

Harvest Management Guidelines for Hunting Seasons in Nevada

Review and Recommendation

Concept and Process

- Initiated in August 2015
- Team approach, cross-divisional involvement



Guidelines Team



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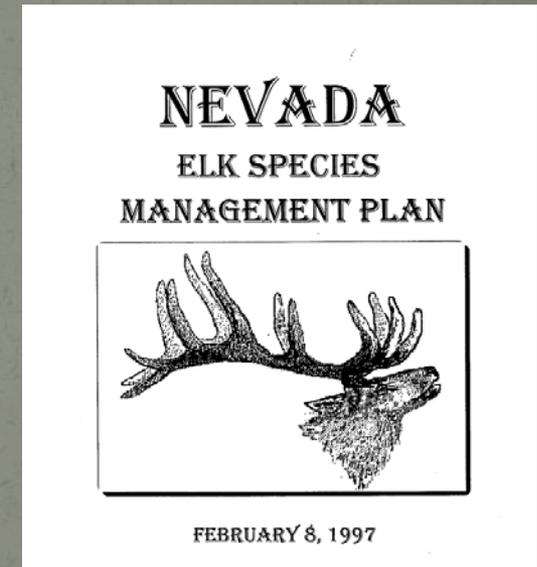
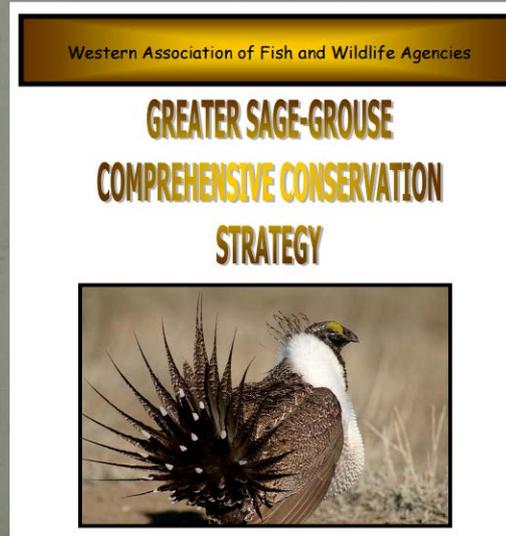
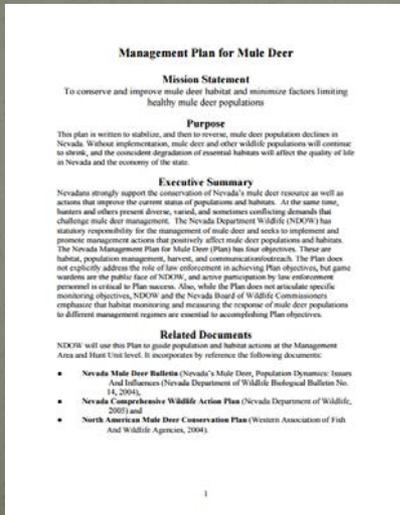
☞ Tom Donham

Harvest Guidelines

- Not new, manage by objective
- Reexamine objectives for which we manage, consolidate
- Review scientific literature
- Comparative data from surrounding states
- Stakeholder and public opinion
- Process
- Benefits

Where are our management objectives?

- Federal Regulation – NRS – NAC
- Elk plans and sub-plans
- Mule deer management plans
- Season setting
- Other documents



Reexamine and consolidate

- Some objectives are somewhat dated
- Objectives can be difficult to locate
- Is there new information?
- Should we consider new approaches?
- Reinventing wheels and building better mousetraps





Objectives



- œ Streamline
- œ Simplify
- œ Standardize
- œ Reduce confusion
- œ Increase value for internal customers (biologists) and external customers (Commission, CABs, and public)
- œ Increase understanding of rationale



Sideboards



- ❧ Department recommendation
 - ❧ Within biological sideboards
- ❧ Public and CAB input
 - ❧ Social sideboards
- ❧ Commission approval
 - ❧ Guidelines, not CR or CGR, therefore not binding
 - ❧ Commission may choose to approve a recommendation outside of guidelines, but Department will inform if believed to be beyond biological sideboard
 - ❧ Any recommendation from agency beyond guidelines will be identified and explained



