

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting

January 8, 2026, Eccles Wildlife Education Center

1157 South Waterfowl Way, Farmington, Utah

The meeting can be viewed live at <https://youtube.com/live/WwufUuLdHKA>

Thursday, January 8, 2026 – 9:00 am

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Approval of Agenda
– Gary Nielson, Chairman | ACTION |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
– Gary Nielson, Chairman | ACTION |
| 3. Old Business/Action Log
– Paula Richmond, Vice-Chairman | CONTINGENT |
| 4. DWR Update
– DWR Director | INFORMATIONAL |
| 5. Law Enforcement update on Drones and Thermal use
– Chad Bettridge, Major, DNR | INFORMATIONAL |
| 6. Utah Cougar Update
– Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator | INFORMATIONAL |
| 7. Utah Furbearer Update
– Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator | INFORMATIONAL |
| 8. Utah Black Bear Recommendations
– Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator | ACTION |
| 9. Predator Control Incentive Amendments – Rule R657-64
– Darren DeBlois, Private Lands Public Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |
| 10. Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74
– Darren DeBlois, Private Lands Public Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |
| 11. Board Appeal – Brandon Jeffs – 1:00 pm | ACTION |
| 12. Other Business
– Gary Nielson, Chairman | CONTINGENT |

Wildlife Board Action Log

Following is a summary of Wildlife Board motions directing the Division to take action and the response to date:

Fall 2026 – Target Date – Antelope Island MOU

MOTION: I move that we ask the division to look at the Antelope Island Memorandum of Understanding and adjust both season dates and hunting structure. This is to be placed on the Action Log.

Motion made by: Justin Oliver

Assigned to: Dax Mangus

Action: Under study

Placed on Action Log: December 4, 2025

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
December 4, 2025, Eccles Wildlife Education Center
1157 South Waterfowl Way, Farmington, Utah

The meeting can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ggjyF48cnY&t=4693s>

Revised November 29, 2025

Thursday, December 4, 2025 – 9:00 am

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Approval of Agenda
– Gary Nielson, Chairman | ACTION |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
– Gary Nielson, Chairman | ACTION |
| 3. Old Business/Action Log
– Paula Richmond, Vice-Chair | CONTINGENT |
| 4. DWR Update
– Riley Peck, DWR Director | INFORMATIONAL |
| 5. Mandatory Testing for Chronic Wasting Disease | INFORMATIONAL |
| 6. 2025-2027 Hunt Tables and Season Dates Revisions
– Sam Robertson, Northern Region Wildlife Biologist | ACTION |
| 7. Book Cliffs Bison Management Plan
– Clint Sampson, Northeastern Region Wildlife Biologist | ACTION |
| 8. R657-42 Amendments – Natural Disaster Relief
– Lindy Varney, Wildlife Licensing Coordinator | ACTION |
| 9. CWMU and Landowner Permit Recommendations
– Darren DeBloois, Public Lands Private Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |
| 10. Blackhawk CWMU and Hiawatha CWMU Variance Recommendations
– Darren DeBloois, Public Lands Private Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |
| 11. Other Business
– Gary Nielson, Chairman | CONTINGENT |

Wildlife Board Action Log

Following is a summary of Wildlife Board motions directing the Division to take action and the response to date:

– Target Date – Antelope Island MOU Hunt Structure and Season Dates

MOTION: I move that we ask the division to look at the Antelope Island Memorandum of Understanding and adjust both season dates and hunting structure.

Motion made by: Jusin Oliver

Assigned to: Dax Mangus

Action: Under study

Placed on Action Log: December 4, 2025

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
December 4, 2025, Eccles Wildlife Education Center
1157 S. Waterfowl Way, Farmington, Utah
Summary of Motions

1) Approval of Agenda (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Chris Robinson, seconded by Bob Christensen and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda.

2) Approval of Minutes (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Paula Richmond, seconded by Justin Oliver and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the September 18, 2025 Wildlife Board Meeting as submitted.

3) 2025-2025 Hunt Tables and Season Dates Revisions (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Justin Oliver, seconded by Chris Robinson and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we ask the division to look at the Antelope Island Memorandum of Understanding and adjust both season dates and hunting structure. This is to be put on the Action Log.

The following motion was made by Bob Christensen, seconded by Justin Oliver and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the 2025-2027 Hunt Table and Season Dates as presented by the Division.

4) Book Cliffs Bison Management Plan (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Justin Oliver, seconded by Ryan Foutz and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we accept the Book Cliffs Bison Management Plan as presented by the Division.

5) R657-42 Amendments – Natural Disaster Relief **(Action)**

The following motion was made by Chris Robinson, seconded by Paula Richmond and passed unanimously.

MOTION: I move that we adopt the amendments to R657-42 Natural Disaster Relief as presented.

6) CWMU and Landowner Permit Recommendations **(Action)**

The following motion was made by Paula Richmond, seconded by Bob Christensen and passed unanimously with 1 recusal (Chris Robinson).

MOTION: I move that we approve the CWMU and landowner permit recommendations as presented by the Division.

7) Blackhawk CWMU and Hiawatha CWMU Variance Recommendations **(Action)**

The following motion was made by , seconded by and passed unanimously with 1 recusal (Paula Richmond).

MOTION: I move that we accept the Blackhawk CWMU and Hiawatha CWMU Variance Recommendations as presented by the Division.

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
December 4, 2025, Eccles Wildlife Education Center
1157 S Waterfowl Way, Farmington, Utah
Attendance

Wildlife Board

Gary Nielson – Chair
Paula Richmond – Vice-Chair

RAC Chairs

Central – Brock McMillan
Southern – Austin Atkinson (online)
Northeastern – Nathan Crapo
Northern – Brad Buchanan

Division Personnel

Justin Shannon
Kenny Johnson
Chris Wood
Rusty Robinson
Dustin Mitchell
Ashley Green
Kevin Bunnell
Miles Hanberg
Jim Christensen

Covy Jones
Staci Coons
Paige Wiren
Hayley Pace
Robin Goodman
Lindy Varney
Dave Smedley
Brad Crompton
Chad Wilson

Dax Mangus
Danny Summers
Darren DeBloois
Sam Robertson
Ginger Stout
Clint Sampson
Charles Lyons

Public Present

Troy Justensen
Angie Wonnacott
Kevin Norman
Ben Crouder

John Baur
Phil Crouwther
Troy Henrie
Travis Jensen

Hadli Sorenson

Utah Wildlife Board Meeting
December 4, 2025, Eccles Wildlife Education Center
1157 S Waterfowl Way, Farmington, Utah
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ggjvF48cnY&t=4693s>

00:00:01	Chairman Nielson called the meeting to order, welcomed the public and read the meeting protocol guidelines.
00:01:46	<p>1) Approval of the Agenda (Action)</p> <p>The following motion was made by Chris Robinson, seconded by Bob Christensen and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we approve the agenda.</p> <p>Chairman Nielson noted that Kent Johnson could not attend the meeting, and then asked the Board and RAC chairs to introduce themselves.</p>
00:03:57	<p>2) Approval of the Minutes</p> <p>The following motion was made by Paula Richmond, seconded by Justin Oliver and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we approve the minutes of the September 18, 2025 Wildlife Board Meeting as submitted.</p>
00:04:23	<p>3) Old Business/Action Log (Contingent)</p> <p>Vice-Chair Richmond gave updates on Action Log items and noted that two of those items would be covered in today's meeting.</p> <p>Big Game Coordinator Dax Mangus gave an update on the division's looking into the use of aerial equipment for hunting and retrieval, and Licensing Coordinator Lindy Varney gave an update on and shared a presentation titled, "Big Game Permits Issued Outside of the Hunt Drawing."</p> <p>The Board asked for clarification on CWMU permits and the loss of accumulated points.</p>

00:19:25	<p>3) DWR Update (Informational)</p> <p>Director Peck recognized the recent passing of board member Kent Johnson's wife.</p> <p>He then highlighted the following: the division's aquatic section took possession of a critically endangered species of woundfin and flew approximately 200 adult and 600 young woundfin from a New Mexico facility to the DWR Logan fish hatchery; division staff are in the middle of capture season.</p> <p>He noted that the division has been holding statewide public mule deer meetings and having conversations about how to increase deer herds, that mule deer winter conditions reporting has just started, and that this year's any legal weapon hunts had an almost 49% harvest success rate.</p> <p>Director Peck also thanked the eight career service employees who are retiring from the division at the end of the month.</p>
00:25:18	<p>5) Mandatory Testing for Chronic Wasting Disease (Action)</p> <p>Wildlife Veterinarian Dr. Ginger Stout opened the floor for questions.</p> <p>The Board asked if the division intends to provide deer gland removal instructions to the public, and if lab testing result turnaround times could be shortened. The Board also asked if there is any evidence that CWD can, or does, get passed on to humans, and if submitting a gland sample might be included in the mandatory harvest report. The Board asked for confirmation that the CDC does not recommend eating meat that has tested positive for CWD, and that then disposing of the infected meat would not be considered wonton destruction of wildlife. The Board asked for clarification on which hunters, or hunts, would be mandatorily required to report.</p> <p>The Board noted that it can be frustrating for meat processors to be asked to put processing a deer on hold pending CWD test results.</p> <p>The Board asked Dr. Stout to update the board on current sampling processes and procedures, and new sampling ideas that are being discussed. The Board also asked if the division anticipated any particular testing result outcomes.</p>
00:35:22	<p>6) 2025-2027 Hunt Tables and Season Dates Revisions (Action)</p> <p>Northern Region Wildlife Biologist Sam Robertson gave an overview of the proposed revisions.</p>
00:36:32	<p>Board/RAC Questions</p> <p>There were no questions from the Board or RAC chairs.</p>

