

## Conservation Actions for the Area 1 & 2 Northern Washoe County August 2022

### Current NEPA in place by BLM Field Offices

- Programmatic Riparian and Water Development EA- Applegate and Eagle Lake FO (011, 012, 013, 015) (Both field offices would DNA off of these to allow work)
- Programmatic Fuels Reduction and Rangeland Restoration EIS (Great Basin Wide, all of NV)
- Stateline Fence Reconstruction EA- Applegate FO (011, 013, northern 015)

### Habitat Restoration

#### • **Fire Rehabilitation:**

- **Poodle Fire 2020 (014, 015)** – Reapplication of spray in areas where previous treatments were not successful. Seed again, with more drill seeding.
- **Lost Fire 2012 (012, 013)** – This fire burned 67,868 acres and is primarily cheatgrass. Spray with herbicide, fallow, and then seed shrub/grass/forb mixture. Plant bitterbrush and sagebrush seedlings.
- **Rock Fire 2010 (014)** – This fire burned 5,358 acres in prime winter and transitional range, which now has low diversity. Spray ~20,000 acres on the east side across several years, followed by seeding. Seed forb/grass mix into the areas where inter-canopy vegetation is lacking. On the slopes of the granites, seed kochia/brush/forb mixture.

#### • **Brush Improvements:**

- **Fox Mountain Bitterbrush Pruning** – A future field trip in the fall where volunteers prune branches of bitterbrush to stimulate new growth to improve forage quality.
- **Bitterbrush Seed Collection** – Collection of seeds and then spreading in concentrated pockets may improve our odds of success for bitterbrush establishment. Focus these efforts in transitional range and winter range.
- **Private Land Brush Mastication** – Work with private landowners to allow for the mechanical disturbance of bitterbrush to stimulate new growth.

#### **Conifer Removal:**

- **Hays Canyon and 49er Mountain** – Lop and scatter juniper. Prioritizing areas around riparian and high mule deer use. Seed these areas following the cuts.
- **Pah Rabs and Northern Virginia Mountains-** Lop and scatter juniper in areas of high historic mule deer use. Seed these areas following the cuts.

#### • **Fuel Breaks:**

- **Rock Fire Green Strip** – Seed strips of kochia to act as fuel breaks for protecting the high elevation brush along the east side of Granites.
- **Boulder Flat Fuel Break (013)** – Work with BLM to increase the buffer around CR 34 and Hays Canyon Rd to create a fuel break in the decadent sage flats.

#### • **Water Development and Enhancement:**

- **Northern Washoe Springs Project (011-015)** – continue fencing 2-5 springs each year for the benefit of multiple species. Following spring fencing projects, seed

mule deer preferred species into the fenced riparian habitat. Use Programmatic Riparian EA.

- **Southern Granites Guzzler (014)**– Conduct DNA off existing NEPA from Winnemucca Field Office to clear a guzzler build in the higher elevation of Granites.
- **NFWF Migration Corridor Spring Enhancement (011-015)**- Fence several springs along mule deer/pronghorn migratory routes or stopovers.

### Investigative Projects

- **Collaring:**
  - **Mule Deer Collaring (011-015, 021, 022, 033)** – Deploy, monitor, and maintain up to 75 GPS collars on mule deer does to assess overall health, disease exposure, pregnancy rates, survival rates, causes of mortality.
  - Continue to investigate mortalities within 72 hours of mortality and collect biological samples.
  - Establish a meeting with NDOW to discuss collar retrieval team. Further develop the idea of an MTT
- **Predator Projects:**
  - **Active Lion Removal (014)** – Use project 37 to mitigate impacts of lions on declining prey populations until a new Washoe predator project is in place. Develop and implement a research project with Wildlife Services with the goal of publishing findings within 10 years. Use preliminary data to inform management decisions prior to publication. Potentially add 021, 022 to the active lion removal based on GPS collar data and success of lion removal in 014.
  - **Project 22-01 (011-013)** - Removal of lions for protection of bighorn sheep until the population recovers to objectives.
  - **Passive Lion Removal (011-015, 021, 022)** – When GPS collared deer are killed by lions, it will trigger removal of the offending lion.

