RAMPART DATA ANALYSIS UNIT
D-50

GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS
59, 591, 511, and 512

DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN

PREPARED FOR
THE COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

BY
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D-50 DATA ANALYSIS UNIT PLAN
Executive Summary
11/13/2007

GMUs: 59, 591, 511 and 512
Land Ownership: 42% Private, 28% USFS, 6% BLM, 1% State, 19% Federal Dept. of Defense
Post-hunt Population:
Previous Objective - 3,000[a]; *2007 Estimate* - 4,100[bc]; *Current Objective* - 4,000-5,000[bc]
Post-hunt Sex Ratio (Bucks/100 Does):
Previous Objective – 45 [a]; *2006 Observed* – 41 [b]; *2006 Modeled* – 35 [b]; *Current Objective* – 35-40 [b]

Figure 1. D-50 Post-hunt Modeled Population

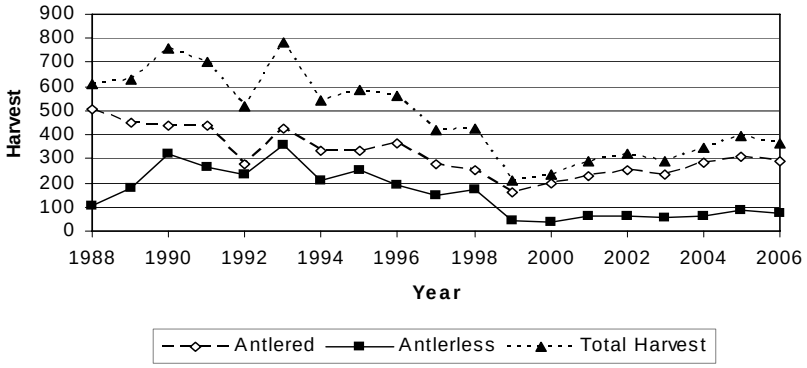

Figure 2. D-50 antlered, antlerless and total harvest from 1988-2006.

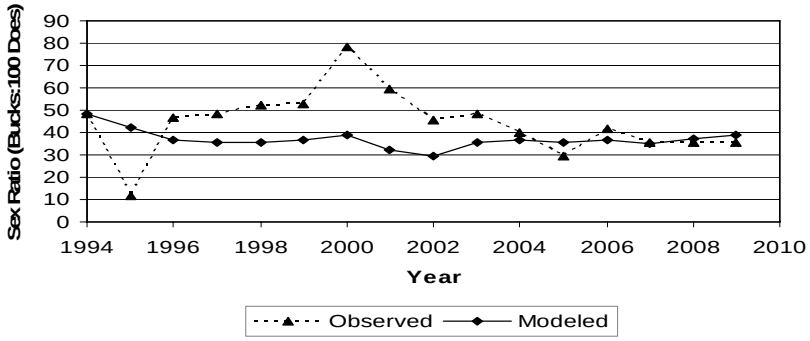

Figure 3. Posthunt Bucks/100 Does

[a] - Represents GMUs 511 and 512
[b] - Represents GMUs 511, 512, 59 and 591
[c] - Approximately 30% of the overall population resides within the city limits of Colorado Springs and was excluded from the objective

D-50 Background and Current Population Information
Historically, deer Data Analysis Unit (DAU) D-50 included Game Management Units (GMUs) 511 and 512. DAU D-16 included GMUs 49, 57, 58, 581, 59, and 591. Recent biological data suggests that there is little interchange between GMUs 581 and 59. Therefore, a DAU realignment is desired and the new DAU D-50 will include GMUs 59, 591, 511 and 512. The population of deer in D-50 is believed to be increasing. This can be attributed to the antlerless hunting in GMUs 59 and 591 being stopped in 1999 to bring the population closer to objective. Population estimates are derived on the Air Force Academy (AFA; GMU 512) and Fort Carson (GMU 591) with the estimated population size of approximately 350 deer on the AFA and 1,100 deer on Fort Carson. Currently, it is estimated that there are approximately 5,750 deer in D-50 and 30% of these deer are believed to be within the city limits of Colorado Springs. The sex ratio for the population was observed to be 41 bucks/100 does in the post season of 2006.

D-50 Harvest and Hunters
In 1989 GMUs 511 and 512 were placed in DAU D-50. Since 1989, the population of deer in D-50 has been reduced by harvest. Much of the reduction occurred on GMU 512 where there was an estimated 1,500-1,800 deer in 1988. In 1999, GMU 591 was established and provides hunting opportunity on Fort Carson. In general, harvest in D-50 declined in the early 1990's, but has been on a steady increase since 1999. Hunter success in D-50 varies by GMU with the highest success in GMU 512. Success in GMU 59 has increases annually since 1999 and success in GMU 511 has been stable to increasing in recent years. Hunter success for GMU 591 has been on a steady decrease since 1999, which has been attributed to hunter selectivity. A variety of hunting seasons have been used in D-50 to obtain population objectives. Antlerless harvest has been used to manage population size in GMUs 511 and 512 since 1988. Recently an antlerless season was added in GMU 591 to manage the deer population and provide hunter opportunity. All GMU's in D-50 provide buck hunting opportunities. In 2000, a private land only antlerless season and a fourth season buck season were added to GMU 511.

D-50 Management Problems
Adequate funding for aerial population survey is needed to obtain population information. Until recently, much of the collected data for D-50 came from GMU 512 (AFA). In 2005, additional information was collected in GMUs 511 and 591. In 2006, all GMUs in D-50 were surveyed for population information. Currently, one of the largest problems facing deer management in D-50 is the number of urban deer that cannot be managed through harvest, which is estimated at 30% of the total population of deer in the DAU. Numerous complaints are received each year from deer feeding in gardens, on ornamental plants, shrubs and trees and bucks damaging small trees while rubbing velvet from antlers. Game damage to agricultural, although not a large problem in this DAU, should be considered in future management decisions. CWD was detected in GMU 59 in 2004. Since that time, four additional deer have tested positive in GMU 591 and no additional deer have tested positive in GMU 59. Surveillance for CWD will continue to be conducted through the submission of hunter harvested deer and suspect animals.

Management Alternatives
The CDOW's preferred alternative is to manage for a post-season population of 4,000-5,000 deer with an observed post season composition of 35-40 bucks/100 does. These alternatives are supported by public comments. In a recent hunter survey, the overwhelming majority of respondents (90%) supported the population composition of 35-40 bucks/100 does. However, the response from hunters, the BLM, and landowners in the DAU differed in regards to the preferred population objective. For example, respondents to a hunter survey supported maintaining the current number of deer within the DAU (57% of respondents). Of the respondents 199 of 240 reported hunting in GMU 511 whereas only 23 reported hunting in GMU 59. We therefore did not adequately sample hunters from GMU 59. Landowners in GMU 59 support an increase in the number of deer within the DAU and the BLM suggests that their lands managed in GMU 59 could support more deer. We therefore have selected the alternative for a 15% increase in the population with the objective of 4,000-5,000 deer with the increase in population being directed to GMU 59. This will be accomplished with limited doe deer hunting in GMU 59 until the objective is obtained. The achievement of the sex ratio objective may require increases in the number of buck licenses. Other alternatives being considered in this DAU plan include: 1) decrease the population size by 15% to 3,000-4,000 deer, 2) maintaining the current population of 3,500-4,500 deer, 3) reduce the sex ratio to 30-35 bucks/100 does and 4) reduce the sex ratio to 25-30 bucks/100 does.

The D-50 DAU Plan was approved by the Colorado Wildlife Commission on January 10, 2008.

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DATA ANALYSIS UNIT PLANS

It is the mission of the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) to perpetuate the wildlife resources of the state and provide people with the opportunity to enjoy them. In accordance with this mission, the CDOW recently revised their strategic plan which defines how the CDOW will manage wildlife in coming years. As stated in the strategic plan, populations are to be managed in accordance with a Data Analysis Unit (DAU) plan. A DAU is defined by a grouping of Game Management Units (GMU) and considered to be a discrete population of big game animals. A DAU plan directs the actions the CDOW will take to meet the legislative and Commission mandates by defining objectives for both the population size and herd composition objectives for a given period of time.

The DAU planning process is designed to incorporate public demands, habitat capabilities, and herd capabilities into a management scheme for the big game population (Figure 4). The public, sportsmen, federal land use agencies, landowners and agricultural interests are involved in the determination of the plans objectives through goals, public meetings, comments on draft plans and the Colorado Wildlife Commission.

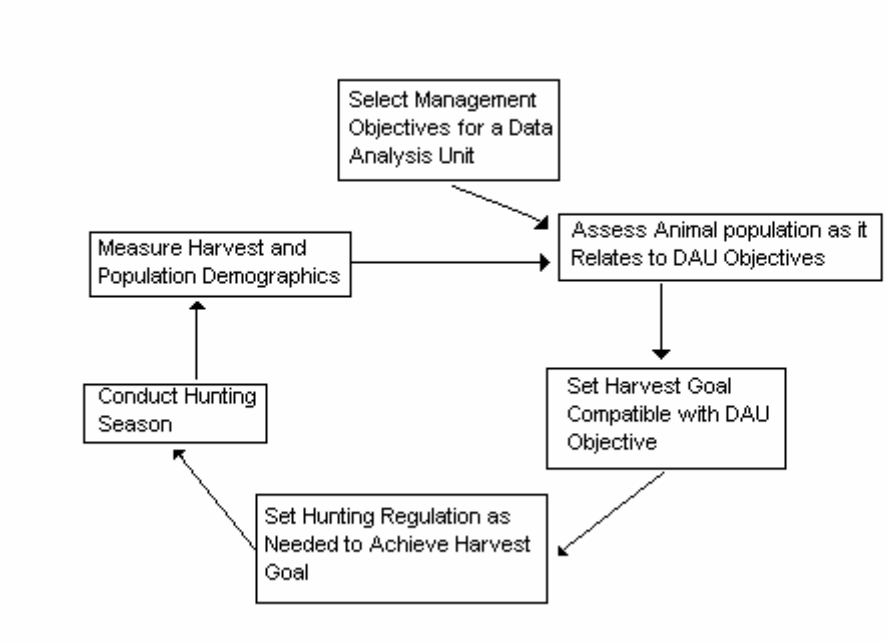

Figure 4. Colorado's Object Cycle of Big Game Management and Harvest.

