency thing with the cougars.

Steve Flinders: Thank you. Question, Layne.

Layne Torgerson: John, if I remember right, when we, on this, when we changed the cougar management plan we went to the regions or to the bigger zones.

John Shivik: Right.

Layne Torgerson: Aren't there triggers in place so that if that harvest of females gets to a certain point, boom, we cut it off? I'm trying to remember. I thought that was . . .

John Shivik: Um, yeah I've got the plan here. I mean it's more about . . . and I'm just looking at the numbers from this year in terms of, you know, we're not hitting our female quotas even. Um, the split units didn't get up to what the quotas were, or the sub-quotas were for females and things. I, the plan's more, it's probably a little more aggressive the other way around in terms of leaving harvest objectives open than . . .um, and keeping the split units open for quotas than shutting it down on emergency (unintelligible).

Layne Torgerson: That's the word I was looking for. If I remember right there was some wording in there about a female sub-quota on these harvest objective units.

John Shivik: Yeah, that's what would do it, yeah. I'm sorry. No, I'm sorry. There is language in there that would initially shut those things down with these female sub-quotas. But we didn't hit those things for most of the units.

Steve Flinders: Good discussion. Other questions? Sorry to put you on the spot John.

John Shivik: That's okay. I'm thoroughly unprepared.

Steve Flinders: Yeah, you got it all in a folder. Anything else? This is just informational. Dan, appreciate you coming and we'll, we've got a capture of that in our minutes and we'll see what goes on with other RACs and take it up at the Board meeting. Anyone have any other business? Motion to adjourn?

Layne Torgerson: I make a motion we adjourn.

Steve Flinders: So moved. Thank you.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Southeast Region Advisory Council
Grand Center
182 N. 500 W.
Moab, Utah
Aug. 1, 2012 ~ 6:30 p.m.

Motion Summary

Approval of Agenda and Minutes
MOTION: To accept the agenda and minutes as written
Passed unanimously

Bobcat Harvest Recommendations
MOTION: To accept the bobcat harvest recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09
MOTION: To accept the Waterfowl Guidebook Rule 657-09 as presented.
Passed unanimously

Recommendation for Wildlife Board consideration concerning cougar guidebook
MOTION: That the Wildlife Board considers incorporating a mandatory GPS location on harvested cougars prior to the next proclamation cycle.
Passed unanimously

Southeast Region Advisory Council
Grand Center
182 N. 500 W.
Moab, Utah
Aug. 1, 2012 ↬ 6:30 p.m.

Members Present	Members Absent
	Kevin Albrecht, USFS
	Seth Allred, At Large
Bill Bates, Regional Supervisor	
Sue Bellagamba, Environmental	
	Blair Eastman, Agriculture
Wayne Hoskisson, Environmental	
	Jeff Horrocks, Elected Official
	Todd Huntington, At Large
Derris Jones, Chairman	
	Kenneth Maryboy, Navajo Rep.
Darrel Mecham, Sportsmen	
Christine Micoz, At Large	
	Travis Pehrson, Sportsmen
Pam Riddle, BLM	
Charlie Tracy, Agriculture	

Others Present

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1) Welcome, RAC introductions and RAC Procedure
-Derris Jones, Chairman

2) Approval of the Agenda and Minutes (Action)
-Derris Jones, Chairman

VOTING
Motion was made by Wayne Hoskisson to accept the agenda and minutes as written
Seconded by Charlie Tracy
Motion passed unanimously

3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update
-by Derris Jones, Chairman

Note; A malfunction in the sound system prevented the recording of the Wildlife Board update. The problem was resolved by the time John Shivik made an informational presentation on predator control. The following was salvaged:
Derris Jones-There was quite a bit of discussion on the Conservation Permit Rule. There was a lot of concern that not only limited entry but once in a lifetime permits gets adjusted on an annual basis and limited entry didn't on the number of conservation permits. The Wildlife Board felt pretty strong that most limited entry units have over a 150 permits anyway, and it maxes out at 8 permits, but they did request that limited entry be looked at on an annual basis for the conservation permit.

Questions from the RAC

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

4) Regional Update (Informational)
-Bill Bates, Regional Supervisor

Questions from the RAC

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

Predator Control Program (Informational)
-John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Questions from the Public

Comments from the Public

RAC Discussion

5) Bobcat Harvest Recommendations (Action)
-John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator

Questions from the RAC

Pam Riddle-Once we fall into line, what will the permits be raised to?
John Shivik-The baseline is six per individual.
Charlie Tracy-Explain what the set days mean. Is that how many days the traps are out?
John Shivik -Yeah, so one trapper might set a hundred traps for one day and that's a hundred set days, so we get an average set days per trapper and that's an interesting metric, because we have some trappers that have been working an area they know very well. Other ones…One of the biggest correlatives is how much the fur prices were last year. So if you get a big fur price last year, a bunch of people want to start trapping and they come in and their set days are terrible. They don't know what they are doing as much, so it really skews that number. So it's one of those things you have to consider. That's why there are four different factors and there's not any one that drives our recommendations completely, so it's smart that way.
Derris Jones-John, do you feel that the increased coyote removal is going to benefit bobcats? Is there a lot of overlap in habitat and competition?
John Shivik -What tends to happen…it's called meso-predator relief where you remove some animals such as foxes, raccoons, etc. and they will really kick up high when you remove a lot of coyotes. It depends on how many people harvest bobcats and are out shooting coyotes at the same time and there are a lot of really complicating factors there. The other thing is the rabbit population. The rabbits are doing well here too, aren't they? Throughout most of the state, they've been on a down and now they are coming up, so even though coyotes may be removed, the bobcats might be doing well on other things, so my best guess is that we will have to see. I don't expect a monster jump in bobcats, but I don't see…anything can happen, but it's not going to be bad for them.
Pam Riddle-I have one more thing. It has to do with coyotes. So if the fawn levels increase, we continue coyote control, if we don't see an increase in fawns, how many years…do we have a plan for that?…how long to continue the program?... if it doesn't give a response. What kind of a response are we looking for?
John Shivik -There are a variety of things mixed in now in terms of units that we are worried about and predator management plans and the whole coyote program. So the coyote program, the way it's set up, it's really relative to those laws, instructing us to work with the public to remove coyotes. So I think what's going to happen is this first year, we will see where the public is removing them. Then we will see what our fawn to doe ratios look like, if there are already areas being treated by Wildlife Services, they are under a predator management plan, and that whole process takes several years in a row. You look at the numbers and you look at the range conditions and if they don't match up, then you put things into gear as far as looking at some of these other predators to see what the problems are…either they are coyotes or cougars, depending on what the population is or what's being hit, so relative to the plan, I don't really have a strong answer for that until we see what happens, relative to the predator incentive program. I don't have a really good answer until we see what the public…what comes about from public interactions there.

<u>Questions from the Public</u>
Jerry Swasey-Some studies they have done with coyote populations in Wyoming…once they control big sections of ranches there, they control the coyotes down to where they are tolerable, the bobcats rebound almost hand in hand as one trades places with the other. So I think we will see an increase in the cat population, because they are both competing with the same rabbit, so if we diminish the coyotes, we will see the bobcats come up. Is that correct? I think with the rabbit population having been down the last 2-3 years and now we will see more rabbits increase… the amount of predators that we see will increase as Mother Nature takes care of things, I suppose. I think the Utah Trapper's Association would probably endorse that.
Mike King-I'm just curious what the overall bobcat harvest was for the state last year?

John Shivik -I think…I should have that number in front of me, but it's in that 300-500 range.
Mike King-So it's 10% or less than the permits that are allocated?
John Shivik -Right. Yeah. Let me check.
Bill Bates-I was thinking it was about a thousand.
John Shivik -I want to strike that. I want to double check the numbers.

Comments from the Public

Dan Cockanyne-Lion Coordinator of the Utah Houndsmen Association. I appreciate the chance to have a minute. I also appreciate John watching over these critters. He's a good guy and we appreciate him. I emailed everyone a copy of this stuff and I hope you got it. If not, I brought more copies. From my work with the UHA, I've traveled around the state, talking to houndsmen and statewide there is a huge concern about lion populations, and the female harvest, and we realize that we are in the second year of a two year plan, but we also think there are some things the Wildlife Board could do to take some steps to keep us out of big trouble. These numbers aren't really 100%, but in 2011 we killed 39% females. In 2012, we killed around 34%. The management plan calls for…a trigger at 20% females, so we're way above that, and then if we also consider…down in Montrose they had a collared cougar study. They killed three females with collars and orphaned 8 kittens and they were all euthanized to get their collars back, so if on the average these females that we are killing, just had a half kitten apiece, you know we are killing 50% females, and we think that's way out of line. I've talked with houndsmen who have been out in the field 30 years and they tell me they have never seen a lion population this low and I understand that we've picked on them a long time and it hasn't changed much with the deer. The thing to consider with the houndsmen is that…we may not be a huge group, but we have quite a financial impact in what we do. When I hunt deer, I buy a box of bullets and orange vest, a tank of gas or two and go out a scout, but that's about it. As a houndsman, I spent more money buying gas last bear season than in my own community. It's a year round thing. We are feeding our dogs. We are doing all that, so when we hurt the houndsmen to the point that they aren't around any more; we create a bunch of things. The other thing that we are concerned about is the science says when the percent of females harvested goes up and the age goes down, it's a sure sign of a declining lion population. We are absolutely seeing that. If you kill a male, another moves in and takes its place. If you kill a female lion and you take on an average of cubs in her lifetime, she's going to have 12 kittens that survive. If half of those are female, in three generations, you've killed 2,000 lions. So killing females has a huge impact, which brings me to the things we feel like that we can do even though we pretty much all agree that the Wildlife Board isn't going to open the plan and change the quotas, we feel the female harvest quota is too high, we'd rather see a low female quota and then have those harvest objective units turn to male only. It can be done. It's been done in a lot of states. And we can still harvest lions and have the opportunity to hunt but we don't need to kill all the girls. Some things we think are important that the DWR has put together…the DWR has put together an excellent cougar orientation program and it's voluntary. It's about the only species that it is voluntary. We'd like to see it made mandatory. If you have a lion tag, you have to take the course. If you are a guide, and you are guiding a lion hunter, you have to take the course. If you are an outfitter, you have to take the course. We'd also like to see that updated so that all hunters understand the impact of taking that female. When they are taking that 40 lb. female, they are just killing something because they have a tag. We'd like to change that. We'd also like to see the split that…a lot of the units are limited entry then they split to a harvest objective and any one can come in. We would like to see that moved to the first of April. Typically March is a very good month to hunt cougars. We have lots of storms and lots of opportunity and what's happening is that it's becoming a competition, so as the clock ticks, you are going to have all these other hunters come in and then you settle

