

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting

September 12, 2012, DNR Room 2000
1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

AGENDA

Wednesday, September 12, 2012, 9:00 am

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| 1. Approval of Agenda
– Del Brady, Chairman | ACTION |
| 2. DWR Update
– Jim Karpowitz, DWR Director | INFORMATION |
| 3. Additional Late Season Antlerless Elk Permits
– Anis Aoude, Wildlife Program Coordinator | ACTION |
| 4. Increased Bison Permits on the Henry Mountains
– Justin Shannon, Wildlife Regional Manager | ACTION |
| 5. Action Log Item – Harvest of Female Cougars
– John Shivik, Mammals Program Coordinator | INFORMATIONAL |
| 6. Other Business
– Del Brady, Chairman | CONTINGENT |

Board Members in attendance:

Ernie Perkins – Vice-Chairman
Bill Fenimore
Calvin Crandall

Board Members participating by telephone or video conferencing:

Del Brady – Chairman – Northeastern Regional Office
Mike King – Southeastern Regional Office
Jake Albrecht - telephone
John Bair - telephone

NOTE: This meeting will not be web-cast, however, the audio recording will be available at the conclusion of the meeting at www.wildlife.utah.gov. Interested persons are welcome to participate in the meeting by going to the Salt Lake Office or any regional office.



GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

GREGORY S. BELL
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

MICHAEL R. STYLER
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

JAMES F. KARPOWITZ
Division Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 7, 2012

To: Wildlife Board

From: Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

SUBJECT: Recommended Late Season Elk Permits to Mitigate for Drought and Fire Damage

At the August 16, 2012 meeting, the Wildlife Board approved 1,450 additional antlerless elk permits to mitigate for drought conditions. The rationale behind issuing additional permits in the early season is to harvest elk before they reach the winter ranges. Since that time, DWR regional managers have been evaluating range conditions as the summer progresses. Those evaluations have led to the Southeastern and Northern regions recommending a total of 205 additional late season antlerless elk permits on 3 existing hunts. If approved, these permits will be sold over the counter on a first come first serve basis, beginning October 18th.

The additional permits recommended by the Southeastern Region are designed to mitigate for fire damage that occurred this summer on the Manti Unit. This area is transitional deer range where elk often winter. The USFS has asked the region to increase permits to help the burned area recover. Livestock permittees have already been cut significantly to help address these range issues. The Manti Unit is over objective and winter ranges that overlap with mule deer are in very poor condition. Late season permits will target elk that normally winter on the burn area.

The additional permits the Northern Region has recommended are designed to deal with elk wintering on the Henefer-Echo WMA. This area has limited winter forage due to drought and these additional permits will help limit potential damage caused by elk.

Hunt	Hunt name	Approved May	Approved August	Proposed permits	Open date	Close date
4020	Central Mtns, Gordon Creek-Price Canyon	175		75	2012-11-21	2013-01-15
4022	Central Mtns, Mohrland-Stump Flat	100		100	2012-11-21	2013-01-15
4052	Morgan-South Rich, Henefer-Echo WMA	90		30	2012-12-01	2013-01-13
	Total	13,108	1450	205		
	Southeastern Region total			175		
	Northern Region total			30		





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MEMORANDUM

Date: September 7, 2012

To: Wildlife Board

From: Anis Aoude, Big Game Coordinator

SUBJECT: Recommended Additional Bison Permits on the Henry Mountains.

Utah DWR biologists conducted their annual bison survey on Thursday, August 2, 2012. The survey estimated 432 adults in the bison herd, which was higher than expected based on last year's survey. Based on the 2011 survey, we estimated the preseason population would have 384 adult bison, and that number was used to determine the permit numbers approved by the Wildlife Board on May 3, 2012. Given this new information, we recommend increasing the number of permits on this unit by 60, divided among the hunts in the table below. The additional permits are needed to assure that we bring the population down to the objective of 325 adults postseason. Adding the proposed late cow hunt will spread the permits out over a longer time period and help minimize any potential crowding issues on this once-in-a-lifetime hunt. We will use the alternate list from the big game drawing to distribute the additional permits. The Henry Mountains Bison Committee has been informed of the proposed change and agrees with this recommendation.

HUNT #	HUNT NAME	Approved 2012 permits			Recommended Addition			Total permits		
		Res	Nonres	Total	Res	Nonres	Total	Res	Nonres	Total
6502	Henry Mountains, Cow Only	13	1	14	18	2	20	31	3	34
6503	Henry Mountains, Hunter's Choice	19	2	21	6	1	7	25	3	28
6504	Henry Mountains, Hunter's Choice	19	2	21	7	1	8	26	3	29
6505	Henry Mountains, Cow Only (late)			0	22	3	25	22	3	25
Total		51	5	56	53	7	60	104	12	116





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JAMES F. KARPOWITZ
Division Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 10, 2012

To: Wildlife Board

From: John Shivik, Mammal Coordinator

RE: Board Motion: "That the Division do an expeditious review of the data and to provide the board members their analysis, conclusions and recommendations concerning the possible over harvest of female cougars."

Current Cougar Harvest

Examining the 2011-2012 cougar take, none of the cougar management units achieved or surpassed female quota numbers. As shown in the table below, female harvest statewide was short by 52 animals.

Management Area	Female Quota	Females Harvested	Females Remaining
Oquirrh-Stansbury	8	7	1
Cache	11	7	4
Uintas	26	11	15
Wasatch-Manti	39	36	3
Book Cliffs	13	4	9
Monroe	28	27	1
Sheep Units	11	0	11
San Juan	8	7	1
Pine Valley	19	12	7
Statewide Sum	163	111	52

Cougar Management Plan

The Cougar Management plan uses a 3-year cycle of harvest and data collection. The plan requires *percent adult females* and *cougars treed per day* to be used to adjust permit numbers. The number of adult females is typically a much smaller subset of the total number of females harvested, and the two numbers should not be interchanged. The number of adult females taken during the 3-year data collection block will not be available until the spring of 2013, when a full analysis will be possible.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Current female cougar take is less than the quota set by the Board on every management unit in the state. Initial data, including a preliminary evaluation of plan performance targets, do not indicate that extreme adjustments to permit numbers are required. When the full and appropriate dataset is analyzed in 2013, the plan's decision tree will be used to adjust permit numbers. The plan is designed to automatically respond to changes in harvest and the Division recommends continuing to follow the current plan.

