PRONGHORN MANAGEMENT PLAN

DATA ANALYSIS UNIT PH-8
Yoder Herd

GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS
110, 111, 118, 119, 123, 124

Prepared for:
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

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DAU PH-8 (Yoder Pronghorn)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GMUs: 110, 111, 118, 119, 123,124
Land Ownership: 81% Private, 17% State Land Board, 2% Federal (BLM or DOD),<1% Other
Post-hunt Population: **Previous Obj.** 4500 **2011 Estimate** 8152 **New Obj.** 6000 (5400-6600)
Post-hunt Sex Ratio: **Previous Obj.** 30 **2011 Pre-hunt Estimate** 36 **2011 Modeled** 38 **New Obj.** 25-35

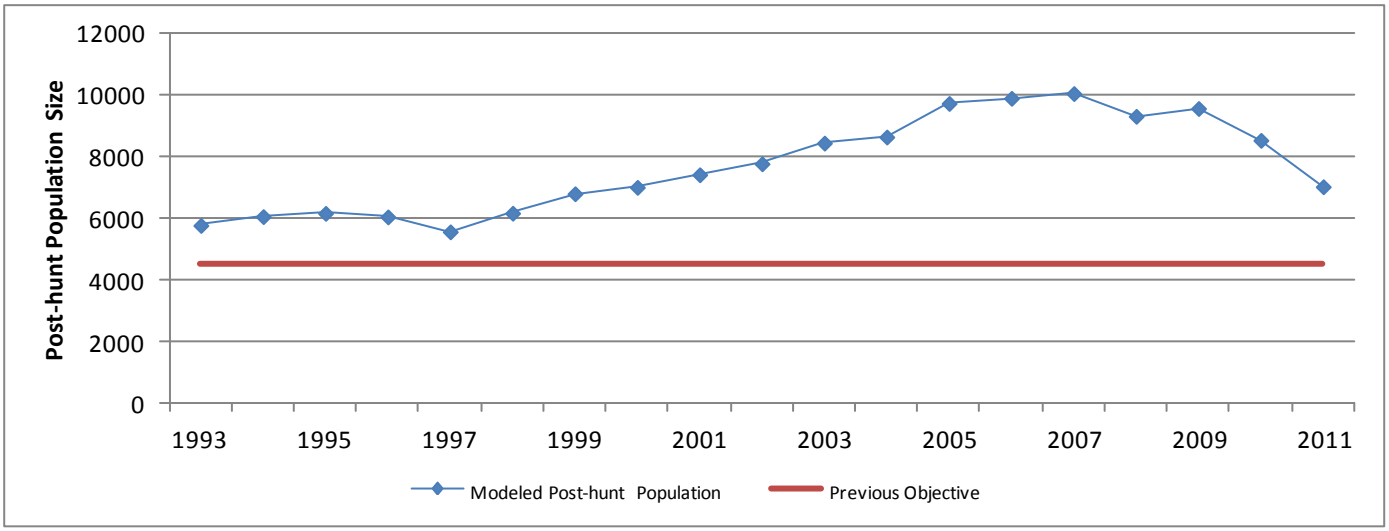

Figure 1. PH-8 Pronghorn modeled post-hunt population and objective range from 1993 through 2011.

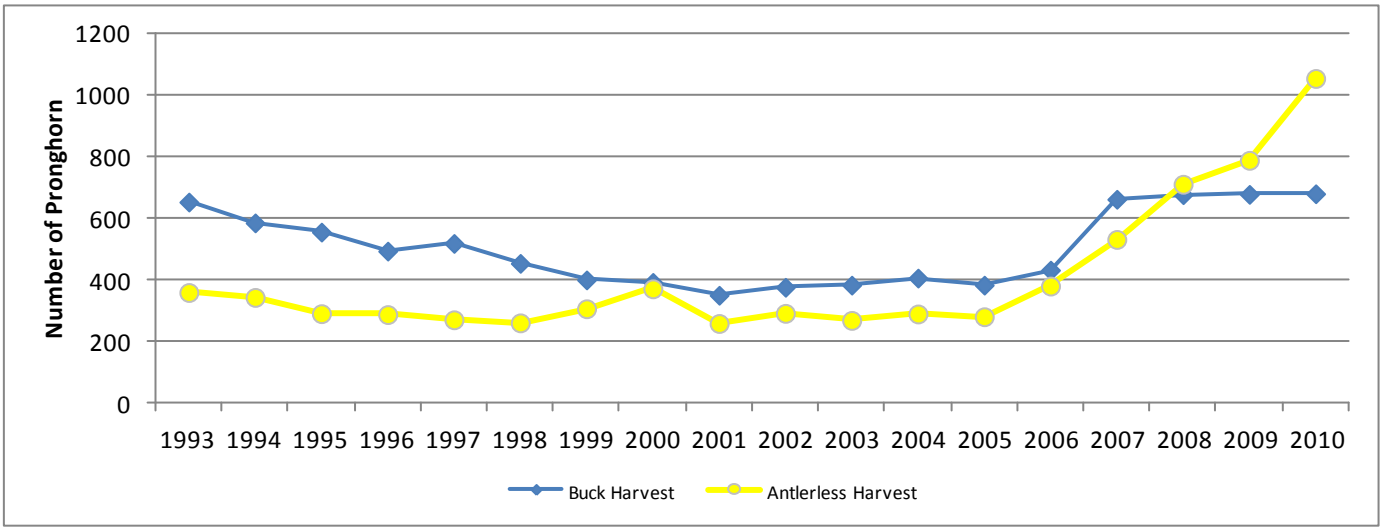

Figure 2. PH-8 Pronghorn buck and antlerless harvest from 1993 through 2010.

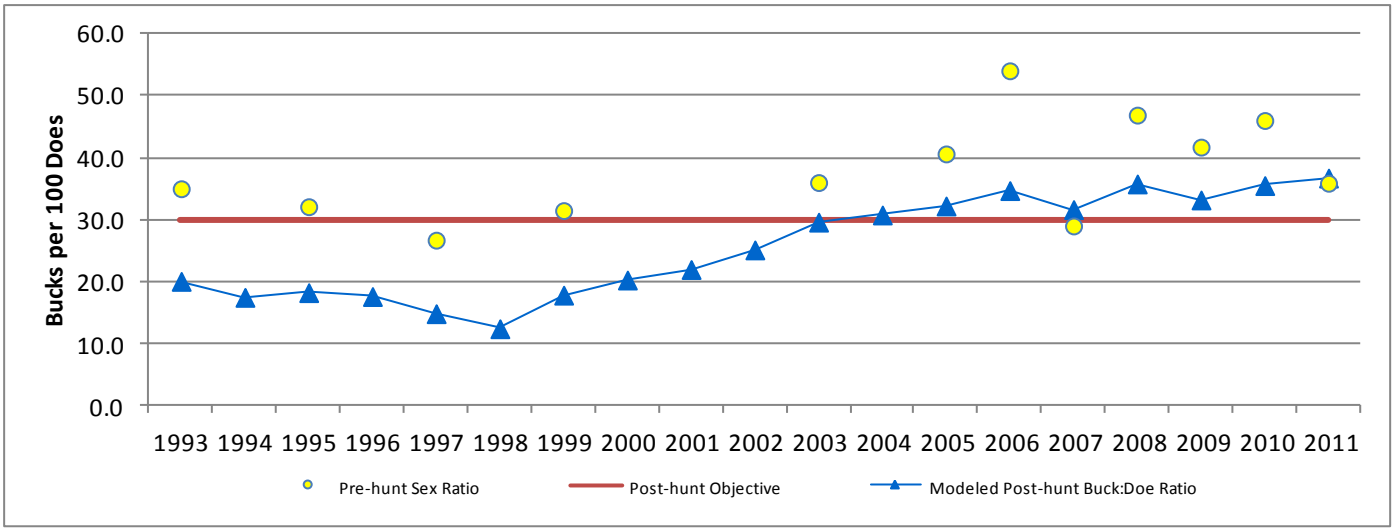

Figure 3. PH-8 Pronghorn observed pre-hunt sex ratio, post-hunt objective range, and modeled post-hunt sex ratio from 1993 through 2011.

Background Information

The Yoder Pronghorn Data Analysis Unit (DAU PH-8) is a large pronghorn unit in southeastern Colorado. Pronghorn are found throughout the DAU, but higher concentrations tend to be in the northeastern and central portions of the unit. The DAU is almost exclusively private and the potential for game damage, primarily to crops and fences, exists throughout the DAU. Urbanization, especially east of the Colorado Springs metro area, is reducing the amount of pronghorn habitat in the DAU. The DAU is popular for hunters from the Front Range due to its proximity to Colorado Springs.

In 2008, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) estimated the pronghorn herd to be more than twice the long-term population size objective. In response, CPW asked the Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) to institute a December doe season and to increase license numbers. Pronghorn harvest has increased substantially since 2009 with a corresponding decrease in the estimated population size.

The scoping process for this plan included two online surveys, meetings, and a 30-day public comment period. Prior to developing population and sex ratio alternatives, we discussed pronghorn management with the Lincoln County Farm Bureau and prepared two separate online surveys for hunters and landowners. We solicited input for the online surveys with postcards, mailing 1,791 postcards to sportsmen who applied for pronghorn licenses in PH-8 and 505 postcards landowners in southeastern Colorado. We also contacted the Colorado Farm Bureau and Colorado Cattlemen's Association so they could advertise the landowner online survey to their members. After receiving feedback from the online surveys and the Lincoln County Farm Bureau, we prepared a draft DAU plan which included three alternative population and sex-ratio objectives. We posted the draft plan on the CPW website for the entirety of the 30-day public comment period and mailed copies of the plan to interested landowners, County Commissioners, and the State Land Board. During the comment period we held public meetings in La Junta,

Walsenburg, and Limon. We also met with landowners from the Double E Soil Conservation District.

Approximately 50% of landowners who responded to the online survey or the 30-day public comment period indicated the current population size in the DAU was too high (compared to 2011 numbers). The other 50% of landowners preferred a management strategy which would maintain or increase the current population size. Landowners also supported a strategy which maintained the current number of buck licenses in the unit. Hunters preferred a population objective that would retain or increase the population. Hunters also wanted to maintain a high proportion of bucks in the unit. Both hunters and landowners expressed concern over the level of hunting pressure in the DAU and some landowners indicated that hunters were causing problems, including trespassing and damage, on their property. Landowners asked the CPW to manage pronghorn in a way that minimizes damage caused by hunters (opposed to minimizing damage caused by pronghorn). Since the DAU is primarily private, many hunters have asked the CPW to facilitate access to properties in the DAU.

Population Objective Alternatives

Alternative 1 — 6,000 (5,400-6,600) pronghorn:

This alternative represents a 25% reduction from the current modeled population size.

Alternative 2 — 8,000 (7,200-8,800) pronghorn:

This alternative encompasses the current pronghorn population size.

Alternative 3—10,000 (9,000-11,000) pronghorn:

This alternative encompasses a 25% increase from the current modeled population size.

Sex Ratio Objective Alternatives

Alternative 1 — 30 (25-35) bucks per 100 does:

This alternative would maintain the current sex ratio objective but would decrease the observed sex ratio by 25%.

Alternative 2 — 40 (35-45) bucks per 100 does:

This alternative encompasses the long-term average sex ratio for the population but represents an increase from the current objective.

Alternative 3 — 50 (45-55) bucks per 100 does:

This alternative would increase the current observed sex ratio by ~25%.

Preferred Alternatives

- **Post-hunt population objective range = 5,400-6,600**
    - The DAU is primarily private and we attempted to balance the needs of landowners when choosing the preferred alternative. Since 50% of landowners indicated that the current number of pronghorn was too high, we chose a preferred alternative that was lower than the 2011 population size estimate. However, since half of landowners and most hunters preferred a management strategy that would retain or increase the current population size, we chose an alternative which increased the previous population objective. We will continue current management practices under this alternative, including a high level of hunting pressure, but may seek alternative strategies which target harvest in areas with a high potential for game damage and reduce the density of hunters in the DAU.

- **Post-hunt sex ratio objective range = 25-35 bucks per 100 does**
    - This alternative maintains the current sex ratio objective for the population but represents a decrease from the current observed sex ratio. It was favored by a majority of landowners in the DAU. To achieve this objective, in the near term we will maintain the current number of buck licenses in the population while reducing doe licenses. This will continue to provide a high level of buck hunting opportunities for hunters. However, as the population nears objective, hunters will have access to a lower proportion of bucks in the population.

This DAU plan was approved by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission on July 12, 2012

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) manages big game, including pronghorn, for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of the state in accordance with the CPW's Strategic Plan (2010-2020). Pronghorn management is also determined by mandates from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) and the Colorado Legislature. Colorado's wildlife species require careful and increasingly intensive management to accommodate the many and varied public demands and growing human impacts. The CPW uses a "Management by Objective" approach to manage the state's big game populations (Figure 4).

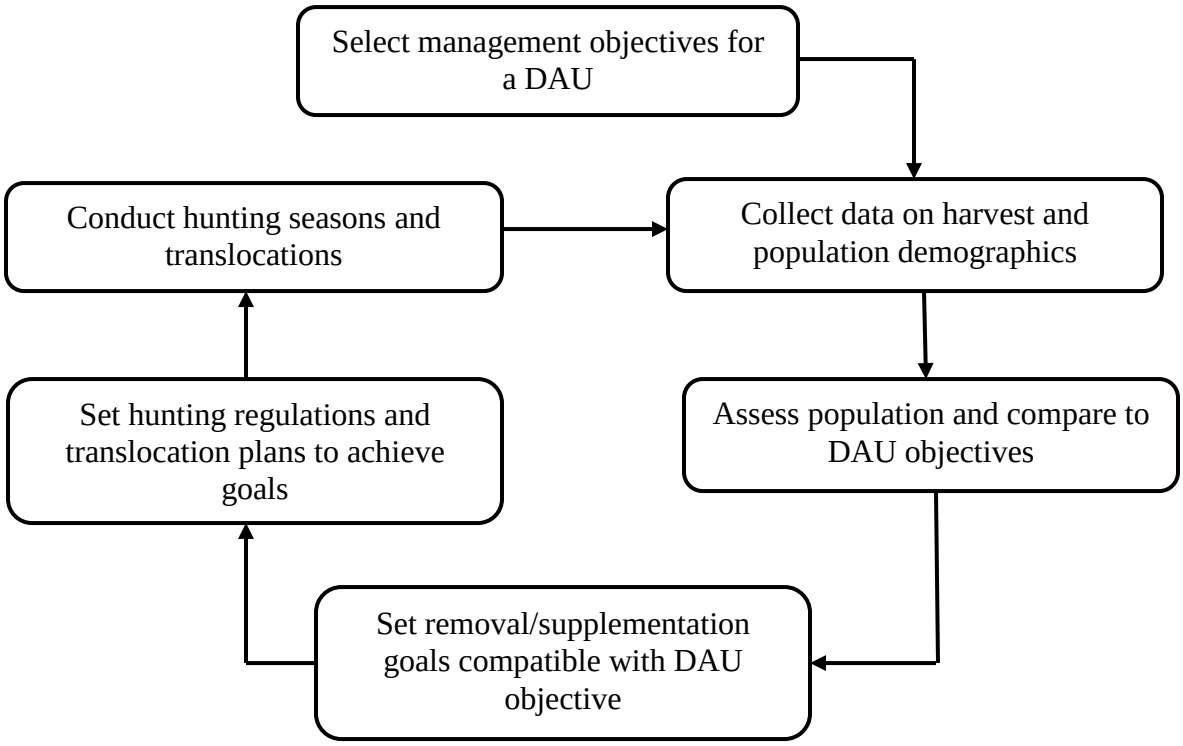

Figure 4. Management by Objective process used by Colorado Parks and Wildlife to manage big game populations by Data Analysis Unit.

With the Management by Objective approach, big game populations are managed to achieve population objectives established for a Data Analysis Unit (DAU). A DAU is the geographic area that includes the year-round range of a big game herd. A DAU includes the area where the majority of the animals in a herd are born, live and die. DAU boundaries are delineated to minimize interchange of animals between adjacent DAUs. A DAU may be divided into several Game Management Units (GMUs) in order to distribute hunters and harvest within a DAU.

Management decisions within a DAU are based on a DAU plan. The primary purpose of a DAU plan is to establish population and sex ratio (i.e., the number of males per 100 females) objectives for the DAU. The DAU plan also describes the strategies and

techniques that will be used to reach these objectives. During the DAU planning process, public input is solicited and collected through questionnaires, public meetings, and comments to the CPW staff and the PWC. The intentions of the CPW are integrated with the concerns and ideas of various stakeholders including the United States Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), city and county governments, hunters, guides and outfitters, private landowners, local chambers of commerce, and the general public. In preparing a DAU plan, agency personnel attempt to balance the biological capabilities of the herd and its habitat with the public's demand for wildlife recreational opportunities. DAU plans are approved by the PWC and are reviewed and updated every 10 years.

The DAU plan serves as the basis for the annual herd management cycle. In this cycle, the size and composition of the herd is assessed and compared to the objectives defined in the DAU plan and removal goals are set. Based on these goals, specific removal strategies are made for the coming year to either maintain the population or move it towards the established objectives (e.g., license numbers and allocation are set, translocation plans are made). Hunting seasons and/or translocations are then conducted and evaluated. The annual management cycle then begins again (Figure 4).

The purpose of this DAU plan is to set population and sex ratio objectives for the Yoder pronghorn herd. The DAU plan will be in place from 2012-2022 with the expectation that it will be reviewed and updated in 2022.

DESCRIPTION OF DAU AND HABITAT

Geography

The Yoder DAU is located in central Colorado (Figure 5) and comprised of Game Management Units (GMU) 110, 111, 118, 119, 123 and 124. Prior to 1987 this DAU included GMUs A-34, A-35, A-41, A-42, A-43 and A-44. This DAU encompasses portions of El Paso, Elbert, Lincoln, Pueblo and Crowley counties and is bounded on the north by the Douglas-El Paso County line and U. S. Highway 24; on the east by Colorado Highway 71; on the south by the Arkansas River and on the west by Interstate 25.

This DAU covers 3,604 mi^2 ranging in elevation from about 7,400 feet at the top of Spruce Hill in the northwest portion of GMU 110 to about 4,200 feet where the Arkansas River flows under Colorado Highway 71 in GMU 124. Topography ranges from steep sided bluffs to rolling hills.

Climate

Precipitation averages 10-15 inches per year and falls primarily in the form of thunderstorms from April through September. Precipitation amounts can vary widely across the DAU but amounts tend to be higher in the northwestern portion of the DAU and the lowest in the southeastern portion. Winter and spring are characterized by high winds.

Land Ownership and Use

The majority of the DAU is owned by private entities (81% or 2,917 mi^2) or by the State Land Board (17% or 604 mi^2). Approximately 52 mi^2 of State Land Board property is leased by the U.S. Department of Transportation for a high speed test track facility. The Federal government manages about 2% of the land in the DAU including 18 mi^2 of land managed by the BLM and 40 mi^2 managed by the U.S. Military. Areas open to the public for big game hunting include the 160 acre (0.25 mi^2) Ramah State Wildlife Area and the Turkey Track State Trust Land property (8,887 acres, 13.8 mi^2). Landownership is mapped in Figure 6.

Agriculture is the predominant land use in the Yoder DAU. Livestock grazing occurs throughout the DAU on native rangeland. Irrigated farmland occurs along many rivers but is most common along the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek. Alfalfa, sod farms, and other row crops are the primary crops in the irrigated farmlands. Large parcels are planted as dryland winter wheat, especially in the northeastern part of the DAU, with lesser acres planted to sorghum, milo, and sunflowers.

Urban areas are encroaching on wildlife habitat around the Colorado Springs-Security-Widefield complex, the towns of Peyton, Falcon, Ellicott and Monument. Urbanization is rapidly occurring along the I-25 corridor from Colorado Springs to the Douglas-El Paso County line. Schriever Air Force Base, formerly the Combined Space Operations Center, is influencing development along the Highway 94 corridor east of Colorado Springs. Development will continue to be a major concern in this DAU, especially along the western portion of the unit.