for a young girl and that's hurting the population. We'd like to see those dates moved. The other trigger for adjusting quotas is cougars treed per day and that's for the hunters that are just pursuing. It's another unique thing. We buy a non-consumptive tag. We spend our dollars to get nothing except maybe a picture, we hope. And that's part of what triggers adjusting those quotas. Right now we do a random survey of 25% of the permit holders. We would like to see that mandatory for everybody. If you have a permit, take the five minutes to do it, so we can do it with good science. We have a cougar study on the Monroe where we are paying a houndsman to go out and tranquilize a cat and put a collar on it and then its fair game to kill it. Clint Meacham was at one of our meetings and he said that hunters killed 40% of the lions he has collared. We aren't studying these animals if we are killing them. The study on the Oqirrrhs, you can't kill a collared cat and we'd like to see that statewide. If we are going to spend our money to study them, then let's not kill them. The last thing that we would recommend is that we everyone be required to GPS the location of their kill. There was a case in your country about lions being killed in Colorado and tagged with Utah tags. The way that limited entry and harvest objective is, it's so easy to kill a lion in one canyon and claim it on another canyon tag and we would like to see that changed. It's a law enforcement tool. It's also a biology tool, so the biologist can see where these lions are killed and where they are taken from. I've been in the woods all my life and never seen a cougar without my dogs. They are just elusive and it's hard to know how many we have. If you talk to the houndsmen like I have, we don't have nearly as many as we used to, so we think that they have been picked on way too much and we need to quit killing a few females.
Derris Jones-When is the cougar RAC?
Bill Bates-It's not going to be this year, is it?
John Shivik -We are on the second year of a three year cougar cycle, so the next round we will be talking about cougars. We are already working with Dan and he's been great and has been coming to these, and bringing some of these issues out, so we will work with him, and I think we will have a really good set of recommendations for cougars, but there's nothing to talk about now.
Dan Cockanyne-But didn't you change the bear program? (He did not come to the microphone, but spoke from the audience. His challenges to John were masked by other talking and John's rebuttal.)
John Shivik -Bear just started a new (?)...the cougar one…we are in the second year…this is confusing and I'm learning this as well, so the cougar is on a 3-year plan. Last year they did change some stuff in it. But as you can see, that causes a lot of confusion and it undercuts the whole purpose for having a 3-year plan, and one of the purposes of having a 3-year plan is so you can have good enough information on any given year, it's a late snow, it's an early snow, harvest has really been impacted by all sorts of yearly things, and it makes a lot of sense to me to follow the three year recommendations so you have a good data set, so you are making a good recommendation for what's going on and visa versa. As of right now, relative to cougars, it wasn't on the agenda and we're getting to the point of not following the 3-year plan.
Dan Cockanyne-But you are requiring GPS locations for coyotes.
Bill Bates-I was just going to say, regardless of whether we have brought it up or not, I think the RAC is still able to make recommendations.
Dan Cockanyne-The fact is having the GPS locations, you would know where each lion was killed. That's a tool that benefits these guys a whole lot.
John Shivik -I agree. There are some of the things they have come up with that are wonderful things that will be incorporated. You can make recommendations on whatever now. I'm only prepared…I will be prepared to get cougars up and running the next time around. Cougars are on the plate the next time around, so I fully expect some of these things to be discussed and incorporated into our recommendations and incorporated into some of your thoughts. This public process is great. The good thing about having this come up now

is that and our having these discussions is that on the day of recommendations, I'm not playing catch up. What I'm hoping is that come next year, we are doing this and this because of this and this and because of this input and this input. I will be up to speed rather than playing catch up. It's going to be a good process that way, and I will have three years of data, so I'll be able to make really strong recommendations about what the cougar population is doing. One problem with GPS is that we will get complaints from the public that they can't afford a GPS. It goes visa versa and that's why we look to your guidance to figure how to work this out and get that to the Wildlife Board so they can sort that out.
Bill Bates-A valuable thing might be is if you feel strongly about that, you can make a motion tonight for John to consider that for next year, and it will be voiced at the Wildlife Board and it will be something on your plate to look at. It's worth bringing up.
Charlie Tracy-How hard is it to falsify a GPS location?
Bill Bates-Not very hard.
Wayne Hoskisson-It's as easy as writing down on a piece of paper.
Dan Cockanyne-If you go to the GPS location and there's no evidence of kill, that's the whole basis of it.
Bill Bates-That would be the implication. Since cougars must be checked in within 48 hours, it gives us a chance to use the GPS location as a law enforcement tool. So, the officer could say, okay, you have this GPS location, let's go take a look at it…especially if he suspects somebody. That's probably the only time if would be used, if he suspects somebody is not hunting in the right area, so you go out and look and then it becomes a law enforcement tool at that point.
John Shivik -Can I answer the question with regard to bobcat numbers? I got embarrassed by not having the numbers right off, so I want to set the record straight on that. Some of the confusion was that for last year non-trap harvest was 156, but the total trap harvest was 846. Our average throughout the years was more like 1500 for the trap harvest and 260 for the non-trap harvest, so that's the numbers you are talking about.
Derris Jones-Regardless of what we end up doing later on this cougar stuff, Dan, I hope you come back when they do open up the same items again, but we will see what happens tonight from the RAC. Is there any other public comment from the RAC for bobcat?

<u>RAC Discussion</u>
Pam Riddle-I have a question on the cougars. Is there a mechanism to prevent from shooting collared cats? It seems kind of ridiculous to shoot a collared animal if you are trying to collect data.
John Shivik -In the Oquirrh study those animals aren't hunting, but the other side of it is if you are trying to monitor populations that are being hunted, you need to monitor a hunted population, so there are arguments for seeing what the impacts are for seeing what is taken and what is not taken.
Bill Bates-So the purpose of the study might be to look at what proportion of the collared animals are taken by hunters, so you may want to leave that open.
John Shivik -There's a variety of demographic and population studies and we need to know what kills cougars and you got to mark them first and then you know what proportion is due to hunting take and what proportion is due to road kill and what proportion is due to some other factors.
Pam Riddle-So that falls into the plan?
John Shivik -Yes. Right into the reason for the study. That needs to happen.
Bill Bates-I guess that's an expensive part of the research.
Christine Micoz-I have a question for Dan. Your concern with so many females being taken, are the majority of lions that are hunted taken with hounds, and if so, isn't there a level of responsibility placed on the houndsman and the hunter to not harvest the females.

Dan Cockanyne-Absolutely and that is why I have driven all over the state tirelessly trying to educate the hunters not to take the females. We've been doing that since I was elected to the Board in April. I've gone to some community almost every week and have met with the houndsmen, because there is. Part of the problem is that outfitters and guides making a living, killing these animals and they are making $4,500 to bring a hunter to a cat and kill it.
Christine Micoz-It just seems there's a level of responsibility on the houndsmen themselves to maybe educate the hunter previous to the hunt that they don't want to take the females and that would alleviate some of the over-harvest of the females.
Dan Cockanyne-Absolutely and we are doing all we can…we are encouraging them to take that voluntary…because it's hard to identify a female. It's hard to identify a female if she has a dependent kitten, because they are dependent up to six months old. We just think there are some things to help us.
Bill Bates-It would probably be good to clarify some of Dan's comments on the percent females in the harvest and the performance targets. When he was talking about 39% females in the harvest, he was talking about total females, which would include adult females and juveniles, but the performance target is based on high, medium or low level of harvest and ranges from 17% to 25% adult females, so there's a difference. Typically with cougar biology we are looking at trying to have less than 40% total females in the harvest, so just to clarify it.
Derris Jones-Tell us what you think, Wayne.
Wayne Hoskisson-My own preference would be to oppose bobcat hunting, but if I was going to propose something, I would indeed propose a decrease by one in permits this year.
Darrel Mecham-Right now it's three. The proposal would reduce it to two.
Charlie Tracy-Doesn't that just encourage another person to get more tags. I mean it's not really reducing the number of tags, is it?
Wayne Hoskisson-It may not change very much, because if you look at the number of bobcats that were killed, and the number of permits that were issued, it's pretty small. It's not a high success hunting or trapping proposal.
Derris Jones-Is there a cap on it, John?
John Shivik -On the total number of tags…it's 4,600.
Derris Jones-So if they reduced tags by one, just more bobcat trappers could possibly fill in and harvest the same number of cats, theoretically?
Darrel Mecham-Generally, what you see happen is instead of having the dad get two tags, they will have the mom get two tags, and someone else gets two tags. I know what you are trying to do, but it's an easy thing to get around.
Charlie Tracy-It's probably better to leave it at three and allow the serious trapper to take the cats. He will do a better job than…well, I don't know.
Derris Jones-We've got a motion on the floor. I guess we need a second if we are going to continue with that motion.
Wayne Hoskisson-My own sense is that we decrease it, because that's what the plan says you should be doing. It may or may not affect things, but if you don't do something, nothing is going to be effective. Might as well do it, I'd say. That's what the plan suggests.
Derris Jones-John, for clarification, didn't we review the bobcat so that we could go to three last year or this year…I can't remember which one it was, but we had to change something to allow it to decrease by one.
John Shivik -Yeah, again, this is before my time, but I'm still learning fast. I mean the way the plan is set up…and I read this to clarify it…to maintain baseline management strategy if less than two variables are outside of the historic range or return to baseline, if less than two variables are outside of the historic range for two consecutive years. So you can consider that if less than two variables are outside of the range and that's what we have right now, less than two outside the range, this is what they fixed last year, it would pop you right back to the six, right, so what that additional language did was really good because it

added incrementally, saying if everything was going in the right direction, which means that your management looks like it's working, stay the course, don't jump and say that we've saved everything. So now we go to our second consecutive year and see if things are still on course and then that's when it jumps back up to six again. So as of now, the way the plan would state exactly what we recommended. But in the old days, before the last alteration to it, it would have jumped way up to six again.
Wayne Hoskisson-Isn't this a judgment call about whether those movements are really adequate or really represent movement? We only have two years of statistics and it's not good enough and they are not big enough for me to say that those are moving in the right direction.
John Shivik-Yeah, I'm kind of …I've got this that's been approved and I just can't say this sucks and throw it out.
Pam Riddle-Isn't the point that last year we were at three and rather than jumping back up, we are going to stay at three for another year to see if the trend continues where we are at, rather than make any changes? So if we change it to two, we might also not be able to determine what's happening out there. So if we stay at three, we will have some consistency for a couple of years.