Individual DAU's are managed with the goal of meeting herd objectives. This is accomplished by gathering herd data and putting it into a spreadsheet model (DEAMAN) to get a population projection. The parameters for the model include harvest data which is tabulated from hunter surveys, sex and age composition of the herd which is acquired from aerial counts and mortality factors such as wounding loss and winter severity which are generally acquired from field observations. Once these variables are entered into the population modeling program a population estimate is obtained. The resulting computer population projection is then compared to the herd objective and a harvest is calculated to align the population with the herd objective.

D-50 RAMPART DATA ANALYSIS UNIT

DAU DESCRIPTION

Location

The Rampart deer DAU is located in central Colorado and lies within portions of El Paso, Teller, Fremont and Pueblo Counties (Figure 5). It consists of Game Management Units (GMU's) 59, 591, 511 and 512. The DAU is bounded on the north by the Teller/Douglas county line; on the east by Interstate 25; on the south by Highway 50; and on the west by the Platte River, Highway 24, Highway 67 and the Phantom Canyon Road.

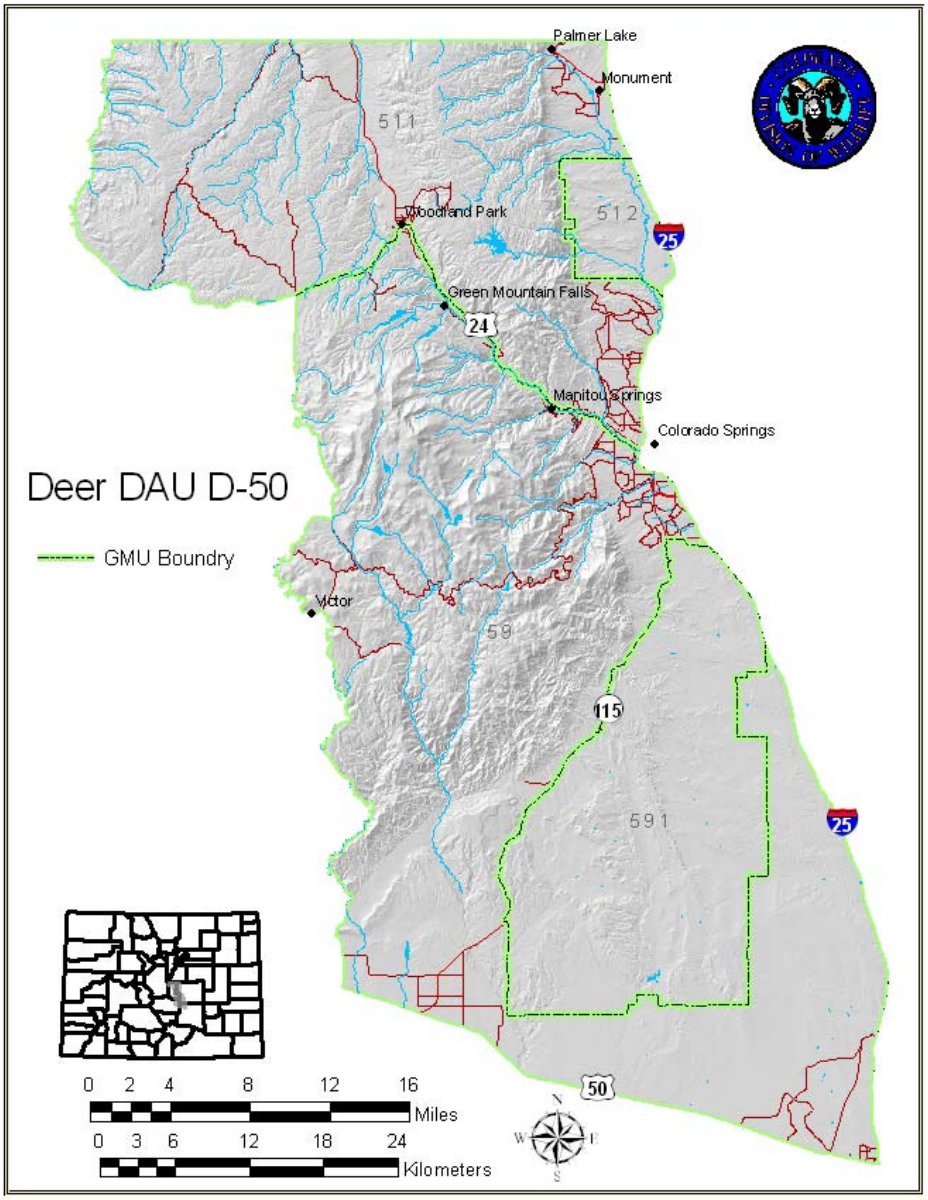

Figure 5. Deer DAU D-50

This DAU covers 1,251 square miles ranging in elevation from 14,110 feet at the summit of Pikes Peak to approximately 4,750 feet where Highway 50 intersects with Interstate 25.

GMU 59 is the largest (646 square miles), followed by GMU 511 (362 square miles), GMU 591 (Fort Carson; 215 square miles) and GMU 512 (Unites States Air Force Academy, AFA; 28 square miles).

Topography and Habitat

Topography and vegetation across the DAU is diverse. The primary topographical features in GMUs 511 and 512 include the southern reaches of the Rampart Mountain Range. The vegetation at lower elevations of the Front Range is dominated by oak brush, mountain mahogany, and ponderosa pine. Rolling hills and steep foothills characterize the landscape to the west of Rampart Range and are dominated by aspen, mountain meadow, spruce/fir, and ponderosa pine vegetation. In 2002, the Hayman fire burned vegetation in the northern and western reaches of GMU 511. Regeneration of aspen, pine, shrubs, grasses and forbs has occurred since the fire.

The most dominant feature in GMU 59 is Pikes Peak, which is comprised of alpine vegetation along with the nearby Sheep and Almahgre Mountain. Lower elevations surrounding Pikes Peak support spruce/fir forest. Topography to the south of Pikes Peak is rugged and somewhat isolated. Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, aspen and mountain mahogany dominate with the most notable feature being the Beaver Creek Canyon. Lower elevations support pinion/juniper and grasslands. Southern reaches of GMU 59 are dominated by greasewood and cholla. GMU 591 is quite diverse with grassland, oak brush, ponderosa pine, riparian, pinion/juniper, and cholla cactus.

Higher elevations may receive in excess of 20 inches of moisture while lower elevations may receive less than 10 inches, with precipitation falling mainly as winter snow and spring and summer rains. Major rivers in D-50 are: South Platte River, Trail Creek, Turkey Creek, Phantom Creek, West Creek, Trout Creek, Manchester Creek, Rule Creek, Monument Creek, Deadman Creek, Camp Creek, Severy Creek, Beaver Creek, Brush Hollow Creek, Horse Creek, Dry Creek, Porter Creek, Eightmile Creek, Cabin Creek, Catamount Creek, Crystola Creek, Bison Creek, Gould Creek, Cheyenne Creek, Ruxton Creek, Bear Creek, and French Creek.

Land Use

Landownership in D-50 is mixed with private land dominating (531 square miles, 42%; Figure 4). This is followed by 351 square miles (28%) of United States Forest Service lands, 243 square miles (19%) of federal lands managed by the Department of Defense, 70 square miles (6%) of Bureau of Land Management, 31 square miles (2%) of State Land Board lands, 18 square miles (2%) of city and county owned lands, and 6 square miles (1%) of lands owned by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (Figure 6). Lands owned by the Colorado Division of Wildlife include the Pikes Peak State Wildlife Area (SWA), Skaguay SWA, Brush Hollow SWA and Beaver Creek SWA.

