

Platte Valley Habitat Partnership Plan

Draft Outline March 12, 2013

Executive Summary

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Chapter 1: Introduction

- Beginning of the Platte Valley Habitat Partnership
 - Modeled after UP plan

- **Geographic Area**
 - Land Ownership and Management
 - Existing Land Use Policies

- **Vision, Goals and Objectives**
 - Vision

The Platte Valley Habitat Partnership considers the quality and quantity of the mule deer population in the Platte Valley important to its landscape and communities to preserve biodiversity, economic, recreational, cultural, and aesthetic values.

 - Goal

The Platte Valley Habitat Partnership's goal is to improve wildlife habitat with emphasis on sustainable mule deer populations.

 - Objective and Criteria 1: Biodiversity Value of the Mule Deer Herd
 - Objective 1: To improve habitat conditions to increase the population size and health of mule deer

Proposed Criteria:

 - Monitor species diversity of flora
 - Age Class Diversity of Shrubs
 - Browse Class
 - Shrub and herbaceous productivity
 - # of acres treated
 - Shrub recruitment
 - Pregnancy rates of mule deer (WGFD)
 - Fat reserves of mule deer (WGFD)
 - Population #'s of mule deer (WGFD)
 - Doe-fawn ratios (WGFD)
 - Mortality ratios (WGFD)

○ Objective and Criteria 2: Economic Value of the Mule Deer

- Objective 2: To enhance economic benefits to landowners, communities and dependent interests by improving habitat to increase the population size and health of mule deer.

Proposed Criteria:

- # of hunters and other mule deer related recreationists (work with WGFD)
- Outfitter revenues (work with Chamber)
- Hospitality revenues (work with Chamber)
- Livestock AUM's (work with Conservation District)
- # of license applicants (work with WGFD)

○ Objective and Criteria 3: Recreational Value of the Mule Deer Herd

- Objective 3: To enhance recreational benefits by improving habitat to increase the population size and health of mule deer

Proposed Criteria:

- Hunter Satisfaction Surveys (WGFD)
- Revenue
- Visitor Surveys (USFS)
- Field personnel contacts (BLM and USFS)
- Increase in political support
- Increase in support from more groups and funders (attendance and money)
- Types of Chamber of Commerce Requests (Chamber)

○ Objective and Criteria 4: Cultural and Aesthetic Value of the Mule Deer Herd

- Objective 4: To maintain the character of the Platte Valley landscape, culture, and aesthetics by improving habitat to increase the population size and health of mule deer.

Proposed Criteria:

- Modify existing USFS visitor use surveys to address C and A values
- Modify WGFD hunter satisfaction surveys to address C and A values
- Look at BLM public perception surveys
- Develop Community Survey for Platte Valley, baseline and changes
- Develop landowner survey
- Look at WGFD's PVMDI survey

○ Objective and Criteria 5: Mission Compatibility for State and Federal Agencies

- Objective 5: To facilitate state and federal agencies to serve their constituents in a manner compatible with their missions by working to improve habitat for mule deer and other species and purposes.

Proposed Criteria:

- Number of projects that cross ownership and jurisdictional boundaries
- Mix of funding to complete projects

Chapter 2: Collaborative Process

- Interests and Objectives
- Partners
- Decision Making Process
- Process

Chapter 3: Factors Affecting Mule Deer Habitat (Presentations from Collaborative Learning)

- Mule Deer Ecology
- Mule Deer Habitat Requirements

Chapter 4: Biological Objective Implementation/Strategies and Monitoring (Objective 1)

- Identify Focus Areas in Platte Valley (Separated into Mule Deer Seasonal Ranges/treatment areas)
 - Summer Range
 - Identify geographic area
 - Landownership
 - Specific habitat types that comprise summer range
 - Identify desired conditions for summer range
 - Increase in forb cover and or diversity
 - Increase in aspen regeneration
 - Improved riparian condition
 - Within a shrub community establish a diversity of shrub size, age, species, and density
 - Within all vegetation communities establish a diversity of size, age, species, and density
 - Decreased animal barriers
 - Promote the development of native shrubs and herbaceous cover in beetle kill lodgepole stands
 - Minimize/decrease invasive species
- Transitional Range
 - Identify geographic area
 - Landownership
 - Specific habitat types that comprise transitional range
 - Identify desired conditions for transitional range
 - Increase in forb cover
 - Increase in aspen regeneration
 - Improved riparian veg condition
 - Scale of treatment is adequate size to minimize impact of grazing ungulates on shrub communities
 - Within a shrub community establish a diversity of shrub size, age, species, and density
 - Within all vegetation communities establish a diversity of size, age, species, and density
 - Decreased animal barriers (movement)
 - Minimize/decrease invasive species
 - Increase shrub nutritive quality for mule deer

- Promote the development of native shrubs and herbaceous cover in beetle kill lodgepole stands
 - Winter Range
 - Identify geographic area
 - Landownership
 - Specific habitat types that comprise transitional range
 - Identify desired conditions for winter range
 - Manage motorized/human disturbance
 - Minimize/decrease invasive species
 - Scale of treatment is adequate size to minimize impact of grazing ungulates on shrub communities
 - Within a shrub community establish a diversity of shrub size, age, species, and density
 - Increase in aspen regeneration
 - Improved riparian condition
 - Increase in shrub nutritive quality for mule deer
 - Decrease animal barriers
- Identify Monitoring Techniques for desired conditions
 - Reference an appendix for specific monitoring methods and data sheets Scale of treatment
- Identify Past and Current Habitat Projects in Platte Valley
 - Reference Maps
 - BLM narrative
 - FS narrative
 - WGFD narrative
 - Private Lands narrative
- Future Projects in the Platte Valley
 - Identify planned projects
 - Reference future project map
- Available Methods and Tools to Accomplish Objectives (originally Chapter 4)
 - Mechanical Methods
 - Disks and Plows
 - Anchor Chains and Cables
 - Roller Chopping
 - Hydro-ax
 - Dixie Harrow
 - Brush Mowing
 - Timber Harvest
 - Commercial Logging
 - Thinning operations
 - Lop and scatter

- Mastication/chipping
 - Jack-straw
- Aspen thinning
- Chemical Treatments
 - Teburthiuron (Spike)
 - Imazapic (Plateau)
- Seeding/Planting
 - Ground disturbance/prepare seedbed
 - Native vs non-native seeding mixtures
- Fence Management
 - Wildlife friendly fence conversions
- Water Development
 - Spring Developments
 - Protection of Riparian Areas
- Prescribed Fire
 - Timing
 - Vegetation Response
- Prescribed Grazing
 - Stocking rate, timing, frequency, intensity
 - Specific for cheatgrass control
 - Specific for dispersing and planting seed by trampling
- Biological Control for weed management
 - Insects to control musk thistle
- Travel Management
 - Reclaiming roads and trails
- Open Space Conservation/Preservation
- Conservation Easements to protect important private lands

Chapter 5: Social and Organizational Objectives (Objectives 2-5)

- Interests
- Objectives
- Monitoring

Chapter 6: Project Funding, Selection and Implementation Criteria

- Available Funding Sources
 - Wyoming Game and Fish Commission Funding
 - Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resource Trust Funding
 - Wyoming Wildlife-The Foundation Funding
 - Other Available Funding Sources
- Project Selection Process
- Project Implementation

Chapter 7: Adaptive Management

- Adaptive Management Process
- 10-year schedule

Acknowledgements

Literature Cited

Resource Links

Appendices