



the wyoming game & fish department



LANDER REGION newsletter

october 2015

In the Field

Hunting seasons around the region



A successful hunt near Rawlins for a Casper family.

Antelope hunting in the region has been good, with several antelope and happy hunters being checked in the field. Elk hunting has been slow in most of the region so far, due to unseasonably warm weather.

Those hunters who have spent time at higher elevations seem to be finding some elk. Mule deer numbers are good and several yearlings and two-year olds of good size are being harvested.

Hunters have been reporting they are happy to see so many mule deer and antelope does and fawns this year. Black Bear harvest has gone well with several nice size bears being checked. Bird hunters are having moderate success and seeing lots of chukar.

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To address hunter crowding, the Lander Green Mtn Mule Deer Working Group is recommending limited quota split seasons in areas 92, 94, &160 and 96 &97. For more detailed information on their recommendation and to complete the survey follow the link below.

We need your thoughts before Nov 30: <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/lander-mule-deer-survey>

The Group will present recommendations and discuss feedback from the surveys at the following meetings from 6 - 9 pm:
Lander, Nov. 30 at the Inn at Lander; **Riverton, Dec. 1** at the Riverton Library; **Rawlins, Dec. 2** at the Jeffrey Center.



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On the Land

Aspen Ripping



Photo by Stan Harter.

Aspen are a priority habitat type throughout the state of Wyoming, and Game and Fish is utilizing a variety of treatments to improve and expand aspen habitats in the Lander region and around the state. These treatments include prescribed fire, mechanical conifer removal, and recently several regions of the state, including Lander, tried a treatment known as root ripping. A bulldozer with a ripping attachment is used to cut approximately 7-10" into the soil on the fringes of aspen stands to sever the lateral roots that extend outward from the parent trees. This stimulates the root to send up suckers, and has been shown to expand aspen stands by as much as 150 feet from the current stand's edge. In Lander, this treatment was funded by the Bowhunters of Wyoming, and treatment was completed by our Statewide Habitat and Access Crew. Monitoring plots were set up to monitor the success of the treatment. One of the benefits of root ripping is that there is no damage to the parent trees.



"Ripped roots" on the fringe of an aspen stand is one treatment Game and Fish is using to expand aspens stands.



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Under the Water

Boysen Reservoir Fishery



Paul Gerrity with a channel catfish from a 2015 netting survey of Boysen Reservoir.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department reports on fish population trends in Boysen Reservoir.

Annual walleye netting at Boysen Reservoir this fall show that numbers of walleye and yellow perch are up. Strong recruitment in 2011 for both walleye and yellow perch are boosting numbers of catchable-sized fish in the reservoir, and another strong 2014 year class of walleye should make for catchable-sized fish in the next year or two. Juvenile yellow perch are also abundant which should lead to better fishing for yellow perch in the next couple of years as well.

Sauger are another popular fish species in the reservoir and they saw a 90% decrease from 2002-2011. During that time there was little to no natural recruitment in the population. However, good recruitment in 2011 and 2014 have allowed partial population recovery and sauger stocking from 2013-2015 has supplemented those numbers. These supplemental stockings will continue in 2016 and 2017 and will hopefully expedite the recovery of the population. Biologists are currently conducting research to determine the environmental factors that influence natural recruitment of sauger.

Trout abundance in Boysen depends on stocking. After stocking shortages from 2008-2012, stocking has occurred at recommended levels and has brought their numbers back up.

Channel catfish and black crappie continue to be a minor part of the Boysen Fishery. Catfish can grow quite large and occasionally provide anglers the chance to catch a trophy exceeding 20 pounds. Black crappie juveniles were abundant this fall indicating that crappie fishing should improve over the next couple of years. Both channel catfish and black crappie like upper reservoir regions such as Muddy Creek, Badwater Creek and Poison Creek bays.

Catching some of these fish may be more difficult as the emerald shiner, a prey species for walleye, sauger and perch, has also increased in abundance. Fishing early before the fish have stomachs full of shiners may be the key to success this fall and next spring.



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Beside the Families

Hunter Education



Lander's four Forever Wild Families completed a hunter education course in September. Volunteers and staff made this a fun, safe experience for everyone. After two evenings of classroom instruction, they spent a beautiful Saturday at the range learning about outdoor and firearm safety, and firing live rounds, the first time for some of them. They are now looking forward to hunting opportunities this fall and many have already purchased big game licenses.