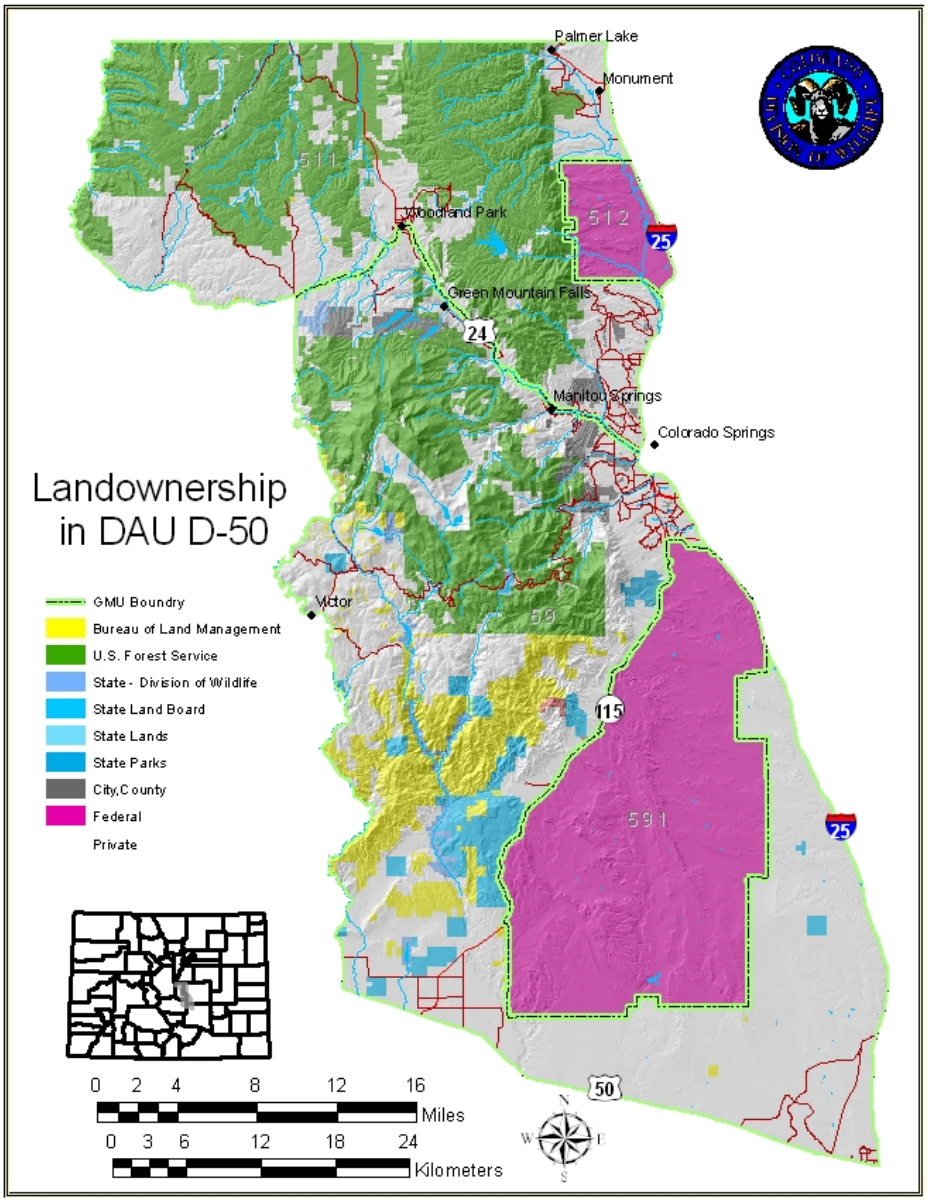

Figure 6. Land Ownership in DAU D-50

Approximately 92% of D-50 (1,145 square miles) is deer habitat of which approximately 678 square miles (54%) is open to the public for managed hunting (Figures 6 and 7). The Colorado Division of Wildlife currently possesses the recreational lease from the State Land Board on 4,640 acres (Table Mountain) in Fremont County.

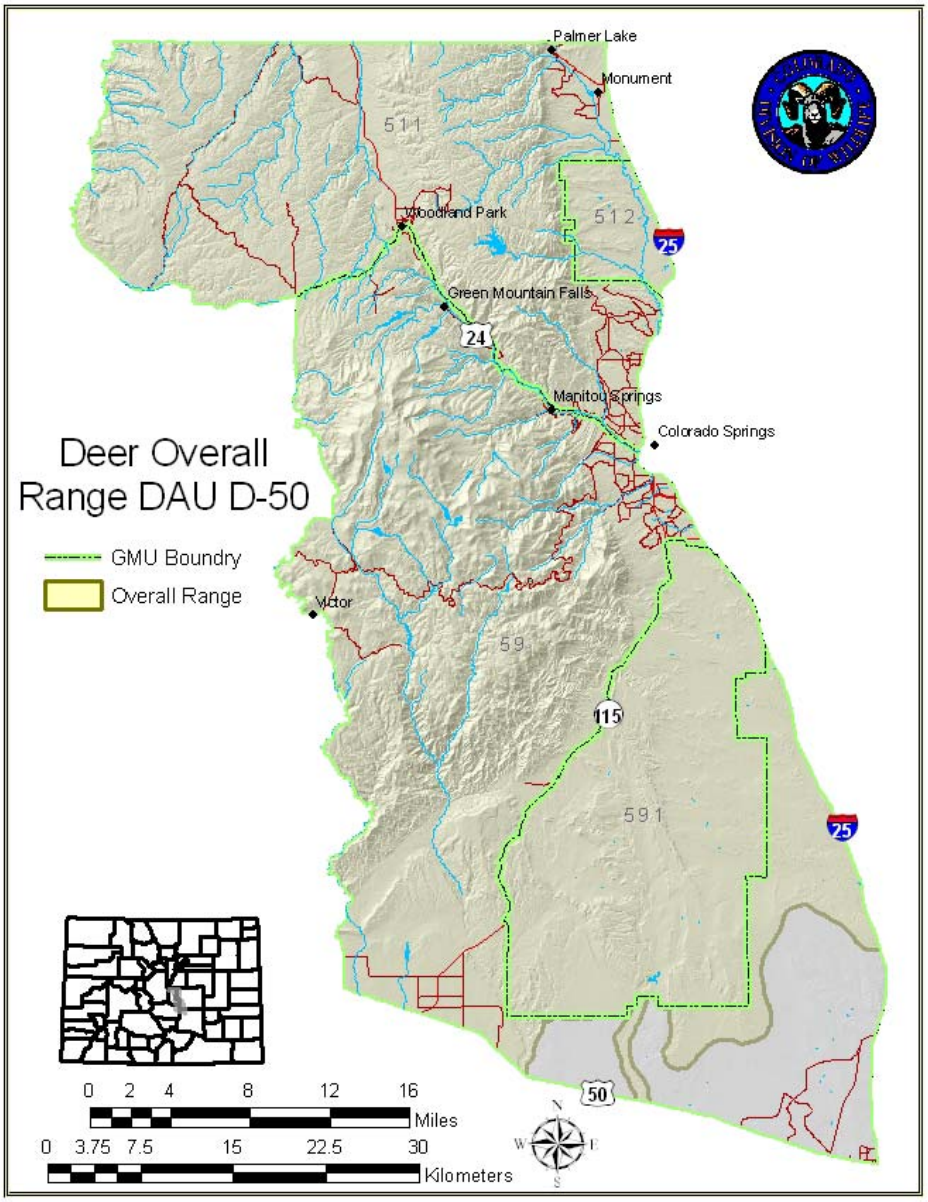

Figure 7. Mule Deer Overall Range in DAU D-50

This DAU has considerable development, which includes all, or portions, of the following cities: Colorado Springs, Palmer Lake, Monument, Manitou Springs, Cascade, Chipita Park, Green Mountain Falls, Woodland Park, Divide, Cripple Creek, Victor, Penrose, and Pueblo. In addition to the concentrated development in the listed cities, suburban development is considerable within this DAU. Outside of the developed areas, agriculture and recreation are the primary land uses. Agriculture use is dominated by livestock grazing, with the growing of hay and fruit orchards in this DAU as well. Recreation uses include hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, off highway vehicles (OHV's) including all terrain vehicles (ATV's) and dirt bikes and full size 4-wheel drive vehicles.

Deer Distribution

Deer occupy the vast majority of this DAU from the alpine around Pikes Peak to the lower pinion/juniper, oak brush, ponderosa pine dominated vegetation along the Front Range. Recently, the Hayman fire of 2002 enhanced habitat for deer in GMU 511 where deer are regularly seen and harvested. The areas supporting the highest deer densities within this DAU include the urban areas on the western extent of Colorado Springs. These areas support large numbers of deer in small areas, which are supported by landscape plantings.

Much of this DAU is classified as winter range because winter does not typically affect deer distribution (Figure 8). However, we know that some deer in this DAU make seasonal migrations to lower elevations. For example, we expect that deer that spend summer months on the alpine of Pikes Peak and migrate to lower elevations in the winter, but the extent of these movements is largely unknown. In the event that winter does have an affect, lower elevations on the eastern and southern boundaries of the DAU area are classified as severe winter range (Figure 8).

Both Mule deer and white-tailed deer occupy this DAU, with the majority of the white-tailed deer occupying the habitats along Monument Creek on the AFA. White-tailed deer are also present and often seen on Fort Carson and the southwest portion of Colorado Springs.

Deer are commonly observed within the city limits of Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs and Monument. Deer are also becoming more prevalent in the subdivisions in the suburban areas within the DAU. Deer have adapted well to urban living much to the chagrin of some residents who complain of deer damaging ornamental shrubs and flowering plants with additional complaints of bucks rubbing on trees and shrubs.

