

## **Bates Hole Mule Deer Working Group Meeting**

### **September 4, 2014, 6:00pm**

**Members Present:** Paul Threlkeld, Jeff Muratore, Pete Garrett, Steve Garrett, Brian Scott, Miles Bundy, Dusty Porter, Rhen Etzelmiller, Ryan Kaiser

**WGFD Staff:** Matt Withroder, Justin Binfet, Heather O'Brien

**Not Present:** Randy Morrison, Jim Wetzell, Chris Mikels

- 1) Justin Binfet: Update/overview of past meeting's minutes and general background for new members present (Brian Scott, Ryan Kaiser).
- 2) Review and approval of mission statement
  - a. Jeff Muratore came up with a mission statement last meeting; Justin Binfet added some language to that statement and two different mission statements were posed for the group to look at, add to, discuss and approve.
  - b. Group discussed a couple of language options and agreed upon the following mission statement:

***"It is the mission of Area 66 Mule Deer Working Group to provide recommendations through discussion, public forum, and science-based information, to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to manage and improve mule deer populations and habitat in Area 66 for sustainable hunting opportunity into the future."***

- 3) Discussion of why the group exists, if the group will truly provide input that is meaningful and not a waste of time.
- 4) Dusty Porter: presented the goals of the group and put them up for discussion. Discussed the potential for three or more public meetings with topics of education, problems/solutions, and group recommendations.

Finalized Goals of the Group:

- Understand critical issues that mule deer are facing
- Use various avenues to gather input from the public
- Develop recommendations to WGFD on the future management of the herd
- Develop recommendations to address factors influencing mule deer to ultimately improve habitats and the population
- Maintain an engaged group of stakeholders to continue future support of mule deer

Looking at the first public meeting & possible topics to cover: What do we hope to accomplish and relay to the public with the first meeting?

- Do we educate the public and provide history, data, survey info first?

- Do we have an open forum discussion first to gauge public mindsets and follow up after that with the appropriate information to fill in gaps?
- Agreement from the group: half a meeting with background/educational material, and half a meeting with an open forum discussion facilitating public input
- Will plan to have the first public meeting the first week of December – exact date to be determined via doodle poll . Location to be determined – possibly off-site from the game and fish office (e.g. library meeting room).
- Make a direct effort to invite our local Game and Fish commissioners to attend meetings; especially public ones (Richard Klouda and/or Keith Culver)

#### Disseminating information to Area 66 Hunters to advertise the first meeting

- Fliers or business cards with the name of the group, hand out fliers/cards during hunting season (WGFD field staff), the Facebook group website, elsewhere? Sportsman's Warehouse? Front counter at WGFD Office?
- Brian may be able to advertise the first meeting on K2 Radio
- Janet will talk to news channels and put releases out to newspapers and listing in the "Open Spaces" section of the Tribune.

#### Facebook Page

- Jeff et al set it up already – group page is currently closed until we agree upon some items during this meeting
- Logo that Janet had done was presented and approved by all – need to make this the banner image for the discussion group. Group also wanted to integrate the WGFD logo. Heather will relay this to Janet and get the new logo up as soon as it is finished (within a few days to a week).
- Group agreed that when we post our poll questions on the group that it helps to have an interesting photo/graphic, a background sentence or two, and then the question for the public to respond to.
- Mission statement will be pinned to the top of the group as well

#### Review of Questions posed by the group:

- Ask a general questions first to pique interest and generate input and discussion
- Ask questions next on specific topics that have been pinpointed by the group as important to mule deer management in Area 66.
- Pose some background information and/or context along with a question to set the stage
- Ask questions on a set schedule, asked by a set person (every 3-4 days)
  - Brian Scott will take charge of posting questions
  - Page has been made live as of the end of our meeting

One more meeting for the group before we meet with the public?

- Yes - group agreed on one short meeting before our December public meeting
- Get back at end of November/Beginning of December and then have a public meeting
- Set up a doodle poll for the dates of both meetings (O'Brien/Binfet)

Rhen's modified question to add to the bunch: *What do you believe is better to maintain and protect the future of our hunting heritage, limited quota hunting management, or general license hunting management, and why?*

- Group members should continue to consider and submit new questions to be posted on the facebook discussion page.

Meeting Adjourned 8:15pm.