00:36:51	<p>Public Electronic Comments</p> <p>There were no online public comments on this agenda item.</p>
00:36:59	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Public comments were accepted at this time.</p>
00:39:42	<p>RAC Recommendations</p> <p>All RACs voted to accept the recommendations as presented.</p>
00:42:07	<p>Board Discussion</p> <p>The Board commented on the archery dates and the Antelope Island hunts.</p> <p>The following motion was made by Justin Oliver, seconded by Chris Robinson and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we ask the division to look at the Antelope Island Memorandum of Understanding and adjust both season dates and hunting structure. This is to be put on the Action Log.</p> <p>The Board commented on one of the topics discussed in the RAC meetings, and on the division's strategy regarding the proposed changes.</p> <p>The following motion was made by Bob Christensen, seconded by Justin Oliver and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we accept the 2025-2027 Hunt Tables and Season Dates as presented by the Division.</p>
00:49:27	<p>7) Book Cliffs Bison Management Plan (Action)</p> <p>Northeastern Region Wildlife Biologist Clint Sampson noted that there were two members listed on the Bison Committee who were not able to participate in the committee, and he then summarized the proposed changes to the Book Cliffs bison plan.</p>
00:51:44	<p>Board/RAC Questions</p> <p>The Board asked Clint to predict how Colorado's change of bison classification big-game animal might affect Utah's Book Cliffs' herds, if we have an idea of how many bison have been taken on the Colorado side of the state border, and how bison might impact cattle herds. The Board asked the division to mention how range treatments impact bison herds. The Board thanked the division and all organizations who have collaborated to improve Book Cliffs habitat for wildlife.</p>
00:58:14	<p>Public Electronic Comments</p> <p>There were no online public comments on this agenda item.</p>

00:58:16	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>There were no public comments on this agenda item.</p>
00:58:43	<p>RAC Recommendations</p> <p>All RACs voted to accept the recommendations as presented.</p>
00:58:44	<p>Board Discussion</p> <p>The Board commented on the impressive scope of habitat improvement projects that the division and conservation partners have undertaken and thanked all who are involved in those efforts.</p> <p>The following motion was made by Justin Oliver, seconded by Ryan Foutz and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we accept the Book Cliffs Bison Management Plan as presented by the Division.</p>
01:01:27	<p>8) R657-42 Amendments – Natural Disaster Relief (Action)</p> <p>Licensing Coordinator Lindy Varney summarized the rule and opened the floor for questions.</p>
01:02:41	<p>Board/RAC Questions</p> <p>The Board noted that if this rule were in place prior to the 2025 Monroe Canyon Fire, the Board would not have had to call an emergency meeting to discuss how the division might help hunters who had a permit for that unit.</p> <p>The Board then asked for hunter experience statistics for those hunters who did have a permit for the Monroe unit and took advantage of one of the options presented to them by the division, and also asked for an explanation of why the division offered relief to Monroe Unit hunters and not hunters with permits for Pine Valley Unit where the Forsyth Fire occurred.</p> <p>Director Peck clarified the division's position.</p> <p>The Board asked how, if this rule change passed, would the division director decide when relief would be granted.</p>
01:10:08	<p>Public Electronic Comments</p> <p>There were no online public comments on this agenda item.</p> <p>Chairman Nielson commented that there may be fewer online comments because the quantity and quality of information that is shared with the public.</p>

01:10:10	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>There were no public comments on this agenda item.</p>
01:10:11	<p>RAC Recommendations</p> <p>All RACs unanimously voted to accept the rule amendment as presented.</p>
01:11:34	<p>Board Discussion</p> <p>The following motion was made by Chris Robinson, seconded by Paula Richmond and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we adopt the amendments to R657-42 Natural Disaster Relief as presented.</p>
01:12:21	<p>9) CWMU and Landowner Permit Recommendations (Action)</p> <p>Public Lands Private Wildlife Coordinator Darren DeBloois clarified three discrepancies in the information posted online presentation or in the RAC packet.</p>
01:14:06	<p>Board/RAC Questions</p> <p>Chairman Nielson commented on the Indian Head CWMU permit recommendation.</p> <p>Chris Robinson asked the chairman if he should disclose his role as a CWMU owner or recuse himself from voting on this agenda item.</p> <p>Ryan Foutz asked the same question about the status of his vote.</p> <p>The Board asked why the Two Bear CWMU dropped out of the program.</p>
01:17:16	<p>RAC Recommendations</p> <p>All RACs unanimously voted to accept the recommendations.</p>
01:18:13	<p>Board Discussion</p> <p>The following motion was made by Paula Richmond, seconded by Bob Christensen and passed with Chris Robinson recusing himself from the vote.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we approve the CWMU and landowner permit recommendations as presented by the Division.</p>
01:18:56	<p>10) Blackhawk CWMU and Hiawatha CWMU Variance Recommendations (Action)</p> <p>Public Lands Private Wildlife Coordinator Darren DeBloois gave a brief explanation of this agenda item.</p>

01:20:36	<p>Board/RAC Questions</p> <p>Chairman Nielson noted that he had served on the CWMU Advisory Committee and that the recommendations before the board today were very well vetted.</p> <p>The Board asked what the original dates were.</p> <p>The RAC asked if the extension would be offered to the public as well as private hunters.</p>
01:22:47	<p>Public Electronic Comments</p> <p>There were no online public comments on this agenda item.</p>
01:22:48	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>There were no public comments on this agenda item.</p>
01:23:01	<p>Board Discussion</p> <p>The Board noted that the current process for vetting and arriving at variance recommendations to bring to the board is effective and efficient.</p> <p>The following motion was made by Justin Shannon, seconded by Ryan Foutz and passed unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we accept the Blackhawk CWMU and Hiawatha CWMU Variance Recommendations as presented by the Division.</p>
01:24:57	<p>Other Business</p> <p>The Board asked for an update on a previous Action Log item regarding new technologies, specifically an update on what the division witnessed in the field, or heard about from hunters about seeing the use of drones and, in particular, thermals out in the field. The concern is that hunters are using drones and thermals in the field and illegally harvesting animals. The Board noted that if a guide or spotter is caught using a thermal device, the outfitter that person works for can lose their license.</p> <p>The Board asked if the division could send out calendar invitations to the Board for future RAC meetings.</p>
01:31:06	<p>Meeting adjourned</p>

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Summary of Motions**

1) Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action)

CR MOTION: To approve the recommendations as presented with the new unit and additional 10 tags, with the condition that there will be a presentation from the biologist in the future of the bear population.

VOTE: Passed 7-1

MOTION: To ask the Wildlife Board to look into the ramifications to allow hunters up to two bear permits in a season.

VOTE: Passed 7-1

MOTION: To ask the Wildlife Board to look into the possibility of a Spring over the counter harvest objective bear tag within the next two years.

VOTE: Passed 6-2

NR MOTION: I move we approve Utah Black Bear Recommendations as presented.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously

MOTION: I move we ask the Wildlife Board to add to the action log to have the division evaluate the possibility of two bear permits per year.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously

SR MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

VOTE: Passed 8-1

SER MOTION: To stay status quo and not support the boundary change.

VOTE: Failed 5-2

MOTION: To accept the Division's recommendation as presented.

VOTE: Passed 5-2

NER MOTION: To accept the recommendation as presented with the exception of removing the ten permits designated to the Dolores Triangle from the La Sal permit numbers.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously

2) Predator Control Incentive Amendments- Rule R657-64 (Action)

CR, NR, SER, NER

MOTION: I move we approve Predator Control Incentive Amendments- Rule R657-64 as presented.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously

SR MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented.

VOTE: Passed 8-1

3) Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 (Action)

- CR MOTION: To approve the changes as presented with the addition of “landowner or lease holder” to the definition.
VOTE: Passed Unanimously
- NR MOTION: I move we accept Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 as presented and add verbiage requiring reporting for the first three years.
VOTE: Passed Unanimously
- SR MOTION: I move that we accept the Division’s recommendations as presented.
VOTE: Passed Unanimously
- SER MOTION: To approve the Division’s recommendations as presented.
VOTE: Passed 4-3
- NER MOTION: To accept the rule as presented with the addition of providing annual updates.
VOTE: Passed Unanimously

4) Additional Motion

The Northeastern RAC made a motion during the Utah Furbearer Update (Informational Only) to bring forward the thought to have a different bobcat license that is not tied into the Furbearer license. This motion passed unanimously.

RAC AGENDA December 9th, 2025

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Welcome, RAC Introductions and RAC Procedure
- RAC Chair Brock McMillan | |
| 2. | Approval of Agenda and Minutes
- RAC Chair Brock McMillan | ACTION |
| 3. | Wildlife Board Meeting Update
- RAC Chair Brock McMillan | INFORMATIONAL |
| 4. | Regional Update
- DWR Regional Supervisor Danny Summers | 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 |

**Central Region RAC Meeting
Summary of Motions
December 9th, 2025
Springville, Utah**

- 1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes.

The following motion was made by Kellen Hyer, seconded by Joshua Greenhalgh, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the agenda as presented.

- 2) Utah Black Bear Recommendations

The following motion was made by Braden Sheppard and seconded by Jim Shuler and passed with seven in favor, one opposed.

MOTION 1: To approve the recommendations as presented with the new unit and additional 10 tags, with the condition that there will be a presentation from the biologist in the future of the bear population.

Utah Black Bear Recommendations

The following motion was made by Tyson Skeen and seconded by Braden Sheppard and passed with seven in favor, one opposed.

MOTION 2: To ask the Wildlife Board to look into the ramifications to allow hunters up to two bear permits in a season.

The following motion was made by Kellen Hyer and seconded by Joshua Greenhalgh and passed with six in favor, two opposed.

MOTION 3: To ask the Wildlife Board to look into the possibility of a Spring over the counter harvest objective bear tag within the next two years.

- 3) Predator Control Incentive Amendments – Rule R657-64

The following motion was made by Drew Eline and seconded by Jim Shuler and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the amendments as presented.