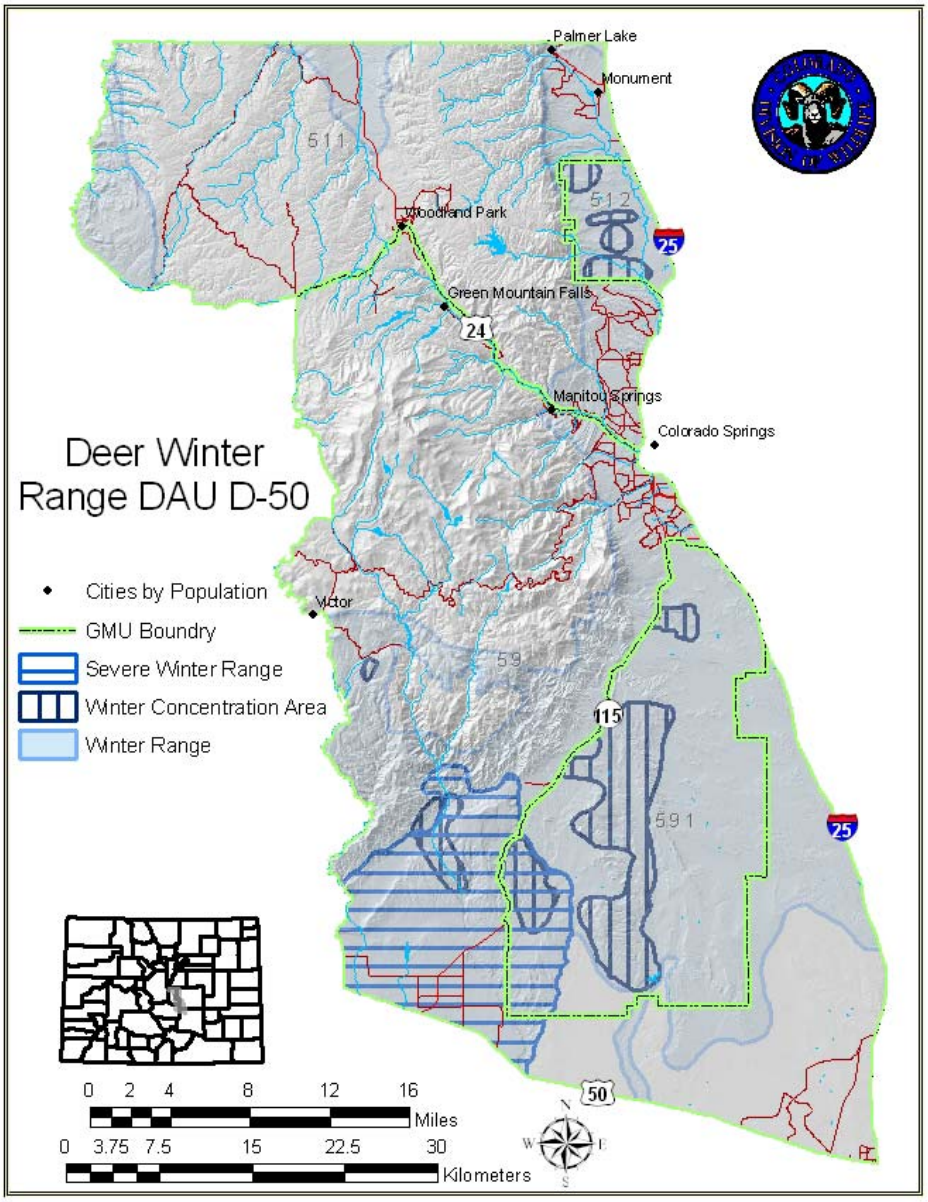

Figure 8. Mule Deer Winter Range in DAU D-50

Historic Population Management

Historically the D-50 deer DAU included GMUs 511 and 512 and was established in 1989. Beginning in 2000 a deer survival study was initiating in the joining DAU D-16 which included GMUs 49, 57, 58, 581, 59, and 591. Because of the size, extent and access into D-16, GMUs 59 and 591 were excluded from the survival study based on financial constraints and uncertain access on Fort Carson (GMU 591). However, radio collars were equipped on deer in GMU 581 near the border of GMU 59. Since these radio collars have been on deer in GMU 581, there has been little documented interchange from collared deer across the GMU

581/59 boundary. We therefore believe that a DAU re-alignment would be more biologically relevant by including GMUs 59 and 591 with GMUs 511 and 512 in D-50.

Population Size

The total number of animals in a big game population fluctuates throughout the year. Normally, the population peaks in the spring just after the birth of the young. Populations then decline throughout the year as natural mortality and hunting seasons take animals from the population. Traditionally, the CDOW uses post-hunt populations (immediately after the conclusion of the last regular hunting season, usually in late November) when referring to population data. This should be used as a frame of reference when population data is referred to in the DAU plan.

Beginning in 1988 a quadrat survey was designed and flown in GMU 512. This survey consists of 20 – one half mile square quadrats that are used to estimate population size. The population size has decreased since 1989 from approximately 1,590 deer to the current estimate of 336 deer in 2006 (Figure 9). This decrease is attributed to increased harvest with the goal of decreasing the population.

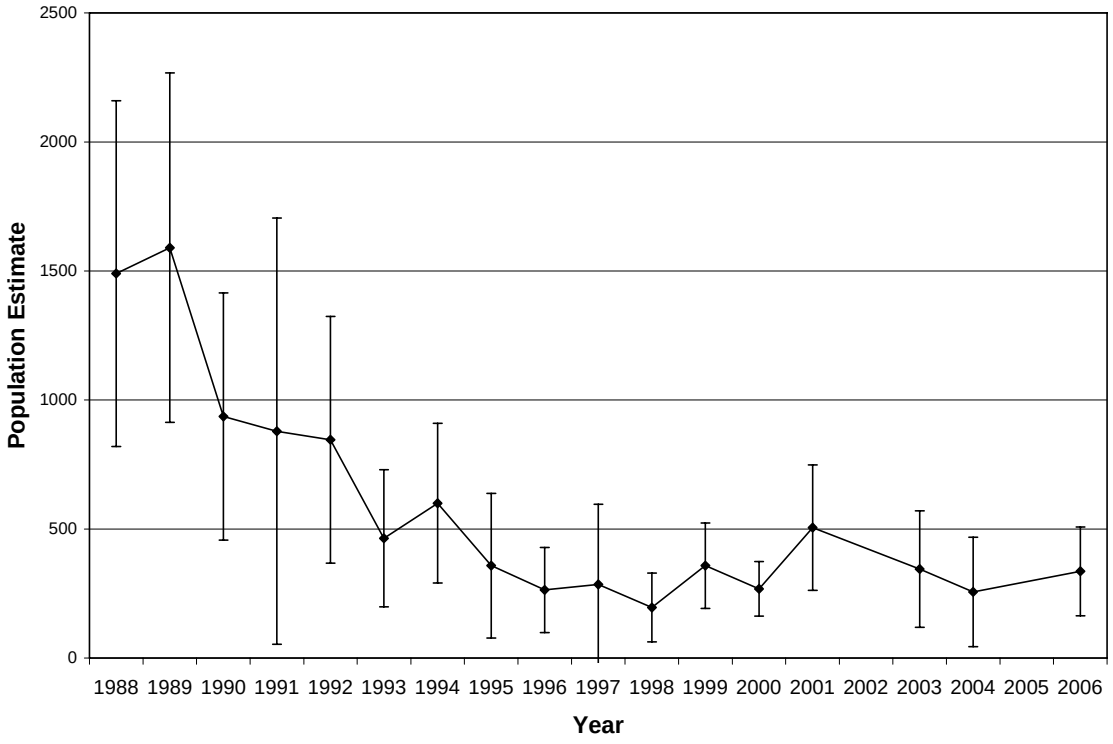

Figure 9. GMU 512 (AFA) population estimates and 95% confidence limits from 1988-2006.

Beginning in 2004, a quadrat system was set up in GMU 591 to estimate deer population size. Currently, there are 75 – 1 km square quadrats that survey approximately 20% of the GMU. These quadrats have been flown every year since 2004 and the estimate varied with a high of approximately 1,350 deer and low of approximately 950 deer (Figure 10).

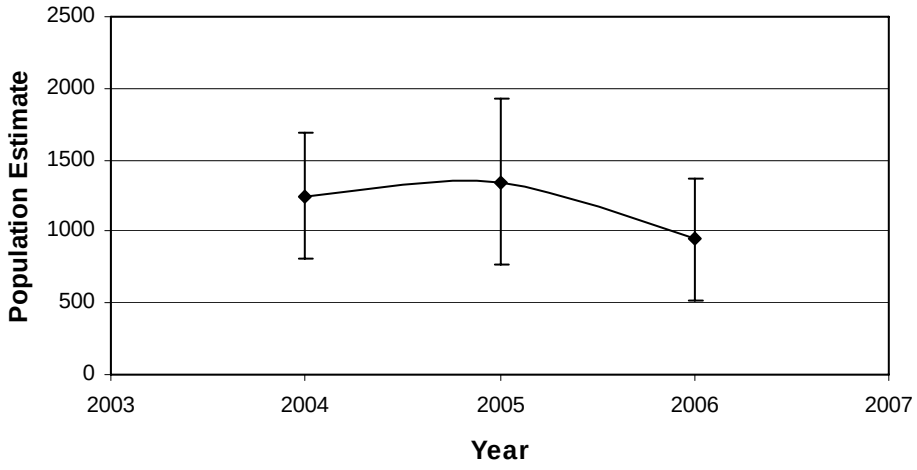

Figure 10. GMU 591 (Fort Carson) population estimates and 95% confidence limits from 2004-2006.

Currently, there are no population estimates for GMUs 59 and 511. Overall, it is estimated that there are approximately 4,400 deer in GMUs 59 and 511. Of these deer in GMUs 59 and 511, approximately 40% are within the city limits and cannot be legally harvested.

Therefore, excluding the deer in Colorado Springs, which is estimated at 30% of all deer in the DAU (GMUs 59, 591, 511 and 512), it is estimated that there are approximately 3,900-4,100 deer in D-50 post season 2007.

Population Composition

Aerial surveys are conducted to collect herd composition information, otherwise known as sex and age information. Many factors such as management history, snow cover, number of animals seen, and observers have influence on observed ratios. Therefore, the composition of the population are estimates and not known with certainty. Although sex and age information are estimates, both ratios are not directly under management control. For example, the sex ratio can be controlled by harvesting more or fewer bucks, whereas the age ratio is largely dictated by environmental factors (i.e. habitat quality, predation, etc.) which are largely out of management control.

Since 1988, GMU 512 has been surveyed on an annual basis with the exception of a few years. In recent years the sex ratio has varied from 40 bucks/100 does in 2004 to 53 bucks/100 does in 2006. The age ratio has varied from 60 fawns/100 does in 2004 to 45 fawns/100 does in 2006. GMU 511 has been surveyed since 2005 with a sex ratio of 36 bucks/100 does in 2005 and 65 bucks/100 does in 2006. The age ratio for 2005 was 80 fawns/100 does and 54 fawns/100 does in 2006. GMU 591 has been surveyed since 2005 for population composition information. The estimated sex ratio for 2005 was 26 bucks/100 does and 34 bucks/100 does in 2006. The sex ratio in 2005 was 51 fawns per 100 does and 36 fawns/100 does in 2006. GMU 59 was flown in 2006, but too few animals were classified to get a meaningful estimate of sex and age information.

Harvest and Hunters

In 1989, GMUs 511 and 512 were placed in DAU D-50. Since that time there has been a reduction in the number of deer in this DAU. This reduction occurred primarily in Unit 512, due to a large number of deer on the 18,000 acre facility. In the late 1980's deer were utilizing all of the current annual growth of Mountain Mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*) and were in poor body condition. In addition, there were public safety concerns with the more than 125 deer that were being hit by vehicles on the AFA and the additional 125 that were hit on I-25 on the east side of the Academy. The population on the AFA was believed to be between 1,500-1,800 deer. In 1988, GMU 512 was established and a hunting season originated to begin managing deer on the AFA. From 1988-1998 the goal was to reduce the population by 1,000 deer. Currently, a hunting season is still used to manage deer on the AFA and the current population is estimated at approximately 350 deer.