Clarity on Objectives



- ❧ Not changing objective
 - ❧ We can change it, but do so following process
- ❧ May change how we measure objectives



Examples



- ❧ Mule deer
- ❧ Buck to doe ratio – 30:100
 - ❧ Measured in fall after the hunt
 - ❧ We have data collected during appropriate survey period with confidence intervals
- ❧ No change to criteria
 - ❧ Challenge to get data during appropriate survey period in all areas
 - ❧ Process challenge, not relevant to guidelines



Examples



- ❧ Antlerless harvest
 - ❧ Rationale is more obscure and more poorly articulated
- ❧ Define population size and conditions under which agency will recommend



Examples



Elk

Bull to cow ratio objective

- Measure at time of year to reduce conflicts and see most elk, but does not correspond to best survey period
- Measured ratios are inaccurate, modeled ratios dramatically higher
- Influenced by attempt to manage population objectives



Examples



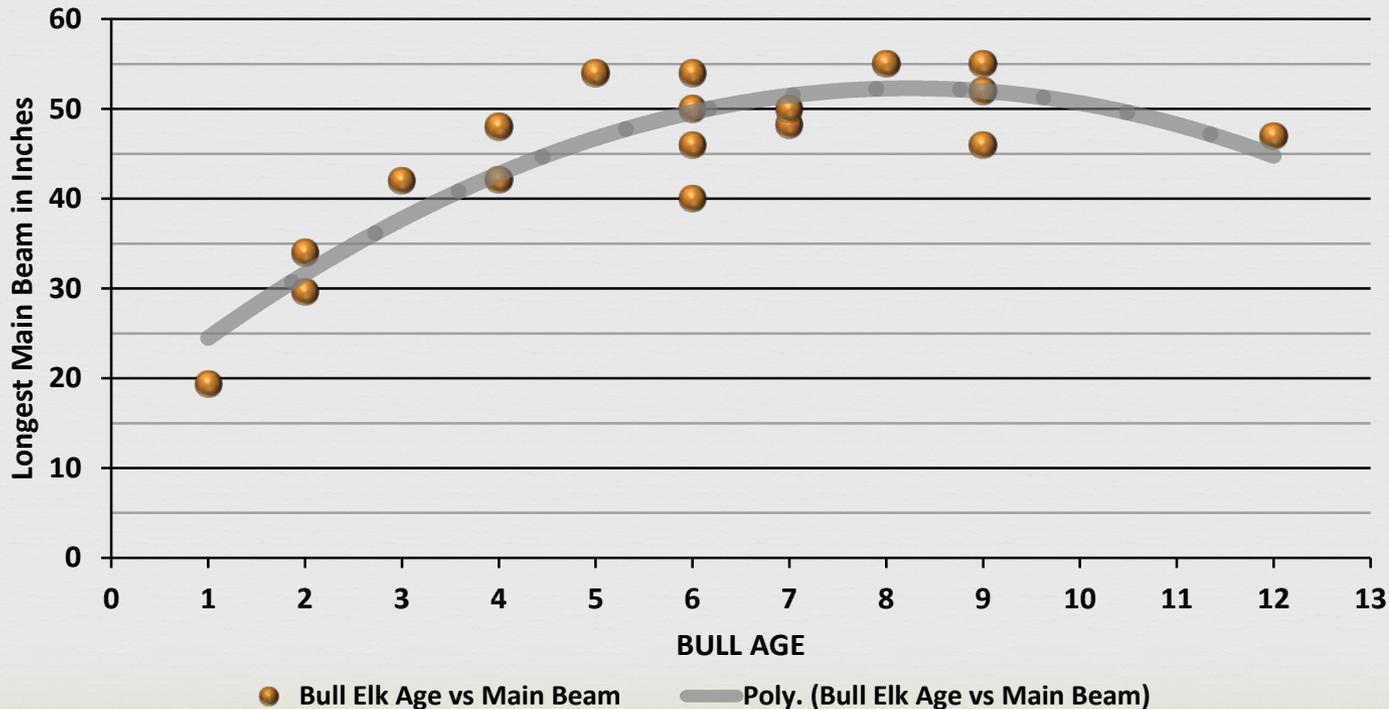
- ❧ Alternative ways to obtain same objective
- ❧ Population characteristics and harvest characteristics
- ❧ Bull elk main beam length

