Meeting Objectives

1. Game and Fish Staff Present Main Themes in Panel Discussions
2. Public Questions and Answer opportunity for Panels
3. Small group break outs to discuss solutions

Group 1 – Daryl Lutz, Facilitator
- * RAC commission, similar to Utah for mule deer projects
- Reestablish key vegetation species on fall and winter ranges
- Increase cooperation with Federal land managers and grazing permittees
  - Appoint a project marketer
  - Encourage forage reserves
- Increase emphasis on reclamation and rehab
- Move three acre recommendation to policy through planning –recommendation that attendees had heard about: G&F made the recommendation of having oil and gas companies mitigate three acres of mule deer habitat for every one acre disturbed by activities.
  - Emphasis on cooperation with industry
- Do prescribed burns
- Increase emphasis on and don’t forget the importance of summer and fall ranges

Population Management
- ***Mandatory Harvest reporting
- * Increase funding for tooth age data
  - And general data collection
    - Radio Collars
    - More ground counts
- **Emphasis on “Quality of the Hunt”
  - Hunter density – common opener in Reg G and 135
  - Split seasons and licenses specific to the split
  - Select your weapon
  - Make the season longer
  - Common closure date
  - ATV abuse
  - Don’t reduce current access
  - Need ore enforcement
  - Hunter accountability/responsibility
  - More education
  - Support state of trails
• Larger WGFD enforcement of effort/resources
  o Increase check stations – statewide scheduling on enforcement

Predators
• *Bounty on coyotes - $ from partners energy
• Wolves included
• Emphasis on state predators stamp
• Continued domestic pets/animals
• Increase quotas on lions and bears to benefit mule deer
• Consider emergency feeding

Partnerships
• County development
• County mule deer working groups
• Interface with Lincoln/Sublette USFS RAC apply for projects
• Increase involvement in state legislature
• Increase involvement with Federal Representatives
• *Improve partnerships with oil and gas industry
• * Improve/create partnership with Union Pacific

Group 2 – Jessica Clement, Facilitator

1. Habitat Improvements
• * Better winter range
• * Restore less optimum crucial winter range to mimic optimum winter range – for example spike treatments on sagebrush while considering sage grouse needs, burning, mowing and seeding
• Reduce overgrazing, reduce competition where necessary between cattle, sheep and deer.
• Consider cyclical nature of growth and seasons in management decisions
• Summer, fall ranges need habitat improved through fire and better management

2. Habitat Protection
• Aggressive predation management
• Pursue partnership with railroads to protect more deer
• Work with Wyoming Stockgrowers Land Trust on conservation easements
• *Manage ATV and motorized use
• * Human presence generally during critical times needs to be minimized. For example antler hunting, coyote hunting, etc.

3. Population Management
• Studies need to be improved, more $ needs to be invested in sampling process ie flight time
  o Also use hand count on population estimates
• Survey hunters and outfitters
• * Mandatory reporting vs. sampling
• *Mandatory checking of harvest
4. Limiting Factors
- * More Hunting season road closures
- * More road closures for fawning periods
- * Weed control before it gets worse

5. Research
- Mandatory checking
- Do research to explore Desert Land and livestock
- What are we losing fawns to, eg high mountain and river valley differences
- Comprehensive study of limiting factors affecting Wyoming Range deer herd

6. Quality of the Hunt
- * Standardize opening (and closing?) dates for Western Wyoming
- Limited quota hunting licenses for residents
- * Choose your weapon – archery, muzzleloaders, rifles all separate seasons
- Split up into more hunt areas for Region G
- Longer seasons to spread out hunter pressure
- * Point restriction

7. Partnerships – All *
- Partnerships with oil and Gas operations
- BLM habitat restoration
- Wyoming Stockgrowers Conservation Land Trust conservation easements
- Keep USFS and BLM partnerships going with WYGFD
- Partnerships between sportsmen, WYGFD, BLIM, USFS and anyone else to do small treatments

Group 3 – Mark Gocke, Facilitator

Habitat
- Find alternative sources of funding, ie partner with other environmental groups
- Sportsmen need to voice concerns with the legislature, especially with regard to energy development, and including Federal planning processes and reclamation of disturbed areas.
- Current habitat conditions will not support 50,000 deer. Habitat data supports that.

Population Management
- Support the lower non-resident quotas
- Time to publically reevaluate the population objective
- Force hunters to pick their hunt area or region, like non-residents do and /or standard opening dates throughout

Partnerships
- Game and Fish needs to carry a bigger stick with the Federal land managers (eg reclamation, grazing and predator control)
Can Game and Fish inform sportsmen of upcoming public involvement opportunities on federal land or otherwise? Utilize newspapers and Wyoming Wildlife Magazine or a brochure to explain how sportsmen can get involved.

Group 4 – Susan Boston, Facilitator

Presentation Notes
1. Sustainability—manage mule deer to sustainable numbers
2. Habitat- improve using burns, timber sales, spike
3. Partnerships – outfitters & guides – public issue with drop camps in the backcountry. Perception of more outfitters using drop camps, but used by “do it yourselves”

Issues/Solutions
- Can we get to the objective – do we have the habitat to get to and sustain 50,000
  o Maintain 50,000 with an “interim” goal of 35,000
  o With current Winter Range habitat conditions 50,000 not sustainable
  o Black bear impacts on mule deer
  o Habitat improvements – do not shorten seasons (short seasons kill more deer)
  o Population objective should be high
  o Habitat is a key issue – healthy habitat will sustain objective
  o Sustainability is a big issue
- Common Opener Issue
  o All habitat areas should be open on the same day in Western Wyoming
  o September 10, September 20 compromise September 15 date, September 10 -15
  o Regions G, H, K, W all of these areas standard opener
- Habitat Issues
  o Issue: domestic livestock over grazing, deer WP’s (eg Hams Fork, Sage RT)
  o WYGF work with BLM to address management issues and better management of livestock
  o Game and Fish, Forest Service, BLM work to implement prescribed burns, before it all burns
  o Implement small scale timber sales to improve habitat
  o Chemical treatments of spike
  o Planting to enhance habitat (eg winter ranges)
  o CRP (BLM lands) rest all treatments on BLM/FS move livestock to private land (CRP)—Rest BLM grazing; move livestock to private land and rest/rotate, similar to CRP program for Ag.
  o Roads and access issue re: four wheelers and sleds – need more restrictions to minimize sleds
  o Late elk seasons affect mule deer and elk – stress
- Partnerships
  o Issue: sportsmen who do not support outfitting industry – there seems to be more friction between sportsmen and outfitters, question as to why (oppose outfitters & guides)
  o Drop camps by outfitters & guides an issue with sportsmen (Greys River Road lawsuit)
    ▪ Need to improve this relationship by eliminating drop camps
- Issue: Abandonment of “Designated” hunt areas by outfitters & guides in Grey’s River
- Game and Fish and Legislator contacts BLM and local level to become more engaged
- Do it Yourself/Backpackers in back causes conflict - more discussion between outfitters & guides and sportsmen
Plus
  • Facilitator moved meeting along
  • Panel Q & A

Delta
  • Allow for more time during Q & A
  • Provide more information on limiting factors process

Compiled by Elaine Walsh Carney 9/11/10