- 4) Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74

The following motion was made by Braden Sheppard and seconded by Tyson Skeen and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the changes as presented with the addition of “landowner or lease holder” to the definition.

Central Region RAC Meeting

Attendance
December 9th, 2025
Springville, Utah

RAC Members

Attending

Brock McMillan
Drew Eline
John Ziegler (online)
Tyson Skeen (online)
Josh Greenhalgh
Braden Sheppard
Kellen Hyer (online)
Josh Kaze (online)
Jim Shuler (online)

Absent

Steve Lund (absent)
Bryce Castagnetto
Amos Murphy
Eric Reid

Wildlife Board

Gary Nielson (excused)
Paula Richmond (absent)
Kent Johnson (absent)

DWR Personnel

Bailee Prestwich
Danny Summers
Chad Wilson
Michael Packer
Nicole Passeri
Matt Briggs
Jason Robinson - Online
Darren Debloois
David Smedley

Total members of the public in attendance: 5

Central Region RAC Meeting

December 9th, 2025

Springville, Utah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsyqsibryeM>

06:00:04	RAC Chair Brock McMillan called the meeting to order. He called the roll of RAC members and indicated which UDWR personnel were present on the broadcast. He explained the process that there will be no live presentations and public comments will be taken during the meeting.
06:03:18	1/2) Approval of Agenda & Past Minutes (Action) The following motion was made by Kellen Hyer , seconded by Joshua Greenhalgh and passed unanimously. MOTION: To approve the agenda as presented.
06:03:31	3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update (Informational) RAC Chair Brock McMillan provided an update on the previous Wildlife Board Meeting.
06:04:47	4) DWR Regional Update (Informational) Danny Summers updated the RAC on all regional activities. Wildlife Section <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wrapped up pheasant releases.- Wrapping up deer classification (RAC members are invited)- Deer captures are taking place this week and next on the Manti, Nebo, Oquirrh, and Stansbury units.- Will be conducting winter camera traps in the Ibapah Valley for Pygmy rabbits in areas with historical records. Aquatics Section <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lower Provo River E-Fishing- Avg 3,961 brown trout/mile.- 17% of brown trout over 15 inches.- Trophy whitefish opportunities.- Improved flows at mouth of canyon helping.- Water's Confirmed as Blue Ribbon- Lower Provo- Middle Provo- Deer Creek- Jordanelle- Strawberry- Working on WRI/HC proposals for next FY- Utah Lake fishing jetty feasibility study.- Community Lake/Lake Hill dredging.- Jordanelle/Deer Creek habitat structures. Habitat Section <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Finished planting 143,000 shrub seedlings on Forest Service, BLM, State and private lands.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completed a 4,738 acre prescribed fire to improve mule deer habitat on the south San Pitch mountain range. - Completed 1,080 acres of aspen enhancement on mule deer summer range at Twelve Mile Canyon and Strawberry Ridge. <p>Outreach Section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - November 19 public deer meeting recording now viewable on DWR YouTube. - Manti Meadow Walk-in Access property now enrolled in Sanpete County. - Helping recruit volunteers to assist Audubon Christmas Bird Counts in the region. - Ice Fishing Seminar. Jan 13th at Springville office. Presented by Tyler Robinson, Sportsfish Bio. <p>Law Enforcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suspects in the Mapleton/Springville case, involving the illegal shooting of deer with archery equipment and a spotlight in residential areas/fields, have finally been charged after over a year. - Officer Greg Stewart is finalizing an investigation regarding hunters who killed multiple deer and illegally used others' tags. - Ongoing issues with hunters neglecting different season closing dates for extended archery areas resulted in the seizure of two bucks harvested in closed areas. - Waterfowl season is busy with associated calls/violations: late shooting, wrong species identification, and over-limit catches.
06:12:51	<p>5) Utah Cougar Update (Informational)</p> <p>Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator presented to the board.</p>
06:14:08	<p>Public Online Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were no online comments received for this topic.
06:14:13	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC asked questions around how the data is collected and what kind of data is used to determine the decline of cougar populations. The RAC asked what the DWR could do about the declining numbers of cougars on the landscape should the number decline to a point they are concerned with over-harvest. The RAC asked what the estimated population of cougars was. The RAC asked if the cougar data provided would consider other types of mortality other than just hunter harvests (i.e. roadkill). The RAC asked what other variables may have affected the lower harvest rate compared to the previous year. The RAC was curious when the DWR anticipated hunters would see the Deer population grow/increase with less lions on the landscape. The RAC was curious if the DWR had considered using DNA to determine the cougar genetics for aiding in determining cougar populations. .</p>
06:22:49	<p>Public Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chet Young - Can you provide any details on the six units where state trappers have been hired to kill cougars? - Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator - Yes there are six different units where we

	<p>are going to see if we're really hard on predators, specifically cougars, if that will help aid the deer population over a three year period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jaden Tuckett - If there are lethal traps and a dog gets stuck in it then dies, what happens? - Chad Wilson - There are risks when hunting or recreating. However there are many variables still being discussed and that may be something we consider in the future.
06:25:48	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>The RAC encouraged the DWR to continue providing these types of updates to keep the public and the RAC informed on the harvests of cougars. The RAC also reiterated that they would like to see the DWR and the Wildlife board continue to use the biological data we have to make decisions surrounding cougar harvests in the state.</p>
06:29:23	<p>6) Utah Furbearer Update (Informational)</p> <p>Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator presented to the board.</p>
06:30:03	<p>Public Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were no online or in person comments received for this topic.
06:30:11	<p>RAC Questions/Discussion</p> <p>The RAC discussed what the benefit was around combining all of the guidebooks together.</p>
06:31:44	<p>7) Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action)</p> <p>Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator presented to the board.</p>
06:32:40	<p>Public Online Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Danny Summers summarized online comments received.
06:33:17	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC asked why we didn't add more unit recommendations for this proposal. The RAC asked what the DWR has determined is causing the bear population to be in a slight decline. The RAC clarified that the higher harvest of females correlates with the lower hunter harvest. Over the counter harvest objective bear permits were also discussed. The RAC asked if the DWR was comfortable with the quotas that are set for harvest objective bears and if they would be fine with hunters meeting those objectives.</p>
06:38:43	<p>Public Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chet Young - On the three year cycle, there is no change of the amount to harvest. Why are we not taking those additional 10 tags from the La Sal unit

	<p>and lowering the objective there?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chad Wilson - The thought process around this is that the Dolores Triangle unit bears have really not been touched as much in comparison to the La Sal. - Chet Young - Is the bear harvest already declining though and now it may not be sustainable? - Chad Wilson - I did not have direct discussion with the other regions but my understanding is that very little hunters actually harvest on the Dolores Triangle. - Jaden Tuckett - The logic behind it seems like you are making hunters deal with bears directly in that Dolores Triangle right? - Chad Wilson - Yes. - Jaden Tuckett - So would that knowledge still work around the cougar population? Send hunters after nuisance bears specifically? - Chad Wilson - No, unfortunately we cannot bring tags back with the current legislative action in place.
06:41:46	<p>RAC Comments</p> <p>The RAC mentioned that there were only two units that actually met the harvest objective this last season and that the state is clearly not in lack of bears. The RAC also proposed what concerns there would be around someone who receives a LE bear tag plus buys a harvest objective bear tag over the counter? If someone is hunting bears, why couldn't they hunt multiple? The RAC asked if it would be possible to have the biologist over the area provide feedback on the population next time. The RAC commented on the lack of biological data and speculation around the declining bear population.</p>
06:50:11	<p>Public Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hunter Loveless - The UT Houndsman Association - We are concerned about the additional unit and tags on an already declining unit. We would suggest waiting a couple more years to give it a chance to recover. - Chet Young - Tyson I got a few things for you. One thing I would say is to look at the units that have not hit harvest objects in comparison to the units that have not been on the list. The last time the bears came around and hit this three year cycle, they were considered to reduce tags, however the tags were actually never lowered. I would like to see those additional 10 tags for the Dolores Triangle be taken from the existing tags being allotted for La Sal. - John Bair - It's frustrating that my family cannot purchase over the counter tags. There is a lot of opportunity for us to harvest more bears throughout the year. We should allow people to harvest throughout the year more often.
06:55:03	<p>RAC Discussion</p> <p>The RAC discussed concerns around the three year cycle of hunts that have been proposed for the Dolores Triangle. The RAC isn't sure if the additional 10 tags will really make much of a difference. The RAC expressed support around the shrinking of unit size to aid in data collection for the DWR and give the hunters the opportunity to spread out. The RAC restated that they are willing to honor the spirit of the three year</p>

	<p>cycle, however there is some skepticism around the amount of bears actually being harvested out of the Dolores Triangle. Biologists have shared that very little to no bears are being actually harvested from the Dolores Triangle.</p>
07:00:37	<p>Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action)</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>The following motion was made by Braden Sheppard and seconded by Jim Shuler. This passes 6 in favor, two opposed.</p> <p>MOTION: To approve the recommendations as presented with the new unit and additional 10 tags, with the condition that there will be a presentation from the biologist in the future of the bear population.</p>
07:06:57	<p>Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action)</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>The following motion was made by Tyson Skeen and seconded by Braden Sheppard. This passes 7 in favor, one opposed.</p> <p>MOTION: To ask the Wildlife Board to look into the ramifications to allow hunters up to two bear permits in a season.</p>
07:09:14	<p>Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action)</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>The following motion was made by Kellen Hyer and seconded by Joshua Greenhalgh. This passes 6 in favor, two opposed.</p> <p>MOTION: To ask the Wildlife Board to look into the possibility of a Spring over the counter harvest objective bear tag within the next two years.</p>
07:11:33	<p>8) Predator Control Incentive Amendments – Rule R657-64 (Action)</p> <p>Chad Wilson, Mammals Coordinator presented to the board.</p>
07:12:19	<p>RAC Questions</p> <p>The RAC asked if the amendments were only around coyotes?</p>
07:12:42	<p>Public Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Danny Summers summarized public comments received from the online presentation. - There were no in person questions or comments.