VOTING
Motion was made by Wayne Hoskisson to reduce the number of bobcat tags by one to two per person.
Seconded by Sue Bellagamba
Motion failed. Except for Wayne Hoskisson, all members opposed the motion. 5 to 1

VOTING
Motion was made by Charlie Tracy to accept the bobcat harvest recommendations as presented.
Seconded by Christine Micoz
Motion passed with one opposing vote cast by Wayne Hoskisson. 5 to 1.

6)

<u>Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09 (Action)</u>
-Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator

<u>Questions from the RAC</u>

<u>Questions from the Public</u>

<u>Comments from the Public</u>

<u>RAC Discussion</u>

VOTING
Motion was made by Wayne Hoskisson to accept the Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09 as presented.
Seconded by Charlie Tracy
Motion passed unanimously

Cougar Discussion

Derris Jones-I skipped over the cougar discussion. Does the RAC want to do anything by way of a motion to the Wildlife Board?

VOTING

Motion was made by Darrel Mecham that the Wildlife Board consider incorporating a mandatory GPS location on harvested cougars prior to the next proclamation cycle. Seconded by Pam Riddle

Motion passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.
Public in attendance 4

The next Wildlife Board meeting will take place on August 16th at the DNR Salt Lake office Boardroom at 1594 West North Temple at 9 a.m.

The next southeast regional RAC meeting will take place on September 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the Castle Dale County Building at 75 E. Main in Castle Dale. Second floor in Canyon Room.

NORTHEASTERN RAC MEETING SUMMARY – MOTIONS PASSED
Wildlife Resources NER Office, Vernal/August 2, 2012

5. BOBCAT HARVEST RECOMMENDATIONS-John Shivik

MOTION to accept as presented

Motion passed unanimously

6. WATERFOWL GUIDEBOOK AND RULE R657-09-Blair Stringham

MOTION accept as presented

Motion passed unanimously

NORTHEASTERN RAC MEETING SUMMARY
Wildlife Resources NER Office, Vernal
August 2, 2012

RAC MEMBERS PRESENT:
Floyd Briggs, RAC Chair
Rod Morrison, Sportsmen
Ron Winterton, Elected Official
Bob Christensen, Forest Service
Mitch Hacking, Agriculture
Wayne McAllister, At Large
Beth Hamann, Non-Consumptive
Carrie Mair, At Large
Kirk Woodward, Sportsmen
Andrea Merrell, Non-Consumptive

UDWR PERSONNEL PRESENT:
Dan Barnhurst, NER C.O. Sergeant
Randy Scheetz, NER Conservation Officer
Lowell Marthe, NER Wildlife Biologist
Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator
John Shivik, SLO Mammals Coordinator
Ron Stewart, NER Conservation Outreach
Gayle Allred, NER Office Manager
Boyde Blackwell, NER Regional Supervisor

1.WELCOME, RAC INSTRUCTIONS AND RAC PROCEDURE: Floyd Briggs

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES: Floyd Briggs

3. WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING UPDATE: Boyde Blackwell

The Wildlife Board went with NER's recommendations.

4. REGIONAL UPDATE

Aquatics:

There will be a Sheep Creek rotenone treatment and will be removing fish from the Sheep Creek drainage September 10-14. If you want to participate and help, Trina needs 80 people to help work on that.

White River had a large fish kill due to ash runoff from a major Book Cliffs rain following the fire. We will start planning restoration work on Evacuation Creek for

the burn. It wasn't a bad burn for wildlife, but the ash draining into the water can be bad for aquatics.

Conservation Outreach:
As waters are smaller, fish are condensed and fishing has been good. Need volunteers for Last Resort Ranch built too high. He has given us permission to move the strands to a better spacing for wildlife (about a five-mile section) August 10 and 11. If you're interested or know of people who are interested let us know, or Kyle Kettle at 435-219-1830.

Law Enforcement:
Busy with court cases from last year. We recently had a deer that tested positive for plague. The law enforcement officer who picked it up tested positive for plague also. He's been on antibiotics and is fine. We need to get the word out to folks, if you see a suspicious animal, don't touch it. We had a "Bear Aware" float on 4th of July put on by the law enforcement folks.

Habitat:
Started Middle Crouse Creek restoration work. There were fish that survived which had been put in last year. They are also starting their season of restoration in chaining, harrow, bull hogs, lop and scatter projects. 800-acre bull hog treatment. There are six new guzzlers going in and four more planned for the Book Cliffs. Six guzzler tanks in Bonanza and Book Cliffs areas are planned.

5. BOBCAT HARVEST RECOMMENDATIONS – John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator

Questions from RAC:
Carrie Mair: What is set days per trapper?

John Shivik: How many average days a trapper has his traps set before he gets a bobcat.

Questions from Audience:
None

Comments from Audience:
Dan Cockayne: I wanted to make a comment regarding cougars.

Floyd Briggs: It's not listed on the agenda so we could accept it in "Other Business."

Comments from RAC:

Beth MOTION to accept as presented
Second: Kirk Woodward

Motion passed unanimously.

6. WATERFOWL GUIDEBOOK AND RULE – Blair Stringham
Recommend Liberal season 107 days with a 7-bird basic bag limit except on pintail, canvasback and scaup.

Season dates: (See handout)

Questions from RAC:
Carrie Mair: All the abbreviations on the slides can be hazy when you go so fast. I would prefer full print out of words instead of abbreviations.

Questions from Audience:
None

Comments from Audience:
None

Comments from RAC:

MOTION by Kirk Woodward to approve as presented
Second: Beth Hamann

Motion passed unanimously

7. OTHER BUSINESS (COUGAR) - Dan Cockayne and Dennis Ingram

Dan Cockayne (hounds man): I am the lion coordinator of the Utah Hounds man Association. I've never seen cougars without my hounds there. You don't see them without the hounds. We've talked to hounds men and they feel the lion population is the lowest they've ever seen. There is way too much competition.

The trigger that adjusts the tags is the adult female harvest and cougars treed per day. In 2011 we killed about 39% females. In 2012, looks like it will be 34%. We've killed almost 50% of females or kittens. We're trying to educate the hounds man why it's so important not to kill the females.

We would like to see a voluntary cougar orientation course (this also identifies if she has dependent kittens). This course should be made mandatory for the hunter, the guide and the outfitter. The course also needs to be modified to include more information on the impact killing a female cougar has on the population.

The split date should be extended two weeks. Currently, if the limited entry quotas aren't filled they go to open season, so near the end of their limited entry season, hunters harvest a female so they get one.

The voluntary random pursuit survey should be mandatory for all pursuit holders in order to assure more accurate information as the cougars treed per day is a trigger number for setting harvest quotas.

Don't take collared cougars. It should be illegal to take a collared cougar on the Monroe cougar study area, like it is on the Oquirrh cougar study area. Killing a study animal is a waste of time and tax payer dollars.

We need a GPS location of the harvest because there are limited-entry areas open at the same time as the harvest objective unit. A lot are being taken on one unit and reported on another unit.

Carrie Mair: How many hounds men were questioned about mandatory surveys?

Dan Cockayne: I've personally met with over 100 hounds men. Only a handful had taken the orientation course.

Carrie Mair: I appreciate you representing the resource. I would like to see the Board recommend the cougar orientation course.

Dennis Ingram: (hounds man) I would like to see the South Slope Yellowstone pushed back to year-round harvest objective unit instead of a split unit. So much of the area is Tribal ground. The cougars move a lot and are not accessible. The accessibility for a trophy hunt is not very good on this unit. I am a strong proponent of letting people hunt using harvest numbers. There's no reason to allow people to have a tag when it's not a trophy unit and I don't want to see two to three people own the mountain. The deer herds are not back enough to have a limited entry cougar hunt. I will send something to the Board. I don't care about the number of tags, but I do not like the idea of a limited hunt because they are calling it a trophy hunt. I am looking for more opportunity. I spend a lot of money on hounds, tracking units, shocking collars, electronics, dog food, not to mention gas, etc.

Bob Christensen: What is the harvest objective starting and ending date? There is a season on it.

John Shivik: 11/16/2011 to 11/11/2012. The harvest objective is the whole year. The splits are limited entry then turn into a harvest objective.

Bob Christensen: With the proposals made, even with a mandatory survey, there could be people who don't like that and that's the whole reason for this RAC process, to get information out.

Floyd Briggs: I'm sure this will come around and we'll deal when it's an agenda item.

Carrie Mair: We might put on the web site how to get your information on the RAC agenda.

Boyde Blackwell: Staci Coons has put many things on the agenda, or you can talk to your RAC chairman.

Kirk Woodward: I don't know if I've ever heard of anybody being able to call Staci and get something put on the RAC agenda. We've discussed this a dozen times, when somebody has a point that we might want to push forward, but it wasn't an item on the agenda so we couldn't do anything about it and we at least want to comment to the Wildlife Board. But the Wildlife Board doesn't have it on their agenda either so it doesn't get moved on.

Boyde Blackwell: The Board does give the mandate to address a specific item within a one year time frame if it likes the proposal.

Kirk Woodward: So I could make a motion that we push that onto the Board to let them consider it for an action log to the Division?

John Shivik: If a topic comes up that people want to discuss, they need to get it to you guys before 24 hours before the meeting, it's published, and then the general public has the ability to comment on it. So you call up before the meeting to make it an agenda item. With the coyote presentation, the RAC contacted Staci and she put it on the agenda published.

Bob Christensen: Would it have any bearing if it's regional related vs. statewide?

Floyd Briggs: That was too short of notice to be on the agenda. It's a two-action item meeting agenda.

Boyde Blackwell: We discuss hunting strategies and hunts and unit boundaries and those kinds of items in November, and permits in April. We can't take action on a hunt boundary, etc. in April after we've already discussed them because we wouldn't have taken any public input.

Kirk Woodward: But if we wanted to discuss it, and called Floyd in advance, and had that put on the agenda as a discussion item we could at least make recommendations.

Boyde Blackwell: At the Wildlife Board meeting, during the round when the Wildlife Board asks all the RACs to make recommendations, Floyd can say our recommendation was unanimous for this, we had a discussion for this and that. They ask every RAC what the motions and recommendations are, which bring up discussion items.

8. OTHER BUSINESS (COYOTES) – John Shivik (informational only)
The Utah Legislature passed two predator-related bills in 2012 and we have a mandate to implement them.

The first bill, Predator Control Funding (Senate Bill 87), adds a $5 fee to all Utah big game hunting permits. The money will fund a program to control populations of predatory animals that endanger the health of Utah's non-predatory wildlife.

The second bill, Mule Deer Protection Act (Senate Bill 245), allocates general funding to the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources ($500,000) and the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food ($250,000). The legislation directs our agencies to work together, and with other government entities, to administer

programs that reduce and control coyote populations, particularly in areas where predation of mule deer occurs.