## Management Area 6 & 065 Five-Year Plan - 2022

### Habitat Connectivity & Movements:

- **Fences – Removal and/or Modification**
  - Map fencing in mule deer migratory corridors and critical seasonal ranges, prioritize the removal and/or modification of fences with high impact to mule deer.
- **Delineate Migratory Corridors - Collaring**
  - Continue to delineate corridors for the remaining sub-herds, via telemetry data.
- **Interstate 80 Crossings/Connectivity**
  - **I-80 ROW Fencing** – Work with NDOT to develop exclusionary fencing around I-80 from the Dunphy Rest Area to the Dunphy exit, including necessary jump outs, re-routing portions of ROW fence to better facilitate movement, and including passages under the interstate.
  - **“Passage Bench”** – Work with NDOT to modify infrastructure under the overpass at the Humboldt River crossing to better facilitate mule deer movement.
  - Continue to investigate other I-80 conflicts for movement and potential crossing enhancements.
- **Industry**
  - Maintain & enhance functional mule deer movement corridors through heavy industry. (Ex. Pete Corridor)
    - **Collaring** – Deploy or maintain collars in herds with high potential for industrial development to collect data that will best inform managers during industry design and NEPA processes.
  - **Area 6 MULDD Working Group** – Seek the expansion of the working group to include mining partners outside of NGM who are planning or operating in mule deer habitats (Ex. First Majestic and South Railroad).

### Habitat Restoration:

- **Herbicide/Seedlings/Seedling Plantings:**
  - Prioritize projects aimed at reducing the dominance of annual invasive grasses in mule deer habitats while restoring desirable grass, forb, and shrub-communities to the landscape. Including the continued use of forage kochia.
  - Continue to pursue meaningful restoration projects across all crucial mule deer ranges.
    - Work with private landowners and livestock operators to conduct restoration on private lands.
  - Request BLM develop utilization standards on both Snowstorm and Immigrant Forage Kochia that benefit wildlife and livestock.
    - Specifically timing of grazing.
  - Support the BLM in the adoption of Indaziflam for application on BLM administered lands.
  - Continue to explore, experiment, and develop alternative restoration strategies, including new tools, to best inform restoration practices.
    - Soil amendments, drought tolerant novel species, new herbicide chemicals/methodologies, etc.
- **Remote Sensing:**
  - Utilize completed (2023) remote sensing vegetation mapping in conjunction with radio telemetry data to develop a habitat restoration priority map.
  - Expand remote sensing vegetation mapping to other regions if proven effective.
- **Fuel Breaks:**
  - Actively pursue opportunities to introduce and maintain fuel breaks protecting valuable habitats on both public and private lands. Including the use green strips that can not only act as fuel breaks but provide forage to wildlife as well.
- **Livestock Management:**
  - Work with willing livestock operators to utilize grazing as a tool to create desirable vegetation communities for the benefit of wildlife & livestock, allow for rest periods during restoration projects, create/maintain fuel breaks (ex. Eleven-mile Flat pasture), etc.
- **Conservation Easements/Land Acquisitions:**
  - Take advantage of, or seek out, properties in high value mule deer habitats & corridors for either state land purchases or conservation easements.
    - Extend Marsh Creek Bench Conservation Easement
- **NEPA**
  - Pursue watershed level analysis for restoration of crucial mule deer habitats.

### Other:

- If Recovering Americas Wildlife Act (RAWA) passes, consider developing a plan specific to Area 6.

## **DRAFT MDEP 7,8,9 Five Year Plan August 2022**

### **Fences – Minimize and/or Modify**

- **Railroad ROW – between Holborn and Fenelon** – 3 miles  
1.3 miles private (Monty Pearce and Winecup Gamble Ranch)
- **Railroad ROW – between Moor Exit and Ralph’s Well** – 4 miles  
1.5 miles private (Monty Pearce, Winecup Gamble Ranch, and Weinger Family)
- **North Pequops**  
22 miles private (Independence Valley Ranch – Winecup Gamble Ranch)
- **Meadow Creek** – 1.5 miles removal in migration corridor

### **Conservation Easements**

- Antelope Peak Ranch – Erik Taylor
- Independence Valley Ranch – Winecup Gamble
- Gibbs Ranch – Wyatt Mesma
- Mary’s River Ranch – Preston Wright
- Memory Ranches – Monty Pearce