07:13:03	RAC Discussion The rAC did not engage in a discussion.
07:13:19	Predator Control Incentive Amendments – Rule R657-64 MOTION The following motion was made by Drew Eline and seconded by Jim Shuler . This passed unanimously. MOTION: To approve the amendments as presented.
07:13:40	9) Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 (Action) Darren DeBloois, Private Lands Public Wildlife Coordinator presented to the board.
07:16:58	RAC Questions The RAC asked if the DWR has discussed this idea with landowners and what feedback are they providing? The RAC asked if the DWR anticipates this being more Mule Deer related or if Turkey will also have an impact? The RAC asked what verbiage will be included surrounding the types of individuals they will approach (i.e. “landowners, lessees or landmanagers”). The RAC also clarified that landowners would be approached by the DWR instead of them having to submit an application.
07:19:19	Public Online Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Danny Summers summarized online comments received.
07:19:35	Public Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Bair - SFW - If there is any kind of way to make landowners feel the benefit of allowing mule deer on their properties, we need to explore that with every ounce of opportunity. It is very much a supported effort from SFW. This is a win-win for landowners, sportsmen, deer and turkey.
07:21:28	RAC Discussion The RAC expressed their overall support for this. It could have a lot of great impact on Turkey especially. The RAC also asked if landowners would be locked into an agreement for a certain amount of time?
07:23:00	Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 (Action) MOTION The following motion was made by Braden Sheppard and seconded by Tyson Skeen .

	<p>This passes unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: To approve the changes as presented with the addition of “landowner or lessee holder” to the definition.</p>
07:24:57	<p>The meeting adjourned.</p>

RAC AGENDA

December 10, 2025

The meeting will stream live at <https://youtube.com/live/hAaZC1siUYc>

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------------|
| 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 Debloois, Public Lands Private 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/rsuqibryeM>

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/QY25kZNmgQ>

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 N. Vernal Ave, Vernal
<https://youtube.com/live/FQiRaipS95g>

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

**Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Summary of Motions**

1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Ross Worthington, seconded by Brandon Zundel and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Agenda and Minutes.

2) Utah Black Bear Recommendations (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Hunter Stallings, seconded by Brandon Zundel and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move we approve Utah Black Bear Recommendations as presented.

The following motion was made by Ross Worthington, seconded by Brandon Zundel and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move we ask the Wildlife Board to add to the action log to have the division evaluate the possibility of two bear permits per year.

3) Predator Control Incentive Amendments- Rule R657-64 (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Robert Dale, seconded by Ross Worthington and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move we approve Predator Control Incentive Amendments- Rule R657-64 as presented.

4) Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 (**Action**)

The following motion was made by Ross Worthington, seconded by Garrett Larsen and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move we accept Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 as presented and add verbiage requiring reporting for the first three years.

DRAFT

Northern Regional Advisory Council Meeting
December 10, 2025
Attendance

RAC Members

Brad Buchanan - Chair
Blair Stringham - Exec Sec
Ryan Brown-Vice Chair

James Carlson
Avery Cook
Robert Dale
Garrett Larsen
Darren Parry

Wyatt Selman
Hunter Stallings
Jessica Wade
Ross Worthington
Brandon Zundel

Board Member

Bob Christensen

RAC Excused

Jaimi Butler
Casey Snider
Steve Sorensen

Division Personnel

Jodie Anderson
Jim Christensen
Darren Debloois
Chad Wilson
Mike Kinghorn

David Beveridge
Melissa Early

Regional Advisory Council Meeting
December 10, 2025

00:05:40 1) Chairman Brad Buchanan called the meeting to order, welcomed the audience and reviewed the meeting procedures.

00:10:01 2) **Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Action)**

The following motion was made by Ross Worthington, seconded by Brandon Zundel and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move that we approve the Agenda and Minutes.

00:10:35 3) **Update from past Wildlife Board Meeting by Brad Buchanan**
Link on website to view.

00:12:39 4) **Regional Update – Blair Stringham (Informational)**
Blair Stringham updated the RAC on regional activities.

Questions from the RAC

Body condition of mule deer observed during deer captures.

00:18:15 5) **Utah Cougar Update (Informational)**

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

No additional information was added to the presentation.

00:18:51

Questions from RAC Members/Public

Population estimates in 2019 being much lower; are there fewer cougars now? Change in how the division determines the cougar population from 2016 to now. The methodology. Does the division account for the method of take beyond hounding? Harvest numbers on spot and stalk. Female harvest numbers. Number of cougars harvested with traps.

Public Questions

Estimation of the cougar population and the methods used to count the trends.

00:23:58

Electronic/ Public Comment Report by Blair Stringham, Regional Supervisor
No public comments received from the online presentation.

Public Comment

Shay Downs- Utah Houndsmen Association- Concern about with six units that state-trapping. Meat is being used and hanging it from the trees. Downs mentioned a situation where a local hunter had turned his dog out on a lion track. The lion was in a foot hold. The dogs were let go. One of the dogs was caught in a snare. He asked if there were going to be any safety measures put in place where lethal traps are being used and how dogs can be protected.

***Questions from the RAC came up regarding hounds getting caught in traps.**

The number of hounds being caught in traps. If the dogs getting caught in the traps belonged to hunters or hikers. Where are the traps being set? Baited traps versus unbaited traps.

James Carlson commented that lethal snares have been out for coyotes for years.

Shay Downs asked where funding for the six units comes from.

Sierra Nelson- Utah Wool Growers Association- Responsible for her dog if she takes it off leash on public ground. Would like to thank the RAC and the Wildlife Board for the work they have done with cougars. Hoping to follow the positive trend and actively manage cougars and get their levels to where they can be more sustainable for wildlife and sheep. Anytime we remove predators, it's incredibly helpful.

Phil Crowther- Utah Department of Agriculture and Food- Regarding funding to pay hired trappers on the six study units, the MOU is not completely signed. Funding comes from the division, Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife and the Wildlife Sheep Foundation.

00:33:28 6) Utah Furbearer Update (Informational)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

No additional information was added to the presentation.

00:33:45 Questions from RAC Members/Public

None

Public Questions

None

00:33:53 Electronic/ Public Comment Report by Blair Stringham, Regional Supervisor

No public comments received from the online presentation.

Public Comment

None

00:34:32 7) Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

No additional information was added to the presentation.

00:35:21 Questions from RAC Members/Public

Bear harvest trend in 2025 being at an all-time high. High bear harvest and if more permits had been issued in 2025. Depredation numbers versus other years. If any units hit harvest objective. What were the harvest objectives? How other states with bigger bear populations count and estimate their population and if we model similarly. Depredation is up in 2025.

Public Questions

Kirk Robinson, representing Western Wildlife Conservancy, asked where to find the presentations that are part of the proposals. He could not find them.

00:42:43 Electronic/ Public Comment Report by Blair Stringham, Regional Supervisor

No public comments received from the online presentation.

Public Comment

Shay Downs- Utah Houndsmen Association- Don't issue 10 new bear tags for the Dolores Triangle unit.

Kevin Norman- Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife- Supports the division's recommendations as presented.

Sierra Nelson- Utah Wool Growers Associations- Supports the division's recommendations.

00:44:14 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

No concern about adding additional 10 permits to the Dolores Triangle unit. The unit's bear population is not being targeted or hunted very much. Even though it is a legislative thing, Ross Worthington would like to see harvest objective permits come down in price. If we have too many bears in Utah, there is an issue with a population of too many bears, why don't we allow people to purchase up to two bear tags a year? If the Dolores Triangle proposal had been brought up last year (when the bear plan was being updated), would the tag numbers be at 10?

The following motion was made by Hunter Stallings, seconded by Brandon Zundel and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move we approve Utah Black Bear Recommendations as presented.

The following motion was made by Ross Worthington, seconded by Brandon Zundel and passed unanimous.

Discussion on the motion

Is that for harvest objective? We've had that type of structure for cougars.

MOTION: I move we ask the Wildlife Board to add to the action log the division evaluate the possibility of two bear permits per year.

00:51:38 8) Predator Control Incentives Amendments- Rule R657-64 (Action)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

No additional information was added to the presentation.

00:52:05 Questions from RAC Members/Public

Has anyone tried to obtain data the incentives? Has coyote harvest increased in areas where we're hoping to see more harvest?

Public Questions

None

00:53:30 Electronic/ Public Comment Report by Blair Stringham Regional Supervisor

No public comments received from the online presentation.

Public Comment

Sierra Nelson- Utah Wool Growers- Supports the division's recommendations.

00:54:00 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Coyotes turned into the coyote bounty program.

The following motion was made by Robert Dale, seconded by Ross Worthington and passed unanimous.

MOTION: I move we approve Predator Control Incentive Amendments- Rule R657-64 as presented.

00:55:28 9) Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 (Action)

Presentations could be viewed at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/agendas-materials-minutes.html>

Darren Debloois summarized the presentation for the RAC.

00:56:50 Questions from RAC Members/Public

Overall structure of the rule, Purpose and Authority definitions. Permits are not issued under this program. It's just a monetary program. DWR approaches landowners who are having depredation issues. Under objective units and paying producers. Would this apply to winter feed rows? If forage is being dumped on the cultivated lands for their cows, would producers be reimbursed? Closer monitoring. Concerns with Chronic Wasting Disease. How to determine monetary values. Who is involved in the negotiation process? Where is the funding coming from? Plans being evaluated on goals and objectives. Qualifying criteria. Definition of a Depredation Program?

Public Questions

Is this program geared towards deer or all species? Pilot areas for deer.

01:10:19 Electronic/Public Comment Report by Blair Stringham, Regional Supervisor

No public comments received from the online presentation.

Public Comment

Kevin Norman- Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife. Supports the division's proposal.