Prior to the 1999, GMU 591 (Fort Carson) did not exist. Rather, GMU 59 covered the geographic area that has now been divided into GMUs 59 and 591. Training schedules on Fort Carson dictate hunter access. Given our relatively short general rifle seasons, hunting on Fort Carson could be made difficult if hunters could only hunt for a short amount of time. Therefore, GMU 591 was formed and a hunting season established that begins October 1 and goes through January 31, annually. This extended season allows for hunters to obtain access around training schedules.

The hunting of antlerless deer in GMUs 59 and 591 was eliminated in 1999 because of the population being below the target objective. Recently, an antlerless hunting season was established in GMU 591 to manage the number of deer and allow for hunter opportunity.

In general, harvest in D-50 has declined since the early 1990's, but has been on a steady increase since 1999 (Figure 11). Part of this decrease can be attributed to the elimination of antlerless harvest in GMUs 59 and 591 in 1999.

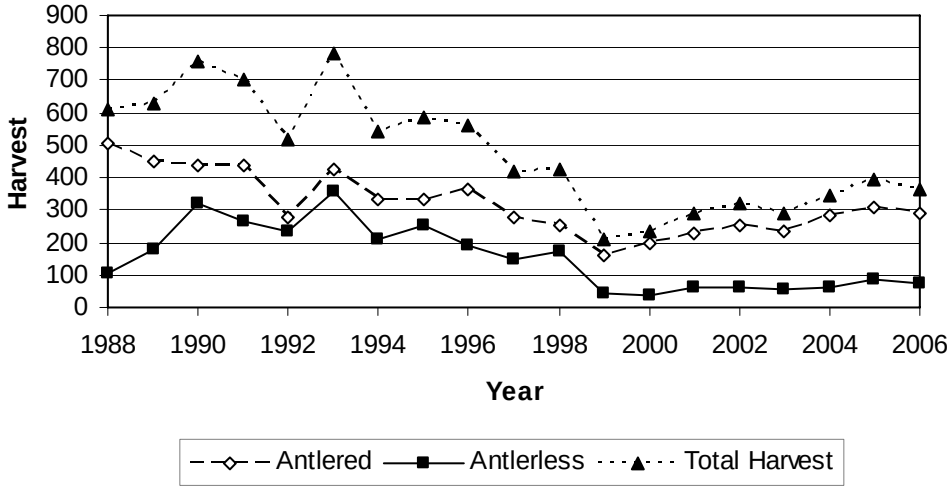

Figure 11. Antlered, antlerless and total harvest in D-50 from 1988 to 2006.

Since 1988, hunter success was derived from the estimated number of hunters and the estimated harvest has varied with the highest success being in GMU 512 (Figure 12). For three years, hunter success in GMU 512 was over 100% and was attributed to hunters having

the ability to harvest more than one animal. Success in GMU 59 appears to be increasing since 1999 and success in GMU 511 has been stable to increasing in recent years (Figure 12).

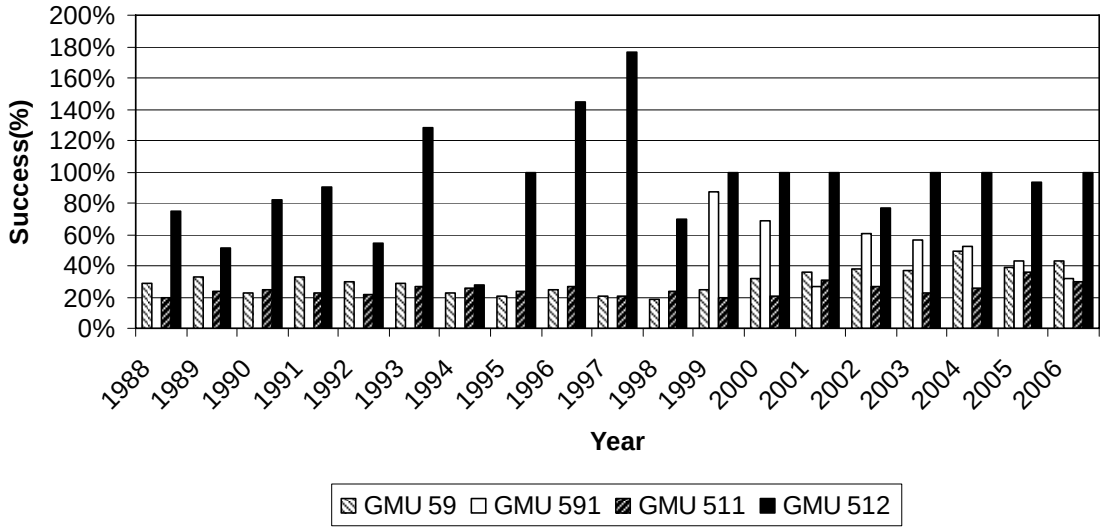

Figure 12. Hunter success by GMU from 1988-2006. Success rates over 100% represent years in which multiple deer could be harvested in GMU 512.

Historic Management Strategies

The historic strategies for deer management in GMUs 59 and 591 (previously in D-16) and GMUs 511 and 512 differ. In 1999, antlerless harvest was eliminated in GMUs 59 and 591 because the population was under objective. Since 1999, there have been DAU wide (GMUs 49, 57, 58, 581, 59 and 591) antlered licenses available for archery and muzzleloading. General antlered rifle licenses have been available for GMUs 49, 57, 58, 581, and 59. As stated previously, GMU 591 was established in 1999 and a long season established to accommodate for hunter access for antlered deer hunting on Fort Carson.

Since 1988, there has been antlerless harvest in both GMUs 511 and 512 to achieve management objectives. Since 1989, a deer hunting season has been offered in GMU 512. Initially, this season was for low velocity firearms, but now is open for rifle. Prior to 1999, hunting of antlered animals in GMU 511 was by over the counter licenses with antlerless harvest coming from a limited number of either sex licenses for the GMU. In 1999, all deer hunting in the state went limited. In 2000, both a fourth season antlered hunt was added and a private land only antlerless season was added. Since the addition of these seasons the general season structure in GMU 511 has remained unchanged, which also includes either-sex opportunity for archery buck and doe licenses for muzzleloader.

Current Population Management

Population Status

For many years population models have been used to make decisions about deer management. The models are DAU specific and use information such as harvest, deer survival, population composition (sex and age ratios), and estimates of population size to predict population size and composition in future years. Data is collected annually for the population model. Until recently, population composition data that was used in the population model for D-50 was collected in GMU 512. In the past few years, additional data

collection has occurred in all the GMUs in D-50 to be used in the population model. Harvest data that is used in the model includes the entire DAU and is collected annually.

Overall, it is estimated that there are approximately 5,750 deer in DAU D-50. It is estimated that approximately 30% of the DAU total is within the city limits of Colorado Springs and cannot be harvested. Therefore, the current estimated number of harvestable deer in D-50 is approximately 3,950-4,000 deer post season 2007 (Figure 13).

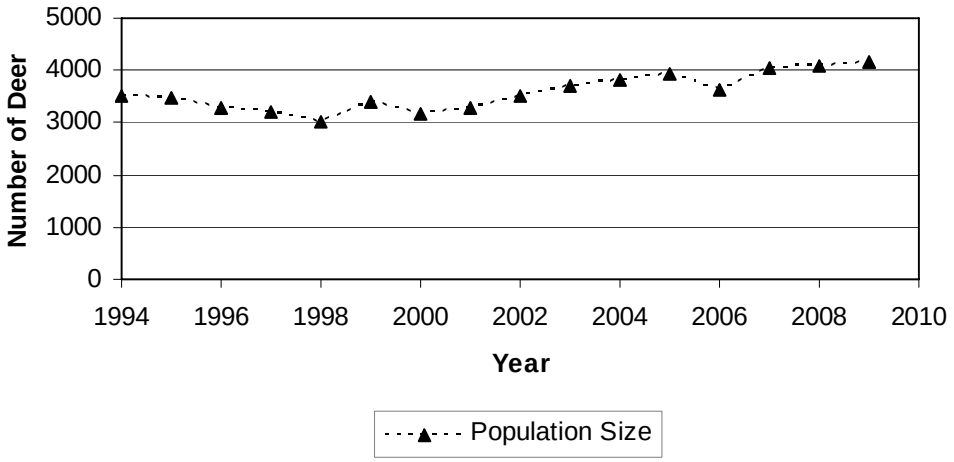

Figure 13. Modeled population size for D-50 from 1994-2009.

Overall, the estimates of sex ratios vary between GMUs, but the management of the population occurs at the DAU level. Therefore, the overall estimate of the sex ratio is the most important for the purpose of DAU planning. The 2005 overall sex ratio estimate was 29 bucks/100 does (this estimate excludes GMUs 59 and 512) and the post season 2006 sex ratio estimate was 41 bucks/100 does. Overall it is estimated that the current sex ratio for the DAU is between 35-40 bucks/100 does (Figure 14).

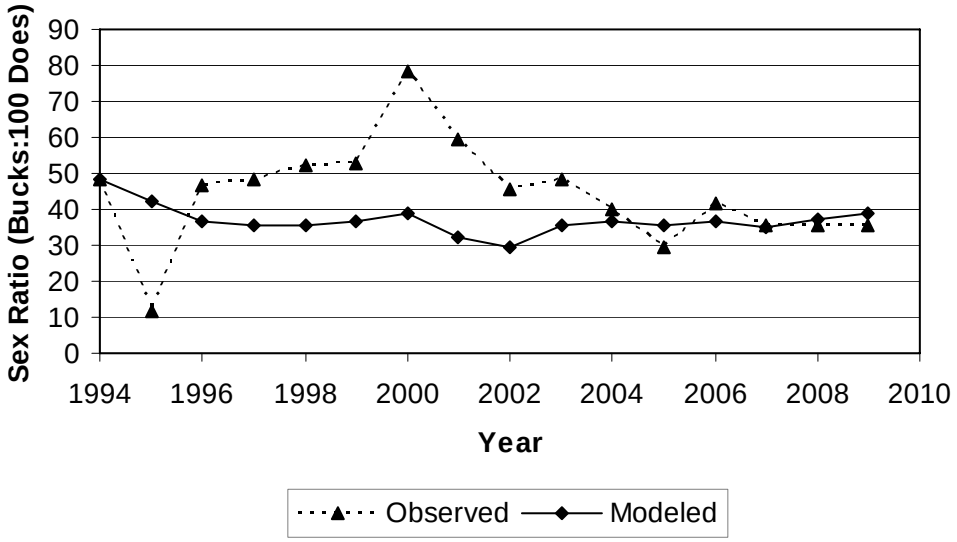

Figure 14. Modeled and observed sex ratios for D-50.

