

RAC AGENDA – December 2025



1. Welcome, RAC Introductions and RAC Procedure - RAC Chair	
2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes - RAC Chair	ACTION
3. Wildlife Board Meeting Update - RAC Chair	INFORMATIONAL
4. Regional Update - DWR Regional Supervisor	INFORMATIONAL
5. Utah Cougar Update - Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator	INFORMATIONAL
6. Utah Furbearer Update - Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator	INFORMATIONAL
7. Utah Black Bear Recommendations - Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator	ACTION
8. Predator Control Incentive Amendments – Rule R657-64 - Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator	ACTION
9. Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 - Darren DeBlois, Private Lands Public Wildlife Coordinator	ACTION

Meeting Locations

CR RAC – Dec. 9th 6:00 PM
Wildlife Resources Conference Room
1115 N. Main Street, Springville
<https://youtube.com/live/rsyqsbryeM>

NR RAC – Dec. 10th 6:00 PM
Weber County Commission Chambers
2380 Washington Blvd., Ogden
<https://youtube.com/live/hAaZC1siUYc>

SR RAC – Dec. 16th 6:00 PM
DNR Richfield City Complex
2031 Industrial Park Rd., Richfield
<https://youtube.com/live/jQY25kZNmqQ>

SER RAC – Dec. 17th 6:00 PM
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main St., Green River
https://youtube.com/live/3CO_mFuNt0Y

NER RAC – Dec. 18th 6:00 PM
Wildlife Resources NER Office
318 North Vernal Ave., Vernal
<https://youtube.com/live/FQjRaipS95g>

Board Meeting – January 8th 9:00 AM
Eccles Wildlife Education Center, Farmington Bay
<https://youtube.com/live/WwufUuLdHKA>



SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

JOEL FERRY
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

RILEY PECK
Division Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wildlife Board and Regional Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Chad Wilson, Game Mammals Coordinator

DATE: November 14, 2025

SUBJECT: Cougar status report

This report shows the most recent years of population and harvest of cougars. For more in-depth history, see our annual reports. The latest data shows a reduction in population. The cougar harvest was down last year, possibly due to the reduction in population over the last several years.

Population – This represents the minimums and should be used to look at the trend more than anything else.

Year	Pop est	Low pop est	High pop est	Lambda
2018	1748	1659	1908	1.03
2019	1614	1321	1825	0.92
2020	1354	1321	1394	0.84
2021	1274	1118	1373	0.94
2022	1162	1095	1204	0.91
2023	1069	829	1206	0.92
2024	1058	1037	1079	0.99

Harvest

Season	Total
2019-20	664
2020-21	753
2021-22	555
2022-23	579
2023-24	567
2024-25	371

CW



SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

JOEL FERRY
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

RILEY PECK
Division Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wildlife Board and Regional Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Chad Wilson, Game Mammals Coordinator

DATE: November 14, 2025

SUBJECT: Furbearer updates and reminders

The following are the recommended furbearer season dates and permits for 2026-2027.

Bobcat

Permits are based on the bobcat management plan, taking into consideration the proportion of kittens and yearlings in the harvest, adult survival, and percent of females in the harvest.

- 6 permits per individual
- Season dates: November 18, 2026 – March 1, 2027
- No permit cap

Other furbearer season dates

- Beaver and mink – September 15, 2026 – April 1, 2027
- Marten, badger, gray fox, kit fox, ringtail, spotted skunk, weasel: September 15, 2026 – March 1, 2027

There will be a digital only guidebook available January 2026, combining furbearer, cougar, and black bear. This is to consolidate information for hunters and trappers.

CW



SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

JOEL FERRY
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

RILEY PECK
Division Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wildlife Board and Regional Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Chad Wilson, Game Mammals Coordinator

DATE: November 14, 2025

SUBJECT: Black bear recommendations and season summary

The following is a summary of black bear recommendations for the 2026 season:

- Create the Dolores Triangle unit by separating it from the La Sal Mountain unit to match other big game unit boundaries.
- Keep the La Sal Mountains permit numbers the same.
- Add 10 permits to the Dolores Triangle unit.
 - 2 spring permits
 - 6 summer permits
 - 2 fall permits

The first year of the three-year recommendation cycle has just been completed. The remainder of this memo is for informational purposes only, highlighting recent data. For a more in-depth history of population trends and harvest, see our annual report.

Population – This represents minimums and should be used to look at the trend more than anything else.

Year	Pop est	Low pop est	High pop est	Lambda
2016	2155	1967	2457	0.97
2017	2152	1989	2442	1.00
2018	2207	2077	2427	1.03
2019	2098	1974	2337	0.95
2020	1912	1785	2135	0.91
2021	1884	1780	2077	0.99
2022	1883	1780	2081	1.00

Harvest

Year	Hunter harvest	Percent females
2019	369	36
2020	467	34
2021	432	40
2022	423	44
2023	342	42
2024	407	32
2025	466	39

CW



SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

JOEL FERRY
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

RILEY PECK
Division Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wildlife Board and Regional Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Chad Wilson, Game Mammals Coordinator

DATE: November 14, 2025

SUBJECT: Predator Control Incentive Rule changes R657-64

Recommended changes to the predator control incentive rule R657-64-6 have been made to clarify that predator harvest locations are protected. See the attached redline for all the changes.

CW

R657. Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources.

R657-64. Predator Control Incentives.

R657-64-1. Purpose and Authority.