With the Carnivores

Highlighting bears

Between education, conflict prevention and mitigation, and capturing bears, September has been busy for the large carnivore section. Some highlights from the Lander Region include:

- Verified six head of domestic cattle killed or injured by grizzly bears and three by wolves in the Lander Region. One grizzly bear was captured and relocated as a result.
- Relocated one grizzly bear for killing three domestic pigs on private land near Dubois.
- Investigated dozens of reports of black bears getting into garbage, birdfeeders, and pet and livestock feed in and around Lander and Dubois. One adult male black bear was removed from the town of Lander, and several black bears were targeted and harvested by hunters.
- Gave bear safety training to Bureau of Land Management employees in Lander.
- Verified apiaries damaged by black bears in the Lander Region.
- Helped the Tennessee wildlife resources agency with the investigation of a report of a man claimed to have been attacked by a bear. The report turned out to be false.
- Taught multiple courses to 50 1st - 8th graders regarding wolf and bear biology and ecology.



With the Wardens

New Lander and East Rawlins wardens



Left: Lander Game Warden Brady Frude; right: East Rawlins Game Warden Dillon Herman

Dillon Herman and Brady Frude have new game warden districts. Herman is in East Rawlins and Frude in Lander. Wyoming game wardens are responsible for wildlife law enforcement and education, damage and prevention, data collection, and wildlife management duties.

Herman was born in Fort Collins, CO, and moved to Cody as a child. He grew up riding and packing horses; working in the wilderness areas of the Absaroka Mountains. After graduating from Cody High School, he earned a bachelor's degree in Wild-

life Biology and Management from the University of Wyoming in the fall of 2012. He worked for the Aquatic Invasive Species program and was a brucellosis technician before completing the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy in July 2014. He was stationed in Green River and Cheyenne before being transferred to the East Rawlins district as of Sept. 1.

"I am excited to be involved with the community as one of the Rawlins game wardens, and I will strive to do my best to work with the community, local non-profits, and other state and federal agencies to conserve wildlife and serve the people of Wyoming." He replaces Brady Frude who transferred to Lander in August.

Frude is a native of Laramie and graduated from the University of Wyoming with a bachelor's degree in biology in 2006. He began his career in wildlife with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) as a wildlife technician working on a bighorn sheep project in Hell's Canyon. He began his career with the Wyoming Game and Fish as a fisheries technician in the Casper region in 2009. He then attended the thirteen-week Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy and became certified as a Wyoming peace officer. His career as a game warden began in August 2010 and he was promoted to the West Rawlins district in November 2011. He brings his wife, Candice, and their three daughters to Lander.

"My family and I are so excited for the many great opportunities the Lander community provides. This warden district is incredibly diverse, ranging from the mixed sagebrush steppe of the Red Desert to the alpine country along the continental divide in the southern Winds. The culture and history around here are just as diverse, and I look forward to meeting and interacting with the many constituents and sportsmen in what I consider to be the best warden district in this incredible state."

You can contact Herman at 307-324-2973 and Frude at 307-332-2704.



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In the Field

Black-footed ferret surveys



Nongame Biologist Jesse Boulerville collects blood from an anesthetized black-footed ferret. Blood is used to test for diseases such as plague, canine distemper and tularemia.

During the months of August and September, the nongame program conducted surveys to assess the population of black-footed ferrets at the Shirley Basin reintroduction site near Medicine Bow.

With the help of members of the nongame program, as well as over 20 volunteers from various sections within the Department, approximately 40 individual ferrets were detected in six weeks of surveys. Surveys were completed by spot-lighting from dusk to dawn to detect ferrets by eyeshine and then capturing ferrets in specially designed traps. Captured ferrets were briefly

anesthetized in order to collect biological samples and mark individuals, prior to being returned to location of capture. With the initial release of ferrets at Shirley Basin in the early 1990s, this site represents the longest running reintroduction area for black-footed ferrets in the world. Over the past two and an half decades, monitoring of this population has been made possible

only through the generous assistance from Department personnel willing to become a nocturnal animal for a couple of nights each year.



Nongame Technician Lee Tafelmeyer releases a black-footed ferret at the location of capture after the ferret has been marked.



Habitat and Access Biologist Derek Lemon and Wildlife Biologist Grant Frost search for black-footed ferrets.



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