Current Management Strategies
Currently, rifle deer licenses in GMUs 512 and 591 are valid for these individual GMUs and this is not expected to change with DAU realignment. However, the combination of 59 and 591 with 511 and 512 will necessitate change in regards to the GMUs in which licenses are valid for archery and muzzleloader licenses for GMUs 59, 511 and 591. For example, archery and muzzleloader licenses are currently valid for GMUs 49, 57, 58, 581, 59 and 591. Archery and muzzleloader licenses for GMU 511 are currently only valid in GMU 511.

Rifle licenses are currently valid for GMUs 49, 57, 58, 581 and 59. Rifle licenses for GMU 511 are currently only valid in GMU 511.

In 2006, an antlerless season was added to GMU 591 to manage the population and provide hunter opportunity. Depending on which alternative is selected regarding the population objective, an antlerless season may be considered for GMU 59 in the future.

Current Management Problems
Efforts have been made in recent years to collect population data in D-50. This additional data will be used in the population model; however, an increase in the number of deer seen will enhance the data collected. The population model could also be bettered by estimates of population size for GMUs 59 and 511. Estimates of population size are expensive to collect and are not expected in the immediate future. Survival data is currently not collected in D-50; however, estimates of doe and fawn survival from the nearby DAU D-16 are used in the model for D-50.

Currently, one of the largest problems facing deer management in D-50 is the number of urban deer that cannot be managed through harvest. It is estimated that approximately 30% of the overall number of deer in D-50 are within the city limits of Colorado Springs. Numerous complaints are received each year from deer feeding in gardens, on ornamental plants, shrubs and trees and bucks damaging small trees while rubbing velvet from antlers.

In general, there is not much known about the number of deer in GMU 59. Much of the GMU is difficult to access and lack of significant winter snows makes deer concentration areas minimal. Beginning in 2006, a post season flight was initiated to obtain herd composition information. This information will be used in a predictive population model to make management decisions.

Game damage caused by deer to agricultural crops in this DAU is limited. Recently, complaints from landowners of deer causing damage to fruit orchards have been received near Penrose. The Colorado Division of Wildlife has supplied fencing materials to alleviate these complaints. There have not been any claims filed for game damage caused by deer in the recent years.

Chronic Wasting Disease
In the spring of 2004 a male mule deer tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease in GMU 59. The buck was found dead in the Broadmoor neighborhood of Colorado Springs. From 2003 to 2006, 84 deer have been tested in GMU 59, 187 deer in GMU 511, 80 deer in GMU 512 and 84 deer in GMU 591. In addition to the positive animal found in GMU 59 in 2004, four additional deer have tested positive for CWD from GMU 591 and no additional deer have tested positive from GMU 59. Three were hunter harvested animals and one was hit by

a vehicle. All positive animals were bucks. CWD will continue to be monitored in D-50 through the submission of hunter killed deer and suspect animals.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Public Input

The primary purpose of this DAU plan is to determine long-term post-hunt population and herd composition objectives. Public input regarding deer management in D-50 was solicited from the public at a series of four public meetings held on June 21, 2007 at Fort Carson, June 25, 2007 at the Air Force Academy, June 28, 2007 in Canon City, and June 29, 2007 in Colorado Springs. Public notification of these public meeting was made using a press release that was distributed to local media outlets (Appendix A). At the meetings a survey was distributed to solicit written comments (Appendix D). To gather input from the public, organizations, and governmental agencies, letters and a copy of the draft DAU plan were emailed to solicit input (Appendix B and C) from these groups. A survey was also sent to 750 hunters in GMUs 591, 511, and 591 (Appendix E).

Alternatives

Decisions about the population and composition objectives relates to factors such as game damage, the need for habitat improvements, the need for the season framework to be altered to obtain the objective and the fiscal impacts of the alternative. Each alternative listed below addresses the potential impacts with regards to these factors.

Herd composition is determined by fawn/doe and buck/doe ratios. Fawn/doe ratios are determined by many environmental factors for which wildlife managers have no control. On the other hand, buck/doe ratios can be directly controlled by management options. Listed below are a few of the many possible alternatives that could be considered to accomplish these objectives.

Many DAU plans use previous DAU objectives as a starting point for determining alternatives. However, because this DAU revision includes the re-grouping of GMUs from two different DAUs, the previous DAU objectives are not valid. Therefore, the alternatives listed below include an alternative with the existing conditions.

Population Size

It is formally recognized that approximately 30% of the deer in this DAU are within the city limits of Colorado Springs that cannot be legally harvested. Therefore, these animals have been excluded from the population objectives.

1. **Maintain the current population level of 3,500-4,500 deer with a population target of 4,000 deer.**

   General discussion – This population level is what is currently estimated to be in D-50. This includes approximately 1,100 deer on Fort Carson and 350 deer on the AFA.
   Game Damage – Game damage problems are not expected to change with this alternative.
   Habitat Improvement – Because this population level is currently being supported on the available habitat it is not expected that large scale habitat projects would be necessary but not discouraged.

Season Framework – The regular season structure would be the same as the 2007 season structure. An increase in antlerless harvest of approximately 20% would be needed to maintain this population at this level.
Fiscal Impacts – An increase in antlerless licenses would be expected to have a slight positive impact on state and local economies.

2. **Decrease current population by 15% to 3,000-4,000 deer with a population target of 3,500.**

General Discussion – The current estimate of approximately 4,000 deer is at the upper range of this population level and the current population would have to be decreased. This would result in a decrease in the current number of deer to approximately 300 deer on the AFA and 850 deer on Fort Carson.
Habitat Improvement and Game Damage – The population is currently being maintained at higher levels so habitat improvement would not be necessary, but not discouraged.
Game Damage – Game damage, although currently minimal in the DAU, might be expected to decrease by the choice of this alternative.
Season Framework- The regular season structure would be the same as the 2007 season structure. Antlerless harvest would have to nearly double to maintain the population at approximately 3,500 deer.
Fiscal Impacts – An increase in antlerless opportunity may have a positive impact on state and local economies until the population reduction is completed.

3. **Increase the population objective by 15% to 4,000-5,000 deer with a population target of 4,500 deer.**

General Discussion – The population is currently at the lower end of this range. The population would have to increase to obtain the level of 4,500 deer. This would result in a population of approximately 1,250 deer on Fort Carson and 400 deer on the AFA.
Habitat Improvement - Habitat improvements would be encouraged to increase the deer population to this level.
Game Damage – Increasing the deer population could lead to increased game damage complaints.
Season framework – The regular season structure would be the same as the 2007 season structure with the exception of antlerless hunting. Antlerless licenses would have to decrease to obtain this population level.
Fiscal Impacts – There would initially be negative fiscal impacts to state and local economies, but these impacts would be offset as the population approached objective and licenses increased.

Herd Composition
General Discussion - The current buck/doe ratio is 41 bucks/100 does which is lower than the current objective of 45 buck/100 does for GMUs 511 and 512 and higher than the current objective of 33 bucks/100 does for GMUs 59 and 591. In general, an increase in the buck/doe ratio means more mature bucks in the population which requires a decrease in buck licenses, which results in decreased buck hunting opportunity. Conversely, a lower buck/doe ratio means less mature bucks in the population and requires an increase in buck licenses, which results in increased buck hunting opportunity.

1. **Post-hunt sex ratio objective: 35-40 bucks/100 does**

General Discussion – This objective range is slightly below the current estimated buck/doe ratio for the DAU. To maintain this level buck license numbers would slightly increase. This alternative would provide for quality buck hunting opportunities. It would be expected that the number of preference points required to draw a buck license would be consistent with current requirements.
Fiscal Impacts – There would be little change in state and local economies.

2. **Post-hunt sex ratio objective: 30-35 bucks/100 does**

General Discussion – This alternative represents a 5-10 buck/100 doe decrease from current levels. This selection of this alternative will increase buck hunting opportunity in the short-term and likely for the long-term for the maintenance of the population at this level. The lower buck/doe ratio means fewer mature bucks, but more opportunity. The number of preference points required to draw a buck license would be less.
Fiscal impacts – The number of hunters would increase, which could have a positive impact on state and local economies.

3. **Post-hunt sex ratio objective: 25-30 bucks/100 does**

General Discussion – This alternative represents a 10-15 buck/100 doe decrease from current levels. This selection of this alternative will greatly increase buck hunting opportunity in the short-term and likely for the long-term for the maintenance of the population at this level. The quality of bucks would be less, but opportunity to draw a buck license would increase. The number of preference points required to draw a buck license would be less and buck licenses may be leftover if the demand for licenses did not increase.
Fiscal impacts – The number of hunters would increase, which could have a positive impact on state and local economies.

PREFERRED OBJECTIVES AND ALTERNATIVES

The CDOW's preferred alternative for the population objective is 4,000-5,000 deer (Alternative 3) with a preferred post season sex ratio objective of 35-40 bucks/100 does (Alternative 1). There is a mixed response in regards to the preferred population alternative in this DAU. For example, of the 240 respondents to hunter survey, 57% (129 respondents) preferred the population alternative of maintaining the current deer population of 3,500-4,500 deer and 32% (73 respondents) preferred an increase in the deer population to 4,000-5,000 deer (Appendix E). Of the 240 survey respondents, 199 reported hunting in GMU 511 whereas only 23 reported hunting in GMU 59. This suggests that hunters are satisfied with the current number of deer in GMU 511 and that we did not adequately survey hunters in GMU 59. However, landowners in GMU 59 prefer to see an increase in the population and the BLM suggests that their managed lands in GMU 59 could support more deer (Appendix F). Given this information we choose the preferred alternative of 4,000-5,000 deer with the increased population being directed to GMU 59. This preferred alternative would be obtained by maintaining doe harvest in GMUs 511, 512, and 591 where it currently exists and by allowing limited doe harvest (either sex archery and muzzleloader licenses) in GMU

59 until the population objective is reached. This alternative translates to a population size of 350 deer on the AFA and 1,100 deer on Fort Carson. The overwhelming majority of public comments supported maintaining the current sex ratio of 35-40 bucks/100 does. This was both in public meetings and also in the hunter survey. For example, 147 (90%) of the 169 respondents favored this alternative. To maintain this objective the number of buck licenses would have to increase slightly. This alternative is not expected to have any impact on the number of preference points required to draw a license.

