



Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Sheridan Region

January 2016 Newsletter



Sheridan Region

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Dayton: Dustin Shorma
Sheridan: Bruce Scigliano
Buffalo: Jim Seeman
Kaycee: Grant Gerharter
N. Gillette: Jackie Otto
S. Gillette: Dustin Kirsch
Moorcroft: J.D. Davis
Investigator: Scott Adell
Damage Tech: Joe Weyant

Public Information Specialist:

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Wildlife Biologists :

Wildlife Management Coordinator:
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Sheridan: Tim Thomas
Buffalo: Dan Thiele
Gillette: Erika Peckham
Terrestrial Habitat: Todd Caltrider

PLPW Program Coordinator:

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Fish Biologists:

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Aquatic Habitat: Travis Cundy

Habitat and Access Coordinator:

Seth Roseberry

Aquatic Invasive Species:

Greg Downey

Story Fish Hatchery:

Superintendent: Steve Diekema
Senior Fish Culturist: Brad Hughes
Culturist: Jennifer Meineke

Sheridan Bird Farm:

Supervisor: Darrell Meineke
Biologist: Nate Brown
Technician: Kurt Heiser

Poaching in Northwest Sheridan County Remained High In 2015

The number of deer and elk illegally killed in northwest Sheridan County continued to increase during 2015, despite efforts by Game and Fish to boost enforcement efforts in the area. Game wardens from Dayton and Sheridan spent an inordinate amount of time investigating reports of poached animals. Game wardens from other parts of Wyoming were brought in to enhance patrols of problem areas.

In an area along the Wyoming-Montana state line, 17 elk (nine bulls and eight cows) and eight deer (two buck mule deer, one doe mule deer, three buck white-tailed deer and two doe white-tailed deer) were illegally killed in 2015. Game wardens were able to make cases on five of the poached elk with four individuals being issued citations resulting in fines of \$6,130. The remaining cases are still being investigated.



A white-tailed buck deer shot and the head removed in northern Sheridan County.



Bull elk shot and left along Pass Creek Road in March 2015



Illegally killed bull elk with head and some meat removed.



A mule deer buck was killed and only its head removed.



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Bald Eagle Captured, Rehabilitated, and Released



Sheridan Region Wildlife Management Coordinator Lynn Jahnke captures the eagle with a fish landing net.



John Woller (on right) holds the door open on the transport cage as Wildlife Management Coordinator Lynn Jahnke prepares to place the eagle into the cage.



The released bald eagle takes flight.



The crowd that gathered to watch the bald eagle being released listens to Wildlife Management Coordinator Lynn Jahnke describe the eagles capture and recovery history.



Sheridan College employee John Woller (foreground at right) opened the door on the transport cage to release the bald eagle he had reported one month earlier.

On December 11, John Woller, an employee at Sheridan College, notified the Sheridan Regional G&F office that a bald eagle on the college campus could not fly. The eagle was captured and transferred to Ironside Bird Rescue in Cody where it was determined it had intestinal parasites and a bacterial infection. After a month of rehabilitation at Ironside, the eagle was transferred back to Sheridan. On Friday January 8, John Woller had the honor of opening the door on the transport cage and letting the bald eagle fly free again. Approximately 30 people from the Sheridan area came to watch the bald eagle being released.



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Pheasant Releases in 2015 From the Sheridan Bird Farm

From November 3 until December 24, 2015, Sheridan Bird farm personnel along with other game and fish personnel and volunteers sorted, loaded and released 14,519 pheasants onto 12 publicly accessible hunting sites in Sheridan, Johnson, Campbell, Bighorn and Fremont counties. During that period, 100 individual stocking events, or about 2.5 events per weekday took place. Vehicles used to haul and release birds logged approximately 11,800 miles during the months of November and December. The vehicles traveled an average 1,475 miles per week to release an average of 1,815 pheasants per week. The total pheasant production at the Sheridan Bird Farm in 2015 was 15,869, of which 1,200 hens and 150 roosters were kept at the farm for breeding purposes to produce pheasants for the 2016 season.



Bird Farm Supervisor Darrell Meineke releases pheasants onto a hunting area in Johnson County.



Veterans from the VA facility in Sheridan spent an afternoon volunteering at the bird farm .

Biologists and Game Wardens Complete Deer Classification Surveys



Sheridan Region Biologists and Game Wardens spent a lot of time looking at deer through spotting scopes in December.