Vegetation

The majority (57%) of the DAU is classified as prairie grassland (Figure 7). Shortgrass prairie, primarily in the eastern GMUs, comprises 39% (1,422 mi^2) of the DAU. Tallgrass prairie makes up 11% (388 mi^2) of the DAU while 7% (266 mi^2) of the DAU is classified as midgrass prairie. Most of the remaining portions of the DAU (13% or 468 mi^2), especially in GMU 111, are classified as dryland agriculture. Other vegetation types in the DAU include irrigated agriculture, shrub or sand dune complexes, riparian areas, and greasewood flats. A 76 mi^2 ponderosa pine forest, the Black Forest, is located in the northwestern corner of the DAU. Besides urban areas, the Black Forest is the only portion of the DAU not suitable for pronghorn but it only comprises 2% of the unit. Major drainages in the DAU include Fountain Creek, Monument Creek, the Arkansas River, Chico Creek, Black Squirrel Creek, Pond Creek, Steel Creek, Little Horse Creek, Horse Creek and North, Middle and South Rush Creeks.

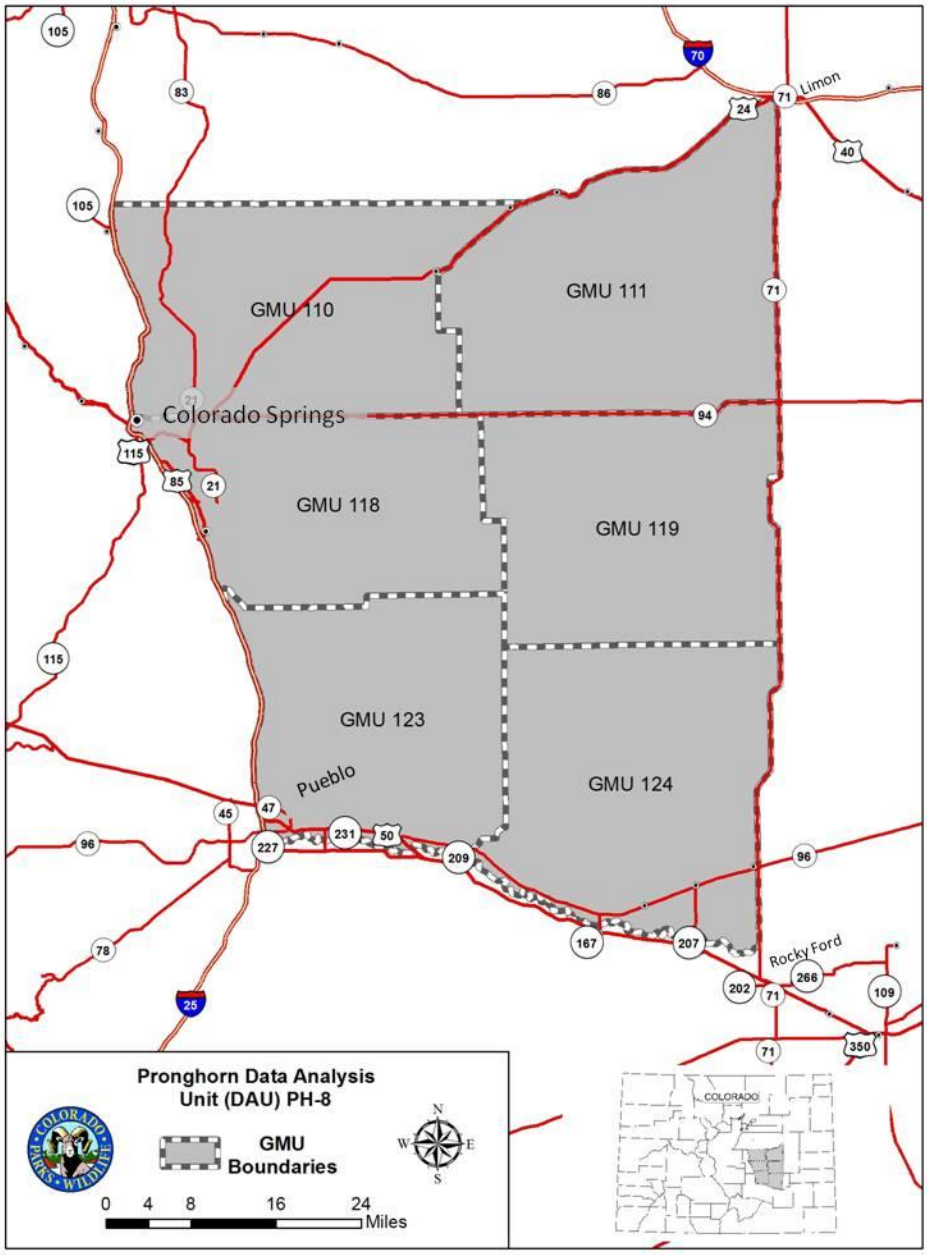

Figure 5. PH-8 Geography and GMU boundaries.

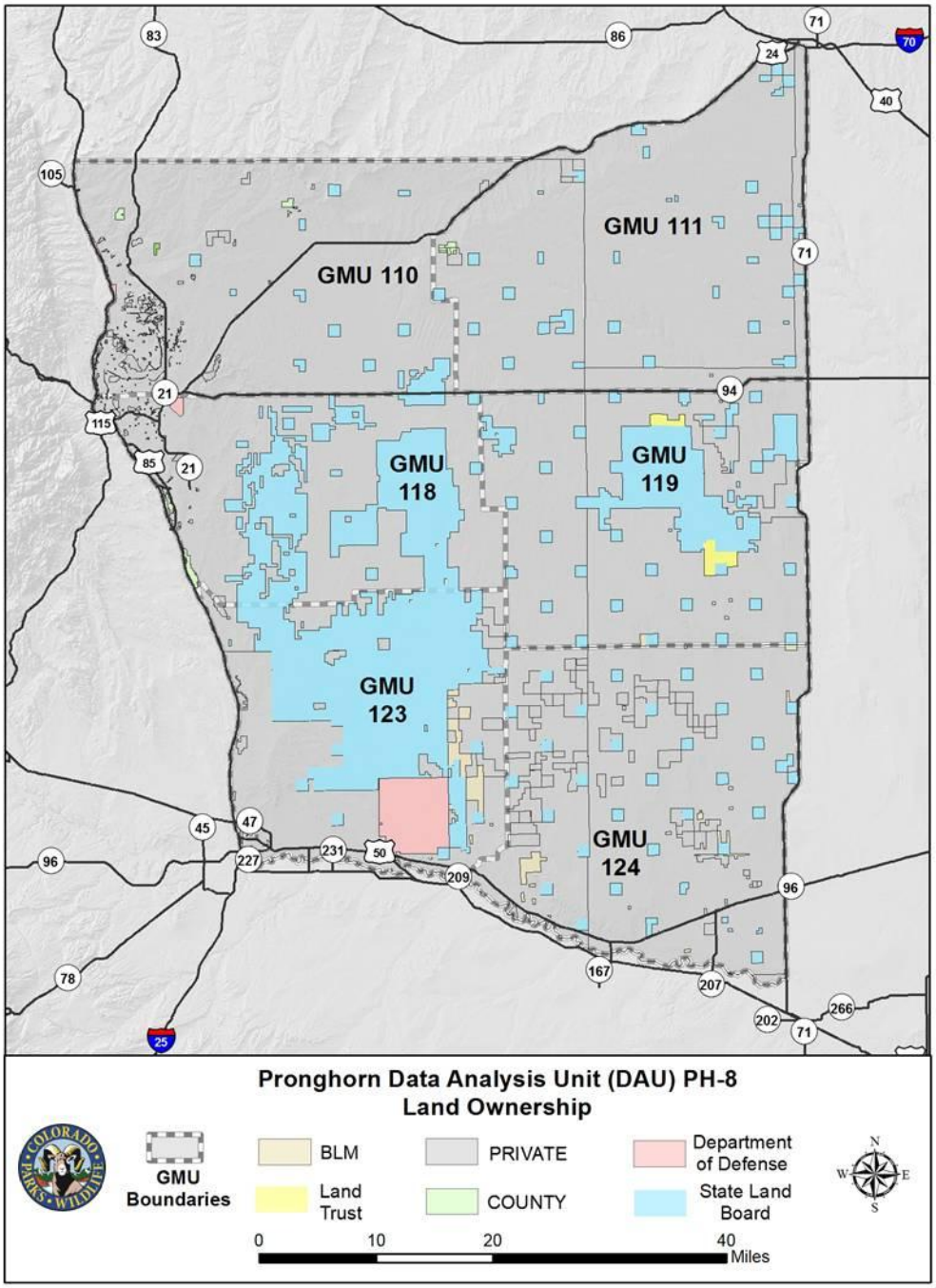

Figure 6. PH-8 Land Ownership

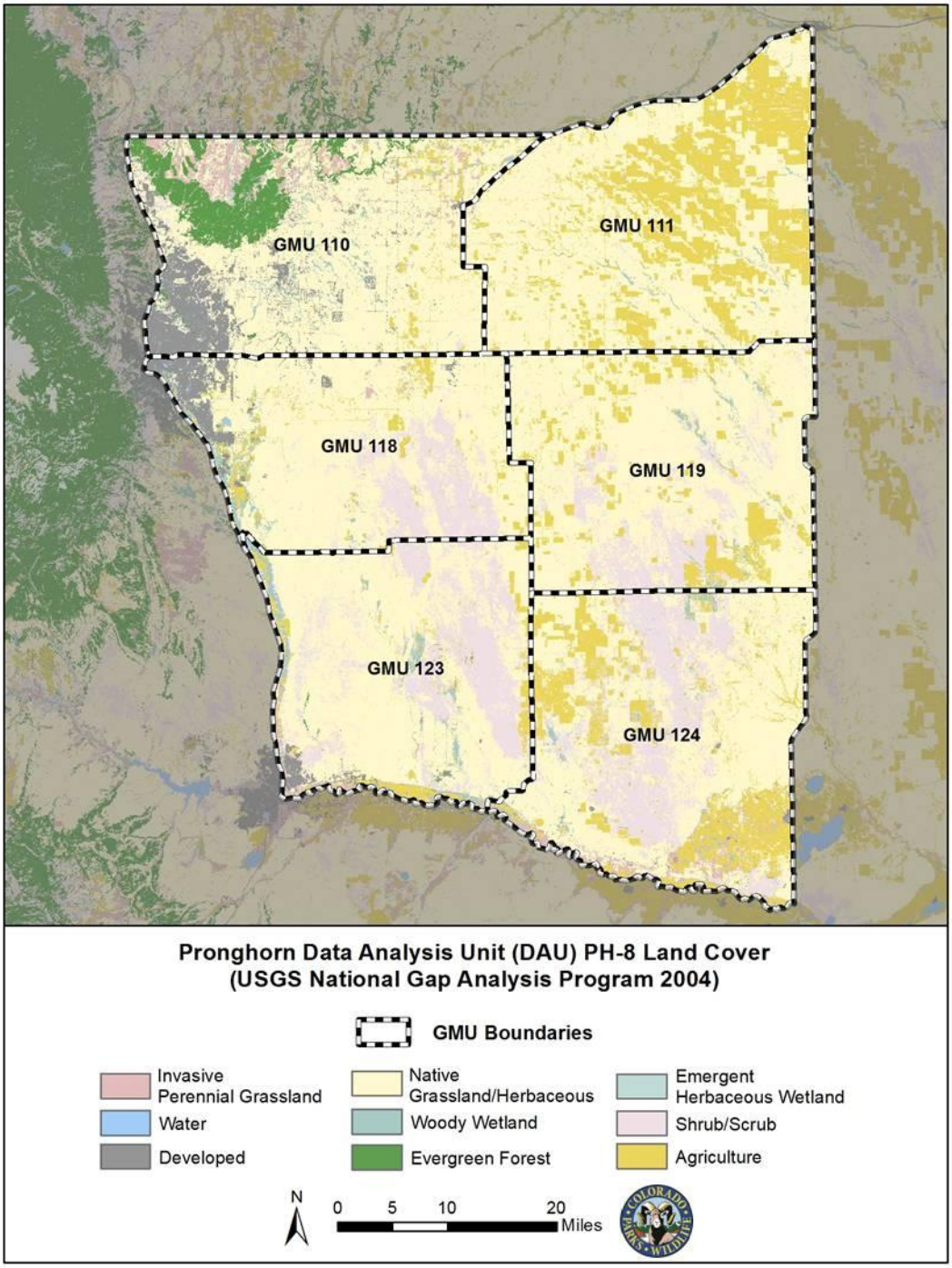

Figure 7. PH-8 Land Cover

HERD MANAGEMENT HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

History

Population Size and Inventory

Between 1975 and 1998, the population size in the DAU was thought to range from minimum of approximately 4,200 pronghorn in 1979 to a maximum of 6,900 in 1982. In 1988, the Wildlife Commission established a population objective of 4,500 pronghorn for the DAU. Following the adoption of the population objective, the population was thought to decrease from about 5,500 in 1988 to a low of 4,300 in 1997. During this time, population estimates were derived from biennial post-season aerial counts, harvest data and the POP II computer program (Fossil Creek Software, 1992 v.7.03, Fort Collins, Colorado).

Post-hunt Sex Ratio

Prior to 1998, pre-hunt sex ratios were derived from pre-season aerial counts conducted from a fixed-wing aircraft. Data was entered into the POP II model which then generated the post-season estimate. Since 1975 the post-season buck/doe ratio ranged from 15 bucks to 100 does in 1994 to a high of 37 bucks per 100 does in 1981. In 1997, the post-hunt buck to doe ratio was estimated at 19 bucks per 100 does. Between 1988 and 1997, the estimated buck to doe ratio averaged 23 bucks per 100 does.

Harvest

Prior to 1998, hunter access was not perceived to be a problem in this DAU. Landowners were willing to provide permission to hunters who asked for permission prior to the opening of the hunting season. Between 1975 and 1997, hunters harvested an average of 797 pronghorn per year (510 bucks, 287 does and fawns). The lowest harvest was 250 pronghorn in 1976 and the highest harvest was 1,623 in 1983.

Between 1988 and 1998, harvest success was fairly consistent. The highest harvest success during that period was 73% in 1993 and the lowest was 63% in 1990. Hunter success and participation was likely dependent upon weather conditions, with lower success and participation occurring in years of cold and/or wet weather on opening day.

Hunting Pressure

Prior to 1988, the number of hunters in the DAU averaged 1,001 per year with a high of 2,187 in 1983 and a low of 398 in 1974. Between 1988 and 1998, the average number of hunters increased to 1,343 and ranged from 1,184 in 1997 to 1,589 in 1989.

Game Damage and Conflict

Prior to 1998, game damage complaints included grazing on winter wheat and rye, damage to seed watermelon, spreading bindweed and fence damage. The CPW suggested hazing as a way to reduce complaints, especially on winter wheat and rye fields.

In 1997, the High Plains Antelope Conflict Resolution Committee was formed to determine both the types and magnitude of conflicts that existed between pronghorn and landowners. The Committee covered parts of the Yoder DAU in El Paso and Lincoln Counties. The Committee determined that pronghorn damage to winter wheat and rye fields was a primary concern. Damage would be expected regardless of population size because pronghorn preferentially concentrate on the fields during the winter. The Committee recommended the use of dispersal hunts, as opposed to reduction in DAU-wide population size, to deal with the damage. Dispersal hunts allowed landowners to target the specific areas where game damage was occurring.

Population and Sex Ratio

Population Size and Inventory

Between 1998 and 2004, the modeled post-hunt population size for the DAU averaged approximately 4,550 pronghorn (range 4,473-4,710). Models were based on preseason sex and age ratio flights, harvest data, and a postseason minimum count completed in 2003. During minimum counts, observers flew one-mile wide transects across the DAU, counting every animal observed. Between 1994 and 2007, minimum counts were conducted approximately every other year (Figure 8). A total of 3,776 pronghorn were counted during the 2003 flight. In 2005, the postseason minimum count was repeated and 7,817 total pronghorn were observed. Accordingly, the modeled postseason population size was revised upwards to 7,620 pronghorn in 2005. In 2006 and 2007, the modeled population size estimates were 8,140 and 7,800, respectively.

In 2008, the CPW began surveying pronghorn populations through aerial line transect distance sampling (Buckland et al. 2001; Guenzel 2007). Distance sampling provided a superior technique to minimum counts for two reasons. First, estimates of both population size and density, and corresponding levels of precision, would be generated with distance sampling. No estimate of precision was possible with the minimum count. Second, detection probabilities (i.e., the percentage of the population observed) could be estimated with distance sampling. In contrast, an unknown portion of the population was observed during minimum counts, making an extrapolation between the minimum count and actual population size problematic.

Distance sampling estimates were conducted in the spring after animals have dispersed from winter concentrations but before fawns were born. Therefore, estimates produced through distance sampling represented preproduction estimates. In 2008, the distance sampling estimate for the Yoder DAU was 9,624 (standard error = 1,408). The survey was repeated in 2010, and the estimated population size was 8,854 (standard error = 796).

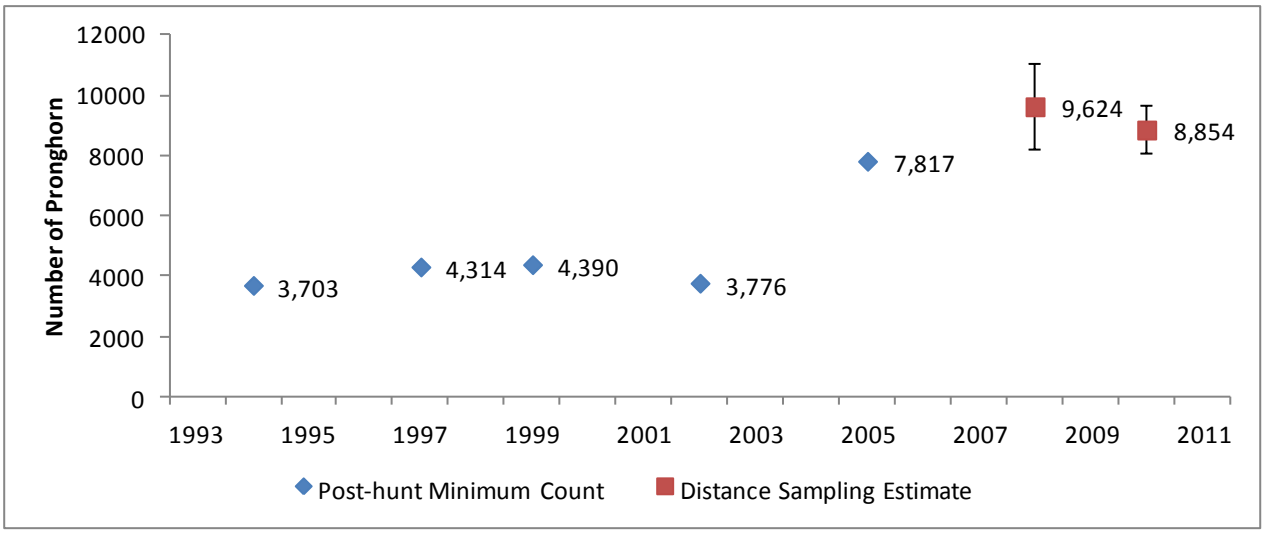

Figure 8. Post-hunt minimum counts and preproduction distance sampling estimates (± standard error) for the Yoder (PH-8) Pronghorn DAU, 1993-2011.

Pronghorn Densities

The distance estimate from 2008 represented a preproduction density of 3.2 pronghorn/mi^2. At the time, this was the second highest density of pronghorn in Colorado after DAU PH-9 in northwestern Colorado (2009 density estimate = 7.3 pronghorn/ mi^2). In 2009, the density of pronghorn in the Hugo DAU (PH-6), which borders the northeastern portion of PH-8, was also 3.2 pronghorn/mi^2. Preproduction densities in PH-8 were reduced between 2008 and 2010 to 2.94 pronghorn/mi^2.

