Meeting Objectives

1. Develop an Understanding of Collaborative Learning
2. Background and Present conditions
3. Identify issues and interests related to Wyoming Mule Deer Herd
4. Collaboratively determine next steps

Main Points Group 1 – Mark Gocke, Facilitator

1. Habitat
2. Hunter Management
3. Non-hunting mortality
4. Deer numbers
5. Development

Group 1 Notes – Concerns and Interests

- Deer numbers are down
- Quality of the winter range
  - Match deer numbers to winter habitat (current population objective is to high – should be based on science rather than public opinion)
- Elk numbers may be too high and compete with deer for habitat and forage
- Poaching
- Change in deer distribution
- Protection of migration corridors – Nugget Canyon Project
- Wildlife harassment on winter range – antler hunting
- Counts of deer leaving winter range in December
- Development (urban, oil and gas, WWD, etc.)
  - Landowners subdividing ranches
  - Road densities
- Habitat improvements are needed
- Partnerships to develop habitat improvements – (federal, state, private, NGOs)
- Hunting Pressure – Hunter density on opening day
  - Standardized opening dates?
- Folks fleeing grizzly country to hunt in the Wyoming Range
- Non-hunting mortality – (predation, poaching, roadkill, winter loss, disease)

Main Points Group 2 – Jessica Clement, Facilitator

1. Deer numbers are down
2. WGFD should increase collaborative efforts to improve public sentiment
3. Oil and gas disturbance on mule deer herd in the winter range needs to be addressed including the increasing number of roads being developed.
4. Are the human dimension surveys accurate and meaningful?

Group 2 Notes – Concerns and Interests

- Deer numbers are down
  - Seasons are too long
  - Too much hunting pressure
  - Buck – Doe ratio too low
  - WGFD underestimates predation effects
- Too much oil and gas development and disturbance, especially on the winter range
- Numbers of homes being built in “pretty places”
- Too many roads = too many hunters and herd disturbance
  - ATV tracks
  - Oil and gas roads
  - Federal agencies should enforce road closures
  - Federal agencies should enforce unauthorized motorized use
    - For example - North Piney – creation of unfettered OHV use on USFS and BLM land
- Make sure the public is heard
  - Public needs to make the effort
  - Sentiment toward WGFD is getting more negative
  - WGFD is trying to address concerns but some members of the public have given up. It is a difficult situation but it needs to be addressed.
- Responsiveness to the public by WGFD at open houses and season setting meetings – is public’s input actually being taken into consideration?
- This meeting has provided good information
- Land – owner relations are very important for our wildlife
- Youth recruitment – perhaps combine with doe-fawn hunt on Wyoming Range
- Mortality surveys - is adequate surveying taking place throughout the herd – for example La Barge to Slate Creek?
- Are the HD surveys really capturing respondents’ attitudes and preferences?
- Are the surveys grounded in valid, reliable and rigorous science or are they orchestrated?
- There are questions regarding the mule deer population estimate’s accuracy

Main Points Group 3 – Susan Stewart and Gary Fralick, Facilitators

1. Oil and gas development on winter range habitat, condition of the winter range
2. Quality of the hunt (hunter #s, hunter ethics, family hunting)
3. Highway mortality and fence entrapment
4. Population estimates and objectives as a function of habitat conditions
5. WGFD Hunt management
  a. Partnerships
  b. Harvest survey and accuracy and results

Group 3 Notes – Concerns and Interests

- Concern about over-hunting, absence of bucks
- Where are the deer? Not present in the Aspen/Foothill zones
- Decent population on the winter range
- Develop underpasses to prevent highway mortality
- Game and Fish focuses to much on big bucks
• Winter range issues – protection of all crucial and winter ranges
• Need to improve conditions on winter ranges; enhances conditions for all age/sex classes
• #1 limiting factor is the poor condition of the winter ranges
• Would like to see numbers back to the early nineties
• Too many people results in a “free for all” – lack of hunter ethics
• Mismanagement re: population estimates vs. known harvest estimates. Other states require reporting of harvest via telephone.
• Oil and gas impacts on winter ranges
• Population objective of 50,000 – is this appropriate with the poor winter range conditions?
• Save what we have left of the Wyoming Range from oil and gas development
• Need to protect winter ranges that deer have used for decades
• Have oil and gas companies improve habitat, habitat treatments should be their responsibility
• Control – fencing restrictions on oil and gas companies, SSNC restrictions on oil and gas companies
• Highway mortality – fencing and underpasses
• Standardize SSN dates – to spread out hunting pressure
• Choose your HA : limited entry
• Split High Country Hunts
  o September 15 – 30; October 1 -14
  o Low areas 134, 135: October 1 -?
  o Pick your hunt (Not LQ)
• Railroad mortality work with railroad companies to decrease mule deer mortality rate
• Over grazing of winter ranges by livestock (i.e. Leroy Area)
• Need to have a regular conversation about partnerships: GF Livestock, County, Feds, Hunters, etc Los
• Urge people to participate and go to public agencies to voice issues and concerns

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Evaluation

PLUS (positive aspects)

• Format of presentations and break out groups
• Small group discussions

DELTA (things that could be changed)

• Sitting for too long
• Smaller small groups, less than 9 people
• Provide opportunity to write concerns on a form and provide to small group facilitators in a particular format with geographic specifics
• Improve notice of meetings
  o Monster Mulies Chat Room – Brian LeTurner
  o More posters
  o Link to GEO web sites from process web site
• Consider non –resident participation
• Rotate location of meetings