Carrie Mair: Does the Division stand behind this program?

John Shivik: We've got the laws implemented, direction made, and we're giving it the best shot we can, but we're going to begin to see next year if it will work.

Carrie Mair: If we don't hit the 70% mark, it could send them back into a reproductive cycle, is that true?

John Shivik: There will always be high coyotes unless you remove them at super high levels.

Carrie Mair: Regarding regulations, if you start turning in coyotes from other regions, will that help the deer population in Utah?

John Shivik: No.

Carrie Mair: If we do this and there is no help to the deer populations will it continue or will it go away?

John Shivik: There should be a lot of self-policing and not cheat the system so we are effective.

Carrie Mair: What does the biology say?

Floyd Briggs: You could add some language in there on sage grouse because on my summer ground we have strutting grounds with coyotes circling it. In our area where there is a predominant sheep population the sage chickens are suffering.

John Shivik: We've worked with the upland guys and we've added some species like rabbits to see how they do in areas, and we want to overlay that information.

The science is, sometimes yes, sometimes no. I want to get information to answer questions.

Ron Winterton: The old-timers come in and want the county to pay the bounty and we don't do it. I think it's going to make a big difference.

Mick Hacking: When money comes in, other groups try to match it on coyote control, so it'll keep the other groups strong and keep it going. It's not just going to be the mule deer that benefit from the reduction of coyotes.

Boyde Blackwell: One of the things we need to consider and focus is what John said. We're collecting other data and we don't know that it's for sure going to work. That's why we're measuring fawn survival and collecting data on sage grouse, and we'll be able to measure those populations at the same time. In three years if we don't see a benefit then we can say we tried this and it does not work. No other states have tried it. We're on the cutting edge.

Carrie Mair: It's still politically driven. It could increase coyote populations if it's not done right. We're trusting in the public and that could be a gamble.

Andrea Merrell: In 2013 they'll have targeted contractors to harvest and concentrate in those areas.

Meeting adjourned 8:00 pm.

Next meeting: September 20, 2012

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Public Library
45 S Main Street, Springville
August 7, 2012 ↜ 6:30 p.m.

Motion Summary

Approval of Minutes
MOTION: To accept the minutes as written
Passed unanimously

Approval of Agenda
MOTION: To approve the agenda as amended
Passed unanimously

Bobcat Harvest Recommendations
MOTION: To accept the recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09
MOTION: To accept the Division's proposal
Passed unanimously

Great Salt Lake Waterfowl Management Area Management Plan
MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendations as presented
Passed unanimously

Central Region Advisory Council
Springville Public Library
45 S Main Street, Springville
August 7, 2012 ✍ 6:30 p.m.

Members Present	Members Absent
Larry Fitzgerald, Agriculture	Matt Clark, Sportsmen
Michael Gates, BLM	Timothy Fehr, At large
Richard Hansen, At large	Sarah Flinders, Forest Service
Karl Hirst, Sportsmen	George Holmes, Agriculture
Kristofer Marble, At large	Jay Price, Elected
Gary Nielson, Sportsmen, Vice Chair	Duane Smith, Non-consumptive
Fred Oswald, Non-consumptive, Chair	

Others Present
Alan Clark, Division of Wildlife Assistant Director
John Bair, Wildlife Board member

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1) Approval of the Minutes (Action)
- **Fred Oswald, RAC Chair**

VOTING
Motion was made by Gary Nielsen to accept the minutes as written
Seconded by Larry Fitzgerald
Motion passed unanimously

2) Approval of Agenda (Action)
- **Fred Oswald, RAC Chair**

Addition of presentation by John Shivik regarding the predator program
Addition of public comments regarding cougar

VOTING
Motion was made by Richard Hansen to accept the agenda as amended
Seconded by Larry Fitzgerald
Motion passed unanimously

2) Wildlife Board Meeting Update (Information)
- **Fred Oswald, RAC Chair**

3) Regional Update (Information)
- **John Fairchild, Central Regional Supervisor**

Wildlife

- Elk and pronghorn classification taking place now
- Coyote check-in program to begin September 1
- Aerial survey of Rocky Mountain Goats to take place this week
- Still receiving wolf sighting reports from Diamond Fork Canyon, latest one from Fifth Water (August 1)

Habitat

- Working with private landowners and state and federal agencies on the following fire rehabilitation projects in the region:
    - Wood Hollow (north and east of Fountain Green)
    - Ophir Canyon
    - Dump Fire (Saratoga Springs)
    - Dallas Canyon (Cedar Mtns.)
- Habitat restoration projects planned for this fall (may get postponed):
    - Manti Face Lop and Scatter
    - Dairy Fork Habitat Improvement Phase 2 (bullhog treatment)
    - 12-Mile Habitat Improvement Project (shrub planting/oak spray
    - North Hollow WMA and Sorenson C.E. Habitat Improvement
    - Maple Canyon WMA Habitat Improvement (bullhog treatment)

Aquatics

- Low flows resulting in isolated fish kills
- Finished Phase III of the Strawberry River Restoration Project
- Sanpitch River fish kill fairly complete on brown trout, native speckled dace and leatherside chub numbers reduced to 10% of previous numbers
- Sticking with bass regulations at Utah Lake (6 and only one over 12")

Conservation Outreach

- Responding to concerns about dead ducks at local ponds (botulism)
- Taking "Bear Aware" campaign to Boy Scout camps
- Bat event at Hogle Zoo successful
- Promoting new predator control program

Law Enforcement

- Officers participated with Juab County Sheriff and DEA to shut down a marijuana grow east of Levan
    - 5100 plants seized
    - One of two individuals arrested
    - Significant environmental impacts and public safety issue

4) <u>Bobcat Harvest Recommendations</u> (Action)
- **John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator**

<u>Questions from the RAC</u>

Fred Oswald – Is the 197 on your slide the target?
John Shivik – It is the target for the set days per bobcat which we get by surveying trappers. We call them and ask them how many days they put their traps out and how many traps they put out and then you can calculate the number of trap days per trapper. If we called one person and he had 100 traps that he set one night that would be 100 set days.
Fred Oswald – Is that one of the performance targets?
John Shivik – Yes.
Fred Oswald – If that is one of the four variables and it is so out of line even though it is moving toward target why wouldn't that be of concern?

John Shivik – I have looked at the set days per bobcat quite a bit and that measure is probably one of the less precise. It is good because it gives us an idea of how many people are afield and how much effort they are putting into it but it is heavily influenced by such things as pelt price and how many newer people are in trapping. There tends to be a core group of trappers that are very familiar with the areas and the cats and trapping methods and they will always consistently pull in more or less the same number of animals. I have played around with the data a little bit and the one thing that really influences the most what happens with set days is what the previous years pelt price is. If the pelt price was high last year then we have a bunch of people trying it out this year and the newer people aren't as efficient and so it's not that the bobcats are down necessarily. It may be that we have a lot of people that aren't as good of trappers. That can really mess up the set days per bobcat calculation. That is why it's not the only thing we look at.
Fred Oswald - Thank you

Gary Nielsen – A few years ago when we adjusted the cat tag numbers down I think it was Kevin who was doing it then and he said they had trapped too many large males and he said that was one of the triggers. Because that was so high the number of tags was reduced and we have since got one tag back. Is the population still low?
John Shivik – The way the plan is now it is difficult to figure out numbers exactly. My guess is cats are doing pretty well. The animals they prey on are coming back. Based on we kept our management the same and it is getting better the populations are probably improving for the cats.
Gary Nielsen – I know that one year cats were worth a lot so people were letting the small ones go.

Questions from the Public
Jason Adamson – I have a question about your set days. Last year the winter was very long and I think the set days number would have been higher.
John Shivik – Those are excellent points. A couple things, these are not arbitrary things I came up with last year, these are according to the plan which is approved through the RAC and Board process. This is what I have to follow in terms of managing this species. Some of the other comments have to do with any given year and frankly this is why I see some benefit in some of the other animals moving to three year plans because any one year the weather or pelt prices can really skew the one year data. There has been something nice about this plan in that they amended the plan last year to add that you look at the year before to see if you are going in the right direction. We are incorporating better multiple years and having better information. The process isn't perfect but it's based on good science.

Chet Young – Last year the way the management plan was set up the tag numbers had to fluctuate by two or three and this was changed last year so they could change one tag number a year.
John Shivik – The big change last year was to add the language that you would keep the number of tags consistent with the previous year. The first strategy would be to maintain the base line management if two variables are outside of the historic range. The base line is six tags per individual and a season length from the third Wednesday in November to the second Sunday in February and no cap on the number of tags sold. We got here by adjusting that through time.
Jack Young – I just remember big changes in the past and now there are smaller changes but they added the cap so that is a reduction in permits.

? – Are we managing bobcats because of the demand for pelts or because they are a predator. A few years ago I read a study about antelope fawn mortality in the Delta area. The conclusion was that bobcats were a major influence on fawn mortality.
John Shivik – The goal statement for the plan is to maintain healthy bobcat populations within existing suitable habitat and provide quality recreational opportunities for bobcat harvest while considering the social aspects of bobcat harvest.

Comments from the Public
Chet Young – I support the Division's proposal.

VOTING
Motion was made by Kristofer Marble to accept the recommendations as presented
Seconded by Gary Nielsen
In Favor: All
Motion passed unanimously

5) Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09 (Action)
- **Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator**

Questions from the RAC
Kristofer Marble – What kind of conflicts did you have that prompted the 600 foot buffer.
Blair Stringham – On the causeway we had several high profile waterfowl species out there last year. We don't get many sea ducks and last year we had a pair of harlequins that were spotted out there which are a high profile species for birders. Unfortunately they are also a trophy species in Utah because we don't get many of them. We had Randy Berger meet with the interest groups; the birding community, the hunters as well as the state park personnel and based upon his meetings they came to a consensus that a buffer along that causeway would be the safest thing to do.
Kristofer Marble – Do you know what sportsman organizations were represented in that?
Blair Stringham – I don't remember but I think the Utah Waterfowl Association was one of them.

Karl Hirst – It seems like if you have good conditions for ducks all the ducks would go up. Can you talk about pintails that are going down and scaup going up?
Blair Stringham – A lot of it depends on the areas these birds are nesting in. If we have a lot of water in the prairie pothole region in particular that is a really high priority area for pintails so when water numbers are down pintails are down. Pintails have become a concern because a lot of their habitat is diminished particularly in California where we have really large populations of pintails in the pacific flyway. A lot of the agriculture has been converted into urban areas and the result is their population being down. They have been on the increase overall so we are hoping if we continue to have some wet years those populations will build. Scaup tend to nest farther north in the Boreal forest regions of Canada and Alaska so those species have done really well with the reduced bag limits as well as overall conditions improving.