Sex Ratio Estimates

Sex ratio estimates for PH-8 are calculated from pre-hunt classification flights conducted with a fixed-wing airplane. Observers fly three or four mile wide transects across the DAU, classifying every group observed into bucks, does and fawns. Prior to 2005, classification flights were done approximately every other year. Since 2005, flights have been done annually.

In 2011, the pre-hunt sex ratio for PH-8 was estimated to be 35.9. bucks per 100 does. The three year average for the DAU is 41.2 bucks per 100 does and the long term average since 1993 is 38.0 bucks per 100 does.

Licenses

Between 1993 and 1998, an average of 720 buck rifle licenses and 490 antlerless rifle licenses were offered in the DAU (Figure 8). Following the last revision of the DAU plan in 1998, models suggested the population was stable and therefore, buck and antlerless licenses remained unchanged at about 525-550 licenses per sex between 1998 and 2005. Following the minimum count of 7,817 pronghorn in the DAU, the CPW recognized that the pronghorn population was above objective and correspondingly increased buck

licenses to 675 and antlerless licenses to 750 for the 2006 season. Licenses were increased again in 2007 and 2008.

In 2008, after confirmation that the population was well above objective, the CPW recognized that we were not offering a sufficient number of regular rifle licenses to move the population to objective. This was mainly because the DAU is primarily private land and landowners were unable to accommodate the necessary number of rifle hunters during the regular season. Correspondingly, we asked the PWC to institute a late rifle season for does, starting in December 2009 and to make antlerless licenses list B to encourage doe harvest. The Commission approved the issue. In 2009, we offered 905 regular season rifle buck licenses, 1,075 regular season rifle antlerless licenses, and 500 late rifle doe licenses. In 2010, we asked the Commission to increase the number of late doe rifle licenses to 750 to increase harvest during that season.

Despite the increase in licenses, some units require preference points to draw a regular season rifle buck tag. In 2010, residents required a minimum of one preference point to draw a license in GMUs 110 and 118. For non-residents, a minimum of one preference point was required to draw a license in 110, 111, 118, and 123. In 2011, residents required a minimum of one preference point to draw buck licenses in 110 and 111 while non-residents were required to have preference points in 110, 111, and 119.

Hunters can also harvest pronghorn with archery and muzzleloader licenses in the DAU. All GMUs within the DAU are included in the list of units available to hunters holding an over-the-counter archery license. Data from the CPW annual harvest survey suggest that only 176 archers hunted in the DAU in 2009. Muzzleloader licenses are valid in all GMUs within the DAU. In 2010 and 2011, we offered 75 buck and 75 antlerless licenses. In both years, buck licenses were sold out at Choice 3 so all 1st and 2nd Choice applicants were able to draw muzzleloader licenses. Antlerless licenses were available as leftovers.

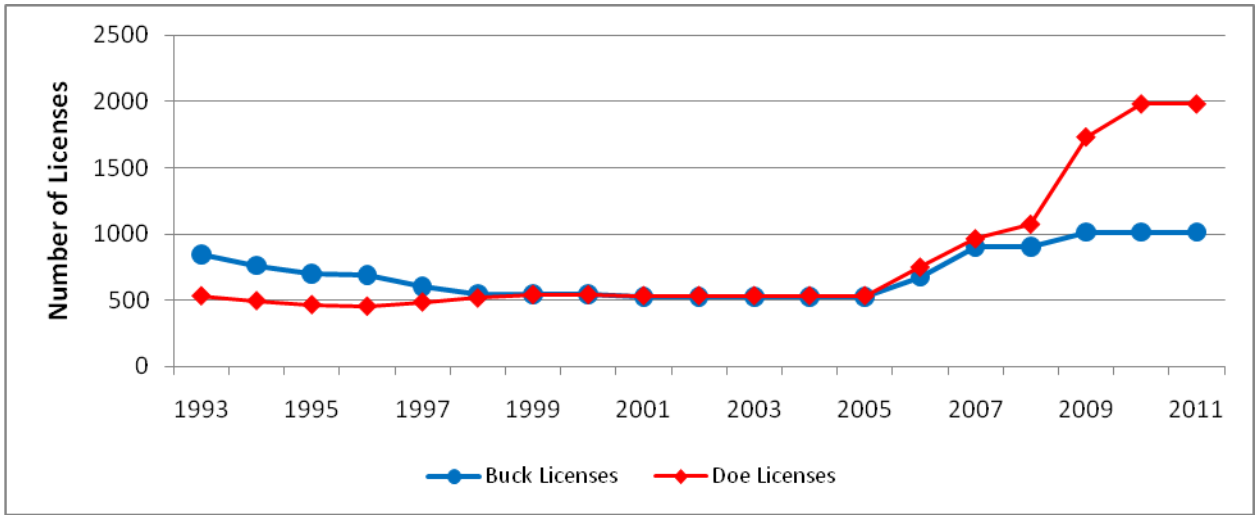

Figure 9. Buck and antlerless licenses, 1993-2011.

Harvest

For bucks, harvest declined from approximately 650 to 450 annually between 1993 and 1998 (Figure 2). The number of bucks harvested annually varied little (range 350-400) from 1999 through 2006. Buck harvest increased from 380 in 2006 to 662 in 2007 due to the increase in license numbers. Since the increase in 2007, buck harvest increased slightly to 680 bucks in 2009.

In contrast, antlerless harvest varied little (range approximately 250-350) between 1993 and 2005. However, the harvest rate has steadily increased from 379 in 2006 to 831 in 2009, with increasing license numbers. In 2009, a higher number of doe and fawns were harvested than in any year since 1993 and doe harvest exceeded buck harvest for the first time since 1993. Hunters harvested over 1,000 does in 2010 and the predicted harvest for 2011 is also expected to be close to 1,000.

Success Rates

License success rates, defined as the percent of pronghorn harvested per license, have been relatively stable since 1993 (Figure 9). For buck licenses, the overall average since 1993 is 73.7% and the running three-year average (2008-2010) is 70.3%. For does the averages for the same time periods are slightly lower: 56.2% overall and 52.6% for the past three years. The license success rates for the rifle doe late season has been consistently lower than the regular season doe license success rate. In 2009, the rifle doe late season success rate was 42.4% and in 2010 it was 46.7%.

Hunter success rates, or the percentage of sportsmen who hunted and harvested a pronghorn, are higher than the license success rates. Since 2004, the hunter success rate averaged 78.4% for buck hunters and 61.4% for doe hunters. Again, success rates in 2009 were lower compared to the overall average, especially for doe hunters (54.3% including both the regular seasons and late rifle seasons). Success rates increased in 2010 to 60.3% for doe hunters and 72.6% for buck hunters.

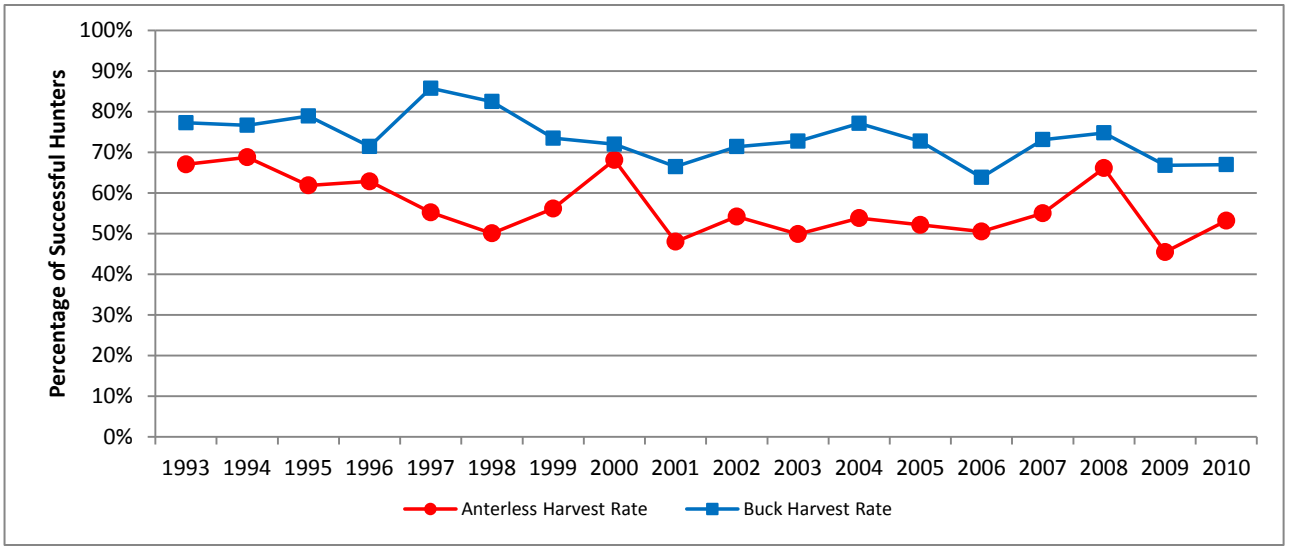

Figure 10. PH-8 Antlerless and Buck Harvest Rates, 1993-2010.

Disease

Disease is not thought to be a factor regulating pronghorn populations in PH-8. Unlike deer, elk, and moose, pronghorn are not known to carry chronic wasting disease (CWD). Diseases affecting pronghorn include bluetongue and epizootic hemorrhagic disease (Lance and Pojar 1984; O'Gara 2004).

Game Damage

Historically, the primary game damage complaint for pronghorn in the Yoder DAU was damage to winter wheat and rye fields (*see History*). Winter wheat is still grown in the DAU, especially in GMU 111, so the potential for game damage on crops exists. However, recent complaints have been limited. Since 2006, the payout for game damage caused by pronghorn has been $3,000, paid out to two individuals in the Calhan area for damage to growing crops. In 2011, CPW issued special hunt permits on a property in GMU 110 to mitigate damage to pasture land.

Habitat Management

Pronghorn habitat in PH-8 will be impacted in the future by housing development, especially in the western part of the DAU, and possibly by wind energy development in the northeastern parts of the unit. Housing development will decrease the quantity of habitat available to pronghorn in the unit. Areas adjacent to Colorado Springs in GMUs 110 and 118 will have the highest impact. Pronghorn are currently located in the western portion of both GMUs but future housing development will likely force the animals to move from the area. The effects of wind energy on pronghorn populations are currently unknown. Potential impacts could result from loss or fragmentation of habitat and vehicle collision. These impacts might alter pronghorn distribution or demographic rates. Road

density, vehicle use, and electricity transmission lines could increase across pronghorn habitat in areas with wind energy development.

Since the DAU is primarily private land, any future habitat management will be dependent on the participation of private landowners. One factor that could influence the ability of private landowners to manipulate private land is the status of future Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts. Pronghorn habitat could be impacted if landowners choose not to re-enroll pronghorn habitat in CRP lands and return the land into agricultural production. Depending on the type of agriculture, impacts could include changes in distribution and demographic rates. For example, if lands currently enrolled in CRP were converted to dry land winter wheat, pronghorn could move onto these parcels of land. This change in pronghorn distribution could, in turn, lead to increased game damage.

CURRENT HERD MANAGEMENT

Current Post-hunt Population

The current modeled post-hunt population estimate for 2011 is 8,152 pronghorn, which incorporates both spring 2011 production and 2011 harvest projections into the model (Figure 1). This is more than 80% higher than the current population objective (4,500) for the DAU. The current population objective was originally set in 1988 and reauthorized by the PWC in 1998. However, the current population objective was set before precise population estimates were available. We have consistently found that the methods (i.e., minimum counts) used to estimate pronghorn population size prior to distance sampling underestimated the true number of animals on the landscape. Therefore, it is likely that we had far more pronghorn in 1988 than the 5,500 estimated at the time.

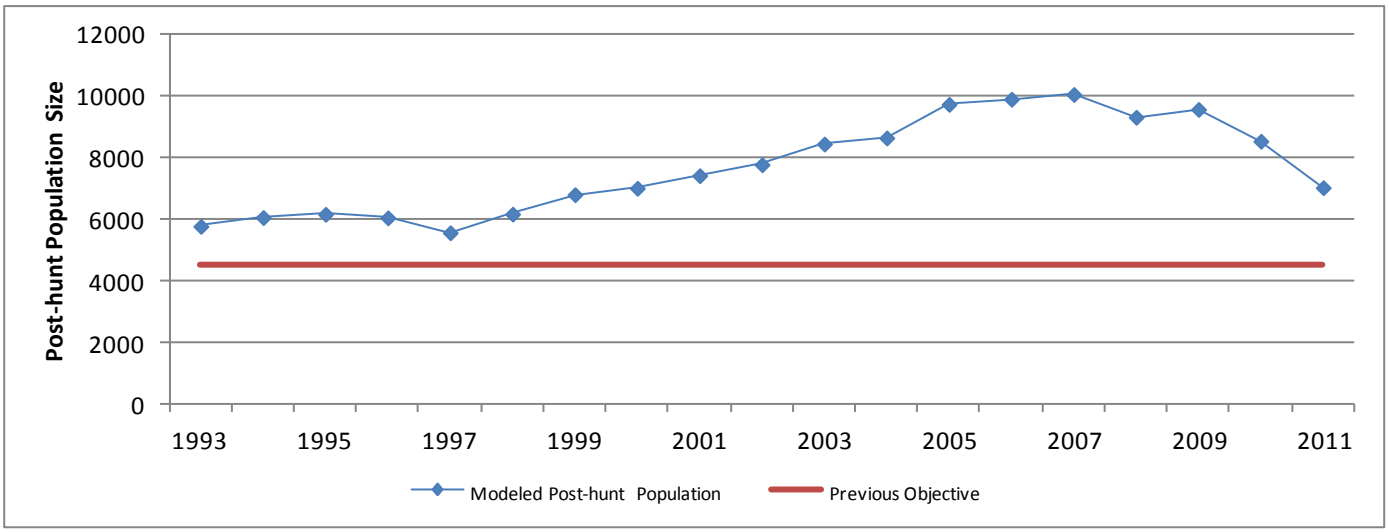

Figure 1. PH-8 Pronghorn modeled post-hunt population and objective range from 1993 through 2011.

Current Sex & Age Ratios

The current post-hunt sex ratio objective for PH-8 is 30 bucks per 100 does. The 2011 modeled post-hunt sex ratio was 37.6 bucks per 100 does (Figure 3). The three-year average observed sex ratio is 41.2 bucks per 100 does. However, since sex ratio estimates are collected prior to the hunting season, the observed pre-hunt ratio is higher than the modeled post-hunt ratio.

The fawn to doe ratio is estimated annually during pre-hunt classification flights. In 2011, we estimated there were 28.9 fawns per 100 does. This was lower than both the three-year average fawn to doe ratio of 36.3 fawns per 100 does and the overall average ratio of 42.4 (data have been collected periodically since 1993). Fawn to doe ratios fluctuate annually depending on spring weather conditions.

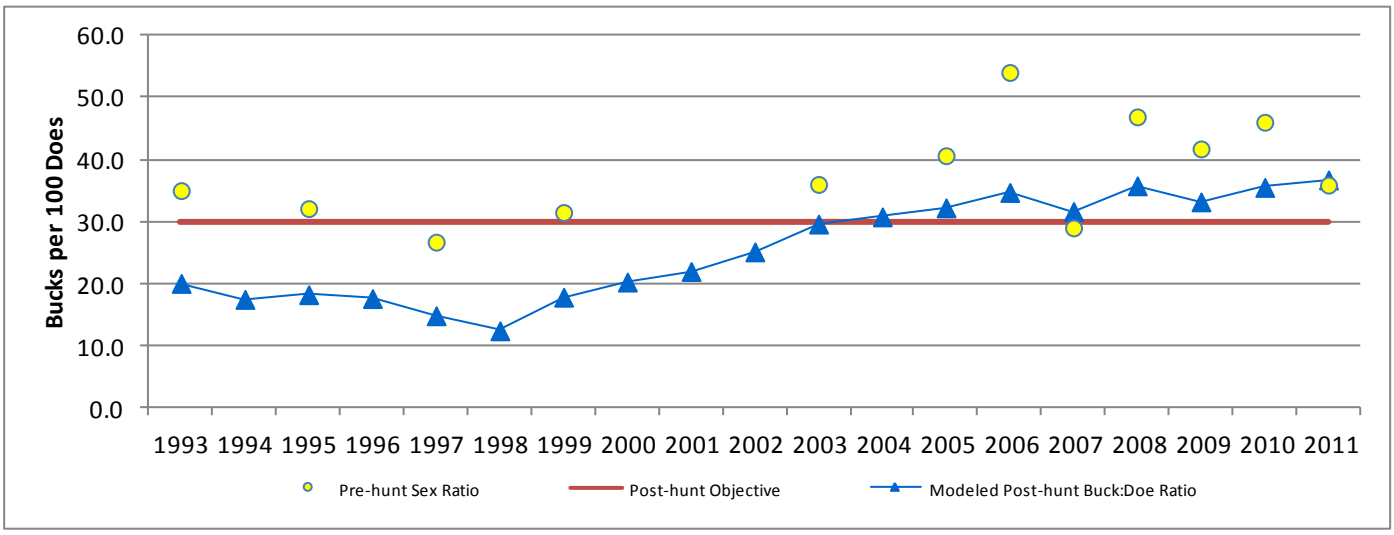

Figure 3. PH-8 Pronghorn observed pre-hunt sex ratio, post-hunt objective range, and modeled post-hunt sex ratio from 1993 through 2011.

Current Management Strategies/Problems

The primary management issue for PH-8 is population size relative to the objective. Despite a steady increase in licenses (Figure 8) and doe harvest (Figure 2) since 2006, we have been unable to bring the population to the objective. Our strategies to deal with the high pronghorn population size have been to 1) increase license numbers during the regular rifle season, 2) institute a late rifle season for does, and 3) to make doe licenses list B throughout the DAU. The primary difficulty with this strategy is the composition of landownership in the DAU. Since the DAU is primarily private, our ability to harvest pronghorn is limited by landowner willingness to allow access on their property. Additionally, there are large sections of the DAU, including the high speed test track facility in GMU 123, that are off limits to hunting entirely.

Data collection on pronghorn is becoming increasingly difficult in the DAU due to wind energy exploration. Currently, we collect most pronghorn survey data from a small plane

flying at low altitudes (<300 ft. above ground level). Wind energy companies utilize small towers to determine whether sites have suitable meteorological conditions for wind turbines. These meteorological towers present a hazard to low flying aircraft. We are also unable to fly in areas with wind turbines due to their height and turbulence created by their blades (e.g., Hu et al. 2011). As such, we might need to explore alternative methods for collecting data on pronghorn in the future.

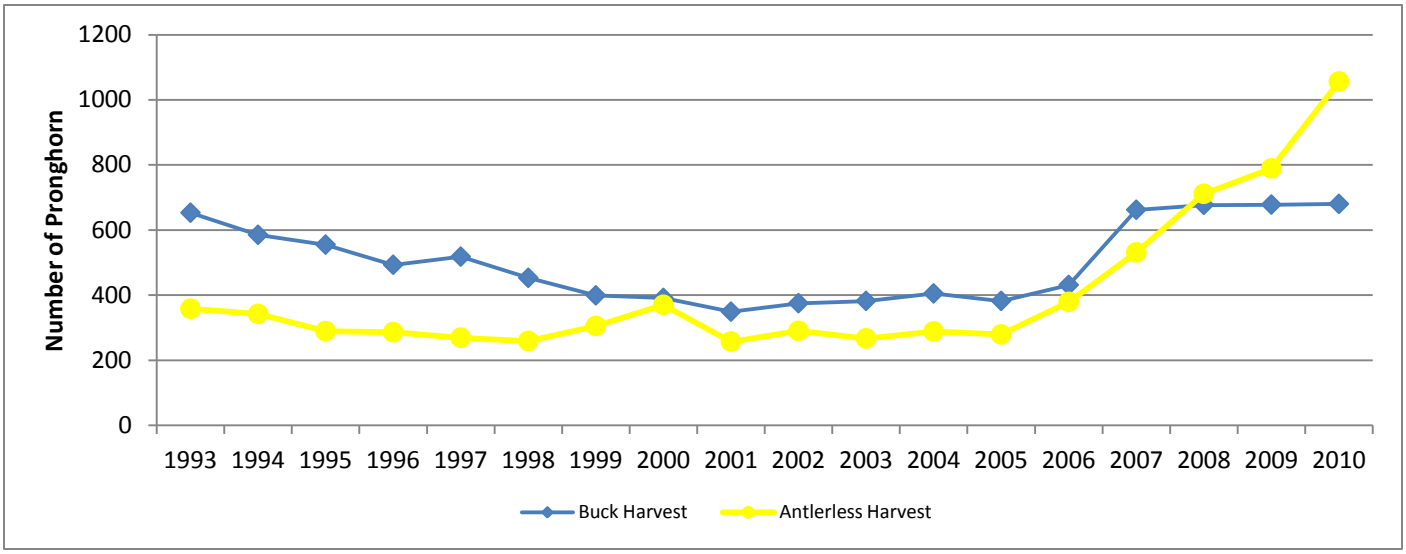

Figure 2. PH-8 Pronghorn buck and antlerless harvest from 1993 through 2010.

ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Initial Issue Solicitation Process

Hunter Input

Following the 2010 late doe rifle season, we mailed postcards to a randomly selected subset of sportsmen who applied for a pronghorn license in the DAU in 2010 (n=1,791 sportsmen, Appendix A). The selected subset of sportsmen included individuals who were both successful and unsuccessful at drawing a license in 2010. The postcard provided hunters with a brief description of the DAU planning process and directed the sportsmen to a website where they could fill out a survey. Sportsmen were also instructed to call the CPW Southeast Regional Service Center if they wished to receive a paper copy of the survey. A total of 269 (15%) sportsmen completed the survey.

In the survey hunters were asked to provide background information, hunting and harvest information and their opinions regarding changes to population and sex ratio objectives. Overall, hunter satisfaction was high in the DAU with 63.9% of respondents rating their satisfaction with hunting in the DAU as Good or Excellent (Figure 10). The percentage of respondents who rated their satisfaction as Poor was 10.8%. Sportsmen favored a population objective that would maintain or increase the number of pronghorn in the DAU (relative to the current population size; Figure 11). Less than 7% of respondents

favored a reduction in the current population size. The majority of respondents (53%) also supported no change in the sex ratio objective (Figure 12).

In the written comments, a number of hunters expressed frustration with their inability to obtain access in the DAU. Many sportsmen suggested that CPW work with private landowners to secure access for hunters. Survey respondents also indicated that there were too many hunters in the DAU which reduced the quality of the hunting experience. The survey text, summary data for all questions and written comments are available in Appendix A.

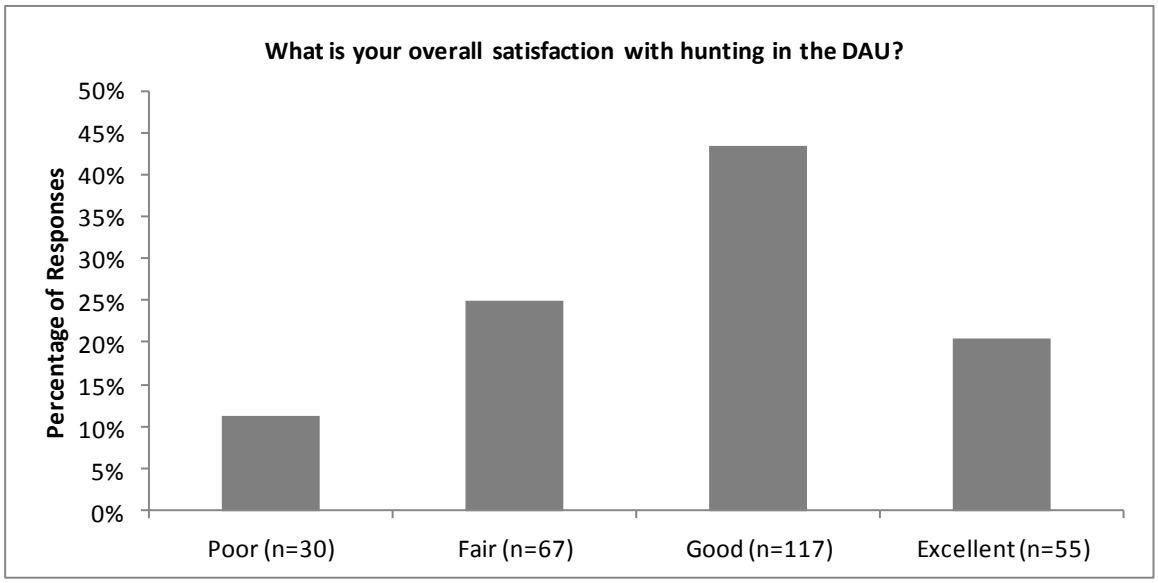

Figure 11. Overall hunting satisfaction of hunters who responded to the hunter survey for the Yoder DAU PH-8.

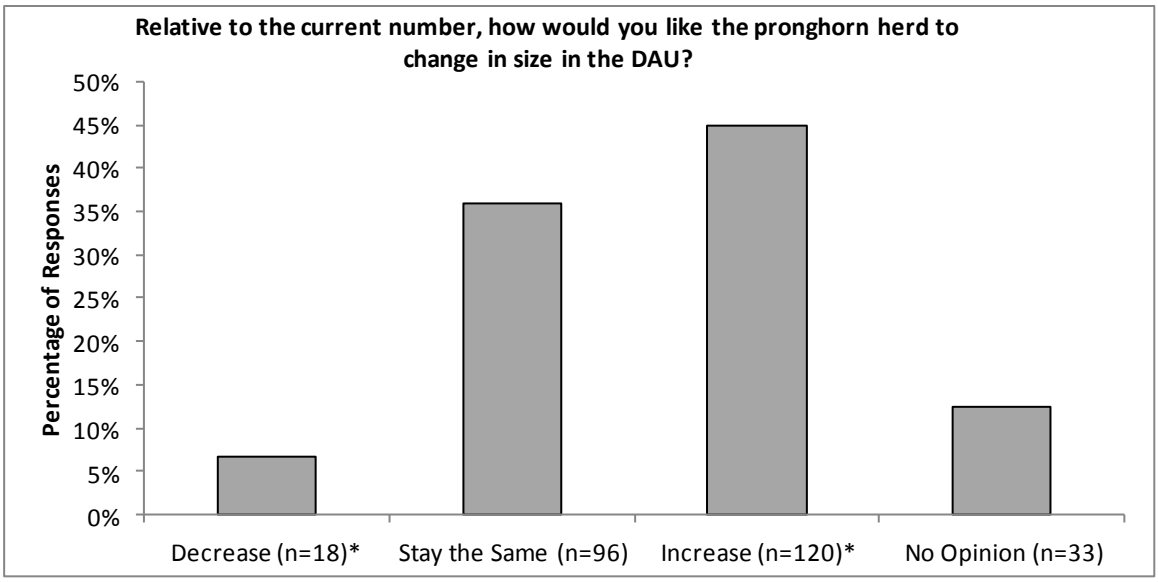

Figure 12. Percentage of responses to the question asking hunters how they would like the pronghorn herd to change in size in the Yoder pronghorn DAU. (*Aggregate responses to a question asking if they would like to see the herd increase or decrease in size by 25 or 50%. See full text of question in Appendix A).

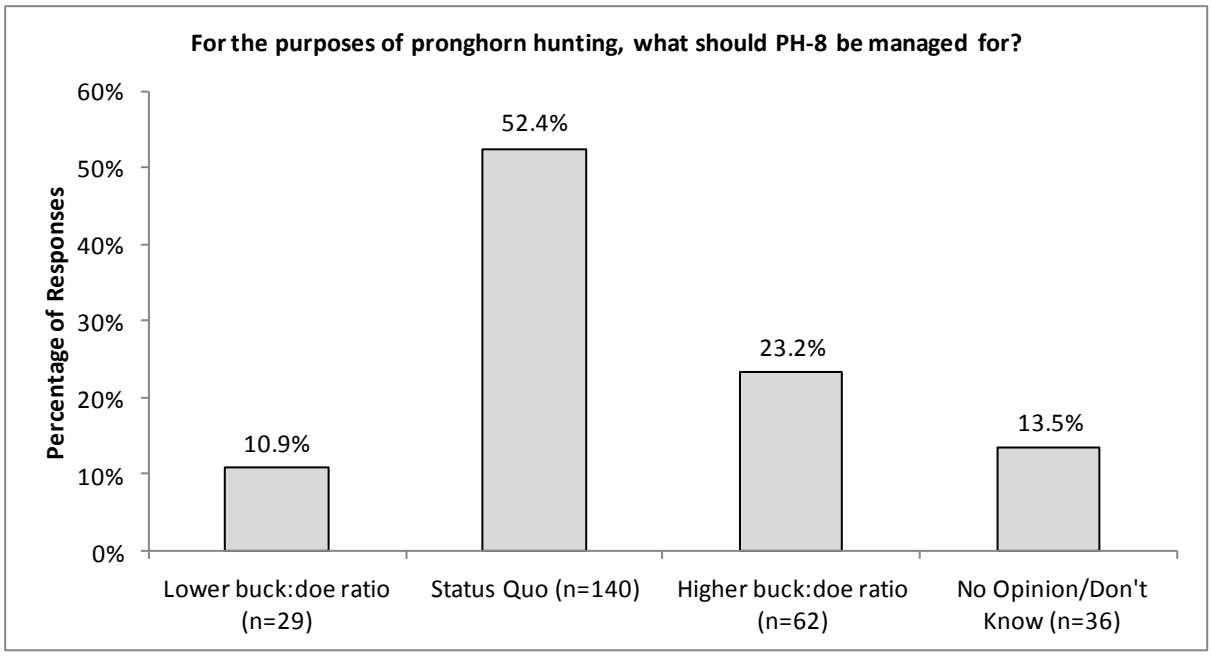

Figure 13. Percentage of responses to the question asking hunters how they would like to see the sex ratio change in the Yoder DAU.

Lincoln County Farm Bureau Input

We were invited to a Lincoln County Colorado Farm Bureau meeting in Limon, CO on September 1, 2011 to discuss pronghorn management in the county. At the meeting, we gave an informational presentation on the DAU planning process, current pronghorn status, and recent management changes in the Yoder (PH-8) and Hugo (PH-6) pronghorn DAUs. Following the presentation, we took comments and had an open discussion regarding pronghorn management and pronghorn hunters in the county.

The Farm Bureau members indicated they felt the volume of hunters was too high but that they would also like to see fewer pronghorn. The members also suggested that we extend the pronghorn season to two weekends or to two seasons because the number of pronghorn hunters on the landscape during the opening of the rifle season is too high. A memo detailing the discussion points from the meeting can be found in Appendix B.

Landowner Input

We also developed an online survey to elicit landowner input for this DAU plan. However, unlike the hunter survey, the survey was developed for individuals who owned property in DAUs PH-6, PH-7, or PH-8 because landowner addresses were available by county, but not by GMU. We developed a list of landowners by randomly selecting properties within the DAUs. We also asked the Colorado Farm Bureau and the Colorado Cattlemen's Association to contact their membership with information about the survey. As with the hunter survey, landowners were instructed to call the CPW Southeast Regional Service Center if they wished to receive a paper copy of the survey. We mailed a total of 505 postcards and received 49 responses to the survey. In the survey, landowners were asked to identify the general location of their property so we could assign the results to the appropriate DAU. Twenty-five of the respondents indicated that they owned property in DAU PH-8. The survey text, summary data for all questions and written comments are available in Appendix B.

In the survey, landowners were asked to provide background information, their opinions regarding changes to population and sex ratio objectives, and opinions about hunters and pronghorn damage. Landowners in this DAU favored a population objective that would maintain or decrease the number of pronghorn in the DAU (relative to the current population size; Figure 13). The majority of respondents (46%) also indicated that they were satisfied with the current number of buck permits in the DAU (Figure 14).

Since the DAU is almost exclusively private, hunters depend on landowners for hunting access. Thus, effective management of pronghorn through hunting in this DAU depends on landowner receptiveness to hunters. Prior to initiating this DAU plan, we were frequently approached by individuals who expressed concerns about hunter behavior during the pronghorn hunting season. Therefore, we asked landowners a question about whether and to what degree they experienced any of the following four problems with hunters: 1) trespass, 2) property damage, 3) too many hunters asking permission to hunt,

4) rude conduct. Additionally, landowners were given the option to specify any additional problems they experienced.

Trespassing was the most commonly cited problem by survey respondents with 70% of landowners indicating that hunters had trespassed on their property at least once in the last five years (Figure 15). Seventeen percent (17%) of landowners reported major problems with trespassing. Damage caused by hunters received the second highest percentage of complaints followed by the number of hunters asking for permission and rude conduct by hunters. Other reported problems included failure to secure fences, poaching, and death of livestock.

Sixty percent (15/25) of the landowners who answered the survey indicated that pronghorn caused damage to their property. Twenty percent (3/15) of the landowners with damage ranked the level of damage as severe. Damage to fences was the most common type of damage reported (11/15 landowners) followed by damage to pasture land (6/15 landowners).

Since hunting licenses are the primary tool available to CPW for managing pronghorn numbers, landowners face a tradeoff between the number of pronghorn and pronghorn hunters on the landscape. Recognizing this tradeoff, we asked landowners whether they preferred us to limit the number of hunters in the DAU or to limit the damage caused by pronghorn. Landowners indicated that they preferred management practices which limited the number of hunters (10 of 24 landowners) compared to limiting damage caused by pronghorn (3 of 24 landowners). A high number of respondents also indicated that the current numbers of pronghorn and hunters in the DAU were acceptable (8 of 24).

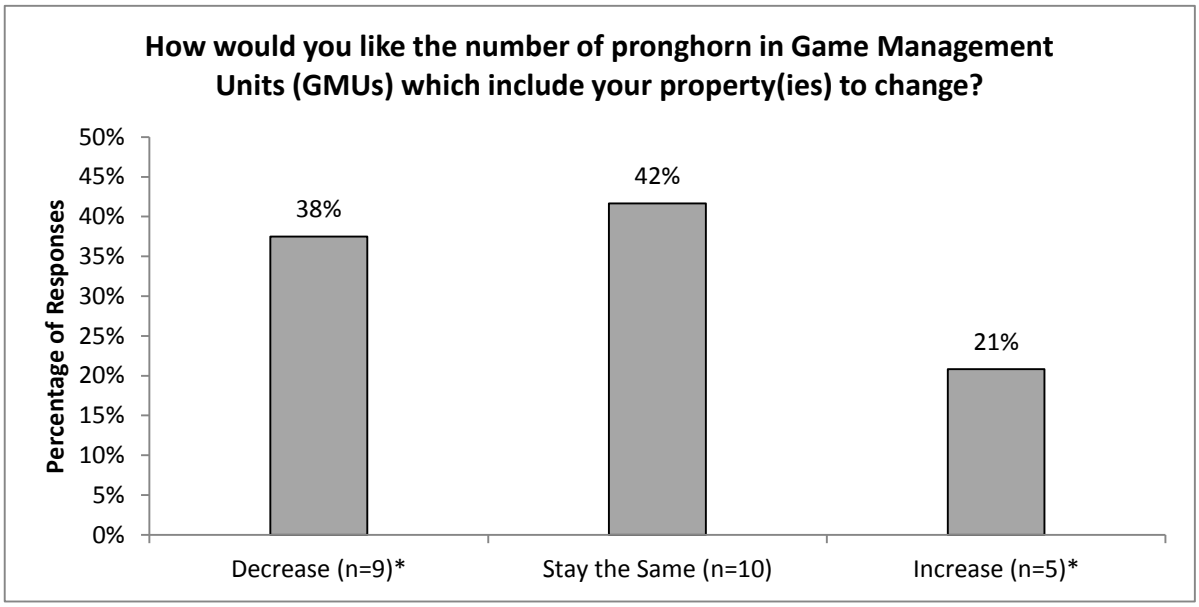

Figure 14. Percentage of responses to the question asking landowners how they would like the pronghorn herd to change in size in the Yoder pronghorn DAU. (*Aggregate responses to the question asking if they would like to see the herd increase or decrease in size by 1-50% or >50%. See full text of question in Appendix C).

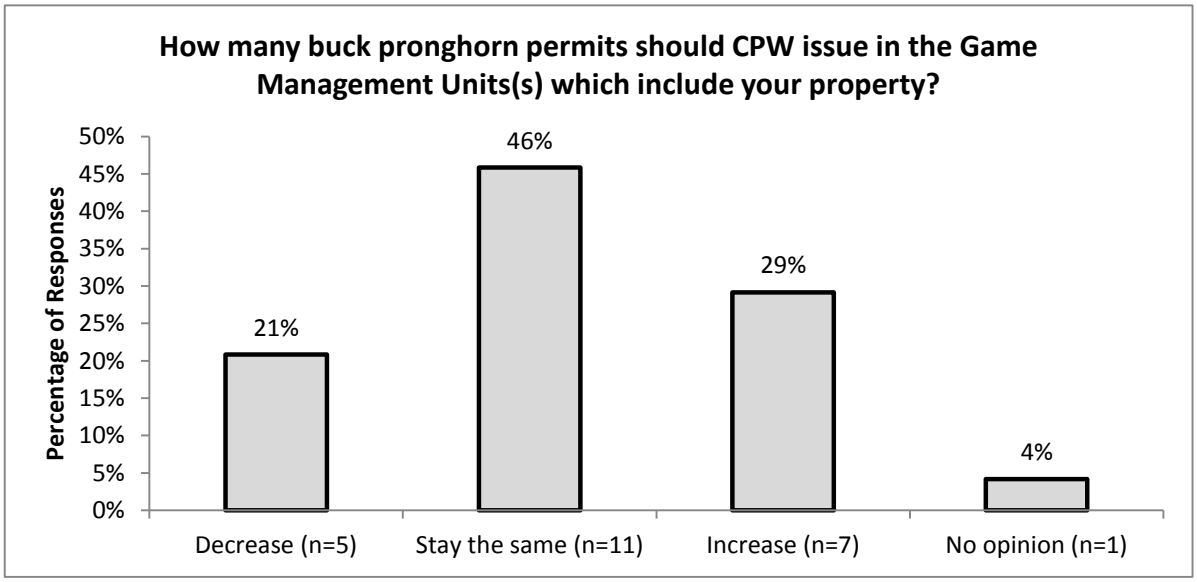

Figure 15. Percentage of responses to the question asking landowners how they would like CPW to manage buck pronghorn licenses in PH-8.