### **Habitat Restoration**

- **Seedings:**
  - **Deer Fire** – O’Neil PPA EA Restoration Treatment – 15,776 acres BLM  
Bitterbrush and Sagebrush seedling plantings
  - **South Cricket Fire** – O’Neil PPA EA Restoration Treatment – 5349 acres BLM, 6140 private (Pearce) Bitterbrush and Sagebrush seedling plantings
  - **Charleston Fire Shrub Rehabilitation** – Plant sagebrush and bitterbrush seedlings in important stop-over areas that didn’t regenerate after burn.
- **Conifer Removal:**
  - **Payne Basin** – waiting on DNA – 2,200 acres, juniper removal and possible seeding in transition and migration corridor.
  - **Murdock Mountain Mule Deer Habitat Enhancement** – Hand thinning and mechanical mastication of Phase 1 or 2 Juniper in migration corridor and winter range. Partners include USFWS, MDF, and Winecup Gamble Ranch.
  - **Collar and Elbow Basin** – 400 acres of private property owned by Simplot. Phase 1 juniper removal in critical winter range. A Partners for Fish and Wildlife Project
  - **Polygons #16 Deadman, #25 Northeast Pequops** – O’Neil PPA EA  
Phase 1 and 2 conifer removal within 3 miles of sage grouse leks, treatments could include – hand thinning, mastication, broadcast and drill seeding, pile burning, greenwood fire cutting, herbicide, and/or temporary fencing.
- **Fuel Breaks:**  
Meadow Creek Restoration – Mow 10 miles of a fuel break to protect critical transition and stop-over areas from burning (O’Neil Basin PPA EA)

**Mule Deer Enhancement Program  
White Pine County  
Management Areas 11 and 12  
Five Year Plan  
July 2022**

- **Conifer Removal**
  - Complete NEPA for identified projects in Cooper Meadow
    - 1,455 acres identified for hand thinning
    - 301 acres identified for mastication
    - Possibly identify more acres under new NEPA
  - Complete projects in Smith Valley
    - 9,048 acres identified for hand thinning
    - 952 acres identified for mastication
    - NEPA and funding is currently in place
  - Complete treatments with the BLM in the South Spring and Hamlin Watershed EA
  - Pursue NEPA for Steptoe Bench
  - Pursue NEPA for Weaver Creek
  - Pursue NEPA on USFS lands in the North Schell Creek Range
- **Spring Restoration**
  - Complete NEPA with BLM spring package
    - When NEPA is completed, prioritize springs and begin restoration efforts
  - Work with USFS to identify springs and complete NEPA
- **Research**
  - Request that NDOW pursue a research project studying the impacts of wild horses on mule deer
  - Conduct mule deer collaring in MA 12
  - Conduct mule deer collaring in MA 11
  - Coordinate with Great Basin National Park on mountain lion study
- **Energy Development**
  - NDOW will keep the Team informed of energy development(s) that may impact mule deer
  - Energy development may alter priorities for mule deer
- **Water Development**
  - Complete water developments that have been cleared
  - Consider new sites for future water developments

## **Conservation Actions for the Area 13 Deer Herd August 2022**

We hope that an extensive radio-collaring project for MA13 will be approved and initiated in 2023. We are expecting that spatiotemporal movement data from radio-collared deer will further inform us on most impactful locations for effective habitat management efforts. These data are *vital* in the decision making process for future habitat projects and will ultimately greatly benefit the herd.

We aim to keep the subcommittee apprised of any developments both in the management area as well as in the region at large. This includes across agencies as well as industries. This 5-year plan will be revisited annually and adaptive, thereby adjusted and modified as needed.