01:11:26 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Ability to pay landowners in areas where turkeys are causing problems. Tighten up the language. Give more leeway to manage turkeys. Thanked the division for being proactive and working with the producers. Utah stands alone with how well the division works with producers. Concern about elk. There are a lot of elk on private property. Would like to see elk removed from the rule. Limit agreement to a three-year term. Target the rule to focus it on mule deer, pronghorn and turkeys. Review what is being spent on depredation. Re-evaluate values. Adjustment of the value of the crop versus the time of year. Cooperative agreements. Taking care of the producers is a key component.

The following motion was made by Ross Worthington, seconded by Garrett Larsen and passed unanimous.

Discussion on the motion

Length of term year reporting.

MOTION: I move we accept Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 as presented and add verbiage requiring reporting for the first three years.

01:29:39 Motion to Adjourn. Brandon Zundel

Southern Regional RAC Meeting

December 16, 2025
DNR Richfield City Complex
Richfield, Utah
6:00 P.M.

RAC Members

Attending

Austin Atkinson
Trevor Barnson
Bart Battista (online)
Rachel Bolus (online)
Chris Cannon
Chuck Chamberlain
Brooklyn Cox (online)
Russell Gardner
Chad Utley (online)
Gary Barney

Absent

Bryant Johnson
Travis Duran

Wildlife Board

Paula Richmond
Kent Johnson (online)

Gary Nielson (online)
Bob Christensen (online)

DWR Personnel

Kevin Bunnell
Cody Evans
Tyrell Orme
Darren DeBloois
Vance Mumford

Adam Kavalunas
Morgan Hinton
Teresa Griffin
Paul Washburn
Terron Roberts

Public invited to join online:

<https://youtube.com/live/1U6-wGJ1LIA>

06:00:00	<p>1) RAC Chair Austin Atkinson called the meeting to order. He called the roll of RAC members and recognized the Wildlife Boards members that were present. He explained the RAC process and that there will be no live presentations. The public will be given the opportunity of providing comments and asking questions at the appropriate time. Encouraged the public to submit comment cards if they wish to provide comments or ask questions. He asked for respect and professional conduct from all those in attendance. The Wildlife Board makes the final decision, not the regional RAC's.</p>
06:05:25	<p>2) Approval Of Agenda and Minutes (Action)</p> <p>The following motion was made by Chris Chamberlain, seconded by Trevor Barnson.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we approve the Agenda and Minutes as presented.</p> <p>Motion passed unanimously.</p>
06:06:17	<p>3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update (Informational)</p> <p>RAC Chair Austin Atkinson provided the RAC members and public with an update from the last Wildlife Board Meeting held on December 04, 2025.</p> <p>Questions from the RAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
06:08:26	<p>4) DWR Update (Informational) Kevin Bunnell, DWR Regional Supervisor</p> <p><u>Wildlife</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to hold Mule Deer meetings in Cedar City, Richfield and Ruby's Inn. • Wrapping up Deer classification by Saturday – thank you for all those who came out to assist in this effort. <p><u>Aquatics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panguitch Lake Siphon Project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<u>Need:</u> Water quality issues from high nutrient level threaten the fishery (e.g, low dissolved oxygen) and ability to recreate (e.g., harmful algal blooms)/ -<u>Goals and Strategy:</u> Maintain the excellent fishery and recreational opportunities by installing a siphon to pull water from a deep part of the lake where it is high in nutrient levels and low in oxygen. -<u>Status:</u> Currently in the planning phase (e.g., design, funding, permitting) and intend to implement in Fall of 2026.

- **Sport Fish:**

- Fish Lake: Completed project on Twin Creeks boardwalk and parking area, Kokanee egg collection successful, food web study nearly complete.

- Lake Powell: Completed Fall gillnet surveys and year-long creel survey. Low water level hit Shad and older Striped Bass hard, but still a healthy population of 1.5 to 3.5 year old Striped Bass. Total angler hours down, while angler catch rates were up. Increasing water level would help everything.

- General: Wrapping up field season work, transitioning to data, reports, project proposals, meetings, etc. Need a good snowpack to avoid drought issues next Summer and Fall.

Washington County Field Office

- **Western Toad:** Released a total of 278 Toads on the Paunsaugunt Plateau in August/September.
- **Desert Tortoise:** Finished plant restoration project in Red Cliffs National Conservation Area (201-2025) to assess plant growth/survival; local volunteers help to collect plant cages and stakes. Finalizing translocation proposal with HCAC.
- **Volunteers:** In 2025, volunteers have donated 344 hours. Work included native aquatics projects (162.5 hours) and restoration (181.5 hours).

Virgin River Program Projects:

- Woundfin: Approximately 300 fish successfully transferred by UDOT plane from Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (NM) to Aquatic Animal Health and Research Center (UT).
- Riparian Restoration: 12/2 – 12/3: Willow planting (n=186) above Hurricane Bridge near Quail Creek Scout Camp. 12/9 – 12/10: Tamarisk sprouts and saplings were cut and treated in St. George (3rd year of project). Ongoing treatment has allowed for native establishment in multiple floodplain parcels.

Habitat Section:

- Seeding and chaining contracts complete at Monroe Canyon and France Canyon Fires, coming up at Forsyth.
- Collars put on Deer adjacent to future Highway 89 fencing to help understand migration and fencing impacts.
- New Cedar area NRCS/DWR partner biologist, Kasen Hulet, starting December 22, 2025.
- WRI proposals due January 09, 2026.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mule Deer working groups either developing proposals or identifying favorites among planned proposals. - Still a lot of ongoing proactive projects. <p><u>Outreach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ice Fishing seminar last weekend at SRO in Cedar City was well attended. - Upcoming Bald Eagle viewing event on Friday, January 09, 2026 at Rush Lake. - Other upcoming events scheduled for February: Water Bird viewing at Jackson Flat Reservoir. Snow Goose Festival in Delta. - Dedicated Hunter program still has projects available for service hours. - REMINDER: Submit harvest reports. <p><u>Law Enforcement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Busy Fall for officers. - Officers in the region investigated over 60 cases during the month of October. - Officers currently focused on completing these investigations and moving cases through the court system. <p>Question from the RAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
06:13:40	<p>5) Utah Cougar Update (Informational) Darren DeBloois, Wildlife Coordinator</p> <p>Presented the Division's recommendations and answered questions from the RAC and public members.</p>
06:14:36	<p>RAC Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chuck Chamberlain: How comfortable are you with the numbers of mountain lions? • Darren DeBloois: Numbers are based on harvest data, always two years behind, we don't see kitten and yearlings too often on harvest. Good estimate of cougars on hand. • Chris Cannon: If levels drop to a certain point, will we go back to a quota system? • Darren DeBloois: There are two state laws the division is bound to follow, first anytime we detect predators in general effecting mule deer populations the director is required by law to enact predator management programs on those units. The second, we switched our management strategies and that again is state law. There are some things that the

	<p>division could recommend the board do but as far as quotas, that would take a law change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin Atkinson: Collar studies on cougars, do we see cause specific mortality on a cougar? Do they die of starvation? What kills cougars? • Darren DeBloois: Typically, hunter harvest is the #1 cause of mortality, natural is fairly low, starvation can occur. They do get killed by their prey and each other as well as roadkill. • Austin Atkinson: What I am trying to understand is, are cougars dying because they are hungry since there is less deer? • Darren DeBloois: Typically, yes, mirror the prey populations. Declines occur. A California study took 7-8 years to notice population reaction. They can prey switch, so sometimes that won't be affected by the decline in deer. • Austin Atkinson: When we lost the permits for cougars, the fear was that the harvest would increase, it hasn't? • Darren DeBloois: We had units that were unlimited harvest obj units prior to that, those were put in place due to the law that requires the director to act. About 2/3rds of the units were already unlimited. The biggest harvest year was the year before the change. Some areas inaccessible during winter months, these pockets supply lion surpluses. • Austin Atkinson: Project 7707, WRI project, explain how that interacts with the unlimited cougar harvest for hunters with a license, trapping license, but this is a separate project. How is that harvest recorded? Do we have access to those numbers? • Darren DeBloois: This is a research project; a touchstone of predator management is that predators do not affect prey population. Utah has 1000's of collars out and one thing we have noticed is that once lion predation on adult does goes above 7%, those populations will not grow. Experimentally look at some of those units where the criteria is above 7% mortality and see if we can answer that question. If you remove enough lions will that increase your deer herd? • Austin Atkinson: How does that project come about? • Darren DeBloois: We have been talking about it for a few years, is there a way to get this data. Other areas don't have the data set that Utah has on deer, they can't see it on that scale. We have the data and the capability to get the answer. • Austin Atkinson: So we might be wrong about the study? • Darren DeBloois: Compelling data, probably 9 units in the state that would meet the criteria of 7% adult doe mortality. That is based on collared deer data, so if 7% of your collared deer are being killed by lions, you probably have a lion issue. 9 units out of 30 cougar units. • Austin Atkinson: How many cougars were taken on the Desert Bighorn Sheep Nursery Sanctuary? • Darren DeBloois: 31 lion on 1800 acres. Study on the Nebo, 30 lions caught and still have uncollared lions showing up on their cameras.
--	--

06:27:06	<p>Public Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name not given: Is this the government hunters killing the lions? How are they going to take those lions? • Darren DeBloois: Yes, we are working with UDAF. I assume using any method they can. Snares, dogs. Snares probably most effective. • Name not given: In the same areas that sportsmen are trying to hunt? • Darren DeBloois: Yes, I don't know the timing. Year around. Traps are most effective in the summer or fall. • Name not given: Did you say year round? Bears too? • Darren DeBloois: That is my understanding, I don't know all the details. No, just lions. • Name not given: You can't differentiate with snares and traps. • JJ Brewer: Represents Utah Hounds association and self. Thank you for the process. Government hunters hired on how many units? • Darren DeBloois: 6 units. Pine Valley, Monroe, Zion, Boulder, East Wasatch, Stansbury. • JJ Brewer: We have already had a case of a hound being caught in a baited snare. Bait hanging in the tree, will bait sites be made public? • Darren DeBloois: Not that I am aware of • JJ Brewer: That is a lot of risk, hanging bait in a tree. Opens a lot of room for a non-targeted species to be caught. Specifically, dogs, hikers. Average hound 15k, there is a risk of us losing a hound, where is that funding going to come from for us? • Darren DeBloois: Again, its public land, you will have to accept the risk at this point. • JJ Brewer: I hate that answer. Why are houndsmen and sportsman not being called first? • Darren DeBloois: I am not in the planning of that, I can't answer that question. • JJ Brewer: Mothers and kittens are not currently allowed to be harvested, what is the protocol for these government sets? When a non-targeted animal like a mule deer buck get caught in one of these government sets? • Darren DeBloois: If you are going to reduce a population, you are going to need to take females and kittens. Yes, an effort will be made to remove them but that is potential. One of the reasons we are using professional trappers. • JJ Brewer: Where do these trappers come from? Who funded this study? Wasn't a public vote? Did this go through public RAC system or Wildlife Board?

