

**Bureau of Land Management
Pinedale Field Office
Pinedale Anticline Working Group
Draft Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 3, 2011, 9 a.m.**

Field Tour – Tuesday August 2, 2011

Tour focus: PAWG members, BLM staff, and the public visited a variety of past habitat improvement projects. The tour stops included identified mule deer transitional ranges and winter stopover areas. BLM biologists will make presentations regarding seasonal habitat requirements for mule deer and will be available to discuss other issues in tomorrow's meeting at the Pinedale Field office.

Key Issue: The Designated Federal Officer would like to receive advice and recommendations regarding the developing mule deer mitigation program. In particular, the PAWG is asked to provide input regarding site selection, methods of treatment, rate of treatment and size of treatments.

PAWG Meeting -Wednesday August 3, 2011

9:00 Bart Myers, PAWG Chair, called the meeting to order.

9:05 Overview of Agenda; review and approval of May meeting minutes

Michael Kramer noted some changes to the May meeting minutes. Kramer motioned to accept the meeting minutes as amended; Paul Hagenstein seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

9:10 Designated Field Officer Report

Attached.

9:10 Report of Progress on Actionable Items from May Meeting

Engaging the public: Posting of the agenda was put into place two weeks in advance at the Sublette County Library.

An email link was created for the public to communicate with PAWG members. The web address is: PAWG_WY@blm.gov

The *Water Brochure* discussion in May was followed up with the subcommittee's report and final submission to the PAWG. In regards to the development of a brochure the BLM took some assignments to follow up on. They contacted the conservation district, the DEQ, and the Operators about participating cooperatively to create a brochure. They are still waiting to hear from the DEQ. The BLM State office has some graphics, design, and publishing capabilities to save money.

9:40 General Observations from PAWG and Public on Field Tour

Some pictures were taken during the field tour and were viewed in today's meeting. Places that were visited were a spray treatment project that was conducted before 1974 near the Soapholes area. Also visited was an adjacent untreated area. The group then went a little further up the slope that had been mowed in a mosaic pattern. The reason the tour was held in these areas was because the mule deer

matrix was triggered last year and that triggering of the matrix initiated additional mitigation responses from the BLM. There are pieces in motion on fertilization treatments on the Anticline. We are looking into habitat improvement possibilities, priorities, and options on the Anticline for the benefit of mule deer.

10:00 Further Clarification of Information Presented by BLM Biologists

BLM biologists, Mark Thonhoff and Josh Hemenway, stated fertilization was the best option for on-site treatment but its effectiveness was not clear. Off-site treatment was deemed equally important because it could improve deer survival rates. They stated they used aerial imagery to determine canopy covers for wildlife. They stated it would give us a starting point on what areas to treat. In conclusion the Biologists stated, 'it is a complicated process'.

10:20 Mule Deer Habitat and Treatment

PAWG members discussed various types of habitat treatment and vegetation including the necessity of having a variety of shrubs, forbs, and grasses. It was noted that smaller shrubs offer more protein and energy content when they are younger while larger shrubs offer cover and thermal benefits. Sage brush is the mainstay for wildlife in the winter with some of the higher protein forbs. It was also noted that deer need a 'variety' in order to stay healthy. Among the treatments that were discussed were mowing, fertilization, herbicides, prescribed burns, watering, and seeding, etc. Operators focused on fertilization because it states in the ROD that onsite mitigation is their first option. Fertilization was also recommended by the Game & Fish Department and by the BLM biologists stating fertilization is the key to new sage brush growth. Also, discussed was the limitation of livestock grazing; however Shane DeForest stated that even though it was a concern in other areas, it was not a concern locally. Also discussed was the possible use of a Dixie Harrower to thin areas of sagebrush to allow for new growth of smaller plants, grasses, and forbs. The importance of mosaic patterns was discussed stating mosaics leave heavy shrubbery for cover. Other topics included which places to work, crucial winter ranges, and improvements to stabilize mule deer numbers.

11:30 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 Discussion and Formulation of Recommendations and Advice to the DFO

Habitat Improvement Project Development in Response to Triggering of the Wildlife Monitoring and Mitigation Matrix for Mule Deer. Attached.

Motion to forward advice to the DFO deferred until there is a quorum.

2:30 Discussion of November 8 Meeting Topics, Setting of Dates for 2012 Meetings

2011

November 8, 9 a.m. Action on the request for advice regarding wildlife mitigation, brief overview of APM wildlife, Air - 'what's happening' (including visibility milestone update primer to upcoming request for advice, if needed, otherwise where we are with achievement of this), Wildlife Mortality report, discussion of actionable items; responses from Wyoming Game and Fish on enhanced Anticline reclamation; advice and recommendation to set policies governing when/where these practices would be used; preliminary date (if available) regarding wildlife use of new passage features on the highway.

2012

February 7	Water (surface waters and macro-invertebrates; groundwater monitoring/modeling)
May 22, 23	Air (modeling, post-winter air)
August 7, 8	Wildlife (Habitat improvement/mitigation treatments); reclamation progress and reported accomplishments
November TBD	Overview of monitoring plan/Water

4:15 Meeting Adjourned

Bannon motioned to adjourn the meeting; Cally McKee seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MEETING ATTENDANCE FORM

PURPOSE: PAWG Meeting

TIME: FROM 9:00 am TO 5:00 p.m. DATE: 8-3-11

NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Paul C Hagenstrom	Livestock	307 367 2266	
Lony Sozar	Citizen Consultant	367-4677	departed 2 P.M.
Matt Naber	Sublette Examiner	367-3203	
Cathy Dean	Randrup	367-2183	
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Cally McKee	PAWG	307-6472	
John Paul	PAWG	367-3554	
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