Appendix A: Press Release Announcing Public Meetings on DAU Plans

News from the Colorado Division of Wildlife

Contact Name: michael seraphin
Contact Phone: 719.227.5211

PIKES PEAK AREA DEER MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

The Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) will hold a series of meetings to gather public comments about deer management in the Pikes Peak Region for Game Management Units 511, 512, 59 and 591. Items that will be discussed include herd population objectives, buck to doe ratios, and how hunting license numbers are set. The meetings will be held at the following locations:

- Fort Carson, June 21 at 6 p.m. (Enter gate 7 off Highway 115 at mile marker 37, approximately 4.5 miles south of gate 1. The wildlife office is located approximately three-quarters of a mile east of Highway 115).
- Air Force Academy, June 25 at 7 p.m. (Base Theater, Bldg # 5136, located off Community Center Dr.).
- Canon City BLM Office, June 28 at 7 p.m. (3170 East Main St.).
- Colorado Division of Wildlife Office June 29 at 7 p.m. (4255 Sinton Rd.)

People who cannot attend the meetings can send written comments to Brian Dreher at 4255 Sinton Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80907.

For more news about Division of Wildlife go to:
http://wildlife.state.co.us/news/index.asp?DivisionID=3

For more information about Division of Wildlife go to: http://wildlife.state.co.us.

Appendix B: Letter Sent to Interested Stakeholders

STATE OF COLORADO

Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Denver, Colorado 80216 **DIVISION OF WILDLIFE**
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Bruce McCloskey, Director
6060 Broadway

Telephone: (303) 297-1192

For Wildlife-
For People

TO: Agencies and Organizations Interested in Deer Management

FROM: Brian Dreher, Colorado Division of Wildlife

RE: Future Deer Management Goals for Deer Management in portions of El Paso, Teller, Fremont, Park, and Pueblo Counties.

The Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) is preparing to update and realign management boundaries for deer management in your area.

The CDOW defines Game Management Unit (GMU) boundaries to distribute hunters and manage big game populations. The aggregation of GMUs makes up what are referred to as a Data Analysis Unit (DAU) and are considered a discrete population of big game animals.

Historically, DAU D-50 included GMUs 511 and 512. Based on deer movement data and historic data collection, the CDOW is suggesting a re-alignment of boundaries with the new D-50 combining GMUs 59 and 591 with 511 and 512. As part of the revision process, new objectives must be determined for population size and population composition (sex ratios). At this time we are requesting comments from you or your organization regarding any issue or concerns. These issues and concerns can then be addressed in our management plan. We have attached in this email a copy of the Draft DAU plan which outlines these alternatives. Please review the draft plan and send any written comments to:
Brian Dreher
Colorado Division of Wildlife
4255 Sinton Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
Email: brian.dreher@state.co.us

Please respond by July 13, 2007. If you have any questions call 719-227-5220. Comments on regarding the management plan will only be accepted in writing.

If you desire, you are welcome to attend one or multiple of the public meetings regarding the deer management plan. Public meetings will be at the following locations:

June 28, 2007 Canon City, BLM Office, 7:00 pm.
June 29, 2007 Colorado Springs, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Regional Office, 7:00 pm

Sincerely,
Brian Dreher
Terrestrial Biologist
Colorado Division of Wildlife

Appendix C: List of Agencies and Organizations Sent Letters

Colorado Wildlife Federation
State Land Board
Colorado State Muzzleloading Association
Air Force Academy
Gary Walker
El Paso County Commissioners
NRCS - Colorado Springs
Colorado Bowhunters Association
Izaak Walton League of America
Fort Carson DECAM
BLM - Canon City
USFS - Steve Tapia
Pueblo County Commissioners
Teller County Commissioners
Park County Commissioners
NRCS - Canon City
Fremont County Commissioners
NRCS - Teller County

Appendix D: Summary of Meeting Survey Results

Feedback was solicited at a series of four public meetings and an email distributed to local sportsmen. Public meeting attendance was low with four people in attendance at Fort Carson and the Air Force Academy, two people in attendance at Canon City and one person in attendance at Colorado Springs.

A total of 12 people responded to our survey. Ten people were deer hunters, one was not a deer hunter and one person did not respond. Four people rated deer hunting as there most important recreational activity, four people rated deer hunting as one of their more important recreational activities, two people rated deer hunting as no more important than any of the other recreational activities that they participate in.

The number of seasons that respondents hunted in GMUs 59, 591, 511 and 512 varied. Respondents hunted in GMU 59 for the one and three seasons, GMU 591 for three seasons, GMU 512 for two seasons and GMU 511 for sixteen, two five and four seasons. Two of the respondents hunted in GMU in 2006 and eight did not hunt in 2006. All respondents hunt federal, state public lands. One person applied for antlerless licenses for the past three years and ten respondents have not applied for any antlerless licenses. Of the respondants that hunted deer in GMUs 59, 591, 511 and 512, two people did not harvest a deer and one person harvested a buck. Of the three people that hunter, one was somewhat satisfied, one was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and one was somewhat dissatisfied.

Eight respondents reside in GMUs 59 or 511 and four live outside of these GMUs. Two own huntable property with this DAU and ten do not own huntable property within this DAU. None of the respondents were guides or outfitters. The age of respondents varied from being born in 1933 to 1967. One respondent derives income from agriculture and eleven do not derive income from agriculture.

Preference for the preferred population objective alternative varied with four people preferring to maintain the current population level, two people preferring a 15% decrease in the population level and six people preferring a 15% increase in the population level.

Preference of respondents for the preferred alternative sex ratio was less mixed with eleven people preferring to maintain the current sex ratio of 35-40 bucks per 100 does and only one respondent preferring to decrease the sex ratio objective to 25-30 bucks per 100 does.

Participants were asked for their level of support regarding a regulation change with the new organization of DAU D-50 and D-16. Nine respondents strongly supported the regulation change, two respondents somewhat supported the regulation change and one respondent neither supported or opposed the regulation change.

Participants were encouraged to provide written comments. Specific comments include:

Thanks for the presentation.

Can you set up a archery rut hunt on Fort Carson and shorten the long rifle season to increase the number of mature bucks.

Reduce doe population – improve deer herd.

Improve buck quality – Kill more does.

Hunting regs to complicated. For instance, just make the DAUs the same as the GMUs.

AFA has done an excellent job of reaching and maintaining their objective, but preference point creep continues making it harder each year to draw.

More deer, fewer elk!

I would love for GMU 511 to expand in size. I would love for the quality of trophy bucks to increase even if that means I don't draw my archery tag every year.

Appendix E: Summary of Mail Survey Results

A total of 743 surveys were mailed to hunters from GMU 511, 512 and 591 in October of 2007. In total, 169 surveys were returned for an overall adjusted response rate of 23%.

When asked the importance of deer hunting as compared to other recreational opportunities, 36 respondents (21%) rated deer hunting as there most important, 117 (69%) rated deer hunting as one of their more important, 13 (8%) rated deer hunting as no more important than other recreation al activities, and 2 (1%) as less important than other recreational activities.

When asked what GMUs within the DAU that hunters hunted, 16 people reported hunting in GMU 59, 19 people reported hunting in GMU 591, 8 people reported hunting in GMU 512 and 161 respondents reported hunting in GMU 512.

When asked the land ownership in which the hunters hunted, 5 hunted private land that they owned, 13 hunted private land for free, 157 respondents hunted publics lands, no hunters hunted private land that they leased and one hunter was unsure.

When asked if they had applied for antlerless hunting licenses in the last three years, 29 (18%) respondents had applied for three years, 20 (12%) for two years, 26 (16%) for one year and 91 (55%) respondents had not applied for hunting licenses in the past three years.

When asked if they had harvested and deer in 2006, 16 (10%) respondents did not hunt, 87 (52%) did not harvest a deer, 48 (29%) harvested a buck and 17 (10 %) harvested a doe.

When asked about their overall satisfaction level, 57 respondents (37%) were very satisfied, 46 (30%) were somewhat satisfied, 23 (15 %) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 17 (11%) were somewhat dissatisfied and 10 (7%) were very dissatisfied.

When asked if they lived in any of the related GMUs, 61 people (38%) reported that they lived in the related GMUs and 98 (62%) did not live in the related GMUs.

When asked if they owned huntable property in the related GMUs, 16 people responded that they did own huntable property and 153 people did not own huntable property in the related GMUs. None of the respondents reported guiding or outfitting in the related GMUs. The year in which the respondents were born ranged from 1931 to 1994. The mean age of respondent was 48 years of age with a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 76 years of age.

A total of 8 respondents reported that their household income was derived from farming. When this group was examined individually for population objective alternatives, 3 respondents wanted an increase in the population objective and 3 respondents wanted to maintain the current number of deer in the DAU. None of these individuals wanted to see a decrease in the number of deer in the DAU.

Population Alternatives

This survey asked the respondents overall level of support for the three population alternatives in the DAU plan. First, respondents were asked their support for maintaining the current population level of 3,500-4,500 deer. Of respondents, 64 (41%) strongly supported,

40 (26%) somewhat supported, 34 (22%) neither supported nor opposed, 10 somewhat oppose (6%) and 8 (5%) strongly opposed. Second, the respondents were asked their support for decreasing the current population level by 15% to 3,000-4,000 deer. Of respondents, 18 (13%) strongly supported, 16 (12%) somewhat supported, 18 (13%) neither support nor opposed, 33 somewhat opposed (24%) and 51 (38%) strongly opposed. Third, the respondents were asked their support for increasing the current population level by 15% to 4,000-5,000 deer. Of respondents, 39 (28%) strongly supported, 24 (17%) somewhat supported, 28 (20%) neither supported nor opposed, 23 somewhat opposed (16%) and 28 (20%) strongly opposed.