- **Darren DeBloois:** Being funded by SFW and Wild Sheep Foundation. Utah state trappers are among the best in the state.
- **Name not given:** Last year I hunted bear on the Wasatch with a buddy, never experienced better bear hunting. This year, I drew the tag after 9 yrs. Spent 15-20 days never caught a bear. Weird because the year before had 2 in five days. I did some research, you guys and wool growers killed over 30 bears. If I did that I would be a felon. If there is that big a bear problem, why trappers rather than hunters? Why not let them hunt the summer?
- **Darren DeBloois:** Depredation take, trappers can only take bears out of active depredation situation. We committed to the Farm Bureau and wool growers that we won't grow predators on the backs of sheep farmers. We increased permits and quotas on the units?
- **Name not given:** Why don't we get the chance to hunt them? What are the trappers doing with the bears, throwing to waste?
- **Darren DeBloois:** Skin them out and salvage the parts, auction them later.
- **Name not given:** In 2023 66k deer tags across the State of Utah, 88K 2025. Deer herds have been struggling. Why killing all the lions when you are doubling deer tags? Why are you trying to save the deer and increasing the permits?
- **Darren DeBloois:** Remember, we hunt male deer. Managing to a buck to doe ratio. You can hunt deer and still grow deer populations. We manage to management plans.
- **Corby Fausett:** Thanks for everyone for being here. Is there a specific number on the 6 units, how many they want to see killed? When it was quota you could follow it that way.
- **Darren DeBloois:** Objective is to be really aggressive, get as many as we can. The tell will be what happens on the deer side.
- **Corby Fausett:** Collared does being killed, trapper heads there. If you can find the deer kill that's the golden nugget. High success rate running off of kills. Sportsman having opportunities. Killing the deer, coming back to eat what they killed and get snagged. We would love to help you out there. Money going to people in Utah's taxidermy and outfitting.
- **Dan Riddle:** Question about this bill, there's a term called confounding variables. Restricted weapons hunts implemented for data gathering. Can you speak to is there some confounding data? Are you skewing your own data?
- **Darren DeBloois:** The restricted weapons, implemented to determine what are the success rates. Can you hunt with lower tech weapons and still harvest? Allowing more opportunity for the hunters.
- **Dan Riddle:** Conflict of 2 different studies, with what the ultimate goal is more deer opportunity.
- **Darren DeBloois:** Clarifies comment, "public land, tough". Understands time and effort put into these dogs did not mean to come off as insensitive.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Riddle: Wool growers and SFW is that common to have outside representation funding? • Darren DeBloois: Utah has incredible funding source, all sportsman organizations contribute millions of dollars that pays for habitat work, collars. Not unprecedented for that to occur.
06:44:29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Comments: • Kevin Bunnell: There were no online comments submitted. • Public comment: (in person) • Jeff Brewer: This is not a study. It's an extermination order. The elephant in the room, who brought this about and why. The average age of a cougar kill in the harvest data is 18 months old. <p>*Clapping occurs from back of room, inaudible outbursts occur, law enforcement involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Brewer: No goals, no protocols. Trap and kill females and cubs. Do we realize the ramifications of this? We are not against sheepman. Monroe mountain, now I can't hunt it. How come? You have snares all over. I have three 10k dogs, do we get reimbursed like the sheepman do? We feel like this did not come from DWR. Corrupt sportsman's groups and politicians. If coordinates were posted, we could stay away from it. • Travis Jensen: Represents Wild Sheep Foundation. Thanks RAC for being here. I respect the difference of opinions. We support DWR in the study. These studies are not opinions, university level. Zion losing 25% adult sheep populations. Not a single sheep mortality due to disease on Zion. All 6 units chosen have adult deer mortality levels that do not support increasing deer numbers. • JJ Brewer: Upset the way this has come about. Does not support sportsman fighting sportsman. We didn't get a vote. Again, this was backdoor politics. 3 of these units have wild sheep on them. Clint Mecham did a study on the Monroe mountain 1996-2013. We killed 40 mountain lions, the data is out there. McClean Mecham was doing the same study on the Oakers. We harvested no lions. Reduced permits from 40 to 5. If killing the lions is going to bring back our deer herds, why didn't it do it in 2022-2024 on the Monroe mountain or when we did the study for 17 years? Statement from that study, Utah State University, Cougar population response "Interestingly enough, the Monroe study itself suggests that human hunting of cougars was non-compensatory

	<p>additive for the cougar population. Meaning hunting significantly reduced cougar numbers but this did not automatically translate into a net survival gain for more deer. Closing statement of the study intense line and harvest and control the mountain lions have shown to be, no help to grow the deer population.” Biggest point, this should have been voted on in public process, two conservation groups should not get to decide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadli Sorenson: Wild sheep foundation. At the core of our position is a is a firm belief in science-based wildlife management, ultimately guided by credible peer reviewed data. • Hunter Mecham: Monroe is completely burned and the Boulder got habitat work approved. BYU study showed it is a habitat problem on the Boulder. Darren already said that lion numbers have dropped and deer haven’t exploded. We don’t need to spend \$300,000 on a study. Put money into highway work. Ten dead deer between Tropic and Richfield on the drive. • Kasey Yardley: There are good people on both sides of this. I am a lion hunter, from a family of ranchers. Sheep foundation and SFW will make the decisions, they are calling the shots. It’s not right that you can take sheep and put them on the west desert and buy out all the sheep permits then put your sheep out there, that get a snuffle and die. Why can’t we do this the right way? This is a money deal, that is all it is. • Troy Henrie: Utah Farm Bureau supports this study. Important to get hard data. • Will Talbot: Piute County Commissioner and a rancher on Boulder mountain, ran sheep on Monroe mountain. Been on Boulder mountain for 18 years, losses from 100 for many years and now 300 to 400 per year. We support this.
07:02:40	<p>RAC Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin Atkinson: Utah Admin Code 23a-11-302 it does give the director big game protector authority and when that was instituted and amended the director has a lot of levers he can pull as it relates to predator management. Direct is bound by Utah code. These projects are public, the information is available. It is our responsibility as Americans, Utahns and sportsman to find those answers and go to our representatives and elected officials to make sure they are being held to that.

07:04:36	6) Utah Furbearer Update (Informational) Darren DeBloois, Wildlife Coordinator <p>Presented the Division's recommendations and answered questions from the RAC and public members.</p>
07:05:10	RAC Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russell Gardner: Increasing the number of permits because population is growing? • Darren DeBloois: Plan has a cap, if all the indicators are in a good place then we offer the max opportunity • Chuck Chamberlain: 6 permit per person, no cap overall? • Darren DeBloois: Yes, 6 per person but as many people as want can get 6 permits.
07:06:20	Public Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Brewer: What will be the ramifications of the Bobcat harvest in the government snares? • Darren DeBloois: I don't know the details. Objective is to minimize bi-takes. • Corby Fausett: To get a bobcat tag you have to furbearer license, you have to take trapping course, but to buy the permit you have to have the furbearer and the trapping license. So, I don't have to have the furbearer license to buy bobcat tags? • Darren DeBloois: You can take bobcat tags without trapping. You can buy bobcat permits and hunt them with another method. Apologizes for confusing the two and corrects himself. More to furbearer course than just trapping.
07:09:36	Public Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Bunnell: There were no online comments submitted. • Public Comment (in person) • Kelly Laier: Represents Utah Trappers association. I want to clarify, snare lions 12-14 inches off the ground. They won't be catching bobcat with those. A snare for a bobcat 8-9 inches off the ground. We want to support the recommendations for next years predator seasons.
07:11:31	RAC Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none

