

~D.E.E.R Project continues near Aspen Mountain~



Researchers with the University of Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit worked with WGFD Green River Region personnel and Bureau of Land Management biologists to capture mule deer associated with the D.E.E.R. Project (Deer and Elk Ecology Research). Workers recaptured the adult female mule deer they have been monitoring since April 2016 to assess their nutritional condition after summer, along with a collection of other characteristics. In addition, workers initiated the male-focused segment of the project by capturing 15 yearling and adult male deer. Funding for the D.E.E.R. Project is made possible by the WGFD and Southwest Chapter of Muley Fanatics.

This project requires coordination between the Coop Unit and multiple natural resource agencies and conservation group. A lot of people made this week of capturing possible. The photographs on this and following page illustrate the process of working captured mule deer through the camera of Green River Information Education Specialist Lucy Wold. Wold actually got to work up deer and, at times, her coworkers took over the camera.

The deer were captured using a net gun fired by highly skilled men from a helicopter. "Muggers" would land and hobble the deer and place them in the bag to transfer two deer at a time to the workers staged nearby on the ground. Each previously collared doe deer had a blood and fecal sample taken, temperature, body and leg girth measurements taken. Buck deer received a collar, the same measurements as the does, and their antler measurements recorded. UW Coop Project Supervisor Kevin Monteith also did an ultrasound to measure the amount of body fat. All of the deer were then weighed, their head spray painted to prevent recapture, their blindfolds removed and then released.

A huge thank you goes out to Green River Habitat Biologist Kevin Spence and CWD Technician Sadie St Claire for helping out on the deer capture!

Photos top to bottom: Helicopter delivers a buck mule deer UW Researcher Matt Hayes, Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays, Green River Game Warden Rob Shipe and GR Wildlife Management Coordinator Mark Zornes carry the buck deer to the processing area. UW researchers Katey Sue Huggler (left) and Taylor Lasharr take blood samples from a collared deer.

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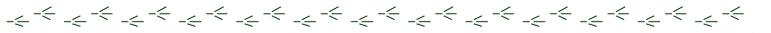
GR Wildlife Management Coordinator Mark Zornes draws blood from a deer. (photo top, left) Dr. Kevin Monteith measures fat index. (photo below blood draw) Collared doe gets ready to be weighed. (photo, below center) UW student zero's the scale before the doe is weighed. (photo below, right) Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays works with Access Technician Nicole Reed to get a body temperature (photo, below, left second from bottom) GR I&E Lucy Wold sprays paint on the deer head so she is visible from the air and UW researcher Matt Hayes and game warden Dave Hays safely release a buck mule deer as it bolts away.



~ Happy hunters near Evanston and Mountain View ~



Nick Roberts and happy deer hunter



Evanston Game Warden Nick Roberts reports that he and other game wardens contacted lots of happy deer and elk hunters this season in the *Evanston and Bridger Valley areas*. Hunters reported seeing lots of deer. Most hunters harvested a legal buck with a few large antlered deer taken.

In the Evanston and Bridger Valley areas, *Mountain View Game Warden Allen Deru and SW Wyoming Access Yes Coordinator Andy Countryman* responded to numerous violations this October. Warden Nick Roberts responded to four trespassing violations, two shooting from the road violations, an over limit and waste of an antelope, an over limit and waste of a bull elk and an elk hunter who mistakenly shot a bull moose. "Most charges are still pending," Roberts said. "Multiple hunters were cited or are still being investigated for making false claims of residency. We also examined a number of unrecovered or wound-loss big game animals. Hunters are encouraged to only take shots within their capabilities and always follow up their shots. We also heard from several hunters who harvested animals that were previously wounded. In those cases, some or all of the meat was not salvageable due to infections. "

Mountain View Game Warden Allen Deru reported that October was pretty quiet, as far as any major violations and the seasons turned out great this year. "Harvest over here this year was great for deer and elk, as the majority of the hunters were very satisfied with the hunt," Deru said. "The number of elk taken increased drastically from the previous two seasons and this had a bit to do with the cooler weather this year. I also checked a few nice bull elk this year that were nice to see coming out of areas 106 and 107." (photo left)