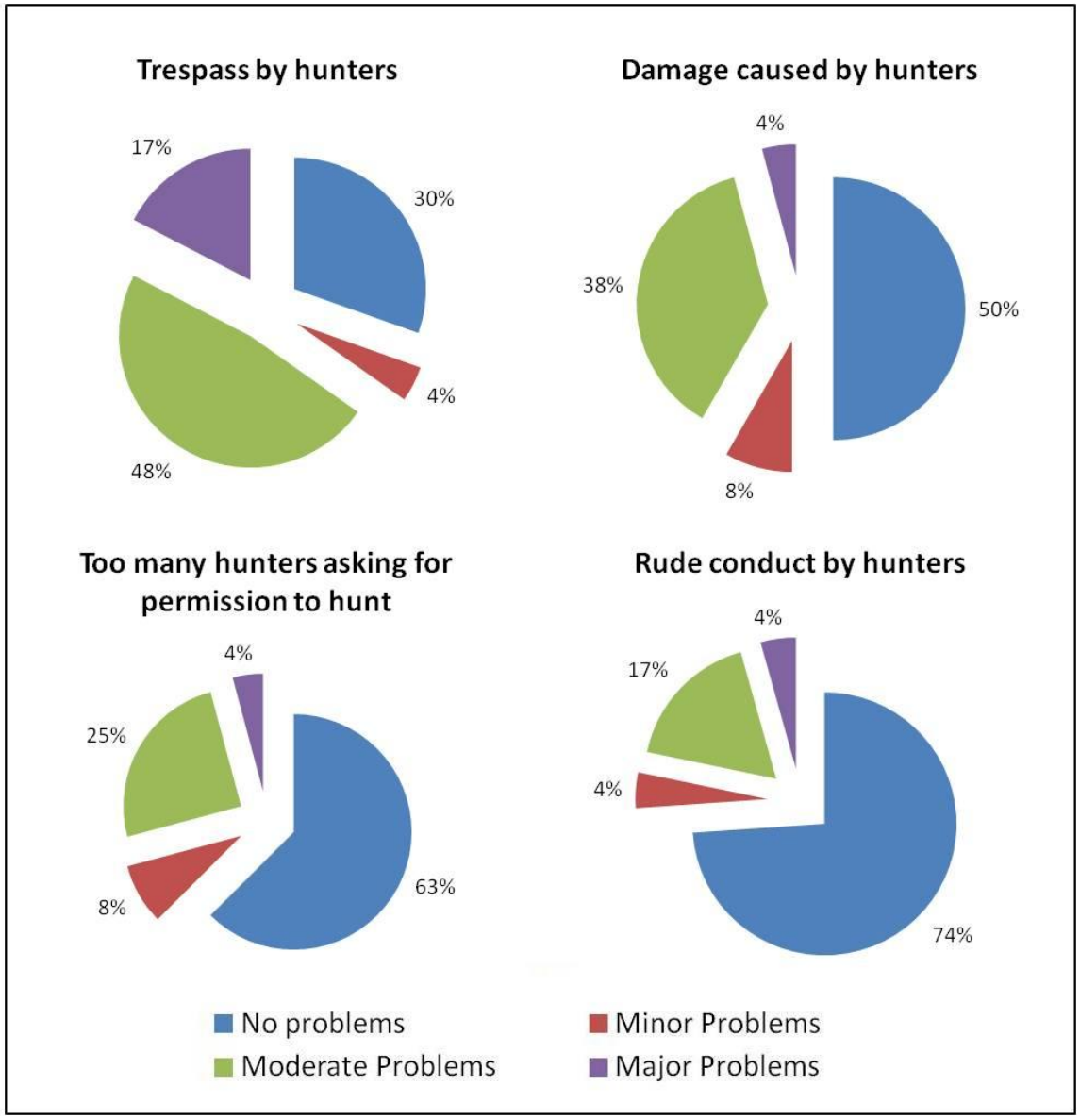

Figure 16. Percentage of landowners who indicated they experienced the listed problems caused by pronghorn hunters in the previous five years.

Management Alternatives Development

Since the DAU is primarily private, we considered the needs of landowners when drafting management alternatives. The majority of landowners surveyed indicated that they would like pronghorn herd size to remain the same as the 2011 levels while hunters preferred an increase in the population size. Landowners also indicated that they were having problems with hunters trespassing and that they would prefer management practices that minimize problems caused by hunters. Many sportsmen and landowners expressed concern that the current density of hunters in the DAU was too high. Both hunters and landowners indicated that the current buck to doe ratio was acceptable.

Based on these results, we proposed three population objective and sex ratio alternatives for consideration. The current modeled population size (as of 2011) was 8,152 and the modeled sex ratio was 38.0 bucks per 100 does.

Post-hunt population objectives

Alternative 1 — 6,000 (5,400-6,600) pronghorn

This alternative represents a 25% reduction in numbers from the current modeled population size. Although the majority of landowners (42%) suggested that the current population of pronghorn in the DAU was acceptable, a high percentage of landowners (38%) indicated that they would prefer the population size to decrease by ≥25%. If adopted, this alternative would require a continuation of current management practices, including a high level of hunting pressure. Under this alternative, sportsmen would continue to have access to a high number of licenses, but as the population declines, their chance of harvesting an animal would also decline.

Alternative 2 — 8,000 (7,200-8,800) pronghorn

This alternative encompasses the current pronghorn population size. Respondents to our landowner survey indicated that they preferred we maintain the current number of pronghorn on the landscape. If adopted, this alternative would allow managers at CPW to take a less aggressive approach to doe harvest in the DAU which should reduce hunting pressure in the DAU. However, the harvest would need to be maintained at a level which prevents the population from increasing which will give sportsmen the opportunity to harvest animals.

Alternative 3—10,000 (9,000-11,000) pronghorn

This alternative encompasses a 25% increase in the numbers from the current modeled population size. While landowners supported an approach that would either maintain or decrease the current population, respondents to our hunter survey indicated that they would like to see the population increase. If this alternative were to be adopted, the CPW would need to reduce the number of licenses in the DAU to allow the herd to grow. This would reduce hunting pressure for private landowners but it would also reduce opportunity for hunters. In the long term, this alternative would create higher potential for pronghorn-caused damage on private land.

Sex ratio objectives

Alternative 1 — 30 (25-35) bucks per 100 does

This alternative would maintain the current sex ratio objective for the population. If adopted, the CPW would have to increase buck licenses proportionally to bring the population closer to objective. In the near term, this would provide more hunting opportunities for sportsmen. However, as the population neared objective, sportsmen would have access to fewer bucks in the population, and thus their opportunity to harvest a buck would also decrease. This management approach was favored by 21% of landowners and 11% of sportsmen who responded to the respective outreach surveys.

Alternative 2 — 40 (35-45) bucks per 100 does

This alternative would represent an increase from the current objective of 30 bucks per 100 does. However, this alternative encompasses the long-term average sex ratio of 38 bucks per 100 does in the population. Under this alternative, the CPW would be able to maintain the current management practices which was favored by the majority of both landowners and sportsmen in our outreach surveys.

Alternative 3 — 50 (45-55) bucks per 100 does

This alternative would increase the current sex ratio objective. To bring the population closer to objective, CPW would have to dramatically decrease buck license numbers. This would reduce the opportunity for sportsmen to obtain a license in the DAU but could eventually result in a higher quality hunting experience since there would be proportionally more bucks in the population. This approach was favored by 29% of landowners and 23% of sportsmen from the respective outreach surveys.

30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Outreach Efforts

After proposing three population and sex ratio alternatives, we finalized a draft DAU plan and used multiple avenues to solicit stakeholder feedback. The draft DAU plan was posted on the CPW website from 22 February 2012 through 22 March 2012. We sent the DAU plan to the State Land Board and pertinent County Commissioners from Elbert, El Paso, Lincoln, Pueblo, and Otero counties. Plans were also sent to landowners who had either routinely discussed pronghorn management with local DWMs or who had expressed an interest in reading the draft during the initial scoping process.

We held public meetings in three locations, La Junta, Walsenburg, and Limon, during the comment period. The meetings were advertised through a press release (Appendix E) and the CPW Insider. Additionally, we held a meeting for landowners in the Double El Soil Conservation District in Simla. The local Nature Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office arranged and provided advertising for that meeting. Seven members of the public attended the La Junta meeting, four attended the Walsenburg meeting, and five attended the Limon meeting. Ten landowners attended the meeting in Simla.

Brief surveys were provided to both individuals who received the draft plan and to meeting attendees. In the survey, we asked stakeholders to describe their interest in pronghorn management (e.g., landowner, hunter, outfitters) and to choose preferred population and sex ratio alternatives. We received a total of 26 surveys (Appendix D). The majority of survey respondents (n=22) identified themselves as landowners or ranchers/owners/operators. Ten of the 22 landowners or rancher/owner/operators also identified themselves as sportsmen/hunters. Two respondents indentified themselves solely as sportsmen/hunters. One county commissioner returned a survey. The remaining individual identified himself as both a business owner and sportsmen/hunter.

Stakeholder Responses

Eleven of 26 (42%) survey respondents selected a population alternative of 6,000 pronghorn (Figure 16). This alternative represents a decrease of 25% from the 2011 estimate of 8,200 pronghorn but would be an increase from the previous population objective of 4,500. Twelve of 26 (46%) survey respondents selected a sex ratio alternative of 30 bucks per 100 does (Figure 17). This alternative would retain the current sex ratio objective for the DAU but would represent a decrease from the current observed buck to doe ratio.

Written feedback received during the 30-day public comment period appears in Appendix D. Written comments were submitted both through email and on the surveys. We also took verbal feedback from stakeholders at the public meetings and over the phone. Many landowners thought that both pronghorn densities and hunting pressure were currently too high in the DAU. Landowners commented that problems with hunters (e.g., trespassing) have been greatly magnified since the CPW increased license numbers in an effort to bring the population to objective. Many individuals were also dissatisfied with the December doe season.

In the draft DAU plan, we reported that a small amount of game damage claims had been filed in the DAU since 2006. Wildlife officers in the DAU also received a very limited number of trespassing calls in the past. Landowners addressed these issues directly and said that the benefits of filing game damage claims or prosecuting trespassers was outweighed by the problems caused pursuing these actions. Landowners cited specific problems with District Attorneys throwing out trespassing cases and hassles associated with filing game damage claims. They expressed frustration with turnover in CPW employees, specifically District Wildlife Managers. Some landowners also felt that PWC meetings were no longer publicized in a way that allowed them to access meeting times and locations.

Landowners offered multiple solutions to their concerns over pronghorn management. Many landowners commented that the CPW needed to encourage doe harvest and thought that offering reduced price doe licenses might help attract doe hunters, especially non-residents. Many landowners also proposed lengthening the regular season and offering multiple licenses to individual sportsmen. They also asked us to pursue management strategies that would provide them with more control over the number of hunters on their properties.

Many sportsmen expressed concern over the recent decrease in both population size and the quality of bucks in the DAU. Hunters reported seeing a drop in population size as well as smaller groups of pronghorn in the unit. They commented that the trophy quality of bucks has decreased in the unit compared to historic levels. Sportsmen asked us to pursue a management strategy that would retain or increase the population size in the unit as well as increase the quality of bucks in the DAU.

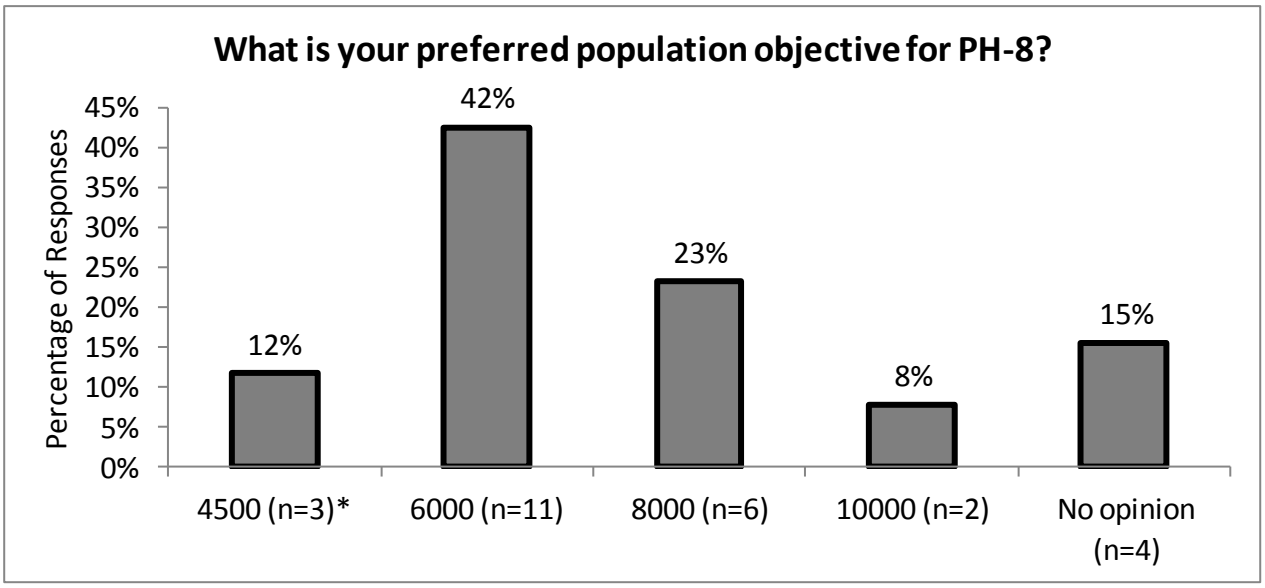

Figure 17. Percentage of responses to the question asking stakeholders which of the three population size alternatives they preferred in the Yoder pronghorn DAU (*Stakeholders were given the option of writing in a different population size objective if none of the three presented were preferred).

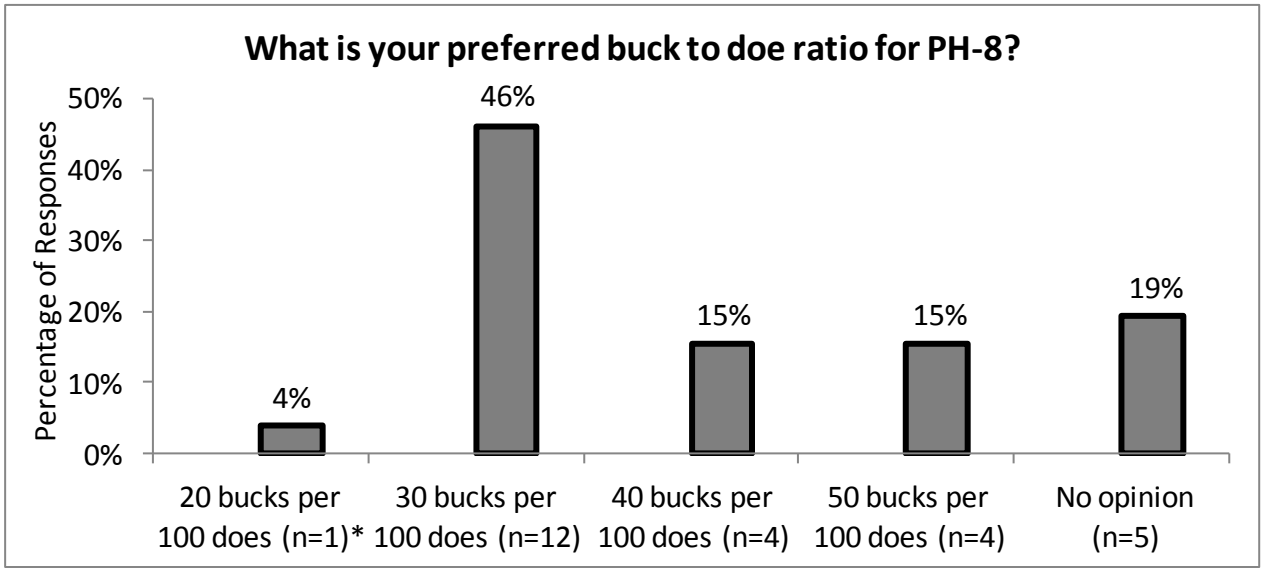

Figure 18. Percentage of responses to the question asking stakeholders which of the three sex ratio alternatives they preferred in the Yoder pronghorn DAU (*Stakeholders were given the option of writing in a different sex ratio objective if none of the three presented were preferred).

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Preferred post-hunt population objective range = 5,400-6,600

We considered feedback from both the outreach surveys and the 30-day comment period when selecting a preferred population objective. Collectively, approximately 50% of landowners indicated that the current number of pronghorn was too high so we chose a preferred alternative that was lower than the 2011 population size estimate. However, the other half of landowners and most hunters preferred a management strategy that would retain or increase the current population size. Therefore, we chose an alternative which represented an increase from the previous population objective.

We will continue current management practices under this alternative, including a high level of hunting pressure, but may seek alternative strategies which 1) target harvest in areas with a high potential for game damage, and 2) reduce the density of hunters in the DAU. We can target areas with game damage by shifting regular and late season licenses to GMUs 111 and 124. These two units have the highest percentage of agriculture in the DAU. We can also issue damage licenses to the specific landowners with pronghorn on their property. Reducing the density of hunters in the DAU while maintaining high levels of harvest might require changes to the current season structure, especially if we were to recommend lengthening or splitting the regular pronghorn rifle season. We could also recommend issuing two carcass tags per hunter. All of these changes would require PWC approval.

Preferred post-hunt sex ratio objective range = 25-35 bucks per 100 does

This alternative maintains the current sex ratio objective for the population but represents a decrease from the current observed sex ratio (41.2 bucks per 100 does). It was favored by a majority of landowners in the DAU. To achieve this objective, in the near term we will maintain the current number of buck licenses in the population while reducing doe licenses. This will continue to provide a high level of buck hunting opportunities for hunters. However, as the population nears objective, hunters will have access to a lower proportion of bucks in the population. We anticipate being able to achieve the sex ratio objective for the population through the allocation of regular season buck licenses.

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APPENDIX A, Hunter Outreach Survey

8 December 2010

Dear Colorado Sportsman,

Pronghorn herds in Colorado are managed at the Data Analysis Unit (DAU) level. The management of each herd is guided by a herd specific management plan called a DAU plan. DAU plans describe herd population and management histories, population objectives and management strategies for a 10 year period. The DAU planning process is the CDOW's method for incorporating the concerns and desires of the public with the biological capabilities of a specific herd. Public input is, therefore, a very important part of the DAU planning process.

Wildlife managers have begun the process of updating the DAU plan for GMUs 110, 111, 118, 119, 123, or 124 (DAU PH-8; see figure below). The CDOW is seeking your input on the future management of this herd. The information you provide through this survey will help the CDOW develop objectives and management strategies for pronghorn in El Paso, Lincoln, Pueblo, and Crowley Counties. Please take a few minutes to fill out this short survey and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

Thank you for your participation.
Sincerely,

Julie R. Stiver
Terrestrial Biologist
Colorado Division of Wildlife
4255 Sinton Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
Phone 719-227-5225

Pronghorn Data Analysis Unit (DAU) PH-8 Hunter Survey
Please mark your responses boxes and return the survey by **January 15, 2011** to:
Colorado Division of Wildlife, Attn, PH-8 Survey, 4255 Sinton Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Part 1 – Background Information

1a. Are you a resident of Colorado? ***(n=269 responses; n=0 skipped question)***
□ Yes ***(96.7%; n=260)*** □ No ***(3.3%; n=9)***

1b. Do you live in the DAU (GMUs 110, 111, 118, 119, 123, 124)? ***(n=269 responses; n=0 skipped question)***
□ Yes ***(39.0%; n=105)*** □ No ***(61.0%; n=164)***

1c. Do you own or lease 40 acres or more of property in the DAU? ***(n=269 responses; n=0 skipped question)***
□ Yes ***(7.1%; n=19)*** □ No ***(92.9%; n=250)***

1d. **(If you answered yes to question 1c)**: How many acres do you own or lease? ***(n=13 responses; n=6 skipped question)***
□ 40-160 acres ***(61.6%; n=8)***
□ 161-640 acres ***(23.1%; n=3)***
□ 641-5000 acres ***(15.4%; n=2)***
□ 5000+ ***(0.0%; n=0)***

1e. What is your zip code? ***(n=269 responses; n=0 skipped question)***

Part 2 – Hunting and Harvest Information

2a. What is your overall satisfaction with hunting in the *DAU*?
(n=269 responses; n=0 skipped question)

□ Excellent ***(20.4%; n=55)***
□ Good ***(43.6%; n=117)***
□ Fair ***(24.9%; n=67)***
□Poor ***(11.2%; n=30)***

2b. Did you draw a pronghorn license in the DAU in 2010?
(n=268 responses; n=1 skipped question)

□ Yes ***(83.8%; n=224)*** □ No ***(16.4%; n=44)***

2c. **(If you answered yes to 2b):** Did you hunt pronghorn in the *DAU* in 2010?
(n=224 responses; n=0 skipped question)

□ Yes ***(95.1%; n=213)*** □ No ***(4.9%; n=11)***

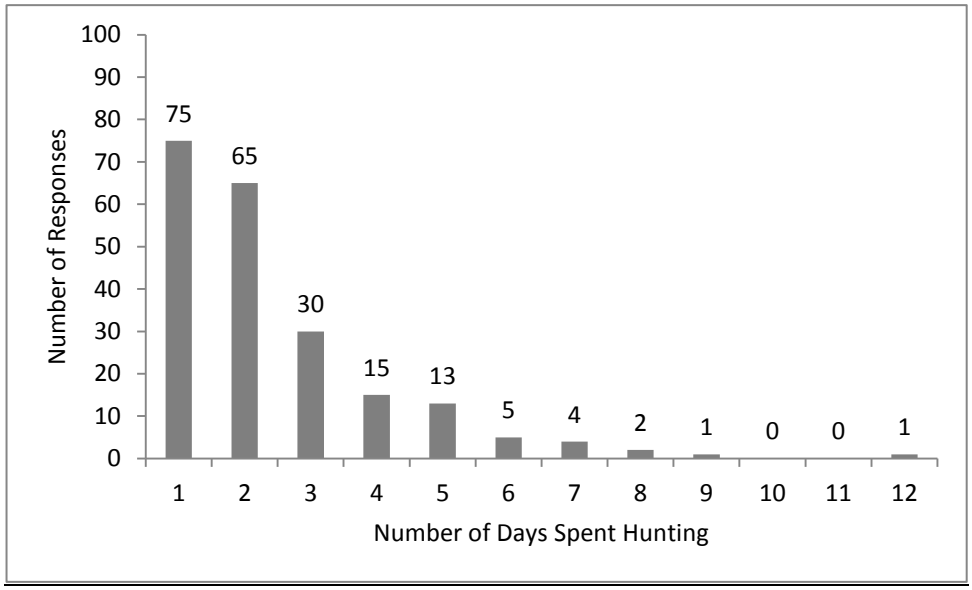
2d. **(If you answered no to 2c):** Why did you <u>not hunt</u> in the *DAU* in 2010 (Check all that apply)? ***(n=11 responses; n=0 skipped question)***

□ Expense ***(0.0%; n=0)***
□ Season conflicted with other obligations ***(63.8%; n=7)***
□ Trouble finding permission to hunt ***(45.5%; n=5)***
□ Other (Please Explain): ***(9.1%; n=1)***
I was out of state during the hunting season.