07:11:41	7) Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action) Darren DeBloois, Wildlife Coordinator Presented the Division's recommendation and answered questions from the RAC and public.
07:12:11	RAC Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chuck Chamberlain: How big is the Dolores Triangle? Going from 104 permits to 114 permits in the same area? • Darren DeBloois: I don't have that information. Most of the current harvest is taken in the LaSalle unit, Division was thinking this could add opportunity on the mountain and make people choose where they want to hunt. • Bart Battista: Do you have a good rationale for why you didn't decrease 10 permits from the original number? I didn't hear a population reason, just opportunity. • Darren DeBloois: Under the current numbers, most of the bears are coming off the LaSalle unit, it would still be its own unit. Having people hunt Dolores Triangle specifically there was additional opportunity, and the region felt 10 was appropriate. • Bart Battista: No population rationale, you just thought it was a good idea.
07:14:30	Public Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JJ Brewer: 104 permits on the LaSalle, we aren't taking 10 from that 104 we are adding 10 and creating another unit? Why not just take the 10 from the existing? • Darren DeBloois: That is an option but it is not what we are recommending.
07:15:16	Public Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Bunnell: There were no online comments submitted. • Public Comment (in person) • Kevin Norman: SFW supports recommendation. Thank you Austin for looking into how the WRI process works, how things are funded and how it came down from the director to clarify a lot of the assuming.
07:15:55	RAC Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Cannon: Just to note that we got an email from the back country hunters and anglers that they support the creation of the Dolores Triangle bear unit.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin Atkinson: how many bears in the last few years were killed in the new unit? • Darren DeBloois: 5-6, some, not none. • Austin Atkinson: Current LaSalle hunt, proposed at 104 tags they would not be able to hunt the Dolores Triangle? Carving it out? • Darren DeBloois: Currently they can, under this proposal you wouldn't. Those 10 would be, 2 spring, 6 summer, 2 fall
07:17:28	<p>MOTION:</p> <p>The following motion was made by Trevor Barnson, seconded by Chuck Chamberlain.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented.</p> <p>Passed 8:1, Bart Battista opposed.</p>
07:18:37	<p>8) Predator Control Incentive Amendments –Rule R657-64 (Action) Darren DeBloois, Wildlife Coordinator</p> <p>Presented the Division's recommendations and answered questions from the RAC and public members.</p>
07:19:23	<p>RAC Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bart Battista: Last year when addressing bounty issues, you had information, but didn't have county data, why not share data? Have state data but not county. Don't want to share, what is the harm in releasing? Concerned when taking his own dog out. Illegal to disturb trap. What is the harm in us knowing where these traps might be located. You are protecting one group but not the other group who both have equal access. • Darren DeBloois: We do an annual report, provide heat map, protect actual site to keep hunters information and trap locations private from others. Standard practice that we don't release locations.
07:19:28	<p>Public Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
07:23:53	<p>Public Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Bunnell: There we no online comments submitted. • Public Comment (in person)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelly Laier: Utah Trappers Association, support this. Coordinates should not be available, general location is fine but not exact.
07:24:50	RAC Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
07:24:58	MOTIONS: The following motion was made by Trevor Barnson, seconded by Chris Cannon. MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented. Passed 8:1, Bart Battista opposed.
07:25:52	9) Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey – Rule R657-74 Darren DeBloois, Private Lands Public Wildlife Coordinator (Action) Presented the Division's recommendations and answered questions from the RAC and public members. Replace "OR" with "AND" should read as, routinely irrigated AND routinely mechanically or manually harvested
07:27:02	RAC Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russell Gardner: How does that look? How do you calculate the payment? • Darren DeBloois: Do everything we can to help mule deer, could handle sideboards and policy. We would approach a landowner, what would it take to get you willing to tolerate these deer rather than us killing does to benefit the herd. It will be an adaptive process. More than depredation payments. • Austin Atkinson: Where do the funds come from? • Darren DeBloois: Since this is a population level management tool, it could be Pittman Robertson federal funds. 75/25 match. • Austin Atkinson: Can this happen on a CWMU? • Darren DeBloois: No, the language here precludes it. If you are running a CWMU you are already receiving compensation for wildlife. • Austin Atkinson: Can a landowner still kill does and get depredation? • Darren DeBloois: No, that would defeat the purpose. Landowners would have to tolerate them, and payment will have to be sufficient. It will be a case-by-case basis. • Chuck Chamberlain: Subsection 3, you have sideboards of how you approve this, is that any one of these or all of these?

	<p>(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:</p> <p>(a) (i) will help big game or turkey populations that are below unit population objective; or</p> <p>(ii) will help manage turkey populations; and</p> <p>(b) a cooperative agreement will result in:</p> <p>(i) increased forage availability and nutrition for big game or turkey populations;</p> <p>(ii) a reduction of female harvest in the population; and</p> <p>(iii) increased hunter opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darren DeBloois: Either one A or B
07:33:30	<p>Public Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
07:33:41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Comments • Kevin Bunnell: There were no online comments submitted. • Public Comment (in person): • Kevin Norman: SFW supports this program. • Troy Henrie: Utah Farm Bureau, applauds Division for trying new things. By adding AND does that take irrigated pasture out? We would like to see that worked on in the future, on all programs to allow irrigated pasture; so much feed is lost. • Darren DeBloois: Yes, it removes irrigated pasture.
07:35:09	<p>RAC Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary Barney: One of the biggest complaints that I have heard from farmers that are active hunters is that it is frustrating that the squeaky wheel gets to create an income source off of depredation payments. When there are a lot of us that are more than happy to have the deer, not the elk but I like the deer. I think this is an awesome program.
07:35:57	<p>MOTIONS</p> <p>The following motion was made by Trevor Barnson, seconded by Russell Gardner.</p> <p>MOTION: I move that we accept the Division's recommendations as presented.</p>

	Passed unanimously.
07:36:20	Additional RAC comments: Austin Atkinson: Concludes meeting, thanks all for participation. Wildlife Board Meeting will be on January 08, 2026 in Farmington, UT where final decisions will be made. NEXT SRO RAC MEETING: April 21, 2026, Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah.
07:36:48	Meeting adjourned.

RAC AGENDA
December 17th, 2025

The meeting will stream live at https://youtube.com/live/3CO_mFuNt0Y

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------|
| 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 DeBloois, Private Lands Public Wildlife Coordinator | ACTION |

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

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>

Southeastern Regional Advisory Council Meeting

December 17th, 2025

Summary of Motions

Action Item 1: Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- The following motion was made by Charles Fischer, seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously.
Motion: To accept agenda and minutes.

Action Item 2: Utah Black Bear Recommendations

- The following motion was made by Mat Farnsworth, seconded by Brad Richman and failed 5-2.
Motion: To stay status quo and not support the boundary change.
- The following motion was made by Charles Fischer, seconded by Steven Duke and passed 5-2.
Motion: To accept the division's recommendation as presented.

Action Item 3: Predator Control Incentive Amendments – Rule R657-64

- The following motion was made by Mat Farnsworth, seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously.
Motion: To approve the division's recommendation as presented.

Action Item 4: Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74

- The following motion was made by Mat Farnsworth, seconded by Brad Richman and passed 4-3.
Motion: To approve the division's recommendation as presented.

Southeastern Regional Advisory Council Meeting

December 17th, 2025

Attendance

RAC Members

Scot Flannery – Chair
Cash Stallings – Vice Chair
Brad Richman
Chris Wood – Exec Secretary

Steven Duke
Charles Fischer
Jake Palma

Matt Farnsworth
Daniel Luke

Board Members

Kent Johnson
Gary Nielsen

Justin Oliver
Bob Christensen

Paula Richmond

RAC Excused

Jack Cantsee Jr.
Justin Ivins

Tyler Gilson
Trish Hedin

Joe Sacco

Division Personnel

Chris Wood
Brandon Behling
JD Abbot
Kyler Stilson

Dustin Mitchell
Brad Crompton
Ian Montgomery
Joe Christensen

Darren DeBloois
Cheyenne Hudson
Ashley Kennedy

Southeastern Regional Advisory Council Meeting
December 17th, 2025
Minutes

00:00:11 **1) Chairman Scoot Flannery** called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and read a statement. All RAC members introduced themselves.

00:03:11 **2) Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Action)**

The following motion was made by Charles Fischer, seconded by Brad Richman and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the agenda and minutes.

00:03:35 **3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update given by Scoot Flannery (Informational)**

Link on website to view.

00:04:54 **4) Regional Update – (Informational)**

Chris Wood updated the RAC on all regional activities. Ian Montgomery provided some additional information.

00:11:08 **5) Utah Cougar Update (Informational)**

View presentations at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html>

Darren DeBloois had no additional information regarding the presentation.

00:12:00 **Questions/Comments from RAC Members/Public**

Data being 2 years behind similar to bear. Population is dropping and if there is a possibility of the effects from the changes in how they're hunted.

00:14:59 **Questions/Comments from the Public**

Brett Guyman, - Asked if the division could speak to the study that's been mentioned in recent RAC meetings. Collar data and any available studies using the data from the mule deer study. WRI study indicating top-down pressure in South Manti and Cache. Other units identified above the 7% threshold. Asked if other units have responded positively in terms of growth and corresponding increases. Possible habitat issues.

Cody Webster – Asked if any of these 6 units have additional studies in progress. Habitat limiting, with fires for example. 3-year study and plans after results. Plans for excessive or no harvest units in study. Study happening on public land. Possible protocols prevent/protect other animals and wildlife from lethal snares.

Greg King, Wild Sheep Foundation – Appreciates Wildlife and RAC. Supports the study proposal being based on science and understands the risks involved.

Travis Jensen, Utah Sheep Foundation – Thanked RAC members and supports the division in the study and efforts to better understand the impact cougars have on deer and sheep populations.

Jarren Hansen, Utah Farm Bureau Federation – Thanked RAC members. Supports the division's efforts. Eager to see results.

Kevin Norman, SFW – Very interested in supporting the study. Anxiously awaiting results.

John Bair – Research is needed and will be valuable for the future.

Ben Lowder, Utah Archery Association – New and better technology, appropriate for this study. Supports study and is very interested in results.

Cody Webster – Frustration with process and risk for animals on public land.

Brett Guyman – Does not think houndsmen in general are against reducing populations. We became aggressive with lions around 2020, and it has not responded well on all units. We need to be cognizant of that.

00:50:42 RAC Discussion

Need to separate the study from the update. Concern about separating all other factors and issues from the study. Concern about presentation when it comes to legislature. Wildlife should be about management, not clearing out. A lot of money and effort goes into collaring deer, at least we'll know the effects

00:59:19 6) Utah Furbearer Update (Informational)

View presentations at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html>

Darren DeBloois summarized the presentation.

01:00:11 Questions from RAC Members/Public

Restrictions for northern river otters and management plan, possible room for improvement and population objectives. Possibility for license agents to sell bobcat permits with them being unlimited.

01:04:18 Public Comment/Questions

Cody Webster – Course should be required to trap lions. Why is it required for bobcats when hunting with dogs?