"The amount of mule deer harvest also increased from the previous two hunting seasons, with a few exceptional bucks coming out of areas 132 and 133. It was really nice to see a few kids out enjoying the hunting season." (photos immediate left and below)



~ Moose on the loose ~ Strutting his stuff ~ Cokeville Action



“The photo of the calf moose was one I took while trying to help it out of a fenced yard that it was stuck in,” Deru said. (photo top, left) “With the help of the owner of the property, we were able to get the calf out of the fence and back to it's mother with out any incident. I also was lucky enough to catch a male ruffed grouse strutting around defending his territory.” (photo left, middle)



Cokeville Game Warden Neil Hymas said deer and elk seasons in the Cokeville area were, overall, as good as predicted. “Deer success rates were high despite muddy roads and inclement weather,” Hymas said. “The early storms caused deer to stage and move early, with many hunters taking advantage of higher deer numbers this year. The combination of past good winters and reasonable reproduction contributed significantly to the good deer season experienced by most hunters.”



“Elk hunters also enjoyed a good season in the Cokeville area. While heavy snows and inclement weather made travel difficult early in the season, it also caused elk to move to lower elevations. Hunters harvested many bull elk throughout the season. The lower number of antlerless elk licenses and shorter seasons were a change for many elk hunters. After winter elk counts confirmed that the West Green River elk population had been reduced to the objective, Department managers put the conservative seasons in place this year to ensure that elk numbers don't drop below the recently reached population objective.”

Kelly Hoffman and his daughter, Mallory, double-up on a deer hunt near Cokeville. This was Mallory's first mule deer.

“Another observation that often accompanies good harvest years is an increase in the number of big game animals that were located by hunters as *cripple losses*,” Hymas said. “While the increase in reports of dead animals is relative to the number of animals being harvested in the field, it is a *good reminder for hunters to be especially careful and ethical while taking shots at big game animals*. Although any hunter can miss an intended good shot under field conditions, taking the time to ensure shot placement, and resisting taking shots that are too quick or too far, can decrease the number of animals that are hit and get away from hunters.” (photo left, bottom, dead elk in Hunt Area 105)



“Hunters should always check if a shot is fired to see if an animal has been hit, and make an honest effort to recover wounded animals,” Hymas said. “Hunters who find a cripple loss are required to contact a WGF D game warden or their regional office to make arrangements for an *Interstate Game Tag if they wish to salvage antlers or parts from a big game animal found in the field.*”

~ Happy hunting near Cokeville and Kemmerer~ Fall fishing ~



“Also, during the elk season in Hunt Area 104, we had two moose shot accidentally being mistaken for elk,” Hymas said. “One was a calf on Dempsey Ridge, and the other was a two to three-year old bull just north of Fossil Butte National Monument. Both hunters reported the violations immediately, and fully cooperated with our investigations. However, two moose are gone from a limited resource. I cannot emphasize to hunters enough that you must double-check your target before pulling the trigger.”

“It was a fairly typical October in the Kemmerer area,” said Kemmerer Game Warden Chris Baird. “Deer harvest was very good, with several large deer harvested. Most deer hunters seemed pleased with the number and quality of deer in Hunt Area 135. The weather on the opening weekend of elk season made camping and logistics difficult, but it made for great elk hunting. Moose hunters hunted hard this year and several good representative bulls were harvested. Antelope in the western end of Hunt Area 93 hit high gear in migration early this October and it seemed to slow harvest in that end of the hunt area, but overall hunters seemed pleased. The type 8 doe/fawn license were a hit and one of the trouble damage areas saw over 40 doe/fawn harvests.”

“As for law enforcement, my most notable case was that I investigated a report from a group of hunters that watched a man shoot two elk,” Baird said. “The investigation revealed he intentionally allowed one of the elk to go to waste and only had one license. The investigation went well, with ample evidence and admissions from the suspect. Multiple formal charges are being filed in Lincoln County.”