Deer classification surveys were completed in the four Sheridan Region mule deer herd units in December. In the Powder River Herd Unit (HU) there were 50 bucks per 100 does and 79 fawns per 100 does, while in the Upper Powder River HU there were 43 bucks per 100 does and 67 fawns per 100 does. The Pumpkin Buttes HU had 45 bucks per 100 does and 71 fawns per 100 does. The Sheridan Region contains only the hunt areas on the east side of the North Bighorns HU where 31 bucks per 100 does and 83 fawns per 100 does were classified. The fawn ratios ranged from 53 fawns per 100 does in Hunt Area 32 to 92 fawns per 100 does in Hunt Area 17. While the fawn to doe ratios were down slightly this year compared to 2014, the ratios observed are still considered good.

Almost the entire Sheridan G&F Region is considered one white-tailed deer herd unit. The Powder River White-tailed Deer HU had 41 bucks per 100 does and 71 fawns per 100 does.



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Moose in Hunt Area 34 Counted From Helicopter

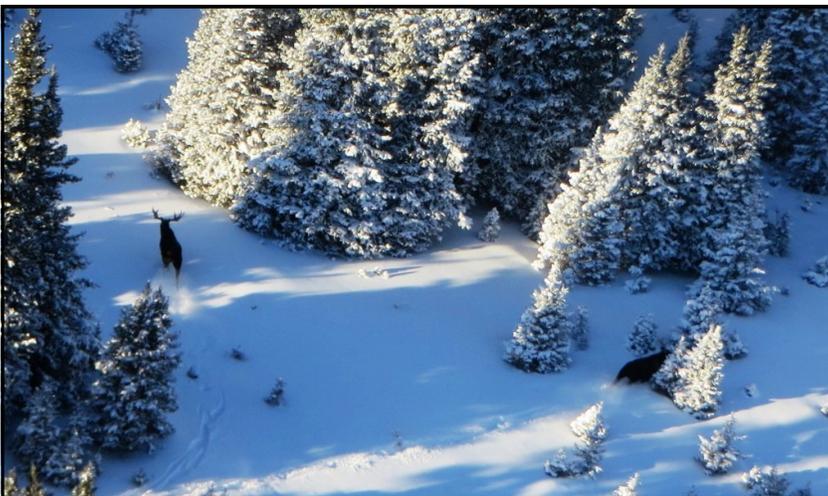


A Bell Jet Ranger helicopter was used to conduct a winter moose survey in Hunt Area 34 west of Buffalo.

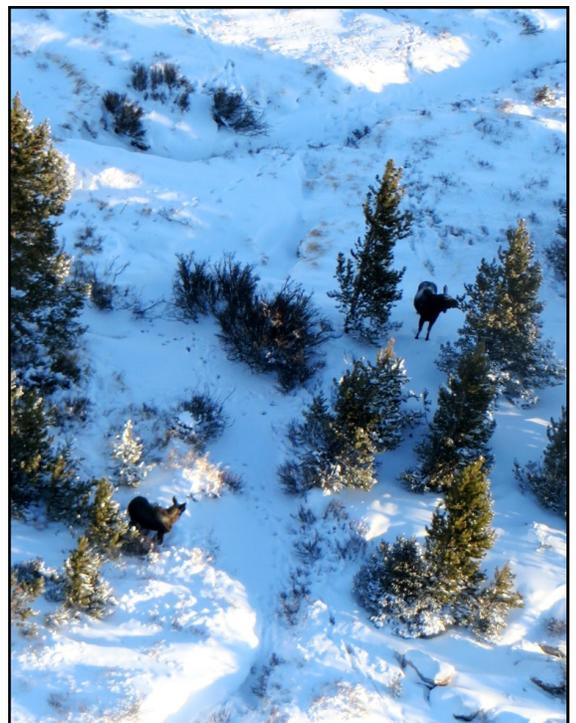


Moose observed were classified as cows, bulls or calves.

A Bell Jet Ranger helicopter was used to conduct a winter moose survey in Hunt Area 34 west of Buffalo. The survey was done to gather information on current moose numbers and herd composition. Herd composition, or classification surveys, provides information on calf production and survival as well as the proportion of bulls in the herd. A total of 24 moose were counted and classified during the survey, including 9 bulls, 9 cows and 6 calves. These totals compared to 33 moose in 2014 and 32 moose in 2013. The lower counts this year could be due to a combination of lower moose numbers and a lower detection rate. Moose often occupy conifer habitat adjacent to willow habitats which makes them difficult or impossible to observe. Survey results and other data will be used when setting the 2016 fall hunting season. Management direction has strived to decrease moose numbers to a level compatible with available habitat. Willow habitat is generally in poor condition, thereby providing reduced moose carrying capacity.



Two of the nine bull moose counted during the winter moose survey in Hunt Area 34.



Moose can occupy conifer habitats that make them difficult to detect.