

BAGGS MULE DEER HERD WORKING GROUP RAWLINS, WY April 28, 2015

The fifth organizational meeting of the Baggs Mule Deer Herd Working Group (BMDHWG) took place on April 28, 2015 at the Rawlins BLM Office. The following people attended:

Working Group Members:

Andy Warren, Bureau of Land Management
Frank Blomquist, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Jim Espy, landowner public representative
Jennifer Lamb, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Larry Hicks, Little Snake Conservation District
Chris Herold, Warren Resources, industry representative
Tony Mong, Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Kim Olson, Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Bo Stocks, Chairperson
Patty Waldron
Wendy Haas, USDA Forest Service
Ed Arnett, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Katie Cheesebrough, Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Lucy Diggins-Wold, facilitator and chief note taker

Absent Working Group Members:

Joshua Coursey or Joey Faigle from Muley Fanatic Foundation (MFF)
Darby Finley, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Cindy Mosteller, Mule Deer Foundation (MDF)

Members of the public:

Erik Collier, public and BLM
T.J. Murry, public and BLM
Greg Hiatt, WGFD
Abby Perry, UW Extension
Jennifer Fleuret, BLM
Karmen Warrington, public
Kirk Warrington, public
Brade Frude, WGFD
Chris Otto, public
Ray Ogle, public

Previous meeting and minutes review/Agenda Items:

- A motion was made by Jen Lamb to approve the March meeting minutes and Ed Arnett seconded the motion. The March meeting minutes were approved.

The working group received presentations about the influences of energy production on mule deer by Dr. Hall Sawyer, W.E.S.T. Inc., Mule deer nutrition and work related to that by Dr. Kevin Monteith, UW-Coop Unit, vegetation and browse data by Andy Warren, and an

introduction to the Platte Valley Habitat Plan by Katie Cheesebrough, WGFD habitat biologist from Saratoga.

Summary of presentations:

- Both Dr.'s Sawyer and Monteith used a Power Point program to show the mule deer research and results from work completed in the Pinedale region and the Wyoming Range. Information and correlations were presented pertaining to human disturbance, doe ecology in relation to nutrition and migration data, and more. Kevin also related information from a 13 year mule deer study in CA that he worked on. The group had many questions for both presenters, especially in the area of doe pregnancy information, fawn survival and predator concerns.

Vegetative Browse Data- Andy Warren

- Andy gave a short presentation on some vegetation transect data he collected over the past several years on habitat browse trends from locations that have been consistently monitored on both sides of Highway 789. The overall message was the percent of cover/browse is declining due to major drought conditions and juniper encroachment.

Key points from the Platte Valley (PV) Habitat Plan-Katie Cheesbrough

(Link to plan below.)

http://wgfd.wyo.gov/web2011/Department/Wildlife/pdfs/PVMD_PLAN_FINAL0003248.pdf
Under Wildlife/Habitat tab/under Public Working Groups tab/Mule Deer Initiative tab

- The PV group had an extensive working document and a summary plan document.
- The group was advised to research and understand current data-habitat browse data.
- Make sure the group nails-down funding sources during the entire process.
- Decide how the group wants to prioritize habitat projects and how to fund them. There is a comprehensive list of funding sources and each one of them has their own application process and application deadlines.
- Make sure to include the mule deer collaring data in the final plan.
- The PV group did not have an energy section in their final plan, however, Katie advised the Baggs group needs an energy section in the plan. It will be important to also include future energy development planned for the area.
- Determine if there are any MOU's required when working with certain groups/partners.
- Including a habitat treatment table is a must for the plan; it is the "meat" of the habitat plan. That table is on page 43 in the PV document.
- Getting soil data is important.
- Take a look at previous habitat treatments completed in the areas. *Andy and Larry presented some of that information at the March meeting in Baggs.
- Include interstate mule deer (migration/travel) information. Key to have Colorado wildlife folks in the loop.

Mule deer and sage grouse enhancement project (Chris and Larry)

- Energy companies Warren E. and P. and, possibly, *Escalera, and Anadarko*, would like to propose that the funds industry has historically contributed to raptor monitoring to be temporarily placed on hold to allow for a new wildlife habitat enhancement project. This proposal is based in part by the wildlife monitoring data that has been collected over the life of the Atlantic Rim project which shows the raptor population is stable, while the mule deer and sage grouse populations have reached a population trend threshold that may suggest some sort of action may be required. *Please refer to the document: Mule Deer and Sage Grouse Enhancement Projects included in the meeting minute record.

Formation of Habitat Plan Subcommittees: Tony

- Tony formed three subcommittees to begin to tackle the habitat plan: Habitat Projects, Habitat (area) Priorities and Habitat Project Monitoring.
- Habitat Projects: Chris, Katie, Jim and Larry
- Habitat (area) Priorities including mapping: Jen, Kim, Ed and Bo
- Habitat Project Monitoring: Andy, Frank, Patty, Larry and Chris *Ed and Katie also offered to help out that that subcommittee also.
- The groups will receive further guidance in the coming week on how to proceed with the subcommittees.

Action Items:

ACTION: Tony please work with Andy and Larry to produce habitat treatment/vegetative maps in relation to where the mule deer are utilizing those habitats for the May meeting.

ACTION: Subcommittee work? How are you going to do this? Did you want to visit about this?

ACTION: Tony can you please reserve the Baggs Community Center for May .**CAN WE PLEASE GET IN 15 MINUTES EARLY TO SET UP?**

ACTION: Tony please decide if you want to approach WYDOT for the history on the fencing and the possibility of laying down the fence to allow animals to migrate.

Next meeting: Thursday, May 28, 2015, in Baggs at the Community Center, 5:30 p.m.