Corey Farnsworth, Utah Trappers Association – Agrees with the need for trapping course for all trapping and something separate for houndsmen would be beneficial. Supports the division's recommendations.

01:06:50 RAC Discussion

More attainable objectives for otter. Confirmation on lion trapping not requiring furbearers. Confirmation on trap registration being required for all trapping.

- 01:10:31 7) Utah Black Bear Recommendations (Action)**
View presentations at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html>
Darren DeBloois clarified the presentation.
- 01:11:43 Questions from RAC Members/Public**
Possibility of issues similar to deer crossing the Colorado border. Number of bears harvested in the Delores Triangle area.
- 01:14:19 Public Comments/Questions**
Cody Webster – Would like to see some of the Bitter Creek tags moved to Little Creek.
John Bair, SFW – Supports the division’s recommendation with one exception – sell over the counter permits before July.
Ben Louder, Utah Archery Association – Supports the recommendations as presented
- 01:17:40 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions**
3 year plans set in place without changes. Spring spot and stalk.
- 01:21:43** The following motion was made by Mat Farnsworth, seconded by Brad Richman and failed 5-2
MOTION: To stay status quo and not support the boundary change.
The following motion was made by Charles Fischer, seconded by Steven Duke and passed 5-2
MOTION: To accept the division’s recommendation as proposed.
- 01:23:28 8) Predator Control Incentive Amendments – Rule R657-64 (Action)**
View presentations at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html>
Darren DeBloois summarized the presentation.
- 01:24:51 Questions from RAC Members/Public**
None
- 01:24:55 Public Comments/Questions**
Corey Farnsworth, Utah Trappers Association – Supports the division’s recommendation.
- 01:25:30 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions**
None
- 01:25:38** The following motion was made by Cash Stallings, seconded by Charles Fischer and passed unanimously.
MOTION: To approve the division’s recommendation as presented.
- 01:25:58 9) Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74 (Action)**
View presentations at <https://wildlife.utah.gov/feedback.html>

Darren DeBloois summarized the presentation.

01:27:41 Questions from RAC Members/Public

Does not apply to dryland farming. Conservation lease agreements being proactive rather than reactive. Funding resource opening with change from depredation to management. Reporting and transparency. Possibility to open for other species. Options for exit strategy when not meeting goals with mid-year review. Vision for increased hunter opportunities. Walk in access options.

01:41:27 Public Comments/Questions

Jaren Hansen, Utah Farm Bureau – Supports the program and the division’s forward thinking. Agrees with transparency depending on circumstances.

Kevin Norman, SFW – Nice to see compensation in lieu of depredation doe permits. Supports the program.

01:44:13 RAC Discussion/Division Clarification and Motions

Consideration for dry land farming in the future with this being a pilot program. Include pheasants and other game. Concern with rule change being too broad. Would like to see better controls for both parties to opt in or out. Funding options. Exceptions for elk and pressure to bend rule. Program will help build tolerance for deer and have a direct impact to the herds.

01:52:08 The following motion was made by Matt Farnsworth, seconded by Brad Richman and passed 4-3.

MOTION: Accept the division’s recommendation as presented.

01:55:25 Meeting adjourned.

Northeastern Region Advisory Council Meeting

December 18th, 2025

RAC Present	RAC Excused	RAC Not Present
Adam Nielson	Willis LeFevre	
Jordon McMahon	Tim Ignocia	
Grizz Oleen	Mark Chynoweth	
Natasha Hadden		
Richard Buehler		
Eric Major		
Nathan Crapo		
Jake Huber		
Dwayne Davies		
Collin Crozier		

Wildlife Board

-Bob Christensen

-Gary Nielson (Online)

-Kent Johnson (Online)

-Christopher Robinson (Online)

-Paula Richmond (Online)

DWR Staff Present

Miles Hanberg	Tonya Kieffer-Selby	
Clint Sampson	Dallon Christensen (Online)	
Dax Mangus	Levi Watkins	

Morgan Larsen	Shay Farnsworth	
Torrey Christopherson	Darren Debloois	
Pat Rainbolt		

00:00:00	1) Welcome and introductions by RAC Chairman Eric Major.
00:08:30	2) Approval of Agenda and Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following motion was made by Natasha Hadden, seconded by Grizz Oleen, and passed unanimously. <p>MOTION: To approve the agenda and minutes as presented.</p>
00:09:08	3) Wildlife Board Meeting Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eric Major read the motions summary from the December 4th , 2025 Wildlife Board meeting.
00:12:41	4) Regional Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miles Hanberg gave a brief summary of regional updates.
00:17:45	5) Utah Cougar Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Darren Debloois took questions about the cougar update.
00:18:09	Questions from RAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will the study be conducted? What methods?
00:30:09	Questions from the Public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will they come up with the percentage of kill? Are the collared does all from the same herd? What is the highway mortality rate on deer? What is the average age of lions being killed right now? Why aren't we still building animal crossings and bridges? Any information on CWD studies that were done on the wasatch mtn east. Where is the funding coming from for the CWD project?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why this study when they opened up lion hunting across the state? • What if a female goes up with kittens in a tree? • What is being done with the pelts?
	No online comments
00:45:17	Public Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustrated that this was done behind closed doors with no public knowledge. This is the wrong way to go about things. • The Utah Wild Sheep Foundation did not have any input on how this study is being done. • The units also house sheep. So this will also be benefiting the sheep herds. • Utah houndsmen strongly disagree with this study. • It would be nice to have signs put up where these lethal traps will be used. • They would like to see some of the doe hunts and extended hunts brought to a minimum to see their impact as well. • Where would the study be without the funding from SFW and the Utah Sheep Foundation. • The Utah farm bureau supports the DWR's efforts. • They looked at statistics of deer killed on the highway between Duchesne and Heber City.
01:04:09	RAC Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants roadkill numbers to be taken into consideration. • As a rancher there are still too many lions. • Once the data is collected five years from now, will the implementation be a public process? • It's too bad it is just an informational item and not an action item.
01:30:44	Break
01:36:05	6) Utah Furbearer Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darren Debloois took questions on the topic.
01:36:24	Questions from the RAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why have the permit numbers the same each year?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we make it so more people can hunt bobcats that don't want to trap them since education classes are so few and far between. • How many trapping classes have we had state wide this year? • Is there a way to see how many bobcats are harvested?
	No online comments
01:38:38	Comments from the Public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bobcat numbers seem to be down from last year.
01:41:45	RAC Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need more furbearer classes in each region more often.
01:49:31	MOTION: The following motion is to bring forward the thought to have a different bobcat license that is not tied into the furbearer license made by Jake Huber seconded by Nathan Crapo and passed unanimously. Motion: To take the recommendation to the board.
01:51:22	7) <u>Utah Black Bear Recommendations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darren Debloois gave a brief summary about the recommendation.
01:52:22	<i>Questions from the RAC</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the bear hunting compared to the lion hunting? • What is the drive to do this? • What is the population looking like?
01:56:24	<i>Questions from the public</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are they getting to jump in with this now instead of waiting for the three year plan to start over? • What is the number of kills on the la sal? • What is the sow/boar harvest ration on the la sal? • Is the spring alw or spot and stalk?
02:00:42	<i>Online comment summary</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One comment strongly opposed.

02:01:05	<p><i>Public comment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support the split of the units, but not the increase of tags. • The ten tags should be taken from the la sal unit instead of adding ten tags.
02:03:28	<p><i>RAC discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's finish the three year plan before making changes. • There doesn't seem to be any depredation problems so why do we need more tags given out.
02:04:47	<p><i>Motion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following motion to accept the proposal as presented except remove the ten permits designated to the dolores triangle from the la sal permit numbers was made by Natasha Hadden, seconded by Jordon McMahon , and passed unanimously. <p>MOTION: To accept the recommendation as presented with one change.</p>
02:07:48	<p>8) <u>Predator Control Incentive Amendments- Rule R657-64</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darren Debloois gave a brief summary.
02:08:47	<p><i>Questions from the RAC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you get a lot of people that want GRAMMA requests to see where predators are being killed?
02:09:24	<p><i>Questions from the public</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No questions from the public.
02:09:34	<p><i>Online comment summary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No online comments.
02:09:39	<p><i>Public comment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No public comments.
02:09:44	<p><i>RAC Discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No RAC discussion
02:09:52	<p><i>Motion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following motion was made to accept the rule as presented by Adam Nielson, seconded by Jordon McMahon and passed unanimously.

	MOTION: To accept the rule as presented.
02:10:16	7) <u>Cooperative Agreements for Big Game or Turkey Rule R657-74</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darren Debloois did a brief summary of the rule.
02:13:17	<i>Questions from the RAC</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is some of the funding from pittman-robinson? • Where some of it is federal dollars, could it be used for sandhill cranes? • Does the DWR have to see the problem first? • So where does the other funding come from? • How do they determine how they pay for the damage? • Will you eventually come back to other species for the rule?
02:23:10	<i>Questions from the public</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No questions from the public.
02:23:15	<i>Online comment summary</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One online comment that was neutral.
02:23:22	<i>Public comment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is nice to see the forward thinking and what the DWR is bringing to the table. • We are excited about the program launch to have sportsmans work with agriculture and hoping that this will work.
02:27:15	<i>RAC discussion</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think this is a good idea and that we should limit the landowner tags that have public access. • I would like to see more access if there is a landowner with a lot of deer on their land. • They are good with it as long as they are taking the hunters into consideration. • If the DWR is working with landowners appropriately it could be beneficial if the investment landowners have is respected.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan sounds well thought out with hopes that the farmers and ranchers be well included.
02:33:20	<p><i>Motion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following motion was made to accept the rule and provide an update on an annual basis by Grizz Oleen, seconded by Jordon McMahon and passed unanimously. • MOTION: To accept the rule .
02:35:17	<p>Adjourn</p> <p><i>Motion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A motion was made by Grizz Oleen and seconded by Adam Nielson , passed unanimously.