

BAGGS MULE DEER WORKING GROUP SECOND MEETING

BAGGS, WY OCTOBER 9, 2014

The second organizational meeting of the Baggs Mule Deer Herd Working Group (BMDHWG) took place on October 9, 2014 at the Rawlins BLM Office. The following people attended:

Bo Stocks, Outfitter and Guide
Patty Waldron, Baggs resident and hunter
Andy Warren, BLM
Frank Blomquist, BLM
Jim Espy, landowner public representative
Jen Lamb, the Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Larry Hicks, Little Snake Conservation District
Darby Finley, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Joshua Coursey and Joey Faigle from Muley Fanatic Foundation (MFF)
Ed Arnett, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Chris Herold, Warren Resources, industry representative
Jim Ainsworth, Rawlins resident, hunter, and hunter education instructor
Reg Rothwell, Wyoming Wildlife Federation Board Member
Justin Clapp, Large Carnivore Biologist with WGFD
Jennifer Fleuret, public at large
Brady Frude, public at large
Greg Hiatt, WGFD
Kim Olson, WGFD
Tony Mong, WGFD
Lucy Diggins-Wold, facilitator and chief note taker

Previous meeting and minutes review:

The group introduced themselves and a new chairperson was appointed to lead the BMDHWG-Bo Stocks. Thank you, Bo! There were no corrections or additions to August meeting minutes.

Charter

- There was a request for more clarification from Frank Blomquist pertaining to the groups' purpose with reference to the creation of a habitat mitigation bank. Tony explained the group will be prioritizing areas, working with partners and or industry to gather the money to implement habitat management projects on-the-ground. Ed Arnett commented that the "bank" could be used for habitat management and mitigation, not just for habitat mitigation.
- Larry Hicks reminded the group that they have to be very focused as to what they want to accomplish with our habitat assessments with reference to previous efforts by the Platte Valley Mule Deer Working Group.
- Frank and Larry both reiterated that the group should assess current habitat conditions and see what work efforts have already been done on crucial winter ranges; mix new data with old data.
- Efforts should also be made to assess habitat conditions post treatments.
- Tony clarified the role of the group when it comes to developing the habitat management plan (the second purpose of the working group) and that later on in the process (February) the group

will really be “drilling down to what we are going to focus our efforts on.” The charter will be left open-ended to we don’t get bogged down now when we will be getting more specific and more focused further along in the process.

- Ed said the general habitat assessment is just a starting point and that the group can revisit the assessment in February when there are specific treatments to assess.

Hunting Season Review

Baggs Game Warden Kim Olson gave a quick review of the Baggs mule deer hunting season thus far. Kim said her assessment was that it was good, there were a lot of younger age bucks and some nice bucks harvested. People were mostly happy and seeing lots of does and fawns; deer she saw had ample fat reserves and there was very little doe harvest. Kim also said the deer opener was not as busy as it usually is and maybe it was because it opened on a Wednesday. The hunters were more spread out, with more hunters on the weekend, then back to not so many on Monday. There were lots of deer hunting camps in the Sandhills, Battle Mountain area, and north of Dixon and Savery; in the sagebrush and foothill country and not so much on the Forest.

Bo said he thinks the deer numbers might be up, but the numbers are not where [as high] they should be.

Patty said of her observations of the deer season thus far was that she saw younger bucks being harvested. Patty also talked to hunters who said they just wanted to get a deer, any deer, and not necessarily a trophy buck. Patty also had nonresident hunters ask her if residents got to kill more than one mule deer. Some nonresident hunters were under that misconception.

Chris said hunters are not utilizing the whole mule deer hunt area.

Brady asked the group to remember that there are other hunt areas besides 82 that make up the herd. Tony reiterated that is true, however, hunt area 82 is a huge portion of the Baggs deer herd. (90%)

North American Model of Wildlife Management

The group watched the presentation by Boone and Crocket (*Opportunity for All*) with Shane Mahoney as narrator to get a background for the NA Model because it is the seven guiding principles we use to manage game.

Herd Unit Information Presentation

Tony presented the herd unit information for Wyoming and Darby (Co Parks and Wildlife) presented herd unit information from Wyoming mule deer interchange with Colorado deer south of the Wyoming border.

- At the August meeting the group asked for information on a variety of topics. Tony addressed most of those information requests. Thanks, Tony! The zoning information was one area where more information could be gathered. Darby’s presentation also addressed the need for more information on Colorado mule deer management.
- Maybe the group can help collar deer in December?

- (After looking at land ownership within the Baggs Mule deer herd) Tony reminded the group that there is a tremendous amount of opportunity to work with private landowners on habitat projects on winter ranges.
- Tony will look at the % of buck harvest in relation to road densities and stop-over sites.
- Larry asked Tony for clarification as far as what direction the WGFD administration has provided him on what or how the group should proceed. Tony assured the group that the group is encouraged to think and try anything they think will be of benefit to mule deer and the “stars are the limit.”

- **ACTION: Tony** will get a hard copy (PDF file, etc.) of his herd unit presentation to group members to review. There were a lot of graphs and a tremendous amount of information that needs to be digested by the group. (Like drinking from a fire hose.)
- **ACTION: Tony** has some research White Papers on a variety of topics and if you want a copy please let him know.
- **ACTION: Bo**, approve minutes to be distributed to the group. Lucy, send those out and record any edits and changes before next meeting.
- **ACTION: Bo, Tony and Lucy** work up an agenda. Lucy, distribute a news release out about the November 3 meeting in Baggs.

Tony clarified the impetus for this working group one more time and thanked everyone for their time.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35. The next meeting will take place 5:30 p.m., Monday, November 3, at the Baggs Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy Diggins-Wold