VOTING
Motion was made by Kristofer Marble to accept the Division's proposal
Seconded by Richard Hansen
In Favor: All
Motion passed unanimously

6) Great Salt Lake Waterfowl Management Area Management Plan (Action)

- **Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator**

Questions from the RAC

Kristofer Marble – Looking through the plan I noticed there are no specific goals as to the number of acres or some number set in regards to the phragmite control. Do you know why there are not some specific goals in the plan?

Blair Stringham – We tried to put as many in as we knew we had control over. For instance with the phragmite program there are some years we can go out and spray quite a bit but does require follow up burns. Some years we are not able to burn because of weather conditions or getting permits and such. We left that out because it may be something that is unattainable and there is some variability there that we don't have much control over. For the most part we tried to put in measurable goals and a time period in which we could accomplish that in.

Kristofer Marble – Do you know how much treatment needs to be done to make an impact on the phragmites or is that something that is unknown?

Blair Stringham – There haven't been too many studies on that. Phragmites can fill in a large area in one year. What we found is the less we have the better. The more areas we can try to eradicate it or open up will provide opportunities for waterfowl to utilize so our goal is to try to treat as much as we possibly can each year.

Fred Oswald –A large part of that area is private clubs and is there a reason that there wasn't any mention of possible partnerships or coordination with the private clubs with regard to the goals and objectives of the plan?

Blair Stringham – As far as the plan is concerned we tried to focus specifically on the WMAs around the Great Salt Lake. Aside from the plan we do have quite a bit of close contact with the club managers and they actually have a little more leeway as far as things they can do and we have worked with them to try to train them on how we have been doing phragmite removal. The reason we did leave them out of the plan is we tried to focus on the areas we have ultimate control over which are our waterfowl management areas.

VOTING

Motion was made by Gary Nielsen to accept the Division's recommendations as presented
Seconded by Kristofer Marble

In Favor: All

Motion passed unanimously

Fred Oswald – I would suggest that it might be something you might want to reconsider in terms of just mentioning the private clubs in the plan for two reasons; one to show that there is a shared responsibility for the ecosystem up there on both the public and private and two if they are mentioned they might feel like they really are full partners in dealing with all of the problems and goals that are going on. I would make that recommendation.

7) Other Business

- **Fred Oswald, RAC Chair**

Cougar

Fred Oswald – There may have been some miscommunication or misunderstanding on behalf of this being an action item tonight. The cougar plan is a three year plan and is up for renewal next year so this is not an action item and we will not be taking action on your comments tonight. We do want to hear from you because you are here.

Jason Adamson – Sanpete County Houndsmen – In Sanpete County on the southwest Manti our cats are in major trouble due to this plan. They have lumped all of these units into one harvest objective unit. We are not a sheep unit. On the sheep units here they used to kill 40 cats in a three month season on Timp. Now we kill two in a year-round season. Two on one unit and six on the other. On west Nebo it's the same thing. They can't fill the quota, those cats are gone. Now the Manti units have a quota. The Manti unit was over killed this year by ten cats over the quota. The quota was eight cats they killed 18 this year. Two years ago they went six over. The southwest Manti unit has been wiped out and to put these units together is ridiculous. On the Monroe unit Clint Mecham has 20 collard cats and half way through the season eight of them had been killed. I don't know about you but if half way through the season they killed half your deer I think you would be upset. These cats are in trouble. I enjoy them, all of us do. I want to be able to take my kids and show them a cat. There are very few left down there. It's not uncommon to travel 70 miles to find one lion to chase. And that is with good houndsmen who know what they are doing. A lot of guys want to tell you there are cats behind every tree but I would be willing to bet they can't tell you the difference between a cat and a coyote. Our cat populations are in trouble and I am asking for your help. This needs to be shut down. The units need to be divided and we need to go back to a limited entry unit on the Manti. It is has been slaughtered. These mountains here are rugged and tough. They are not an easy place to hunt. They are a nightmare to turn a pack of hounds loose on compared to the Manti. We have 24 on the Nebo and have only killed 11 of them. Everything that is left over comes down to the Manti. You have 12 on the Wasatch Timp and only two have been killed. We used to go 40 there in a month and the season would shut down. Those cats are gone. On Wasatch Cascade the quota is 12 and they have killed six. That is a year-round season. Those quotas are coming to the Manti and I need that stopped. We all do. We want to have some cats to hunt somewhere. I am a deer hunter and I love to hunt deer. But I can guarantee that the cats are not your problem. The cat populations are the lowest I have seen them in 30 years. I can understand wanting to bring the deer herds back. I want to bring them back as bad as anybody. The quota on the Manti was eight cats this year and last year and five the year before. The year it was five they killed 11. Last year they killed eight when we didn't have the quotas from the other units combined. It stopped where it should have. This year the quota was eight and they killed 18. There are nine cats that aren't accounted for. There were 94 cats killed total but the numbers I got from John show 85. I don't know where those other nine came off of. One thing we would like to do as houndsmen, I heard you talking about problems with bears in campgrounds. Our hound club has gotten together and we would like to recommend to you guys that will come into these campgrounds and get it done and get these bears out. It won't cost you anything. There will be several guys that will be on call 24/7 and if you get a bear in a campground we will run it out. We have been doing it on the scout camp above Mount Pleasant. We want to help. There are a lot of houndsmen out there that can't get it done and cannot

catch a bear but a lot of them can and we will recommend the best ones for you. We do need your help with these cats.

Robert Olsen – I just want to back what Jason is saying – I live in Fairview and our lion population is in trouble. I don't know if there is an emergency closure that could be done but something needs to be done. I don't understand how it got away from us. I don't understand the logic of filling tags from Alpine in my backyard. The lions aren't traveling that far. That is bad management. We need help, our lions are hurting.

Tammara Mohr – I agree with Bob and Jason. I too live in Fairview in the southwest Manti unit and we love to chase our cats down there. When it comes to predators I can see that nobody really cares when it comes right down to it. Before I moved here I didn't either. I am from California, not something I really want to say in here. I love to hunt deer and chase cats with my hounds but they are in trouble. Last year we chased three cats. That is a mama and two babies. And we had a tom that came in and out. I remember seeing 60 pound cats that were turned in that still had spots. They were tagged as a tom. I don't know about you but I think there is a problem there and we really need help. We are asking for your help. I know you can't do anything for a year but recommendations from a lot of people, especially RAC members, go pretty deep and that is what I am asking for.

Jason Walker – First of all I would like to say I really appreciate the Division of Wildlife for the freedom to pursue cougars on about any unit and the pursuit season is very liberal. There are a lot of states that don't have that privilege. I started to hunt with my father in the late 80s and I continue to pursue cougars still and I really enjoy it. I do 90 percent of my hunting off horseback or hiking so I'm in the back country pursuing these cougars and over the years I have seen a steady decline. We had quite a few lions in the late 80's and mid 90's and I have watched them decline ever since. Now we are giving out twice the amount of lion tags as we used to. I love to hunt deer also and I haven't seen them come back and that seems like the reason everyone is after cougars. I would support Dan and am against any increase in lion permits.

Chet Young – I appreciate you taking the time to listen to us tonight. Three years ago at the Wildlife Board meeting when the Manti units were switched over to a split unit Justin Shannon was the biologist at the time and he recommended to the Board not to do it because they already did a study on those four units and had proved that the coyotes were the problem not the lions. Right after he made that statement Director Karpowitz made the statement that we need to do the right thing for the deer but let's make sure we are doing the right thing. You can go to the Board minutes. So now these units are combined with the Wasatch units which are sheep units and the Nebo unit also. I added the numbers together and for the Nebo west face, the cascade and Timp there are 48 tags allowed. There could be 48 lions killed on those units. The three year average is 17.32 cats. So we are setting the numbers at 48 when realistically they should be down around 17 or 18. That is the amount of cats available and what has been getting harvested. That leaves 30.68 tags to get filled off these Manti units and it is devastating them. On the one unit the quota was eight and they killed 18 lions off it. The fear is if we wait for three years for this to come back to discussion those units will be no better than the Timp unit which is a sheep unit that they are only killing two lions a year off of. The average for

three years on that unit is 3.66 lions. Yet the quota is at 12 and that is transferring down to the other units. I am here asking and I appreciate you listening. I know what you have said but I would like some discussion on this to get the tag numbers set at a realistic number. This was a three year trial but we need to start with the right numbers. I appreciate your time.

Dan Cockayne – Lion coordinator for the Houndsmen Association – I appreciate your time and the opportunity to address you. I want to say that I appreciate John. We are glad to have him looking after these critters. He cares about them and has been a big help to us. I emailed a copy of my stuff. I want to say lions are unique. I have been in the woods all my life and I have never seen one except with my hounds. We can't count them and it is really hard to tell how many there are but there are some things that we can tell. In the publication, Managing Cougars in North American it says one of the signs of a declining cougar population is an increase in the harvest of adult females and we are seeing that drastically. I have been all over the state the last four months talking to houndsmen and what I have heard all over the state is they have never seen the lion population so low and that really concerns us. The trigger to adjust tags is 17 to 20 percent females in the harvest. In 2011 we killed 39 percent females and in 2012 with the numbers so far it looks like 34 percent. And Sanpete County is over 40. We are really concerned about that. What we have targeted in our meetings with the houndsmen is education. We need to stop killing the females. We can kill a tom and another tom will move into the area. If we kill a female and she averages 12 surviving kittens in her lifetime and the average is six females by three generations taking that one female out of the population has removed over 2,000 lions out of the population. Taking the females is hurting the lion population. In Colorado they are currently doing a study. They had three adult female lions that were collard and it was legal to kill a collard lion. One was taken and it orphaned eight kittens that had euthanized because they were too young to survive on their own. We realize that it is a three year plan but we are asking for an emergency change in the Sanpete county area. It can be done for the sheep or the deer. We can raise the numbers but we can't hit the quotas. We need to lower the female quotas. There are things that can be done. The guidebook has to be adjusted to get the dates lined up as always and we feel like there are things that can be done that don't change the plan that can help preserve the females. One is the Division has an excellent cougar orientation online and that is a volunteer course. Almost all other species have a mandatory orientation course. We are asking that the orientation course be mandatory for cougar. One of the other things we are asking is that we move the split up to April 1st. Right now it is March 1st. March is a really good time to hunt lions because we consistently get storms and by moving that up we think that will help save some females because the guy with the limited entry tag doesn't have to rush out at the end of February and take a female to fill his tag. The other trigger to adjust tags is a pursuit survey, how many lions treed per day. Right now we do a random survey of about 25 percent of the hunters and it's voluntary. We would like to it required if you have a pursuit tag to fill out the survey. I was selected this year and it took me five minutes on the computer and it provides a lot of good information. The cats that are wearing the collars on the Monroe are free game. You heard Jason say we are spending our money to study these cats and put collars on them and then we are shooting them. It doesn't make any sense to me to kill them. If we want to study a dead cat we are killing 400 a year we have a pile of them we could study. We feel like we should preserve those collard animals. Lastly we would like to see every

kill be reported with a GPS location. I know down around Moab they just finished a case where they were killing lions in Colorado and tagging them with Utah tags. Because hunters can hold a harvest objective tags but pursue anywhere in the state there are a lot of cats that are being killed on a limited entry unit but being reported as killed on a harvest objective unit. We think that GPS information would be valuable to biologist as well as law enforcement. That is what we are about. We are putting all of our efforts as a club into educating hunters and especially our new hunters. There was an atmosphere that they were our competition and what we are trying to convince the houndsmen is that these hunters are our future and we need to take them under our wing and help educate them. We need your help with that. We feel like it is time for and emergency adjustment on some numbers on the Sanpete unit. Thank you.