2e. Which season did you hunt? (check all that apply)? ***(n=214 responses; n=0 skipped question)***

□ Regular Rifle Season Buck ***(36.0%; n=77)***
□ Regular Rifle Season Doe ***(48.3%; n=99)***
□ Muzzleloader Buck ***(2.3%; n=5)***
□ Muzzleloader Doe ***(0.0%; n=0)***
□ Late Doe Rifle Season ***(27.5%; n=59)***

2f. How many days did you hunt in the DAU in 2010? ***(n=211 responses; n=3 skipped question)***



2g. How many pronghorn did you harvest in 2010 in the DAU? ***(n=212 responses; 2 skipped question)***

□ 0 ***(33.5%; n=71)*** □ 1 ***(59.0%; n=125)*** □ 2 ***(7.5%; n=16)***

Part 3 – Population Objective

Population Objective: The Division strives to manage big game populations within both the biological and social carrying capacity of the herd. The biological carrying capacity is the number of animals that can be supported by the available habitat. The social carrying capacity is the number that will be tolerated by the people who are impacted by the herd (hunters, wildlife viewers, landowners). The population objective is to set at a number which attempts to balance these two carrying capacities. Based on a new method of estimating population size initiated in 2008, the PH-8 herd is estimated to be significantly over the current long-term population objective. To bring the PH-8 herd closer to the population objective, the Division has increased the number of regular season licenses and instituted a December doe season. This has translated to an increase in hunting opportunity (in terms of license numbers) available to hunters.

Question 3: Relative to the current number, how would you like the pronghorn herd to change in size in the DAU (GMUs 110, 111, 118, 119, 123, 124)? Check one
(n=267 responses; n=2 skipped question)

 Decrease greatly (over 50% fewer pronghorn) ***(1.5%; n=4)***
 Decrease slightly (25% fewer pronghorn) ***(5.2%; n=14)***
 Stay the same ***(38.0%; n=96)***
 Increase slightly (25% more pronghorn) ***(33.3%; n=89)***
 Increase greatly (over 50% more pronghorn) ***(11.6%; n=31)***
 Don't know/No opinion ***(12.4%; n=33)***

Part 4 – Male:Female (Sex) Ratio Objective

Male:Female Ratio Objective: Pronghorn herds can be managed to maximize buck hunting opportunity (which creates higher number of buck hunters) or to maximize the number of bucks available for hunting (typically less buck hunters afield), or some compromise between the two. If the herd is managed to maximize the quantity of hunting opportunity, more buck hunting licenses are made available and buck hunters will be able to hunt more frequently, with less preference points. However, this results in fewer total bucks in the herd (lower buck:doe ratio). If a heard is managed to maximize the number of bucks, fewer buck licenses are issued in order to increase the number of bucks in the population (higher buck:doe ratio). As a result, buck hunters will have access to a higher number of bucks in the population, but the frequency that hunters are able to hunt bucks decreases and the preference points needed to draw will increase. Therefore a trade-off exists between the number of licenses (amount of opportunity) and the number of bucks available for hunters.

Currently, DAU PH-8 is managed for a 30 buck:100 doe sex ratio objective. In 2010, a minimum of between 0-1 preference points were needed to draw a rifle buck tag, depending on the unit (e.g., 1 PPs to draw a rifle buck license in GMUs 110 & 118, 0 PPs to draw a rifle buck license in GMUs 111, 119, 123, and 124).

Question 4: For the purposes of pronghorn hunting, should PH-8 be managed for? ***(n=267 responses; n=2 skipped question)***

 Increased **quality** of hunting opportunity (higher buck to doe ratio, fewer buck hunters in the field, but more PP needed to draw a buck license). ***(23.2%; n=62)***

 Increased **quantity** of hunting opportunity (lower buck to doe ratio, more buck hunters in the field, and easier to draw buck licenses). ***(10.9%; n=29)***

 Status Quo (ratio of 30:100 is currently providing the right balance between drawing odds and bucks in the field). ***(52.4%; n=140)***

 Don't know/No opinion ***(13.5%; n=36)***

Written Responses to Hunter Outreach Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your responses will assist help us to better manage your wildlife resources. Please provide any additional comments you have in the space provided below.	
1	I took the over the phone survey this year for the 2010 season and they did not ask about how many animals I counted. I saw more coyotes than antelope the first two days. I spend a lot of time out in this area and the animal population seems to be going downhill. I saw no fawns this year, very few young bucks (1-2 year olds). I am not sure how your new method of estimating population size works but the number of animals seems on the decrease. I think you need to develop a different method. I also think you need to stop the December doe hunt. Between the coyotes and the increased number of hunters, the population will disappear in a few more years. There were too many hunters in the field this year. I was out during the rifle season with some hunters with licenses. It was the worst hunting during that season that I've seen in 20 years out there. The number of animals were not there and too many hunters were out. I saw more road hunters and trespassers than I've seen in years.
2	Just harvested my first antelope near the date of my 80th birthday. Great day!
3	The single biggest drawback to harvesting a buck or a doe is the lack of public land to hunt in this DAU. Perhaps additional Land Trust properties or Walk-In access properties would increase the harvest potential.
4	More property needs to be available to the Hunter. State Land should be accessible to hunters without any type of a fee. A lot of the land in these units are owned by the public but it can't be hunted. ie School Trust Land, BLM etc.. These leased land should not include hunting rights it is for cattle ranching.
5	I have hunted on the Thatcher Ranch near Pueblo for many years. There is little/no public access on any of the other ranches in the area. Crowding has become a huge problem on the ranch and the quality of the hunting has steadily decreased. Many years you encounter many, many more hunters than antelope. It has gotten to the point that I would consider not applying for a license rather than dealing with the crowds. Thank you for your consideration.
6	Hi
7	I hunt for the meat.
8	You are doing a great job. Keep up the good work.
9	The most pressing thing about pronghorn hunting in these units is getting permission to hunt from landowners. Every year more and more landowners are leasing hunting rights. I think the DOW should take a more active role in securing hunter permission. The current walk-in program is a joke.
10	It would be nice to have a list of property owners who would allow hunting after contact with the hunter. You wouldn't publish this information just allow access to it if requested by a hunter who has drawn for that area. Thank You

11	I enjoy the numbers of antelope the last 5 years. I have seen more animals each year. Thank you DOW.
12	You folks do great work for all of us in Colorado. Thanks for what you do
13	I would like to see less muzzle loader hunters. They drive around in there pickups and four wheelers sometimes even chasing the game. I feel that muzzle loader hunters lack the drive to hunt. Due to their limited kill range they often try to drive closer to the heard thus in turn scaring the game away. In short muzzle loader hunters put a great deal of stress on the heard and keep them moving. Not to say that some rifle hunters don't do the same thing. Also I would like to point out that the private land owners need to work more with DOW. Before the season opened I did some scouting and found about ten properties to hunt. But just two weeks before the season opened I was called by several land owners saying that I would not be able to hunt their land. Upon hearing this I checked back with the other land owners and they much to my surprise I could only hunt two of the smaller properties out of the ten. Their reasoning for not allowing me to hunt was that they were putting live stock on their property and did not feel comfortable with hunters out on their land. I feel that they did not do themselves or the hunt any justice. Why have this late doe season to control the heard when you cannot hunt the heard. I did not fill my tag due to the above reasons. Where I could hunt there were so many hunters there we were tripping over one another. All the while the herds were on land we could not hunt. I was wondering is there some place that I could go to for a list of property owners that will allow hunting on their grounds? I was unable to attend your class on this hunt due the short notice of the meeting and that it fell on a Tuesday. I feel that the meetings need to be on the weekends when working people can attend. I want to thank you for your time and hope this gives you some insight into what you are trying to do with the pronghorn herds in Eastern Colorado.
14	The seasons needs to be longer. Not only for a better kill Quota. and is the kids have more than 2 days to make a kill. School or hunting, what are most parents going to pick?
15	The DOW is doing a great job in units so near to major population areas. The landowners are reasonable about access if a modicum of respect for property is shown and a little time taken. Overall, I am satisfied with the current status and the changes proposed should have no negative effect.
16	I have hunted in 119 for many years. Too much land is now being set aside for outfitters and the people who pay big bucks to hunt antelope so it is increasingly hard for us to find places to hunt in 119. That is becoming quite a problem, and for other people I know, too.
17	I enjoyed the hunting there were numerous pronghorn where i hunted.
18	I hunt unit 123. Much of this unit is the Chico Basin Ranch that is closed to hunting unless one is willing to pay a large amount. I used to hunt there until the State Land Board bought and most hunters were not allowed. Now I hunt another ranch that recently began to charge $ 350 to hunt. These 2 ranches make up most of the northern half of unit 123 with much of the southern half being the Pueblo Test Center. So much of unit 123 is basically closed to hunting unless one is willing to pay. I don't mind a reasonable trespass fee, I' ve paid $100 dollars to hunt the place that now charges $350, but these 2 ranches charge way to much. Since the Chico Basin is state owned land I would like to see it open to more reasonably priced hunting maybe done on a lottery system.

19	Antelope numbers are down, from recent years, in GMU111.
20	very limited public hunting area in unit 118. Ranchers won't let more hunters on their properties
21	Access to herds is greatly diminishing with the encroachment of residential areas and large areas of corporate-owned range land which does not allow hunting.
22	I have noted signs of poaching on my property. Blood trails/drag trails out of season. Last year pronghorn guts were left. It seems posted signs are removed or destroyed as soon as I put them up.
23	there should be a limited number of outfitters that are allowed to operate in the DAU. I would much rather do my own door knocking and asking for permission to hunt than having to pay an outfitter to hunt a certain property. And having some kind of contact information on the fences of private property would greatly help us hunters come in contact with the property owners to gain permission to hunt and thus reduce the illegal hunting from the road as so many do in the late season. Which is why I did not harvest a late season doe.
24	I have friends that allow us to hunt. This year there was a noticeable decrease in the number of hunters and I actually had fun. Last year there were so many people hunting, I was afraid to take a shot, thinking I might shoot someone. Thank you for allowing me to utilize this wonderful resource in our great state.
25	Lots of animals to see, maybe need some more mature bucks in the area
26	predation is a big problem in these units, the fawn survival rate needs to be addressed.
27	Thanks for a great time hunting in Colorado!
28	In Past years I saw 20 to 40 antelope per day of hunting. This year, I saw 15 total in five days of hunting. The DOW is issuing way too many doe tags.
29	There are always many hunters in the field in this unit. Higher quality of bucks and fewer hunters would be preferred, even if that means drawing less often.
30	Your survey addressed rifle hunting only. I indicated that I harvested 2 pronghorn. 8 days for the archery buck. 1 day for the late season doe.
31	The hunting in this area has gone from numbers of quality bucks and does to scarce and immature animals running for their lives. I believe that the herd was healthier and larger at around 2004 and 2005. Gradually, since 2004, it seems that the hunter numbers have increased tremendously (with reckless shots being made every year); and the herd has diminished dramatically. Especially with the very limited amount of public land in the DAU(Turkey Track STL) and close proximity to a large city, this area must be managed for the quality hunting it can provide.
32	I have hunted area 118 and 123 on the Bohart Ranch every year for at least the past 15 years. We used to see herds of 10, 12, 20 Antelope every year. We don't see them anymore. We see groups of 2 to 5. This was only the second year I have not tagged out. It just seems the Antelope have declined on this ranch over the years.

33	Trying to get more info on these hunts after I picked up a left over doe tag was extremely poor. DOW office gave me numbers to both officers in the area. Jeremy Huntingon tried to be helpful, but did not have any info on properties that would allow access. Aaron Flohrs would never return my call after 2 messages were left on his cell number. I wanted to hunt south of Hwy 94 and needed info for that area. The only antelope I saw for the late season was on Tuesday of a group of 40 does. They were over 400 yards and by the time I found out you owned the property they were long gone.
34	I understand the setting of season dates must accommodate all interested parties, landowners, other seasons etc. The taking of does would be increased if the season were slightly earlier so it would proceed the rut. Current season is usually right in the middle of the rut and bucks have pestered the does so badly they can be almost impossible to approach within a reasonable range .Have hunted same area for over 40 years and since the season was moved to it's current time frame it has gotten really tough to take a doe.
35	Would like to see more access for non-landowners. Difficult to find public land to hunt in this area. Thanks
36	DOW has trapped numerous antelope off of land within units 124 and 123 I think this has greatly diminished the hunting experience within unit 124, I have been hunting this unit for over 30 years and the last five are the poorest both in the number of antelope seen and the quality of bucks. The quality of bucks has diminished greatly over the last 15 years with bucks living within the boundaries of the US Test Track (unhuntable) the only bucks old enough to grow sizeable horns. I believe that the herds in units 123 and 124 should be managed separately.
37	Need to show/tell land owners that they do not own the pronghorn. Somehow need to get access to more land. Landowners only see dollar signs when it comes to the animals on their land
38	Pronghorn population seems to be decreasing ever year to the point that I may start applying elsewhere.
39	The pronghorn population is way down in the units I hunted in, 110,118,119.I believe tags should be reduced, especially for doe in these units.
40	We need more landowners to allow hunting on their property.
41	Once again, the lack of public hunter access to private land hunting opportunities is the most disturbing trend with regards to antelope hunting in these GMUs. Wyoming has a very successful program in this regard. Thank you.
42	hunters owning 100 acres or more should draw we they tear up or fences & tear up are crops
43	Need fewer buck hunters, but more doe hunters. PILES of does, lots of little bucks, few big bucks in many places.
44	Hunted the Nature Conservancy property (old Smith Ranch) in 119 late doe season. Saw quite a few does but not many bucks. Great hunt.

45	during the late season hunt most of the animals were on state trust land where the lease would not allow hunting. This is public owned land that should be available to hunting. Because the DOW interactive maps show that the winter concentration of antelope are in these state trust lands it seems that the DOW has found a way to collect more revenue without impacting the herd size. Very little herd management is happening in this season. I spent over $125 just for gas trying to find a ranch that had antelope and would allow hunting. I will not apply for a late season tag again until the antelope are encouraged to graze in areas where hunting is allowed.
46	I like it the way it is. We always see a good balance between bucks & does and I have been successful on both.
47	Cancel the late doe season
48	Eliminate the late season
49	I believe there should be something done about access to the large tracts of state land or any other tracts of land that farmers or ranchers lease from any government agency. Access to state or federal lands should not be controlled by a private business. Pay-to-hunt is especially abhorrent on government lands. The average income worker is being pushed out of the ability to hunt.
50	My son and I have hunted the Thatcher Ranch in GMU 123 for over 25 years. We have been advised that they will be closing the ranch down to public hunting access beginning in 2011 and they have applied to the RFW program to solicit high dollar pay hunters looking for trophy animals. My concerns with this are the high number of doe and young buck pronghorn in that unit which will not be harvested as pay hunters are looking for trophy bucks. This could and very well might affect your future management strategies with doe populations with the increase of doe pronghorn in GMU 123. Other than that, CDOW in conjunction with John Thatcher, the ranch owner, have done an excellent job of managing the pronghorn numbers in 123 to levels that have accommodated the active big game hunters in that unit. Thanks you.
51	Private property is the single biggest reason that I rate hunting in the DAU as fair. Without access granted by acquaintances, hunting would be nearly impossible.
52	I did not hunt rifle season, but had to give a answer. I hunted archery and there was no season to pick from.
53	The DOW needs to publish a list of ranchers who will let hunters on their property to hunt Pronghorns. Maybe the DOW can work with the state cattleman's Ass. to acquire a list of ranches, points of contact and phone numbers.
54	did not get to hunt it this year
55	unable to hunt due to time constraints late season doe and lack of available ground and antelope to pursue
56	I felt that there was not enough public land for the amount of hunters in these units! I refused to shoot even if I would of seen any game because I would of be too scared to hit a hunter.

57	The last two seasons we have seen more bucks than does on the ranch we hunt on in unit 124. Both in 2009 and 2010 there were doe hunters in our camp that did not fill their tags. This is highly unusual and makes me wonder if too many does have been killed in 124 over the past three or four seasons. Thanks
58	All private land and too many people with access so all that was done is road hunting making the animals very wary.
59	I have hunted in the southern part of 118 & the northern part of 123 for the past 13 years. It seems to me that in this limited area the numbers of pronghorns (both bucks and does) has decreased in the last 3 or 4 years. I have no scientific data to support this observation. It just seems we see fewer animals than in the past.
60	Increased hunter access to spread out hunters, if possible.
61	I don't know where you get your stats but! I've hunted 118 for more than 10 years and the population in that area is so, so ,so down compared to just 4 years ago- I would say 80%
62	1st year hunting pronghorn. A lot of private property in area 119. Hard to get access to hunt. Walk in access area's?
63	units 110 and 118 have a much lower number of antelope than several years ago. as for the late season the antelope migrate to state trust lands that have limited or no hunting available. the interactive map that shows the winter concentrations are almost exclusively State trust lands where no hunting is NOT allowed- Brett Grey ranch(old Smith ranch,) 80,000acres, Bohart and Chico basin ranches50-60,k acres, a large ranch in crowley Co. that charges 5-800 dollars for a trespass fee for doe antelope
64	I have hunted antelope in unit 111 since 1978, there has always been antelope to hunt but many years it is after the regular season that the herds really migrate into the area. the weather dictates their moving south. Many times at the normal season herds are small and scattered and in the weeks immediately following they gather in bigger numbers and cause damage to the wheat fields. I think the late season is a very good idea but to get the most good out of it maybe add buck tags during that season and maybe extending it over two weekends as the numbers of antelope are greater and concentrated and maybe by allowing for more animals taken would help control herd size and damage done. It would also help to spread the numbers out and ease landowner worry's and complaints. The antelope do not eat a lot but their hooves being smaller and sharp work as little spades cutting the roots of the plants, also when they travel across the fields in great numbers and at fast speeds they cause damage resulting in wind erosion. I do not want to see them completely gone but when the numbers in the herds get too big landowners would like to see them gone and the herd also suffers with lack of food they need to make needed energy from- a dry year the wheat does not grow enough and a year with lots of snow they are unable to get to much of it and competition for the little they can get to is severe. I would hate to see it become like the areas north of Craig which have a lot of winter killed animals. The green winter wheat is their best choice of food that they can easily digest and get the energy to live in the cold with. It is hard to manage these herds as they migrate a lot, some years due to snow they can move many miles from where they spent the summer. They are a very interesting animal to watch and get to know, I hunt them on foot and the only other animal that I have hunted that elicits as much adrenaline for me is elk. To be without them would be a terrible tragedy but as the agricultural economy continues to decline the friction with farmers and ranchers with

	escalate and I feel the greatest loser in that would be the antelope. Thank you for your continued hard work in managing our native wildlife.
65	need more public access
66	I have been hunting in GMU 119 since 1995. I have harvested an Antelope, buck and doe, every year except for three years. This year, 2010, I noticed something very different then other years. I noticed many more small bucks then does. Usually I see herds of 8-15 does together with a big buck and a 1-2 smaller ones. This year I saw groups of 3-4 does with 2-3 small bucks, with the small bucks running the does like crazy. I don't know if this information is helpful in trying to determine tags, but I thought I would mention it.
67	If possible, it would be good to patrol a little more to reduce the ridiculous amount of road hunters that have no respect for private property.
68	There seems to be a lack of public land, especially in GMU 110. I'm not familiar with the other GMUs in this region, but not much good hunting in 110 due to the lack of public land.
69	Really need more public access. The Turkey Track Ranch area is overwhelmed with hunters. Private land access is hard to find and very expensive. I won't hunt this DAU again until more access is available.
70	The entire point system needs to be revamped. The way it works now is not managed equitably.
71	I would like to see more public hunting land available around Colorado Springs. As of now the only land that is close is the turkey tract state land trust for antelope hunting. I would like to see the division of wildlife put more effort and resources into the Colorado Springs area. It would go a long way to have the big game access program moved into these units. Thank You.
72	There are plenty of antelope in area 119 but I would like to see more walk in access with cooperation of the landowners.
73	Very hard to get permission to hunt on private land. Very little public land available
74	Unit 124 seems to have good numbers of pronghorn over the years. Doe tags are usually easy to draw each year (good), and a buck tag can always be drawn in two years. This is very good hunting opportunity!
75	I usually hunt in GMU 118, as stated I did not hunt this year because the ranch where I have hunted and had requested permission did not have a December hunt. Is there some information available that gives names of persons allowing hunting on their property?
76	The December hunt was worthless. Hunted 102K acres with no pronghorn. They were herded up and the herd was not seen for 4 days of hunting.
77	The hunting right now is great. I would do nothing at this time
78	most pronghorn on private land with no access or pay to hunt.
79	Late season is not nearly as productive as Oct season
80	open more state trust land to hunting
81	Make a list of land owners willing to allow hunters on their land available to hunters that draw a tag.
82	I found that there wasn't a lot of public land to hunt and when we asked for permission on private land we were denied.