(1) This rule is promulgated under authority of Section 23A-11-402 to establish procedures for:

(a) targeted predator control and general predator control programs administered by the division for the benefit of mule deer; and

(b) creation and distribution of educational and training materials related to mule deer protection.

R657-64-6. Trap and Hunting Locations.

(1) Program participants and contract vendors are required to provide GPS data documenting the precise location where each coyote is taken.

(2) ~~To the extent GPS data discloses the location of trap lines or hunting areas, and public disclosure of that data exposes the traps to the possibility of theft and damage or the hunting area to exploitation by others, the data may be~~ The GPS data is classified as "protected" under Subsection 63G-2-305(2) and restricted from public disclosure pursuant to Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act, ~~provided the requirements of Subsection (3) are satisfied.~~

~~(3) Any person desiring to protect GPS data from public disclosure that locates trap lines or hunting areas must submit to the division a written claim of confidentiality explaining:~~

~~(a) the financial and commercial harm reasonably expected to occur if the data is subject to public disclosure; and~~

~~(b) why the person submitting the data has a greater interest in prohibiting access than the public in obtaining access.~~

KEY: wildlife, predators, game laws, wildlife laws

Date of Last Change: March 11, 2025

Notice of Continuation: June 13, 2022

Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: 23A-11-401; 23A-11-402; 23A-1-204



SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DIEDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

JOEL FERRY
Executive Director

Division of Wildlife Resources

Riley Peck
Division Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wildlife Board and Regional Advisory Council Members

FROM: Darren DeBloois, Private Lands/Public Wildlife Coordinator

DATE: November 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Cooperative Agreements for Big Game and Turkey

DWR is proposing a new rule for Cooperative Agreements for Big Game and Turkey. The proposed rule for Cooperative Agreements aims to establish a proactive, mutually beneficial framework for managing big game and turkey populations that utilize private cultivated lands. This approach is rooted in the recognition that achieving population objectives and enhancing wildlife health often depends on the quality and availability of forage on private property.

The core rationale is as follows:

1. **Population Enhancement:** The agreements are specifically designed to benefit **below-objective big game or turkey populations** by incentivizing landowners to manage their crops or livestock forage in a manner conducive to wildlife nutrition.
2. **Improved Forage and Nutrition:** Direct payments to landowners for forage or crops used by wildlife will **increase forage availability and nutrition** during critical periods, thereby supporting healthier, more productive herds and flocks.
3. **Alternative to Depredation Programs:** The agreement offers an alternative to the existing reactive depredation programs. By entering into an agreement, a landowner accepts the wildlife use in exchange for defined compensation and cooperation toward shared management goals, allowing the Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) to move away from costly, reactionary depredation responses. The agreement is **in lieu of participation in depredation programs**.
4. **Meeting Management Goals:** The agreements mandate that all participating lands **must meet defined goals and objectives** for wildlife management, ensuring that public funds are used effectively to achieve specific conservation outcomes.
5. **Hunter Opportunity and Herd Management:** By improving population health and ensuring adequate resources, the program can help **reduce female harvest** where necessary to promote growth, ultimately leading to sustained populations and an **increase in hunter opportunities** in the future.

In essence, this rule shifts the management paradigm from addressing conflict after it occurs (depredation) to creating structured, voluntary partnerships with private landowners to actively manage habitat and forage, thereby serving the broader public interest in robust big game and turkey populations. DWR is recommending a new rule to define how we may enter into cooperative agreements with private landowners to work toward enhancing big game and turkey populations that use private cultivated lands.



R657. Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources

R657-74 Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey

R657-74-1. Purpose and Authority

(1) Under authority of Section 23A-2-401, this rule defines:

- (a) how the division may enter into cooperative agreements for big game or turkey use on "cleared and planted land";
- (b) management objectives for cooperative agreements entered into under this rule; and
- (c) the procedures, standards, requirements and limits for entering into cooperative agreements under this rule.

(2) The division may pay a private landowner with cleared and planted land through a cooperative agreement for big game or turkey use.

(a) The cooperative agreement may be made for up to six years

- (i) all cooperative agreements entered into under this rule shall be evaluated every three years at a minimum to determine if said agreement is still meeting the intended goals and objectives.
- (ii) a cooperative agreement can be evaluated at any point during the agreement with a written request from either party to re-evaluate the agreement.

(b) The cooperative agreement is entered into in lieu of participation in the depredation program, described in Title 23A, Chapter 7, Cooperative Wildlife Management Units Act, and Rule R657-44. The property subject to the cooperative agreement is excluded from any relief granted by those programs.

(3) The division may approve a cooperative agreement for big game or turkey use on cleared and planted land when, in the opinion of the division, such agreement:

- (a) (i) will help big game or turkey populations that are below unit population objective; or
- (ii) will help manage turkey populations; and
- (b) a cooperative agreement will result in:
 - (i) increased forage availability and nutrition for big game or turkey populations;
 - (ii) a reduction of female harvest in the population; and
 - (iii) increased hunter opportunities.

R657-74-2. Definitions.

(1) Terms used in this rule are defined in Sections 23A-1-101, 23A-6-101, 23A-1-206, 23A-8-401, 23A-8-402, 23A-8-403, 23A-8-404, 23A-8-405 and Subsection 23A-2-201(4).

(2) "Cleared and planted land" means private land or privately leased state or federal land used to produce a cultivated crop for commercial gain and the cultivated crop is routinely irrigated or routinely mechanically or manually harvested, or is crop residue that has forage value for livestock.