Questions from the RAC

Fred Oswald – Thank you to all of you who took the time and effort of coming here tonight and let us know how you are feeling about that. There are a couple of things I would note with regard to who might be listening to you. We do have a Board member here tonight and I'm sure John has been listening and he is aware of your concerns. In addition to that the minutes of this meeting are sent to all the board members and I know by experience that all the board members read all of the minutes that are sent to them. In terms of you being here tonight I think it's worthwhile for you to express your concerns. While it is not an action item and we will not be taking any action on what you have told us tonight you can be assured that the Wildlife Board will read the minutes and they will know that you were here and expressed your concerns. I think John will take back to the Wildlife Board what you have said tonight. Again we appreciate you being here. We have heard your concerns with regard to cougars and that concern will be relayed to the Wildlife Board. That is the body that will need to take action if any action is taken before a year from now when the plan is up.

Coyote Predator Program

- **John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator**

Questions from the RAC

Kristofer Marble – Where are the check-in locations published?
John Shivik – That will be online soon. People will need to login over the next couple of weeks. We are working with the regions on locations. What you will probably see is in some regions you will have three different sites and one site will be every Monday, one will be Tuesday, one Wednesday. We will publish it and see how many people show up in September and then adjust that schedule from there.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30
30 in attendance
Next board meeting August 16, 2012 9 a.m. at the DNR boardroom, Salt Lake
Next RAC meeting September 11, 2012 6:30 p.m. at the Springville Public Library

Northern Regional Advisory Council

Aug 8, 2012

6:00 P.M.

Place: Brigham City Community Center

RAC Present	DWR Present	Wildlife Board
John Blazzard- Agric	Jodie Anderson	Ernie Perkins
Robert Byrnes- Chair	Justin Dolling	Bill Fenimore
Paul Cowley- Forest Service	John Shivik	
Joel Ferry- Agric	Blair Stringham	
James Gaskill- At Large	Mitch Lane	
R. Jefre Hicks- At Large	Rich Hansen	
Russ Lawrence- At Large	Jason Jones	
Jon Leonard- Sportsman	Dustin Mitchell	
Bruce Sillitoe- BLM	Randy Berger	
Bryce Thurgood- At Large	Chad Cranney	
Craig Van Tassell- Sportsman	Darren Debloois	
John Wall- At Large	Scott Davis	
	Corrie Wallace	

RAC Excused
John Cavitt- Noncon.
Ann Neville- Noncon.

RAC Absent
G. Lynn Nelson- Elected

Meeting Begins: 6:00p.m.
Number of Pages: 14

Introduction: Robert Byrnes-Chair

Agenda:
Review of Agenda and May 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes
Wildlife Board Meeting Update
Regional Update
Bobcat Harvest Recommendations
Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09
Great Salt Lake Waterfowl Management Area Management Plan
Pineview Reservoir Hunting Closure Proposal
Coyote Predator Program
Cougar Guidebook & Rules Consideration of Issues

Item 1. Welcome and Introductions

Introduction of RAC Members

Item 2. Review and Acceptance of Agenda and May 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Motion

Motion- Blazzard- Adopt the amended agenda.
Second- VanTassell
Motion Carries- Unanimous

Motion

Motion- Gaskill- Approve the minutes as amended.
Second- Lawrence
Motion Carries- Unanimous

Item 3.Wildlife Board Update

Emailed info to RAC Members.

Item 4. Regional Update
-Justin Dolling, Regional Supervisor

In the middle of a drought. Conditions aren't as bad as other parts of the state. Have had small fires in the region. Habitat section has been meeting with BLM to get rehab areas burnt. Rehab project on Rock Creek on Hardware Ranch.
Aquatics- Keeping an eye on the conservation pools. Plans to treat right hand fork of the Logan River. Part of the Bonneville Cutthroat recovery effort. 2 day project.
Wildlife- Launched coyote control program. John Shivik will talk about that a little later this evening. Droughts have increased big game depredation especially in west Box Elder and Rich

County. Starting on Mule Deer Unit Management Plans. Biologists are reporting fair number of bucks this year.
Outreach Section- Dedicated Hunter participation has declined. 1700 signed up and right now we are 57% below the peak we had 4 years ago.
Law Enforcement- Successful quagga mussel road block at Echo last weekend. Continue with Big Game Winter Range patrols looking for illegal activities. Primarily the poaching of mule deer.

Item 5. Bobcat Harvest Recommendations
- John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator

See Handout

Public Questions

Becky Wood- I have only seen one bobcat in my entire life. I'm curious if you have an estimate of how many bobcats are really out there?
John Shivik- That is a very common question. A lot of the species we manage are bears or cougars or bobcats and things that are rare for people to see. We don't have a good estimate of exactly how many there are. I try to get away from that. That is why we use these proxy numbers. We don't know exactly what the population is but the numbers we are looking at, it is probably stable to rising a little bit. I cannot tell you exactly how many there are.

RAC Questions

John Wall- On your surveys, does that include guys that bought a furbearers license or is that just trappers.
John Shivik- It is the furbearer licenses.
Robert Byrnes- On your variable for kittens and yearlings, that is the proportion in the harvest? Is that correct?
John Shivik- Yes.
Robert Byrnes- As that number goes up, does that tell us where we are having good reproduction. What does that variable tell us as it changes?
John Shivik- If you have a lower number, you are harvesting less and would want to back away from the permits because you want to see a higher proportion which would indicate you have got a growing population. That would be the interpretation. As you get more of those, there is more in the population. If you have more of the lower age groups, that is an indicator that your population is growing. If you have fewer, it is an indication that it is not growing. Each are good indicators of effort and health of population but any one of them is not perfect and that is why we take all 4 of them together.
Robert Byrnes- That is why we really like the newer plan.
Paul Cowley- How many animals were harvested last year?
John Shivik- 846 trapped, 156 non-trapped.
Paul Cowley- Thank you.
John Blazzard- The non-trapped would be houndsmen?
John Shivik- Non-trapped would be houndsmen, shooters shooting any other take like that.

John Blazzard- Do you see any advantage to having a certain number of the tags allocated to houndsmen rather than first come, first serve trappers? I hear a lot of houndsmen complaining to me that the trappers are taking all the bobcats and they don't get a chance to chase them. They don't ever kill the babies, just the big ones.
John Shivik- I will take note of that. I talk with the houndsmen quite a bit but have not heard that in particular. It is like a lot of our other issues where we have to figure out amongst the groups how to share the mountain. I would be resistant to allotting certain numbers to certain groups. If it became a huge issue, we may approach it differently. I think we are handling it pretty well the way it is now.

Public Comment

Stan Bassett- Utah Trappers Association- Support the recommendations that have been presented tonight.
Chet Young- Utah Houndsmen Association- Supports the division's proposal on bobcats.
Robert Byrnes- Where are we at in our cycle on this? Have we had this for 2 years now?
John Shivik- This current plan started from 2007-2016. The recommendations come out every year for bobcat.
Robert Byrnes- We adopted this management plan that long ago?
John Shivik- I think you discussed it last year, an amendment last year to add that language that said if things are stable then to keep consistent with the previous year.
James Gaskill- Refreshing to be sticking to the plan.

Motion

Motion-Gaskill- Recommend the Wildlife Board accept the bobcat harvest recommendations.
Second- Cowley
Motion Carries-Unanimous

Item 6. Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09
- Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator

See Handout

RAC Questions

Robert Byrnes- On the Antelope Island Causeway buffer, have you defined where it starts? Is it the center line of the road or the edge of the pavement?
Blair Stringham- We have defined it as the edge of the pavement. 600 feet from the edge of the pavement north and south.
James Gaskill- Maybe I heard incorrectly but I thought you said it closes 30 minutes after sunset? Is that correct?
Blair Stringham- Yes.
James Gaskill- That is a big change from the past.
Blair Stringham- Is that not similar to what we have done in the past?
James Gaskill- It has always been sunset. I thought that was a federal regulation.

Blair Stringham- You are correct.
R. Jefre Hicks- Scop harvest. Big increase this year from what it was before. When you listed it on your page, there was an asterisk by it, is there something more we need to know about that?
Blair Stringham- It is just the change from last year to this year.
R. Jefre Hicks- Do you know the percentage of increase? Is it a huge increase in nesting?
Blair Stringham- It is based on the models that are formulated by the fish and wildlife service. They have specific criteria in that plan that if the population reaches a certain level then we can become more liberal with our harvest and season. The way that is set up is that the most restrictive would be a bag of 2 and 86 day season. The next step up would be 86 and a bag of 3. After that, it would be 107 day season and a bag of 7. As far as Utah is concerned, Scop make up a small portion.
Bryce Thurgood- On the pintails, is most other states around or in the flyaway at the 2 pintail bag limit or are we higher?
Blair Stringham- 2 is the maximum that the fish and wildlife service will allow us to take. We are hanging right there until they allow us to take more.
Bryce Thurgood- Dropping it from 2 to 1. Obviously you are worried about levels keep going down right?
Blair Stringham- We are recommending 2 this year. It is really based upon another model the fish and wildlife service has and how many they will allow us to harvest. With the population being down, it is still not a level that they are concerned that we would overharvest. That is why they have allowed us to have the 107 day season and the bag of 2 again this year.
Bryce Thurgood- I thought it was the only one below the long term average.
Blair Stringham- It is below the long term average. It is not significantly below it just depends on the year for pintails. They are up and down. They are down below their long term average but not at a place where we feel like we need to reduce that bag further than 2.
James Gaskill- Could you talk a little bit about our local conditions. Could you tell us how it is looking and if there is any botulism or anything like that going on?
Blair Stringham- If you compare it to last year, it is probably night and day. Last year we had huge amounts of water and a lot of snowpack. This year is the complete opposite and dry. A lot of our water is shrinking. We are able to manage that within our waterfowl management areas and so we can maintain, for the most part, our water levels. Overall, the Great Salt Lake is drying up pretty fast right now. As far as botulism, we have not seen many outbreaks yet on the Great Salt Lake. We do expect some because there always is some every year. It is just a matter of how long the conditions persist. If it maintains to a really high temperature as well as the water levels being low, that water level temperature increases, bacteria produces a toxin which causes botulism. We are monitoring that and have seen some outbreaks in ponds in the Great Salt Lake area but nothing yet in the Great Salt Lake. I imagine there will be some before things cool down.
James Gaskill- Thank you.
Joel Ferry- Thank you for all the work you have been doing. On the swan population, I have heard that it has been growing and is quite large. Is there any talk of increasing those permits at all? Do you know population numbers for swans and what kind of situation we are in there?
Blair Stringham- I don't have the number here with me.
Joel Ferry- I have heard that they are eating themselves out of house and home on their nesting grounds. Have you seen that?