The survey then asked their preferred population alternative. Of respondents, 86 (53%) preferred maintaining the population level, 22 (14%) preferred a decrease, and 53 (33%) preferred an increase in the population.

Sex Ratio Alternatives

This survey asked respondents overall level of support for three sex ratio alternatives in the DAU plan. Respondents were asked their support for maintaining the current sex ratio of 35-40 bucks per 100 does. Of respondents, 111 (69%) strongly supported, 25 (15%) somewhat supported, 17 (11%) neither supported nor opposed, 8 somewhat opposed (5%) and 1 (1%) strongly opposed. Second, the respondents were asked their support for decreasing the current sex ratio to 30-35 bucks per 100 does. Of respondents, 9 (7%) strongly supported, 16 (12%) somewhat supported, 29 (21%) neither supported nor opposed, 41 somewhat oppose (30%) and 44 (32%) strongly opposed. Third, the respondents were asked their support for decreasing the sex ratio to 25-30 bucks per 100 does. Of respondents, 6 (4 %) strongly supported, 7 (5 %) somewhat supported, 18 (13%) neither supported nor opposed, 31 somewhat opposed (23%) and 76 (55%) strongly opposed.

The survey then asked for which sex ratio alternative was preferred. The majority of respondents,147 (90%) preferred maintaining the current sex ratio, 13 (8%) preferred decreasing the sex ratio to 30-35 bucks per 100 does and 4 (2%) preferred decreasing the sex ratio to 25-30 bucks per 100 does.

Appendix F: Public Comment Letters and Emails

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
3170 East Main Street
Cañon City, Colorado 81212

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

In Reply Refer to:
6500, (CO-200)EB

June 29, 2007

Brian Dreher
Colorado Division of Wildlife
4255 Sinton Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Mr. Dreher,

The Royal Gorge Field Office, Bureau of Land Management appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Rampart Data Analysis Unit (D-50) deer management plan. The majority of the public lands management by BLM occur in Unit 59 in the Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA). The area is extremely rough terrain with difficult access.

The BLM will refrain from making a recommendation on population objectives and sex ratios but we believe the habitat could support more animals, at least on public lands managed by BLM. We see no evidence of over utilization of habitats on lands that we manage. Opportunities for habitat improvement projects are somewhat limited due to topography, access and the interim management guidelines for the Beaver Creek WSA. However, the recently completed Royal Gorge Fire Management Plan allows for wildland fire use fires (natural ignitions) to burn in much of this area. This fire management prescription offers hope that natural fires will be allowed to help improve wildlife habitat.

Again, thank you for allowing the Bureau of Land Management the opportunity to comment on your draft plan. Please contact Erik Brekke, Wildlife Biologist on my staff with any additional questions or comments. He can be reached at (719) 269-8519.

Sincerely,

Roy L. Masinton
Field Manager
Royal Gorge Field Office

Brian Dreher
4255 Sinton Rd
C.S. CO 80907

15 July 2007

Dear Sir:

Comments on area 591 for Deer Hunting.

1) FT Carson plans to close 31 Dec instead of the 31 Jan close dates as listed in the big game brochure. I bet you there is no record of big game hunting in Jan of the season.

2) Entry times into hunting area vary between range control & DECAM.

3) There is a requirement that hunters use "black out" drive on FT Carson Roads which not only causes greater travel time to your assigned hunting area but also an increased hazard. Contractors seem not to held to same standard so they can use their headlights. I can't believe private vehicles in Iraq + Afghanistan are made to drive with their headlights off.

4) Decam put recreation signs up to identify roads hunters could use which really aided the hunters + then range control either took them down or required them to be taken down.

5) The check in hunter Trailer always seems to be run well and very helpful to the hunter. Pre-registration for area

6) Need earlier check in times to allow time to get to assigned hunting areas.

7) Access on Training holidays, 3 day weekends, are sometimes limited entry. Times when the soldiers could hunt, the Hunting areas are not available.

8) Areas are closed to hunting when vehicles or are setting in assembly areas and the soldiers are off for the weekend. It is easier for the units to remain responsible for the area than to clear the area which would allow the area to be used for hunting.

9. Low velocity weapons only during the week if the hunting areas are open. It is nice that there are open areas but the use of low velocity weapons. If the intent is to allow for archery hunting that is fine but the hunting areas are extremely limited during the week.

Dan Singleton.
307 Dewell St
Woodland Park CO 80863
719-687-0992
Dan carrying for 2 weeks so stubby pencil w/o spellcheck is in effect.-

Dreher, Brian

From: Gary Walker [grwalker@fone.net]
Sent: Sunday, July 01, 2007 6:45 AM
To: Dreher, Brian
Subject: RE: Deer Management Plan

Dear Brian,

When my family purchased Turkey Creek Ranch in 1963 the ranch consisted of 6,000 acres which was home to 6 antelope, no deer and no elk. Today the ranch is 60,000 plus acres and is home to a good population of antelope, a slow growing herd of deer and a small number of resident elk. I have enough habitat to support very large herds of all species but I am hampered by the location of my ranch in relation to Penrose, Pueblo West, Ranchos Colorado, Midway Ranch, Pueblo Reservoir's State Wildlife (hunting) Area, Fort Carson and the DOW's past liberal licensing policy for this area. I would like to see the numbers of licenses offered for Deer and Elk in my area drastically limited for a period of time to help me establish herds that could sustain a management program that would involve hunting. My growing herds of elk were eliminated when Fort Carson was pressured into increasing the hunting of their elk, deer and antelope herds. Most of their 700 head of elk went east as a result of that pressure. I will never understand why everyone was so concerned with the elimination of that small population of elk on Fort Carson. I ran 4500 cows on all of Fort Carson for many years in the 60's and can assure you that herd of elk (plus other species) should have been left alone as a guarded gene pool that is so desperately needed on the State and Federal grounds in Colorado.

I am very dedicated to ranching, wildlife and conservation and need your help in re-establishing an eco system that Mother Nature intended for this ranch and our area. I hope the proposed changes in our management area will be a positive start but I would like to visit with you at your convenience.

United States Department of Agriculture
NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
Tamarac Business Center
800 Research Dr.
Suite 100
Woodland Park,
CO 80863
Teller-Park SCD Office
(719) 686-9405 Fax: 686-9403

July 10, 2007

Brian Dreher
Colorado Division of Wildlife
4255 Sinton Road
Colo. Spgs, CO 80907

This letter is in response to your request for public comments regarding the Draft Deer Management plan for portions of Teller, Fremont, Park and Pueblo counties. This plan involves Data Analysis Units for Game Management Units 50, 59, 591, 511 and 512. After reviewing the Draft Plan material I have the following comments.

1. Although the lack of deer harvest in areas of metropolitan Colorado Springs and along the foothills surrounding it necessarily limits the amount of active management there, deer numbers will likely increase in both these areas and in those areas where the Hayman Fire has increased deer habitat and forage amounts. Therefore limiting the nearby herd seem prudent as this may limit the amount of recruitment that occurs when outlying numbers of deer travel into the metro areas and suburbs. So because managing the herd in the urban areas isn't possible as deer can't be harvested there, a more aggressive management and harvesting program becomes more important outside the urban envelope. I therefore support alternative number 2 that of decreasing the current populatin by 15 per cent with a target of 3,500 animals.

2. Although game damage claims seem to be under control and are being addressed by providing fencing materials, etc. to fruit tree growers in the Penrose area, in my opinion waiting to take action until after future damage might occur is not a proactive stance and implementing the 15 per cent population should head off potential eventuality.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this deer management plan.

Leon S. Kot
District Conservationist

November 17, 2007

Division of Wildlife

RE: Area 59

This letter is in regards to taking area 59 out of its current status and including it with different areas. My opinion is that the two regular rifle seasons would be appropriate but adding doe seasons and later buck seasons when the bucks are rutting would be too hard on the deer numbers. The deer numbers in area 59 are very low at present time and this would only add to their decline. Due to the large number of lions, bears and coyotes in area 59 their numbers have decreased dramatically in the last 10 to 15 years. We are not seeing the number of fawns born in the spring due to the lack of bucks and does killed by predators.

If you would like to contact me please feel free to call me in the evenings. Thank you.

Grant Chess
Landowner in Area 59
931 Red Canyon Rd
Canon City, CO 81212

719-275-3242

November 19, 2007

Division of Wildlife,

Out of concern for what few deer we have left in area 59, I am writing this letter in hopes that you will listen to the people who have been here for four generations. The people including my family, friends and neighbors, didn't have time to prepare a petition to respond to this decision you are getting ready to make.

We are all in agreement that we don't care about taking area 59 out of the application process for deer, the way it has been for years, and putting it in with the areas up North. But we do believe, contrary to what anyone says, it is going to put more pressure on our deer population. What all the ranchers, hunters, landowners and even outfitters in area 59 are in agreement about, is that the Division of Wildlife should never consider another deer season in area 59, ESPECIALLY when the mature breeding bucks are rutting. They are so stupid they will not move out of the road for cars, trucks and from my experience, even whistling trains!

We live with the deer everyday of the year. We don't sit behind computers and come up with ideas, like lowering the mountain lion quotas from 17 to 4 because 2 people controlling the whole area's quota stopped hunting. The number of lions harvested has more to do with who is hunting than anything else.

We now once again have too many lions working on our deer. With the predator problem of too many lions, coyotes and even black bear plus the added hunting pressure, we don't see how you can justify a late season that will even further deplete our deer population.

Right now, the bucks are swollen up and rutting hard. The meat is not even fit for human consumption, not even jerky!

DON'T have this late season! This only brings out the head hunters and the meat goes in the ditch!

Danny Chess

Sincerely,
Danny J. Chess
Penrose, CO
719-372-3203