Examples



🌀 Bull elk main beam length:

2015 Unit Group 108, 131, 132 Bull Age vs Antler Length





Examples



- ❧ Bull elk harvest should comprise 25–35% ≥ 50 inch main beam length
 - ❧ Consistent with current data
 - ❧ Independent of ratio



Other Changes



❧ Pronghorn

- ❧ Buck to doe ratios focus on ≥ 2 year old bucks
- ❧ Specify doe hunt objectives

❧ Bear

- ❧ No changes

❧ Bighorn sheep

- ❧ Specify ewe hunt objectives

❧ Mule deer and elk

- ❧ Alternative units
- ❧ Standardize season dates



Other Changes



- ❧ Mountain lion
 - ❧ Statewide objective
 - ❧ Monitor on genetic population structures identified in research
 - ❧ Monitor harvest characteristics
- ❧ Mountain goats
 - ❧ No change
- ❧ Upland game and furbearers
 - ❧ No substantive changes
 - ❧ Clarify management objectives used for bobcat

Next Steps

- Use these guidelines to formulate hunting season and quotas for the next 4 years
- Remember, guidelines are not binding
 - Not CR or CGR
 - CABs may suggest other considerations
 - Commission may adopt seasons or quotas that differ
 - Department will describe rationale for any season we recommend that is not consistent with guidelines

Existing Plans

- *Policy for Management of Pronghorn Antelope (2003)* contains an objective of 20–30 total bucks per 100 doe;
 - The draft guidelines state that buck ratio will be based on modeled pronghorn bucks ≥ 2 years of age.
- *Bighorn Sheep Management Plan (2001)* does not identify specific ram harvest criteria;
 - The draft guidelines state a minimum of 8% of the total estimated rams and not to exceed 50% of rams ≥ 6 years of age.
- *Black Bear Management Plan (2012)* requests analysis of a 10-year population trend;
 - The draft guidelines do not use the 10-year population trend in season or quota setting, although it uses the other components in the plan.

Existing Plans

- *Elk Species Management Plan (1997)* identified a bull to cow ratio of 15–40;
 - The draft guidelines uses hunter reported main beam length to evaluate age structure of harvest, which is not contained in the plan.
 - The draft guidelines provide harvest criteria for "spike" and "antlerless" hunts, which are not addressed by the plan.
 - The draft guidelines identify elk incentive hunts, which are not described in the plan.
- No plan exists for mountain goats.
- *Comprehensive Mountain Lion Management Plan (1995)* identifies that harvest objectives will be established by administrative region;
 - The draft guidelines combine harvest objectives into a statewide objective until such time as the need for a specific area-specific objective is needed.
 - Area-specific management zones are identified in accordance with research published following adoption of the plan.
 - The draft guidelines use harvest criteria published following adoption of the plan.
- No inconsistencies exist between guidelines and any draft mule deer plans

Other Changes

- Updated biological sideboards to broaden information beyond ungulates
- Specialty tags are not addressed in each section, but within the preamble section; not a substantive influence in season or quota setting; TAAHC addressing some aspects currently

CAB Meetings and attendance

- Made effort to have knowledgeable staff person attend CAB meetings
- Posted information on web
 - Included all prior versions for comparison
 - Prior presentation detailing guidelines process.
- Mailed support for at least one CAB did not include Commission Memo and most recent version

Next Steps

- Revision as directed by Commission
- Bring to February meeting for final adoption

Questions – Direction