Blair Stringham- Swans have not really been the same as snow geese. Swans are increasing but are not to a point we are increasing permits yet. It may be a possibility in the future.
Joel Ferry- You don't know what our fly away populations are?
Blair Stringham- I don't, sorry about that.
Joel Ferry- Just interested in knowing, thank you.

Public Comment

Carl Ingwell- Utah Birders- Support the guidelines proposed tonight. Most notably the rule change of the 600 foot buffer along the causeway.

RAC Comment

R. Jefre Hicks- 600 foot buffer zone turned out to be an ok thing for everybody including the hunters and the birders. Thanks to DWR and everyone who worked on this to make a compromise.

Motion

Motion- Cowley- Recommend the Wildlife Board adopt the Waterfowl Guidebook and Rule R657-09.
Second- Wall
Motion Carries-Unanimous

Item 7. Great Salt Lake Waterfowl Management Area Management Plan
- Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator

See Handout

RAC Questions

James Gaskill- Do we have any data to support the widely held notion that youth hunts really do help recruit hunters? I am not bad mouthing youth hunts but I am wondering. Do we really have any data to back it up and say that we have more young hunters into the system because we let them hunt 2 weeks before the season started?
Blair Stringham- We don't have any real specific data indicating that. We can look at our hunter numbers. Overall, support for that program seems to be really high. Every year, you hear lots of stories of youth who have had amazing experiences on that youth hunt. It is something we continue to support even though we do not have any direct data to support it.
James Gaskill- I am not saying I don't support it, I do support it. I would like to see some data or something that would back it up because if we are just letting them hunt with their dads 2 weeks early, that is ok. I have another question about rest areas. This is something that has been on my mind for 30 or so years. Is there any thought to expanding rest areas outside of WMA's?
Blair Stringham- We have not really thought much about that. Largely because the Great Salt Lake itself is a huge rest area. It is not something we have really ever considered.

James Gaskill- That may be so but there is very little of the waterfowl use areas that isn't easily accessible to airboats and mud boats now days. It is my experience that whenever you drive your airboat through an area, the ducks are not able to rest very well. It is something I have thought about for a long time. Rest areas are probably the least thought about thing in the whole management process. I was devastated when they opened the rest area in Ogden Bay, for example. It is a question I think you ought to look at which is not a question, it is a statement.
John Blazzard- Curious as to what the long term waterfowl hunter numbers are? Are they increasing dramatically or going down?
Blair Stringham- It really depends on the year. It fluctuates and periods when we have really good duck numbers and lots of water, hunter numbers go up. Overall, I think in general, there has been a general decline in the hunting public. It is something that we want to maintain as many hunters as possible.

Public Comment

Jeff Richards- Utah Waterfowl Association- Would like to thank Justin Dolling. Very thorough and thought out. In support of this plan.

RAC Comments

R. Jefre Hicks- Mimic what Jeff Richards said. It is a pretty good guideline for keeping things on track in the waterfowl world.
Joel Ferry- As a waterfowler myself, it is neat to see this plan as a guideline so we have some direction we can head towards. In this overall plan, I think the utilization of conservation easements would be a good management tool on this habitat management section in addition to land acquisitions and working with adjacent landowners.

Motion

Motion- R. Jefre Hicks- Recommend the Director of the Division of Wildlife Resources to adopt the Great Salt Lake Waterfowl Management Area Management Plan.
Second-Ferry

Discussion on the Motion

Justin Dolling- Would like to provide some clarification with these management plans. They typically do not go through our Wildlife Board. They go directly to our director.
Robert Byrnes- The director will approve it or adopt it as your management plan. Is that correct?
Justin Dolling- Yes.

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Item 8. Pineview Reservoir Hunting Closure Proposal
- Becky Wood, Landowner

See Handout

Mitch Lane, Sergeant- The Division agrees whole heartedly with the value of Pineview and the wildlife that use it. I certainly sympathize with Becky. However, the Division does not support this proposal. Utah code 76-10-508 prohibits the discharge of any firearms within 600 feet of any buildings as well as other places. In this case, that would address Becky's concerns there. That covers that concern. There are areas at Pineview where hunting can occur safely and legally. I have either worked in Weber County or supervised for the past 16 years. To my recollection, we have not ever had any other complaints of hunting. It is a small group of hunters. We feel it is a short duration. Most of this hunting activity that occurs at Pineview is late season waterfowl hunting. There is no biological reason hunting should be closed at Pineview. The division is a little concerned with what closing an area like this could do as far as setting a precedent for other requests and proposals. I can assure Becky and all the residents in Huntsville, that the division of wildlife will respond to and handle complaints of violations. We work very closely with both the Weber County Sheriff's department and law enforcement up there.

RAC Questions

John Wall- Does Huntsville City have any firearm restrictions of any kind for the city?
Becky Wood- I don't think it is legal to discharge a firearm within city limits. As far as I know.
R. Jefre Hicks- She brought up the topic of skeet shooting. It seems to me that is almost a littering issue. Is that legal on the shores of Pineview Dam?
Mitch Lane- If that were prohibited, it would be by a forest service regulation. The area we are talking about is owned by the BOR and administered by the forest service. That would be a forest service regulation. I am not aware of a regulation that would prohibit that. Certainly, littering could be occurring. Even though the shooting of trap or skeet would be allowed, littering would not be.
Robert Byrnes- I'm sure you can inform us on the ability of the Wildlife Board to control the discharge of firearms which is outside of their purvey. Could you just state what you know as far as being law enforcement?
Mitch Lane- As to what the Wildlife Board can do?
Robert Byrnes- They cannot restrict the discharge of firearms.
Mitch Lane- That's correct.
Robert Byrnes- Except in hunting right? Skeet shooting is outside of their jurisdiction.
Mitch Lane- Yes.
Joel Ferry- As an officer, wouldn't this be more appropriately addressed with the forest service than in this body? Would they own the land?
Mitch Lane- Yes, it very well may be. We have been in communications, as well as Becky, with the forest service and they are aware of her concerns. I have visited the area with one representative from the forest service.
Joel Ferry- Okay.

Paul Cowley- I know Ms. Wood contacted me and we visited about this subject. That has been passed to our district ranger who has been meeting with the division. We are looking at some signage there that we could better inform folks about some of those concerns. At this point, when they had a meeting scheduled, that was the same time we had a fire break up in Logan and that meeting was cancelled. That needs to be rescheduled.
James Gaskill- Maybe we ought to boil it down to what this committee can do and what we can't do.
Robert Byrnes- We could make a recommendation to the Wildlife Board for a hunting closure. Or, we can make a recommendation to the Wildlife Board opposing a closure. It is an action item. When we get to that point, we will have to have a motion.
James Gaskill- We can't do anything with the noise restriction? We can't do anything with a shooting restriction?
Robert Byrnes- Correct.

Public Comment

Scott Anderson- I live in Bountiful and we have a rifle range on the northeast side of us. There is Farmington Bay 4 miles away and I can hear shooting from either of those.
Becky Wood- In the Huntsville river bottoms, there is signage posted by the forest service. It is just a small area. On the south side of the trail is a sign describing types of wildlife and birds to look for in the area. The very last paragraph of the sign says "don't make any loud or sudden noises if you want to maximize your viewing of the wildlife in this area." A loud and sudden noise is a description of a gunshot.
Jeff Adams- I live between Corinne and Brigham and hear gun shots. I feel this would be a negative trend to start.
Kevin Noorda- Oppose the closure of Pineview Reservoir.
Becky Wood- The Winters Grove nature trail is a designated nature trail. To me that says you go there to view nature. There are three signs along that trail calling it Winters Grove nature trail. The sign at the end says "be quiet when you come here so you can view nature". These are forest service signs.

RAC Comment

R. Jefre Hicks- I am in agreement with the DWR's position on this. I think it sets a dangerous precedent to areas that are legally open to hunting. Especially based on the proximity to houses that it is still legal. I would hesitate to go along with any proposal that would close legally open lands based on the discharge of firearms.
Bryce Thurgood- I hate to feel like we are teaming up on you. Banning gunshots for disturbing wildlife means we are going to have to ban people that drive around Pineview, boats in Pineview, cars or airplanes that fly over Pineview. You are going to hear deer hunting 5 miles up any hill around all of Huntsville. The cars are a lot louder on the freeway than the shotguns. I hope we totally avoid ever going down this road and not even give it a consideration.
Paul Cowley- Want to thank you for taking the time to come and express your opinion and voice that to us this evening. I think it is really commendable that you took the time to come and try to address an issue vs. letting it just fester and struggle with it. We are trying to work with the division to find out how we best balance out some of these needs.

Robert Byrnes- We respect private property rights and the property rights of land management agencies in Utah. Currently, you don't have a recommendation in favor of this from the agency that basically controls this property. We can't do anything about people just discharging weapons that are not engaged in hunting. It is outside of the capacity we are granted by the legislature. They hold that very tightly in their hand as far as shooting that is not involved in hunting. I'm glad that you came out and made your presentation and became involved in the process. We need more people to be involved in the process of managing wildlife in Utah.