83	I believe that the number of Pronghorn available to hunt in GMU 110 has been well managed, and I personally don't see a reason to change it. That said, I obviously don't have all of the data that you at the DOW have. I am pleased with the way you have managed 110 and 111 in the past, and hope to continue to be able to hunt these areas with reasonable opportunities to harvest an animal. (I appreciate you folks -- a lot!)
84	I found it difficult because there was a resident in the DAU who was buying the hunting rights from the surrounding property owners. This person was generating a "business" and commercializing hunting on his "property." I highly doubt he was reporting this income to the State of Colorado or the IRS. None-the-less, I will no longer be hunting Pronghorn in the State of Colorado and will be traveling to Wyoming.
85	The number of antelope in Unit 111, over the past 15-20 years, this year included, has been only adequate. I would not consider the unit to have great numbers of antelope. It definitely has many, many more than unit 112, which has been declining in numbers.
86	The area we hunted was in GMU-124 was very satisfied with the hunt.(Just leftover does)We really like the antelope meat.

APPENDIX B, Lincoln Co. Farm Bureau Meeting

Memo

To: Brian Dreher and Cory Chick

From: Julie Stiver

CC: Warren Cummings, Dan Skinner

Date: 9/3/2011

Re: 9/1/2011 Meeting with Lincoln Co. Farm Bureau

Warren Cummings, Dan Skinner and I meet with 14 members of the Lincoln Co. Farm Bureau on 1 September 2011 in Limon to discuss pronghorn management in Lincoln County. The intention of this meeting was to provide the Farm Bureau with information about DAU planning and to receive input on pronghorn management from the Farm Bureau as part of the Scoping process for the DAU plans up for revision. I gave an informational presentation on the DAU planning process, current pronghorn population status, and recent management changes in the Yoder and Hugo pronghorn DAUs. Warren, Dan and I then took comments and had an open discussion regarding pronghorn management and pronghorn hunters in the County. The Farm Bureau members in attendance indicated that they own, lease, or manage properties in GMUs 120, 121, 119, 112, 113, 114.

We received the following comments from the Farm Bureau Members:

- They would like to see the season extended to two weekends or to have two seasons because there is too much hunting pressure, especially on the opening day, during the current 7 day season. The landowners who are willing to allow hunting access currently can't accommodate the number of hunters asking for permission. This is especially true since we have increased licenses in SE Colorado.

- They mentioned the volume of hunters is problematic.

- One member asked why he has to pay the $10 fee for the habitat stamp when he buys a license since he is providing habitat for the pronghorn on his land. He would like to be compensated for providing habitat, possibly through the return of the habitat stamp fees paid by hunters who purchase his vouchers.
    - Other members argued that might be tricky since the landowners would be expected to maintain pronghorn on their property in exchange for habitat stamp fees. They suggested that the landowner would have no recourse if pronghorn caused damage to the property in question.
    - The members eventually agreed that they were looking for some level of compensation for the habitat they provide to pronghorn and the damage to their property caused the animals.
    - They specifically mentioned damage to fences and hay crops

- The members believe the total acres available to public hunters has recently declined because new landowners are purchasing properties and leasing the property to outfitters or prohibiting hunting access altogether.
    - With the recent increase in hunting licenses, this problem has been exacerbated because the density of hunters on the limited number of properties available for hunting has dramatically increased

- The members discussed the behavior of outfitters at length
    - They indicated that the behavior of outfitters was far worse than the behavior of the general hunting public. They believe outfitters are driving fences along properties that they lease during the season and thus preventing the animals from cross into neighboring properties where hunting is allowed. The members also believe that the outfitters are too savvy to be caught engaging in this behavior, because Warren has to cover such a large area.
    - They also indicated that they believe outfitters are unwilling to allow doe harvest on lease properties during the regular rifle season because it could impact the success of the paying hunters
    - They believe that a doe-only season in October would be more effective than the current late December season because the does will be easier to hunt.

- They would like to see changes in the landowner voucher program that would allow them to have more control over the sportsmen who ask permission to hunt on their property.
    - They believe they would be more successful at helping us achieve our goals if they could provide vouchers to hunters who they know and trust

- They generally feel that the pronghorn population is down, especially since we instituted a late doe season.

- They are seeing fewer fawns this year than in previous years.

- They generally indicated that the pronghorn population is still too high.

- We discussed the option of providing multiple licenses to one hunter.

I provided the members with a copy of the Landowner Survey and asked them to fill out the survey at their leisure so I could have their written comments. Warren and I also encouraged them to write a letter expressing their ideas and concerns to me on Farm Bureau letterhead so I could include the letter in the DAU plan. We were invited back to future meetings.

APPENDIX C, Landowner Outreach Survey

25 June 2011

Dear Landowner/Operator:

Wildlife managers at the Colorado Division of Wildlife are updating three pronghorn herd management plans in the following eastern plains hunting units (Game Management Units or GMUs): 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 118, 119, 123, 124, 129, 133, 134, 135, 140, 141, 142, and 147. These GMUs include all or part of the following counties in southeastern Colorado: Elbert, El Paso, Pueblo, Huerfano, Las Animas, Crowley, Otero, Lincoln, Cheyenne, and Kit Carson (see map on back). As a landowner and/or agricultural producer in this area, the CDOW is seeking your input on the future management of these herds. The information you provide through this survey will influence pronghorn management strategies and objectives in the area.

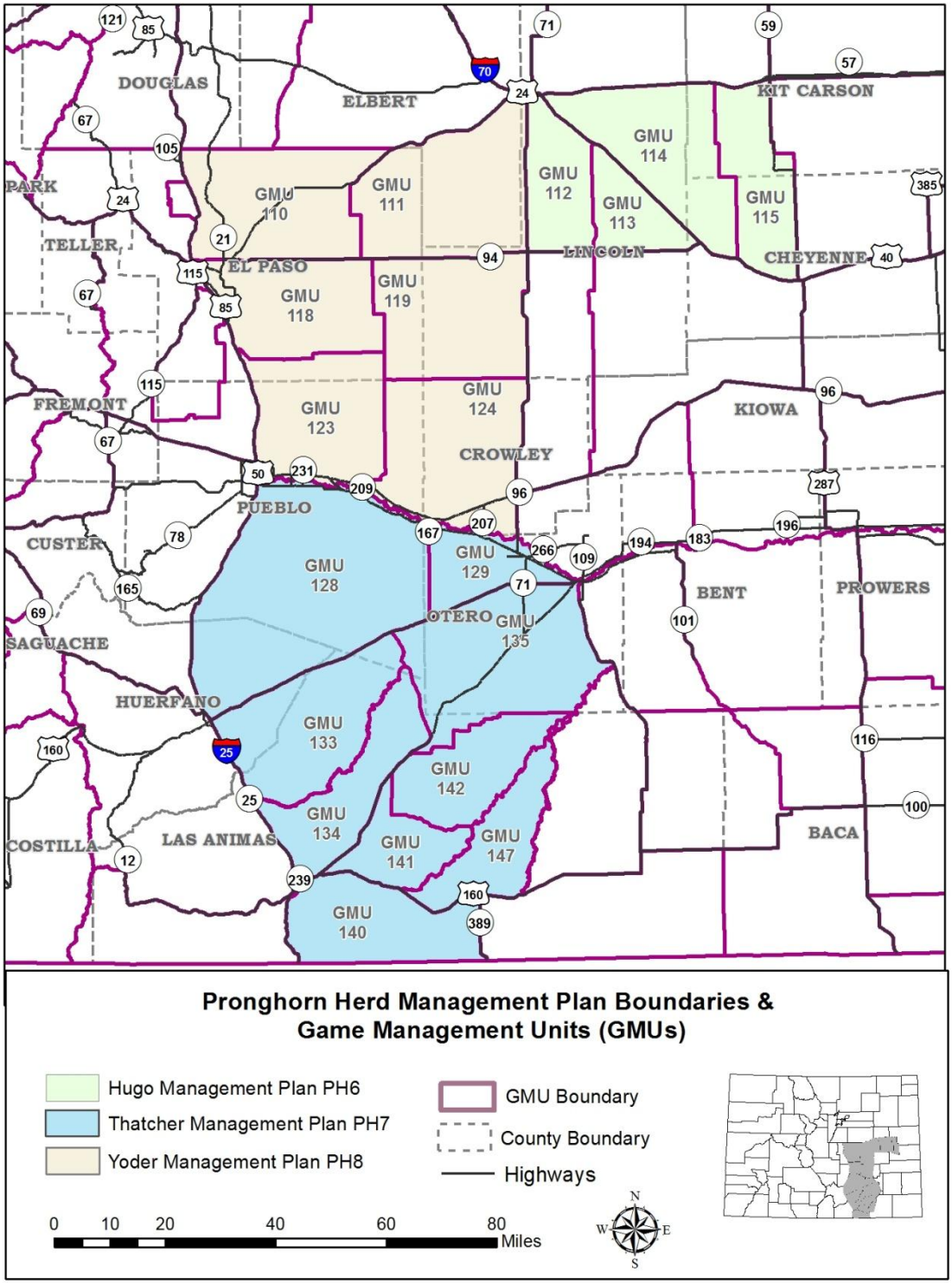
Please take a few minutes to fill out this short survey and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Your responses are private and will not be associated with your name or address in published reports. While your response to this questionnaire and any of the questions is completely voluntary, you can help us effectively manage pronghorn and pronghorn hunting in Colorado by sharing your experience and views. You may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact feel free to contact us.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Julie R. Stiver
4255 Sinton Rd
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
Julie.Stiver@state.co.us
719.227.5225

Allen Vitt
600 Pueblo Reservoir Rd.
Pueblo, CO 81005
Allen.Vitt@state.co.us
719.561.5306


DOUGLAS
ELBERT
KIT CARSON
PARK
TELLER
EL PASO
LINCOLN
CHEYENNE
FREMONT
CROWLEY
KIOWA
PUEBLO
CUSTER
BENT
PROWERS
SAGUACHE
OTERO
HUERFANO
COSTILLA
LAS ANIMAS
BACA
GMU 110
GMU 111
GMU 112
GMU 113
GMU 114
GMU 115
GMU 118
GMU 119
GMU 123
GMU 124
GMU 128
GMU 129
GMU 133
GMU 134
GMU 135
GMU 140
GMU 141
GMU 142
GMU 147
Pronghorn Herd Management Plan Boundaries &
Game Management Units (GMUs)
Hugo Management Plan PH6
Thatcher Management Plan PH7
Yoder Management Plan PH8
GMU Boundary
County Boundary
Highways
0 10 20 40 60 80
Miles
N
W
E
S

Pronghorn Herd Management Plan Landowner Survey

Please note: Questions are printed on both sides of each page
*Return the survey by **July 25, 2011** to:*
Colorado Division of Wildlife, Attn: Pronghorn Survey, 4255 Sinton Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Part 1: Background Information

The Colorado Division of Wildlife will be updating three different pronghorn management plans (see enclosed map). The Division would like to know the general location of your property so we can assign your responses to the appropriate management plan. Each plan includes a separate grouping of Game Management Units (GMUs), which are listed below:

1. Hugo PH6 management plan GMUs: 112, 113, 114, 115
2. Yoder PH8 management plan GMUs: 110, 111, 118, 119, 123, 124
3. Thatcher PH7 management plan GMUs: 128, 129, 133, 134, 135, 140, 141, 142, 147

1. In which county(ies) is your property located? (Check all that apply)

☐ Cheyenne	☐ Crowley ***(n=3)***	☐ El Paso ***(n=8)***	☐ Elbert ***(n=10)***
☐ Huerfano	☐ Kit Carson	☐ Las Animas	☐ Lincoln ***(n=5)***
☐ Otero	☐ Pueblo ***(n=4)***	☐ Other (please specify)_____	

2. If you own/manage property in HUGO PH6, please indicate in which GMU your property is located. (Check all that apply; see green area in enclosed map)

☐ GMU 112	☐ GMU 113
☐ GMU 114	☐ GMU 115

☐ I DO NOT own/operate property within the boundaries of the Hugo Management Plan PH6

3. If you own/manage property in YODER PH8, please indicate in which GMU your property is located (check all that apply; see tan area in enclosed map).

☐ GMU 110 ***(n=5)***	☐ GMU 111 ***(n=13)***	☐ GMU 118 ***(n=0)***
☐ GMU 119 ***(n=3)***	☐ GMU 123 ***(n=3)***	☐ GMU 124 ***(n=4)***

☐ I DO NOT own/operate property within the boundaries of the Yoder Management Plan PH8

4. If you own/manage property in THATCHER PH7, please indicate in which GMU your property is located (check all that apply; see blue area in enclosed map).

☐ GMU 128	☐ GMU 129	☐ GMU 133

☐ GMU 134 ☐ GMU 135 ☐ GMU 140
☐ GMU 141 ☐ GMU 142 ☐ GMU 147
☐ I DO NOT own/operate property within the boundaries of the Thatcher Management Plan PH7

5. How many acres of land do you own, lease or manage?

☐ <160 acres ***(n=0)*** ☐ 160-1000 acres ***(n=7)*** ☐ 1001-5000 acres ***(n=13)*** ☐ >5000 acres ***(n=5)***

Part 2. Management Objectives

Population Objective
The Division strives to manage pronghorn populations within the social carrying capacity of the herd. The social carrying capacity is the number that will be tolerated by the people who are impacted by the herd (hunters, wildlife viewers, landowners). The social carrying capacity is often below the number of animals that can be supported by the available habitat. A population objective is set at the herd's social carrying capacity. When populations are above the population objective, the Division increases hunting license numbers (primarily female licenses) to bring the population closer to objective through increased harvest. This translates to more hunters in the field. When populations are below objective, the CDOW can decrease the number of hunting licenses to allow the population to increase.

6. How would you like the number of pronghorn in Game Management Units (GMUs) which include your property(ies) to change?

I would like the pronghorn herd size to:

Decrease by more than 50%	Decrease by 1-50%	Same the same	Increase by 1-50%	Increase by more than 50%	No Opinion
5	***4***	***10***	***2***	***3***	***0***

Buck Objective
Decisions about how many and what type of pronghorn hunting permits to issue are included in the pronghorn management plan. Permits can be issued in a way that maximizes either the number of buck hunting licenses, the number of bucks available to hunters, or some compromise between the two. In general, a decrease in the number of buck hunting licenses could make buck permits more difficult to draw but may limit competition and interference among hunters and increase buck harvest rates. Conversely,

an increase in the number of buck hunting licenses could make buck licenses easier to draw but could increase competition among hunters and decrease buck harvest rates.

7. Which of the following general strategies should CDOW use to guide decisions about <u>how many buck pronghorn permits to issue</u> in the Game Management Unit(s) which include your property?

☐ Increase the number of buck pronghorn hunting permits (easier to draw a license, more hunters in the field) ***(n=7)***

☐ Decrease the number of buck pronghorn hunting permits (harder to draw a license, fewer hunters in the field) ***(n=5)***

☐ Maintain the current number of buck pronghorn hunting permits ***(n=11)***

☐ No opinion ***(n=1)***

Part 3. Hunting and Damage

8. Have you hunted pronghorn in Colorado in the last five years?

☐ Yes → *Please answer questions 9 & 10* ***(n=7)***

☐ No → *Skip to question 11* ***(n=16)***

☐ I prefer not to answer this question → *Skip to question 11****(n=2)***

9. Out of the last 5 years, how many years did you hunt for pronghorn?

☐ 1 of 5 years ***(n=3)***	☐ 2 of 5 years ***(n=0)***	☐ 3 of 5 years ***(n=0)***	☐ 4 of 5 years ***(n=0)***	☐ 5 of 5 years ***(n=4)***

10. How did you obtain your license(s)? (Check all that apply)

☐ On a regular draw license ***(n=2)***

☐ On a landowner voucher for the property I own or manage ***(n=4)***

☐ On a landowner voucher for another property ***(n=1)***

☐ Family only landowner license ***(n=0)***

11. Do you lease your property to outfitters?

- ☐ YES ***(n=4)***
- ☐ NO ***(n=21)***

12. Whom did you allow to hunt pronghorn on land you control in the last 5 years? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ No one ***(n=2)***
- ☐ Family, friends, and neighbors ***(n=17)***
- ☐ Public hunters who paid no access fee ***(n=8)***
- ☐ Hunters or outfitters who have leased the land or paid an access fee ***(n=5)***

13. Have you changed hunter access to your property in the last 5 years?

- ☐ No change in hunter access ***(n=12)***
- ☐ I allow MORE hunters access to my property ***(n=8)***
- ☐ I allow FEWER hunters access to my property ***(n=4)***
- ☐ I have CLOSED my property to hunters ***(n=1)***

14. If you had any problems with pronghorn hunters on your property in the last 5 years, please rate the level at which you experienced the following problems.

	NO PROBLEMS	MINOR PROBLEMS	MODERATE PROBLEMS	MAJOR PROBLEMS
TOO MANY hunters asking for permission to hunt	15	2	6	1
TRESPASS by pronghorn hunters on your property	7	1	11	4
DAMAGE to your property by pronghorn hunters	12	2	9	1
RUDE CONDUCT by pronghorn hunters on your property	17	1	4	1
OTHER problems with pronghorn hunters on your property	19	0	1	1

Comments:

-Severe poaching problem- even out of season. dead carcasses with horns removed and one doe left to rot. locks cut off pasture gates by poachers (and shot off). neighbors report "shining" from road at night into my pastures. neighbors reported ctually seeing poachers in the pasture, shot antelope, load in truck and drive out my pasture gate! All reported to DOW and now the poachers have been caught. Thanks Jeromy and Aaron!