### **Water developments – Enhance or Add**

- Additional guzzlers through the Golden Gate, Seaman, Irish, and Quinn Canyon Ranges, as well as in Coal Valley, to provide a more extensive network of water resources in drastic drought conditions
  - Central Nevada Water Development Project EA may allow for DNA procedures within the Tonopah Field Office area of responsibility
- Enhancing established springs throughout the Grant/Horse Range by conducting and or expanding PJ removal and deploying horse exclosures and fencing

### **Habitat Restoration**

- **Conifer Removal:**
  - Through Perish Springs and surrounding areas (important migration corridor)
  - White Pine Range to expand the work being conducted by the Forest Service
    - Fawning grounds by Hamilton
  - Expanding work being conducted in the Douglas Hills and Ellison Knobs areas
  - Benches of the Grant Range
- **Seedings:**
  - In the entirety of the management area – recent fires in the area have provided an opportune window
    - Herbicide to reduce infiltration of cheat grass and other invasives

### **Predator removal**

- If radio collar data indicates a particular species as a primary predator causing a significant amount of mortalities and or a particular area where deer are significantly more vulnerable to predation

## **Conservation Actions for the Area 14 Deer Herd August 2022**

### **Fences – Modify or Add**

- Stronger horse enclosures that may require additional NEPA clearances
- Adding wildlife-friendly fencing around springs and or riparian areas

### **Habitat Restoration**

- **Conifer Removal:**
  - 3-bar NEPA clearance
    - Targeting areas that further expand other work being done in the area
    - Monitoring and removal of phase 1 and early phase 2 trees on previously treated areas
    - Conducting PJ removal on surrounding stop over areas (e.g., Mt Hope, Lone Mt.)
  - Various benches and canyons in the Diamonds, as necessary and to piggy-back off work being done by other agencies and groups
    - NEPA is close to being complete
  - Gibellini Mine will conduct future mitigation work with associated NEPA clearances in the coming years
    - PJ removal to expand off of their efforts as well as riparian restoration where appropriate
- **Seedings:**
  - Cortez Range – recent fires in the area have provided an opportune window
    - Upcoming mining activity in Horse Canyon (Gold Rush) may allow utilization off their NEPAs and expanding off related mitigation work
    - Herbicide to reduce infiltration of cheat grass and other invasives
- **Water Development and Riparian Restoration:**
  - Spring restoration in Spring Valley
  - Potential big game guzzler(s) on Lone Mountain
  - Vegetative work to enhance riparian areas

### **Investigations**

- A fawn mortality project to better inform Project 40 and identify a more supported target species

## MDEP Management Areas 16, 17, 21, 25 5-Year Plan

### Water Development/Mesic Protection

- Butler Basin Meadows Protection – Complete current phase of exclusionary fencing and expand to adjacent meadows.
- Complete BLM Programmatic EA – Place exclusionary fencing around mesic sites on BLM. Several sites include but aren't limited to: Alpine Canyon Spring: 11S 452484.88m 4208820.65m  
Jack's Spring: 11S 454393.26m 4207074.62m and 11S 454826.54m 4206954.37m  
South Lone Mountain Spring: 11S 456288.87m 4205366.18m  
Shovel Spring: 11S 442765.45m 4221610.11m  
Peterson Meadows: 11S 446822.11m 4331103.95  
Point of Rock Spring: 11S 528927.81m 4237766.26m  
Sidehill Spring: 11S 527306.35m 4234227.92m
- Work with the USFS on Mesic Fencing (Sagehen Spring)
- Build the cleared guzzlers under the newly finished EA.

### Pinyon and Juniper Treatments

- Complete Morey Bench pinyon and juniper treatments
- Complete the Little Fish Lake Valley treatments cleared on the USFS
- Treat BLM portions of Pine Creek and Pasco
- Treat Meadow Canyon/Andrew's Basin
- Treat NE corner of Shoshones (important MD wintering habitat)
- Complete Indian Valley treatments
- Thin/treat Cloverdale summit
- Antelope Range/Ninemile Peak treatments
- Magruder/Palmettos PJ treatments around water sources
- Kawich Range

### Seeding/Herbicide

- Aerial seed and plant seedlings on Carver's Bench PJ treatments
- Antone Canyon Seeding
- Wall Canyon/Pablo herbicide and aerial seeding
- Seedling planting on Morey Bench



**Mule Deer Enhancement Program  
Churchill and Mineral County  
Management Areas 18 and 20  
Five Year Plan  
July 2022**

