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 – Jessica Clement, Facilitator

1. Habitat Improvements - * All
   • Continue prescribed burns
   • Support habitat projects – financially and politically
   • Competition with livestock – limit time of livestock on deer habitat
   • Expand conservation easements to buy grazing leases/permits

2. Habitat protection - * All
   • Limit ORV use

Population Management

3. Population Measurements
   • Require/strongly encourage hunter surveys to include teeth
   • Improve data collection with greater accuracy; fly more intensively (requires more money)

4. Limiting Factors
   • No doe hunts if we want to increase population objective – Larger population would require not hunting any doe deer
   • Hunt area 132 3 point or better works well

5. Research
   • Reevaluate the hunter survey; now people are downplaying their success to limit hunter numbers
   • Incentives for filling out harvest surveys and penalties for not filling them out.
   • Spend time with hunters at check stations and fill out surveys there/have someone surveying – it is a good place to get information.
   • Check stomach content samples from coyotes through government trappers to check for deer.

6. Quality of the Hunt
   • *Standardize opening dates statewide fro October 1.
• Limited entry license type for September 15 opener
• Continue to be able to hunt multiple openers
• *Early opener impedes archery hunters

7. Predation Management
• Conduct predator control – pre-fawning on fawning grounds and shortly after
• Predator control helps deer numbers

8. Partnerships
• *Attend license setting meeting and GF meetings – send emails to the public
• Public participation in mortality surveys
• To work with landowners to have more walk-in /ride-in areas in exchange for public services

Group 2 – Mark Zornes, Facilitator

Population Management
• “Special Management” should include average age class of harvest (need cementum aging)
• Implement mandatory harvest reporting
• Consider split season vs. a common opener
• Licenses in “special management area should be higher priced ($100) with additional revenue going to research in that hunt area
• Reduce competition from elk when over objective

Habitat
• Need to identify funding for planning and personnel parts of habitat projects
• Promote “Adopt a Winter Range” complex for local sportsmen to raise money, formulate partnerships and plans for habitat projects
• Need to identify and create additional forage reserves for cattle to restore habitat improvements
• Make sure habitat projects don’t lead to increased livestock stocking rates

Partnerships
• Partner with livestock producers on habitat projects because they benefit too
• Work with Federal agencies to reduce livestock numbers during drought
• Promote good grazing management (i.e. restoration) to promote good habitat (eg, Cumberland CRM – do more)
• Need to court some big money donors for habitat
• Promote sportsmen coalitions to work with Federal land managers
• Create mule deer local working groups, similar to sage grouse

Group 3 – Susan Boston, Facilitator

Habitat
• * Reduce livestock grazing on winter ranges (-AUMS)
  o Get data on AUM history
  o What are the side effects?
• Reduce roads on winter range
  o Evaluate impact of roads
  o Increase closed-road enforcement fines
• *Increase enforcement on winter range
• *Cheatgrass – look for solutions (invasive weeds in general)

Population Management
• Continue no overlap of deer/elk seasons
• *Keep non-resident numbers - max 500 in Region G
• *Look at increased predator control on winter ranges (all predators, mountain lions, coyotes, etc.
• Coyote bounty
• *Keep deer seasons short-don’t overlap deer/elk
• Continue aggressive mountain lion quotas
• Early blackpowder season (separate season)
• Additional underpass (LaBarge to Big Piney)
• 4 – point or better season when needed – increase average age

Partnerships
• Develop trust fund for wildlife using $ from oil and gas industry (to fund WGFD operations)
• Partnership with land owners to increase access
• *Increase information communication with railroad and other industry – use data – get data from railroad on effects
• Maintain fences in areas with high mortalities

Plus
• Like more aggressive approach to obtaining public input
• Inclusive process
• Thanks for listening
• Appreciate open-minded approach, makes a huge difference
• No red shirts

Delta
• Not enough time
• Prioritize subject areas better
• Bad time of year, should have had meetings earlier in the summer
• Need better advertising
• Include notices in WWN Game and Fish Newsletter
• Don’t diminish public input from this process
• Create an incentive to encourage participation
• More opportunities for positive interaction with WGF Department

Compiled by Elaine Walsh Carney 9/12/10