-Fences down

-Hunters that spend the whole weekend just driving around looking for an opportunity to hunt without permission, is a problem. Or they come and ask on that day, to hunt.

-Damage: My tenant had one cow killed by hunters last year. It was the result of neighbor leasing land to hunters who were extremely irresponsible.

-OTHER: Hunters from adjacent property chasing antelope.

15. How would you like to see the number of pronghorn HUNTERS change in the Game Management Unit(s) which include your property?

☐ Decrease ***(n=4)***	☐ Stay the same ***(n=13)***	☐ Increase ***(n=6)***	☐ No opinion ***(n=1)***

16. Have pronghorn caused damage to your crops or other property in the last 5 years?

☐ YES, slight damage→ *Please answer questions 17 & 18* ***(n=6)***

☐ YES, moderate damage→ *Please answer questions 17 & 18* ***(n=6)***

☐ YES, severe damage→ *Please answer questions 17 & 18* ***(n=3)***

☐ NO→ *Skip to question 19* ***(n=10)***

17. When does the majority of damage occur?

☐ Spring ***(n=2)***	☐ Summer ***(n=6)***	☐ Fall ***(n=3)***	☐ Winter ***(n=3)***

18. What type of crops/land did pronghorn cause damage to on your property? (Check all that apply)

☐ Winter Wheat ***(n=4)***	☐ Corn ***(n=0)***	☐ Alfalfa/Hay ***(n=4)***	☐ Fences ***(n=11)***	☐ Pasture land ***(n=6)***
☐ Other (please specify): ***(n=4) (2=sunflowers, 1=bindweed, 1=overgrazing)***				

Hunting licenses are the primary tool available to the CPW for managing pronghorn numbers. For landowners, this creates a potential tradeoff between the number of pronghorn on their property and hunting pressure on or around their property. As pronghorn numbers increase, the potential for crop damage is higher. To lower the number of pronghorn, the CPW typically increases the number hunting permits (primarily for females) available, which increases the number of hunters in the field.

19. For the purposes of pronghorn management in the Game Management Unit(s) which include your property, what is your preference?

☐ Limit the NUMBER of pronghorn HUNTERS (more pronghorn, fewer hunters) ***(n=10)***

☐ Limit the amount DAMAGE to your property caused by PRONGHORN (fewer pronghorn, more hunters) ***(n=3)***

☐ The current numbers of hunters and pronghorn in the GMU(s) are acceptable ***(n=8)***

☐ No opinion ***(n=3)***

Part 4. Additional Comments

20. How did you hear about this survey?

☐ Colorado Cattlemen's Association

☐ Colorado Farm Bureau ***(n=1)***

☐ CPW postcard ***(n=24)***

☐ CPW employee

☐ Family, friends or neighbors

☐ Other (please specify):

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input is very valuable to us and will help us better manage your wildlife resources. Please feel free to leave us ***additional comments on the back of this page*** *regarding pronghorn management or pronghorn hunters.*

Please leave any addition comments in the space below:

Written Responses to Landowner Outreach Survey

1	At some point more hunters are counterproductive, too many ruins everyone's hunt. DOW has allowed some second license, more of this needs to be allowed. Out of state hunters should not pay the out of state fee on the second license. Out of state pronghorn should not be as high as out of state deer.
2	I feel landowners should get more permits. The landowners can then control who is on his property and at what time of the season. The general season should be somewhat longer. A landowner with more than 1500 acres who regularly hunts or allows hunting should get a license. If he chooses to use it or give it away, at least he has the opportunity to hunt. My landowner draw is usually one out of three apps, and the draw is almost always a doe. I have one hunter who only wants to kill does because he thinks they eat better. My hunting pressure is usually 5-10 people and they almost always hunt different times. If the season was longer I could safely accommodate a few more hunters. The highest kill in the past 5 years was 12. If I can be of further assistance, feel free to contact me.
3	I think it would be good to have two seasons or an extended season for antelope so the hunters would not be so concentrated and have a better chance for success.
4	I think that DOW has a long ways to go to get rid of 90% of the pronghorn in this part of Colorado. DOW wants that land owners to let them graze on them and does very little to help compensate for the damage they do. Colorado has a noxious weed program and if they would control the pronghorn it would the best. Instead of spraying for weeds. I know this is on old man's opinion but a lot of the land owner's feel the same way as I do in this area.
5	I would like to see more landowners get involved in the program and allow more hunters, especially kids, be able to hunt pronghorn on their property. If there were some other benefits/incentives, I believe they would join in as well.
6	Is there a special license for landowners to reduce pronghorn herds?
7	The herds need to be reduced but an increase in hunters is a problem also. Maybe an idea of offering 2 or more licenses to one hunter. Then the hunters that we know and can trust, can do more hunting.
8	We have had great success with pronghorn hunters, most are a very thankful. We have now starting charging to hunt and will limit the number of hunters on our property. In the past we average 60-70 hunters on our property. After meeting with the Landowner Committee in Denver and DOW staff we were given the impression that we should not be offering free access and should start charging. This year we will be charging a fee and have turned some of the property to a guide. We image this will drop the number of hunters on our property to 25-30. The number of pronghorns on our property will increase 3-5 times, if not more, from November through March. If the season was later the harvest would be greater on our property.

9	We have noted quite a substantial decrease in antelope numbers on our property. Some folks like the antelope; others don't. They don't seem to bother us much (we just have grazing land). We don't hunt antelope on our property, but we DO hunt deer. Notably- we have some turkey and recently have seen evidence of elk. We prefer not to allow pronghorn hunting on our property as their numbers are declining. Thanks!
10	We would like to see more consistency in what hunters receive licenses; i.e., we have certain hunters whom we expect each year and it is a burden to have new hunters show up and want to hunt and we are not familiar with them. We would like our regular hunters to be given preference.

APPENDIX D. Responses received during 30-day Public Comment Period (February-March 2012)

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

1. Please describe your interest in eastern plains pronghorn management (check all that apply) ***(n=26 surveys received)***

□ Landowner ***(n=20)***	□ Rancher/Farmer or Operator ***(n=17)***	□ Interested Citizen ***(n=7)***
□ Sportsmen/Hunter ***(n=12)***	□ County Commissioner ***(n=1)***	□ Other ***(n=0)***
□ Business Owner ***(n=5)***	□ Outfitter/Guide ***(n=1)***	

2. Based on the alternatives presented in the draft DAU plans, please mark your preferred POPULATION OBJECTIVE for each DAU:

Yoder PH-8		
□	6,000 (5,400-6,600)	***n=11***
□	8,000 (7,200-8,800)	***n=6***
□	10,000 (9,000-11,000)	***n=2***
□	Other ***4,500***	***n=2***
□	No opinion	***n=4***

3. Based on the alternatives presented in the draft DAU plans, please mark your preferred BUCK to DOE Ratio OBJECTIVE for each DAU:

Yoder PH-8		
□	40 bucks per 100 does (35-45)	***n=4***
□	30 bucks per 100 does (25-35)	***n=12***
□	50 bucks per 100 does (45-55)	***n=4***
□	Other ***20***	***n=1***
□	No opinion	***n=5***

Written Comments

1	I think the herds in my area of the Yoder PH8 area are dropping. We use to have several doe antelope fawn on our property, but in the last 3 years, no pronghorn have been born. Overall quality is down with no older class animals, so trophy bucks are difficult to find. Overall herd size is down compared to 10 years ago. I think less hunting pressure is needed plus the December hunting, or late doe season is hurting the population in my area. I would like to see better quality and more herds, I'm not sure what the best way to go about making it happen.
2	1) Multiple licenses is a good idea. 2) 2 separate seasons, possibly 2 consecutive weekends.
3	I have hunted GMU 111 for 12 years. I have seen fewer animals now that I did then. The quality of bucks is poor. I realize it is a challenge to satisfy all people. I miss walking into a valley and seeing 50 antelope. We have been hunting does in December and have decided as a family not to do that hunt. This past Dec. we took 3 does that all had twins.
4	Target the problem areas more.
5	From the data it seems that harvest numbers need to increase to control numbers of animals for habitat conditions. In 2010, with herd numbers at 8854, only 20.66% were harvested. By the next crop of fawns, numbers should have re-gained or surpassed 2010 numbers. NOTHING HAS BEEN GAINED!! Why not have more hunting seasons, as is done with elk? DOW has allowed that species to be hunted from mid-August thru the end of January in some areas to control numbers. Landowners would then be able to allow more hunters onto their property - giving more hunters the opportunity to hunt. Also, consider selling over the counter licenses for some antelope areas.
6	In our area just north of Simla, there are entirely too many for the land available to them. The herds seem to have grown tremendously in this area!! Hunters are not a problem for us, as we only allow certain ones to hunt our land, and they must follow our guidelines- walking in, cleaning up, not disturbing our cattle, etc.
7	Change season structure 2 weekend hunt.
8	My family and I have been hunting Pronghorns in areas 118 and / or 123 (depending how we draw) for many years. I feel the antelope populations have dropped off considerably over the past few years. Just 3 or 4 years ago it was not uncommon for us to see large groups of 10 to 15 pronghorns while we were hunting, but for the past few years we feel lucky to see groups of 4 or 5. Something changed and it's not for the better. We have still been successful for the most part, but it has taken more hunting days and many more shoe leather express miles to experience that success. Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against walking and hunting hard, but the thought of the populations dropping any lower troubles me.

9	Thanks for a copy of the proposed plan. I think that a number of good points were raised and that the season needs to be longer to accomodate the hunters. One weekend is not enough to facilitate the number of hunters coming out. I would suggest a longer season for the public. I would also suggest that the number of licenses NOT be decreased in these units (119 and 123) because there is not a shortage of pronghorns in these units. My family probably has 800 animals on the ranch and try to harvest between 18-20 bucks each year. In 2011 17 bucks were taken in the first 3 days of the hunt and all the hunters were quite happy. I have tried to get Travis Black to include the property in the Big Game Management unit for 3 years now but he has said the money just isnt there. Inclusion of the ranch in that plan would certainly open up more ground for the public. there also needs to be more rifle deer permits allocated for these units. We have bucks dying of old age out here and cant get the tags to harvest them. As you know we try to sell our big game tags as it is a vital part of our ranching operation. If we cant get the tags it will force us to turn to the companies that seem to know how to get the tags for the seasons and thus further restrict the public from access Thanks again for the opportunity to comment on the pronghorn license process and please allow more landowner tags.
10	I mentioned last night that development is affecting habitat in the Yoder DAU. That development is a larger issue than the report states. In the last 20-30 years it has moved much further east than Falcon and Ellicott. It now extends to Lincoln Co. Rd 2 in Lincoln and Elbert counties in large numbers. This development means that pronghorn numbers a concentrated in larger numbers on the other landowners. The distribution issues with in the DAU are a result of these development trends. The report should reflect this. The Yoder DAU Plan mentions some small game damage awards. Please be aware that: 1. Landowners that charge access fees can't receive game damage. 2. Trying to collect game damage is a real hassle for landowners and not worth the effort. 3. Right now there are 500 pronghorn on 160 acres of wheat. The Yoder DAU discusses lack of hunter property access and non-participation by landowners in the survey. Both of these issues are the result of poor management by DOW over many years. When a land owner has a problem that he/she takes to the District Wildlife Manager nothing happens. The turn over rate with game wardens makes the problem worse, chances are you never see the same one twice. When the landowner takes the problem to the wildlife commission he/she is quickly told that the issue won't be handled here, it must be taken through the proper channels. Frustration sets in, the landowners only recourse is to withdraw from the system. That means denying access to hunters and ignoring surveys. The DOW's continued policy of the hunter always being first continues to make this worse. Let me give you an example. A couple of years ago the number of licenses was doubled in this DAU. Trespass and road hunters came out of the bushes, not a wildlife manager in sight. They had set up a game checkpoint at Punkin Center at 6:00 am. Eight or nine of them spent to whole day there. I know because the stopped all of the neighbors on the way to my daughters wedding. Most of the hunters learned about the check point before they shot their first pronghorn, they took a different route home.

	One biological fact Julie, “a full coyote is a sign of a healthy ecosystem”.
11	Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the draft plan for the antelope in the Yoder area. I have hunted that area for over 20 years and have never had a bad day. I think a major concern of the landowners is that notification comes on the day of the hunt if the road hunters see the antelope in the field. If I was to pick an alternative it would be to maintain the current numbers. The landowners always have an issue with road hunters and damage to gates and fences when they run the antelope. As far as specific comments given by the survey there is some concern about the amount of State Land that is off limits. My comment on that is that most of the State Land lease holders do allow for hunting on their property and they do it by lottery. First come first serve. The Bohart usually allows 50 to 70 hunters per year on the ranch and up until the last several years most of those individuals have been successful. I believe the drought has impacted the numbers. If it rains in the spring as normally happens the antelope are there. If it doesn’t rain they move elsewhere. On your map for figure 6 showing land ownership you indicated that a portion of the Brett Gray in Lincoln County is land trust property. TNC has given that property to the SLB for an easement on the ranch so you could color all of that area as blue for the SLB ownership. On Page 7 where you discuss the herd management history the paragraph near the bottom might include some information on the recent drought impact on both the antelope and the other animals in the area. Just a suggestion since the drought seems to have had an impact on the successful birth rate of the fawns. On page 11 your chart seems to indicate that even though the hunters complain about access the success rate is fairly high. That seems to indicate that some hunters complain about access but it is not a significant complaint based on the success rate for the hunters. Most of those not getting animals probably are road hunters who have not previously obtained permission. The last paragraph on page 13 indicates that the fawn to doe ratio’s are down from previous years. It might be a good idea to mention that drought may have something to do with this rate. The hunter complaints concerning access issues is troubling. Most of the hunters I encounter have no problem getting access if they would only contact landowners when they apply for the licenses. Bohart, Thatcher’s, and the other large land owners are more than willing to allow hunters on the place if they treat the property as requested. Many of those that complain were probably kicked off for traveling in areas that the rancher indicated they did not want them in. I have been on Thatcher’s ranch during antelope season and the IL road is busier than hwy 50 with road hunters. I think one of the reason that this ranch closed access was due to that problem where hunters did not respect the rights of the land owner. SLB lease holders have specific responsibilities and the insurance requirements that the state needs has raised some serious liability concerns for them so they naturally shy away

	from hunters they are not familiar with. There has been a significant push for ranchers to develop additional revenue sources from hunting so I think that has had some impact on fees charged by hunters. It has also limited the amount of land that hunters have access to. Overall, I like the proposal and would vote to keep the antelope numbers the same. Your charts and graphs seem to indicate that the population is slowing approaching the desired animal numbers. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.
12	I am a non-resident landowner (I have been out-of-state a number of years, but grew up in Colorado- lived there for 25 years). Being out-of state causes some problem with lack of control of hunter access. However, my tenant does a good job of controlling hunters. I do feel that the landowner control of hunting could be better controlled if that owner had more control of the number of licenses issued to him through the landowner application program. Most landowners allow hunting until the bad hunter spoils the situation either by disregard for the property, or poor hunting practices. Also, if you once allow hunting, everyone thinks its ok to go on your property, and then you have a problem. Leasing to "sportsman clubs" is also a poor choice because some of the worst hunters are found in the "club" because of their hunting practices. The only way they can hunt is by joining these "clubs". I really don't know how the hunting/access situation can really be solved. I am a hunter and have been since I could carry a gun. I enjoy the sport and believe others should too. I often wonder if charging a fee is the answer. Once you do, the hunter feels he has more privilege than he really does. Someone you allow to hunt without charge is more apt to be careful. But, once you have a careless hunter the gate for all hunters is closed. That is the reason I don't allow bear hunting. I feel the game wardens do a <u>really good job</u>, with little credit from the public. Your management plans look to be in line and should be helpful to all. Thank you.
13	My son and I have enjoyed the Antelope hunting in S.E. Colorado. Totally because of DOW's BGMU access. Licenses and have been always available over the last 6 years via 2, 3 choices or leftover. All in recognition of the BGMU effort of the DOW. Without BGMU access we would not be able to hunt due to access permission. The antelope population is stable for hunting just land access is the limiter. Once the herds move to private land any harvest effort are a zero. Please continue to promote and support the BGMU program.
14	I bow hunt Antelope in the southeast and the numbers of Antelope have dropped over the last 6 years to a point I am trying to decide if it is worth hunting Antelope at all. I have been telling myself that it is because of the drought but there does not seem to be a lot of concern on the CPW side. (I know this is not P but we get that from talking to Allen) I understand that there is landowner pressure to reduce what they think is competition for the grass but these same landowners want more tags that they can sell or sell trespassing rights. I tried the walk in access properties last year because I knew the hunting was going

	to be slim where I hunt. It was also slim on these properties if I seen an Antelope at all while walking the properties. Then again maybe the Antelope do not go to these properties until the rifle season I do not know. The information that is available on these properties was supplied by rifle hunters. It was the first year and I may need to give it a second try. I have some friends that hunt around Agilar and the rancher told them that there are no Antelope to hunt this year and he is stopping all Antelope hunting for a few years and may not ever open it back up if things do not change. They have harvested several nice Antelope a year for many years but 2 years ago they only harvested one and last year they harvested zero Antelope. I understand to increase herd numbers there would have to be tighter limits on tags and that currently Archery tags are unlimited. I do not know how big of a impact archers have and I would hate to see these tags be limited but I do understand if we want any Antelope hunting it have to be that way. I would like to see rifle doe hunting stopped or greatly reduce before that happens.
15	As someone who has hunted SE Colorado and whose grandparents and other relatives have lived in La Junta, I am an interested party to these meetings. However, I am unable to attend any of these meetings. Will the results of these meetings be posted somewhere on your website? Thanks for your help and I wish you and your staff great success in your efforts to maintain this wonderful animal and its habitat. My family and I love the high desert prairie.

APPENDIX E. Press release for southeastern Colorado pronghorn management meetings.

News from Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Contact Name: Michael Seraphin
Contact Phone: 719.227.5211

SE COLORADO PRONGHORN MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - Do you think there too many or too few pronghorn in southeast Colorado? Colorado Parks and Wildlife biologists want to know. To find out, the agency is holding public meetings about pronghorn population management in Limon, Walsenburg and La Junta.

Specifically, biologists would like public input about the pronghorn populations in portions of Cheyenne, Elbert, El Paso, Huerfano, Kit Carson, Las Animas, Lincoln, Otero and Pueblo counties.

The following three pronghorn management plans will be discussed: Data Analysis Units (DAU) PH-6, which includes Game Management Units (GMU) 112, 113, 114 and 115; DAU PH-7, which includes GMUs 128, 129, 133, 134, 135, 140, 141, 142 and 147; and DAU PH-8 which includes GMUs 110, 111,118, 119, 123 and 124.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife would like input from landowners, livestock operators, hunters, homeowners and recreationists to assist in formulating the 10-year pronghorn management plans. The discussion will focus on controlling pronghorn population through hunting.

To aid the public in discussion, several management alternatives will be presented at the public meetings. The alternatives generally include increasing or decreasing overall herd size and male-female ratios, they also may include a status quo option. The benefits and drawbacks to each alternative will be presented at the meetings.

The meetings will be held in the following locations:
February 21, 6 p.m.
La Junta Senior Center
114 East 2nd St.

La Junta, CO.

February 23, 6 p.m.
Lathrop State Park Visitor's Center
70 County Road 502
Walsenburg, CO

March 2, 6 p.m.
Limon Community Center
477 D Ave.
Limon, CO

If you cannot attend these meetings but would like to provide input about pronghorn management in these areas, you may contact Julie Stiver, CPW biologist in Colorado Springs at 719-227-5225 or julie.stiver@state.co.us; or Allen Vitt, CPW biologist in Pueblo at 719-561-5306 or allen.vitt@state.co.us.

For more information on pronghorn in Colorado, visit our species profile page at: http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/Profiles/Mammals/Pages/Pronghorn.aspx.

To learn more about pronghorn hunting in Colorado, please see our Big Game Regulations at: http://wildlife.state.co.us/RulesRegs/RegulationsBrochures/Pages/BigGame.aspx .

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

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

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