“Brown trout have started to spawn and the fishing on both the Green and the Hams Fork rivers has been great! Streamers, eggs and flesh fly patterns are working well.”

photo below, right



Photos left, top to bottom: Mitch Kinnear, Deer Hunt Area 135. Phil Krall, successful archery hunter, with deer from Deer Hunt Area 135 and bull elk from Elk Hunt Area 104. Elk hunter Clint Nielson with nice bull from Elk Hunt Area 102.

~Fall hunting in Baggs Country ~



Baggs Game Warden Kim Olson had a another busy fall checking big game hunters. These photos were captured from Olson's camera, with everything from a young man's first buck, to a 30-incher, husband and wife team, a couple of proud hunters and one very busy hunting camp. "Lots of animals hanging, all part of the happy harvesters," Olson said." It took me an hour to check the 25 critters hanging in this camp!" (photo, left, third down from top)





Hunter Management Areas

Go to Wyoming Game & Fish Homepage



Enforcement Happenings

There are unsolved poaching cases in the Green River Region. If you have any information about any wildlife violation please contact your local game warden or the **STOP Poaching Hotline** at:

1-877-WGFD-TIP (1-877-943-3847)

•You can also report a wildlife violation at the WGFD website <http://wgfd.wyo.gov>
Text keyword WGFD and message toTIP411 (847-411)

Southwest Access Yes Coordinator Andy Countryman reported that he, also, responded to multiple hunting violations. "I responded to seven wildlife violations, including taking game from the vehicle, failure to tag big game, shooting from a public road, taking big game without a license (still in court), taking a two-point deer in three-point restricted hunt area, and a trespassing case, which is still unsolved," Countryman said.

"As far as violations on our Hunter Management Areas and Walk in Access Areas (WIA) there were also multiple violations, including failure to obtain HMA permission slips before hunting, operating a motorized vehicle on closed roads, operating a motorized vehicle off road, operating and or possessing ATV's on the Bear River Divide HMA."

"We did experience some access damage at one of our Uinta County WIA's," Countryman said. "The main wire gate post had been knocked down and it was impossible to shut the gate. Mountain View Game Warden Allen Deru and I repaired the gate to maintain landowner relations and continue public access." (photo left, bottom)

"I also had a conviction of a false oath case," Countryman said. "The suspect paid almost \$1600 in fines and surrendered wildlife taken with those licenses. The suspect was raised in Wyoming and moved to Utah. He did not claim residency in Utah for any purpose. However, he physically domiciled with his wife and children in Utah. The suspect currently raises cattle with his father in Wyoming and stays on occasion, but will have to physically domicile in Wyoming for a full year to regain his residency for game and fish purposes in Wyoming. I also investigated three dead deer, most likely left due to cripple loss. The best part, I checked some happy deer hunters." (Photos, left, top)



~ Green River and Rock Springs High School students assist with Fall netting ~



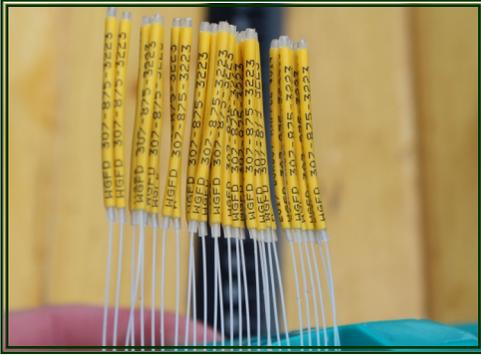
Students from Rock Springs High School, lead by their teacher Lorrissa Apell (photo top left, far left), assisted the Green River fisheries crew pick trammel nets on Fontenelle Reservoir. Green River Fisheries Biologist Troy Laughlin give the students more direction on how to get the illegally introduced burbot out of the nets, so that they can be weighed, measured, stomach contents taken and otoliths collected to age the fish. (Photo left, center)

Students from Green River High School, lead by their AP Biology teacher Allison Baas, also assisted the Green River fisheries crew picking burbot out of the trammel nets used down on Flaming Gorge Reservoir during the annual fall netting. (photo left, third down) Green River Fisheries Biologist John Walrath (photo bottom, right) and fisheries technician AJ Vandomelen (photo bottom center) set the nets and the students picked fish to assist with collection of valuable data. Baas' students have been helping collect fish and habitat data for many years and her students really appreciate working outside, in their own backyard, on a worthwhile project-helping biologists monitor the invasive burbot.