Motion

Motion- Gaskill- Recommend the Wildlife Board not adopt the Hunting Closure Proposal.
Second- Van Tassell

Discussion on the Motion

Bruce Sillitoe- I am inclined to withdraw from this particular issue because it appears to be very direct at forest service lands.
James Gaskill- That is certainly something you can do. I think that what we can do, however, is we can recommend that there be a hunting closure or recommend that there not be a hunting closure. Forest Service can do what they want to do regardless of what we do. You are welcome to excuse yourself from the discussion but I don't think at this point we have encouraged the Forest Service to do anything. We can only deal with strictly hunting and not with land use in any other way.
Bruce Sillitoe- Thank you, that actually helps out a lot. We are recommending maintaining the management of wildlife as the DWR has done in the past.
Robert Byrnes- Are you still going to want to recues yourself.
Bruce Sillitoe- I will go ahead and vote.

Motion Carries- Unanimous

Robert Byrnes- Thank you Becky for coming out. You will still be on the Wildlife Boards agenda.

Other Business

Item 9. Coyote Predator Control Program
- John Shivik, Mammals Coordinator

Informational Only

RAC Questions

R. Jefre Hicks- To monitor this, I assume it will take more man hours and possibly some more employees. The DWR will have to foot that bill or will that be money allocated by the legislature?

John Shivik- It is a mix. We try to keep that $500,000 for the intent of contracts with the general public. We are not hiring gobs of people to do this. This is why it has been a little bit more difficult. Logistically, what you are going to see is not some full time person sitting at an empty desk all day. It is set up in each region to try and different days open. We will use people, resources and time and juggle them around.
R. Jefre Hicks- Are there any closed areas? I guess this is the bounty program right?
John Shivik- It is more or an incentive program.
R. Jefre Hicks- Call is what you will.
John Shivik- Everybody has to follow the furbearer guidebook. In terms of where you can go and what you can do, you have to follow all of the ordinances and standard type rules. You don't get any right to go on tribal lands or parks or anything like that.
R. Jefre Hicks- Oquirrh land is targeted to mule deer, right? So, you pay people to hit them in targeted areas. Are those public or private lands? Are we paying people to clean out coyotes out of someone's private property? Just need some clarification.
John Shivik- It is a really unique situation for the division because we don't manage coyotes. It is not one of our species. We don't manage the lands, per say, that way either. We are trying to get people to focus on the areas where mule deer, especially fawning grounds and areas where deer populations can be impacted by coyote predation is how the law is written. We don't make any differentiation between private or public land although we have had some people call checking with the walk in access program to ask if they can put coyote on their list for reasons to let people on private land. That has happened but we are just saying this is about protecting mule deer.
John Wall- I think coyote control is a good thing but I think that high of a bounty will bring misinformation. People are going to come from out of states and I don't know how you can track that. A coyote has no boundary, especially in the winter.
John Shivik- We are just following what we are instructed to do. People are already complaining about locations and things. WE have to balance keeping people honest and helping deer against putting up road blocks for people. I think we have come up with a good thing in between where people have to set their location and sign a paper saying they removed coyotes from these locations. If they are willing to put their name to a piece of paper, that is the best we can do.
James Gaskill- Tell me about the budget for this. The $5 dollar additional fee is suppose to fund this entire program or is that just going to fund the bounty and the hiring of the agents and you are expected, in house, fund the rest of it?
John Shivik- The $5 dollar fee is what is going to end up with Wildlife Services. The $500,000 that is going to fund this program is general fund money.
James Gaskill- The legislature appropriated half a million dollars for the entire program or just for the bounty program.
John Shivik- For the incentive program. It is not pure bounty because we are recommending and focusing in specific areas. We are trying to make it for the benefit of mule deer as much as possible. That is $500,000 dollars of general fund. We are trying to follow the spirit of it and not just hire a bunch of people. I have been working with supervisors to make this happen without hiring. Most of that $500,000 will go right back into actual work and reimbursements.
James Gaskill- I would be very upset if you take a fishery biologist off his job to run this program, or any other biologist, or even law enforcement. It seems to me that if the legislature

wants to kill coyotes, they ought to give you enough money to do it and not just enough money to pay the bounty.
John Shivik- I acknowledge what you are saying and from the way we formed this program, it is a lot to do very quickly and we are balancing competing interests. We've got a really clear mandate in terms of this legislation. We are trying to gather the information needed to asses it and see if it is working.
James Gaskill- I understand that and applaud that. I am pleased with this presentation, just not necessarily pleased with the whole program.
Justin Dolling- We have a part time person involved in the depredation nuisance program so we took that part time position and then matched it with the money that is coming out of the two bills to form a full time position. Essentially, it is going to help our region from the standpoint that we will be able to carve the region in half and have two full time people dealing with depredation and nuisance as well as coyote check in type procedures. Not all the money that comes from the 2 bills will go to bounty. There is an education component. There is a personnel component and then there is a bounty component.
James Gaskill- That helps but my statement was simply that if they mandate something for you to do, the legislature ought to pay for it. It's not like you have pockets of money hidden you can pull out when you want to.
Robert Byrnes- Especially for your contractors, are you checking that they are eligible to possess a firearm? Just like you do when you buy a hunting license.
John Shivik- The way it is currently set up, if someone turns in a coyote they could hit it with a car. We are reimbursing for those who turn in coyotes. With traps and the furbearer regulations, you have to have an ID number fixed to that trap. There is a fee there with giving people those. As far as other stuff, it is going to have to be up to local ordinances. Currently, it is not set up in the registration to check for that.
Robert Byrnes- A felon could posses a gun illegally, go out and kill coyotes and come to you to get money.
John Shivik- That is something I think we will look into.
Robert Byrnes- Think about it.
John Shivik- Thank you.
Bryce Thurgood- Let's give the felons a break and let them shoot coyotes. Nothing else, but let's let them shoot coyotes.
R. Jefre Hicks- It appears as if we are somewhat stuck with this now. Obviously this had to go through a subcommittee and the legislature. What was the DWR's position on these two bills that spends all this tax money?
John Shivik- This was passed. These are our orders and it is what we are going to do.
R. Jefre Hicks- Was anyone there representing the DWR on the subcommittee that recommend this go to a full vote? If so, was it a favorable recommendation for this?
John Shivik- You are now at levels above me.
Justin Dolling- I don't know the answer to that question. There were two bills that went through the process and passed. I heard our director say that he got a text saying the bills are dead. Two minutes later, he got a text saying they passed. I don't have a lot of detail in the level of involvement we had in crafting those bills or even commenting on those bills.
R. Jefre Hicks- I just wanted to know how the DWR was involved in crafting or what say they had in it?

John Wall- As far as I can remember, I took the test online and there is something in there that requires you to the same circumstances if you are buying a hunting license. You have to answer yes or no saying you are legally able to do that.
John Blazzard- I was involved in the law getting passed to the legislature. We were trying to funnel money into Wildlife Services which the $5 dollar thing did. If Wildlife Services can take care of more coyotes out of a helicopter or an airplane in a day than you can trap in a lifetime. The farm bureau and a lot of ranches and livestock folk were pushing hard for this thing too. I'm sure we were thinking a whole lot more of the livestock than the deer. Hopefully, it will help us all.

Item 10. Cougar Guidebook & Rules Consideration of Issues
Chet Young- Utah Houndsmen Association

Informational Only.

Chet Young- RAC members given a list. Amendments made to the cougar management program. Numbers are not adding up. Would like to ask the division to look at the numbers. Would like to see the voluntary cougar orientation course be mandatory. Random pursuit survey should be mandatory. On the Monroe, we would like to see it illegal to harvest a collared female. Would like GPS coordinates on location of all cougars harvested.

RAC Questions

John Blazzard- How often would you like the pursuit permits to report?
Chet Young- Yearly. Right now, it is a random survey.
John Blazzard- It seems to me the division ought to generate that because there are a lot of houndsmen that would forget to do those kinds of things. It would be easy to forget unless it was mailed to you.
Chet Young- I don't know the full circumstances of how to set it up.
James Gaskill- The division does a phone survey is that correct? Statistically, it is valid as far as the mathematicians are concerned. All this would do is be additional. It seems to me that if we have a statistically valid survey, there is not much more to be gained from that survey. I don't mind filling out surveys myself but there would certainly be an additional cost to do that. You would have to implement a cost if they didn't do it. Is that going to make it an efficient mandatory survey? I'm not saying it's not a good idea, I'm just wondering if you have considered all of the ramifications?
Joel Ferry- Don't they do a survey on the swans every year if you draw? If you don't fill it out, you are left out for two years. You cannot apply for two years. Every tag holder on swans has to do it.
James Gaskill- I have been in other states where they have done it with turkeys and all kinds of things. I'm not sure it is cost effective.
Chet Young- This stems back from 4 years ago. I did a survey that somewhat replicated the divisions survey and asked everybody at our bank to fill it out. The numbers were so far off, it was comparing apples to oranges. I'm not saying which one is right and which one is wrong. I just feel if there is a way to get better numbers, it would be nice.

James Gaskill- I appreciate your passion for your sport and that you have taken the time to come up with these recommendations. I really do think that it is a valuable contribution.
Joel Ferry- When the cougar thing came up, there were some changes made from the previous year when we opted this long term plan. I made the comment that if we are bringing this up, something is not right within that management plan if we are having to change, adjust and modify it. It has been 3 months since we have looked at cougars are you are already wanting to make changes to it. I don't know why this was not brought up 3 months ago. Personally, I am disinclined to make any changes because we had the opportunity to evaluate it then and here we are now. What if something changes in the next 6 months, do you want to come back and do it again?
Chet Young- This is the same complaint today as what I had when this was originally made.
Joel Ferry- The houndsmen bring the concerns that they are overharvesting in certain areas. We get the information from the DWR that we go off of.
Chet Young- To clarify, when I was talking numbers, I was not asking for any changes be made to the management plan itself. I was asking if we are offering 12 tags on a unit. The average amount of cats over a 3 year cycle at 3.66 cats. I was asking for maybe an evaluation at the division's discretion and say we might be a little bit out so that after we go through the 3 year cycle, our numbers are in line. Obviously, this new plan is a learning process. If there is something that can better the process without taking away is all I am asking for. No change to the plan.
R. Jefre Hicks- If people had to turn in their GPS coordinates every time they harvested an animal, would that really help? Would that give you some good data that you do not have now?
John Shivik- This process has been ongoing in terms of communication of the houndsmen. The GPS and training, are a lot of good ideas. What these guys are proposed through all 5 RACS now, I think GPS could be really useful. This is a good time for us to talk because this next round, a year from now, I will be making new recommendations and I think we will have some good input from the houndsmen and you might see some of these ideas in the next round of recommendations. There are pros and cons to all of these things. It will just take some time to work out the cost of GPS locations and full surveys.

Meeting Ends: 8:28 p.m.