- **Conifer Removal**
  - Complete NEPA for additional projects in Area 18 and 20 areas to focus on include:
    - War Canyon
    - Cedar Mountain
    - Pilot Mountain
    - Powell Mountain
    - Buller Mountain
    - Bald Peaks
    - Smith Creek
    - Topia
    - Truman Meadows
  - Seek clearance to go back into past treatment areas and retreat 5 years post treatment.
- **Spring Restoration**
  - Complete NEPA for spring protection fencing
    - Once NEPA is completed seek funding and contracts to complete projects
  - Work with USFS to identify springs and complete NEPA in Area 20
  - Complete fencing projects on private land to protect spring sources
  - Fence Gilbert Creek pasture as well as Water Canyon in New Pass Range
- **Water Development**
  - Identify future water development sites in Area 18 and 20
  - Consider developing spring sources that promote mule deer use
- **Feral Horses**
  - Encourage the BLM to keep horses and burros at AML
    - When a horse removal is conducted. Follow up with predator removal
- **Fire Rehab**
  - Apply herbicide on past fires and rehab with forage kochia and snowstorm
  - Reseed all pinyon and juniper fires. If money is lacking focus efforts on all north facing slopes



## **Lincoln County MDEP Subcommittee – 5 Year Plan for Mule Deer Management September 2022**

### **Management Area 22**

- Restore/regenerate bitter brush on Jackrabbit Bench and surrounding area
- Pinion/Juniper removal in Fairview Range
- Protection of springs in Fairview Range
- Use GPS data from proposed collar study to target other areas for habitat treatment

### **Management Area 23**

- Increase habitat quality within priority fawning grounds
- Plant bitter brush in high elevation habitat
- Remove pinion/juniper
- Protect springs
- Perform maintenance on Atlanta Road pinion/juniper treatments

### **Management Area 24**

- Focus on improving summer range
- Continue pinion/juniper removals
- Seed bitterbrush to plant in chainings
- Plant bitterbrush seedlings in high use areas
- Construct water developments in Delamar Mountains to increase summer habitat

Clark County MDEP  
Areas 26, 27, and 28  
Five-Year Management Plan  
Autumn 2022

Data Gathering

1. Remote Camera Array- 1 year minimum, can be repeated
  - a. Monitor use of springs in the Spring Mts by mule deer, non-targets, and predators (20 sites, 20-40 cameras). Monitor condition of springs/habitat/vegetation.
  - b. Analyze photo data using AI software; incorporate data into a modified population model/estimate

Habitat Restoration

2. Spring Enhancement- 5-10+ years to completion
  - a. Initiate or continue building/replacing fences around springs in the Spring Mountains and McCullough Range
    - i. Willow Creek for fencing- furthest along on the NEPA process for Spring Mts
      1. Scope of Work completed in 2017, will need to be revised.
    - ii. Mud Spring has an old wire fence that needs to be replaced with pipe rail fencing to allow deer/elk and exclude horses/burros. Sensitive plant area.
    - iii. Buck Spring, Fence Spring, Trough Spring, Sawmill Spring are all currently fenced, so Categorical Exclusions may apply for replacing/maintaining these.
  - b. Other spring restoration projects: Timeline will depend on NEPA. Coordination with USFS and/or BLM is underway for ~15 additional springs. The following spring projects are currently under draft NEPA plans (Piute Eldorado EA):
    - i. Ora Hanna Spring (McCulloughs)- excavate springhead and/or fence for cattle
    - ii. Highland Spring (McCulloughs)- additional drinker, fence for cattle
    - iii. Cow Spring (McCulloughs)- additional drinker, fence for cattle
3. Mullein Removal- 2-3 years.
  - a. Hand-removing mullein (*Verbascum spp*) from the CC Spring Road in Spring Mountains NRA where mastication and other restoration has occurred and replacing it with native seed/seedlings/plantings. No additional NEPA as target areas are restoration/fuels reduction areas. Coordinate with USFS.

Other

4. Horse and Burro Management- Support private citizens and NGOs in their actions to solicit aid and funding to remove feral horses and burros from areas in Clark County where numbers exceed AML.

- a. Clark County MDEP members and private citizens have expressed concerns for the BLM's ability to efficiently remove excess horses and burros without aid, especially funding and have reached out to NGO groups to assist.
- b. NDOW has no jurisdiction over horse and burro management but can provide support as documentation of horse and burro impact on habitat and wildlife.