Thank you to ALL the students, teachers, and bus drivers.



~Burbot Raffle ~Project WILD workshop for educators~



2017 Burbot Raffle" Floy Tag



If you like catching burbot and a chance to win \$1000 dollars, the Upper Bear River Trout Unlimited Chapter (UBRTU) has got a deal for you. UBRTU is sponsoring a burbot raffle on Fontenelle Reservoir with one grand prize of \$1000 dollars. To be in the drawing for the grand prize anglers need to catch one or more of the 25 burbot wearing a yellow "2017 Burbot Raffle" Floy Tag - the tag is the anglers "ticket" for entering the drawing. "Each tag is imprinted with the following message 2017 Burbot Raffle WGFD [307-875-3223](tel:307-875-3223)," says Green River Fisheries Supervisor Robert Keith. "When anglers catch one of these fish they need to call the phone number on the tag. Game and Fish office personnel will give folks instructions to mail the tag with their contact information to the Green River Office of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Successful anglers will be officially entered into the drawing when their tag and contact information is received at the Green River office. There is no fee to participate in the 2017 Burbot Raffle on Fontenelle, just catch a burbot with the yellow Floy tag."

The winning tag will be drawn on January 8th at the La Barge Ding the Ling Derby being held on Fontenelle Reservoir January 7th and 8th. Anglers need not be part of the derby, nor be present during the drawing, to win the 2017 Burbot Raffle. However, they do need to catch a tagged burbot and submit the yellow Floy tag with their contact information to Game and Fish prior to the drawing on January 8th.

Educators from Wyoming elementary through high schools, US Fish and Wildlife Service and conservation districts attended a Project WILD workshop at the Green River Game and Fish Office. Regional Information and Education Specialist Lucy Wold said 16 educators worked and played together, using WILD activities to learn about mule deer ecology, elk management issues, invasive species, owl ecology, predator/prey relationships and much more. Educators received credit from the Professional Teaching and Standards Board. We are sure they also had a lot of fun!



GR Office Managers Sheila Deinhardt (right) and Regina Dickson (left) had some fun on Halloween with their characters Piper and Alex from the Netflix series Orange is the New Black. Sheila and Regina handed out candy to trick-or-treaters and gave some of the customers (and their co-workers) a good laugh!

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~Critter Spotlight~
Snow Geese
 By Mark Zornes a.k.a. Leopold

- ◆ **Snow geese are a medium-sized goose**, commonly seen in large numbers in Wyoming during spring and fall migrations. Birds that inhabit Wyoming seasonally, winter in Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and the Mexican states of Chihuahua and Durango. They summer and breed in the Arctic, including Alaska's North Slope.
- ◆ **Snow geese are so abundant currently**, and their impacts are so great on their tundra breeding grounds, that efforts are occurring across the nation to reduce their numbers and impacts. There are both fall and spring seasons for this species in the Central Flyway portion of Wyoming (east of the Continental Divide) and a season is being evaluated for western Wyoming in the Pacific Flyway.
- ◆ **Snow geese occur in two color phases**; the typical white form (with black wing tips), and a "blue" color phase (once incorrectly considered a separate species). The much smaller Ross' goose also occurs in both color phases and may occur in mixed flocks with snows during migration.
- ◆ **Again, these birds are only observed in Wyoming during migration**, and do not breed here. In their tundra breeding grounds, snows lay 2-6 eggs and young are precocial (able to immediately begin following their mother). They may walk 50+ miles from nesting to brood rearing habitats.
- ◆ **Predators are numerous for this species** (especially on the breeding grounds) and range from gulls and other seabirds to foxes, snowy owls, polar bears, and man.
- ◆ **Snow geese are a very social species of waterfowl**, rarely observed alone, and usually observed in flocks of a few dozen to several hundred thousand! Snow goose populations have tripled since the mid-1970s with causes ranging from increased agriculture (they spend significant time feeding in grain fields), increased protections through the federal refuge system, and a warming arctic.