

RAWLINS, WYOMING JULY 10, 2014

14 members of the public attended the BMDH meeting in Rawlins. Game and Fish personnel included Steve DeCecco, Daryl Lutz, Kim Olson, Brady Frude, Tony Mong, Ian Tator, Katie Cheesbrough and Lucy Diggins-Wold. After a presentation of the process, herd update, and how the working group will be chosen, the group was split into two breakout groups and their responses were recorded. The question posed to the group was: **Based on your observations and experiences what are some issues (I) affecting the BMDH and what are some of your suggestions for solutions (S) for these issues? *All of the groups' comments were recorded and each group was asked to rank their top three issues. The order of the issues is not in order of importance. Additionally, many issues were lumped together as they are related.**

I=issues and S=solutions

GROUP 1

Top Three Issues:

1. Lack of Coordination
2. Competing multiple land uses
3. Poor habitat quality

I= Different missions for each agency (land managers) resulting in lack of coordination and lack of collaboration/threshold management

S= Formalized agreements with “teeth”

I= State population objectives are not being discussed or addressed by other agencies

S= Better and more coordination

I= Lack of hunter success/harvest survey information; poor return on hunter harvest surveys

S= Implement mandatory reporting or else you don't get to buy a hunting license; Oregon does this

I= USFS not emphasizing habitat treatments on summer range-actually, not implementing any projects

S= Public pressure to do something meaningful and better coordination between agencies

I= Drought; climate changes have resulted in poor forage base and lack of available water

S= Targeted habitat improvement treatment projects

S= Shift habitat improvement focus to higher elevations

I= Short term vision and solutions

S= Long term vision and solutions

I= Beetle killed forests results in limited habitat access and limited hunter access as well as limited or changing wildlife movements

S= Better, proactive forest management

I= lack of or poor hunt area management; crowding, limited access, lack of hunting opportunities

S= Reevaluate hunt area management

S= Offer different opportunities, like primitive hunt option, or hunters have to choose a week to hunt (offer four weeks of hunting) like Colorado does

I= Juniper encroachments

S= More targeted juniper removal

I= Energy development causing poor habitat quality, low mule deer numbers, fragmentation

S= Better road and travel management

S= Better and more proactive planning

S= Identify crucial areas for wildlife and avoid disturbance in these crucial wildlife areas

S= identify stopover habitats and reduce or limit disturbances in these areas

S= Reevaluate recommendations with current data using adaptive management measures; there have been more recent wildlife studies that have shed new light on mule deer movements and responses to human disturbances so use that new data.

S= Identify mitigations

I= Weather: there are data gaps in how animals move in response to weather and climatic changes.

S= More and better data on weather and how it affects mule deer movements/behavior

I= elk numbers increasing in areas that used to hold mule deer; competition and resource overlap

S= reevaluate the population objective

I= Hunter crowding versus Hunter recruitment and retention

S= none offered

GROUP 2

Top Three Issues:

1. I=ORV misuse negatively impacting hunt quality and increasing mule deer stress

S= reduce ORV use

2. I=Declining habitat condition/quality and fragmentation

S= More habitat work

S= Mitigation for energy development

I= Crucial winter range is not identified or protected in Colorado

S= Invite Colorado BLM to be a member of the working group

3. I=Predation

S= (Surgically-be more precise and targeted) remove predators

S= More quality/targeted habitat improvement projects that benefit mule deer

I= negative impacts from wind energy

S= mitigation

I= Disruption of the elk rutting season

S= Eliminate the late November and December elk hunting seasons

I= Limited quota hunting seasons elsewhere in the region are causing hunter crowding, lack of hunter recruitment and lack of opportunity

S= Limited Quota

I= G&F Commission hunting regulations are not flexible enough to address changing circumstances

S= Harvest by quota

I= Shed antler hunters causing stress to mule deer

S= SW restriction

S= Later season

I= Hunters have unrealistic expectations

S= Increased awareness and education, especially with fawn productivity and survival

I= Mule deer nutrition poor in summer and fall habitats

S= Improve the habitat conditions, including transitional ranges

I= Urban mule deer getting too aggressive

S= Translocation

I= Competition for resources between elk and mule deer

S= Manage elk herd to objective

S= adjust the archery season

I= Decrease in hunter access with decrease in hunter density

S= Limited Quota hunting season

S= Choose your method; firearms or archery

I= Significant decline in mule deer numbers in the Sandhills

S= research and find out what caused the mule deer numbers to decline