



Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Sheridan Region February 2015 Newsletter



Sheridan Region

Regional Wildlife Supervisor:

Joe Gilbert

Regional Fisheries Supervisor:

Paul Mavrakis

Office Managers:

Lori Roe
Kathy Boyles

Shared position:

Wendy Balkenbush
Stephanie Bomar

Game Wardens:

Dayton: Dustin Shorma
Sheridan: Bruce Scigliano
Buffalo: Jim Seeman
Kaycee: Grant Gerharter
N. Gillette: Jackie Otto
S. Gillette: Dustin Kirsch
Moorcroft: J.D. Davis
Investigator: Scott Adell

Public Information Specialist:

Bud Stewart

Wildlife Biologists :

Wildlife Management Coordinator:
Lynn Jahnke
Sheridan: Tim Thomas
Buffalo: Dan Thiele
Gillette: Erika Peckham
Terrestrial Habitat: Todd Caltrider

PLPW Program Coordinator:

Troy Tobiasson

Fish Biologists:

Bill Bradshaw
Andrew Nikirk
Aquatic Habitat: Travis Cundy

Habitat and Access Coordinator:

Seth Roseberry

Aquatic Invasive Species:

Greg Downey

Story Fish Hatchery:

Superintendent: Steve Diekema
Senior Fish Culturist: Jared Smith
Culturist: Jennifer Meineke

Sheridan Bird Farm:

Coordinator: Darrell Meineke
Biologist: Nate Brown
Technician: Kurt Heiser

Determining Quality of Wildlife Winter Forage

Kaycee Game Warden Grant Gerharter and Terrestrial Habitat Biologist Todd Caltrider collected samples of leaders from sagebrush and curl-leaf mountain mahogany in the Upper Powder River Mule Deer Herd Unit. Leaders are the current year's growth on shrub species. They are the most palatable part of the shrub and are highly sought after by many wildlife species due to their high protein content. Leaders are an important part of the winter diet of mule deer, pronghorn, and sage grouse.

The collected samples were sent to Colorado State University for analyses. This information will provide the WGFD with some baseline information on the nutritional levels of different shrub species important to mule deer in the herd unit. In addition, this data will help guide WGFD in choosing different habitat treatments to best benefit mule deer.



Terrestrial Habitat Biologist Todd Caltrider collecting sagebrush leaders on the Mesa northwest of Kaycee



Sheridan Region Monthly Newsletter

February 2015

Fin Clipping Allows for Fish Identification Later



Story Hatchery Superintendent Steve Diekema (on left) and Sheridan Regional Fisheries Supervisor Paul Mavrakis fin clipping lake trout that will be stocked into Park Reservoir.



The adipose fin is clipped off a fingerling lake trout. The fin will not grow back so the fish can be identified during fisheries surveys for several years after it is stocked.

The Sheridan Fish Management Crew helped Story Fish Hatchery personnel mark 5,000 lake trout by removing the adipose fin. The fin clipped lake trout will be stocked in Park Reservoir during the summer of 2015. They are being stocked to thin out the very abundant white suckers in the reservoir and hopefully improve stocked trout growth and condition. These fish were fin clipped so they can be identified during fisheries surveys that will be conducted in future years. When the surveys are conducted the number of marked (stocked) fish will be compared to the unmarked (naturally reproduced in the lake) fish to determine the contribution of the stocked fish to the lake trout population of Park Reservoir. This comparison will allow fish managers to adjust stocking rates so a healthy population of lake trout can be maintained in the reservoir.

Game Wardens Check Keyhole Tournament Anglers

Moorcroft Game Warden John Davis and South Gillette Game Warden Dustin Kirsch checked ice anglers participating in the 2015 Pine Haven Chamber of Commerce Ice Fishing Derby that was held February 7th and 8th. The contest was well attended and most anglers caught fish. Fishing regulation compliance was higher this year than in 2014 when several anglers were cited for no names on their ice fishing lines. This year, citations were written for unattended lines, culling fish and having an over limit of crappie.

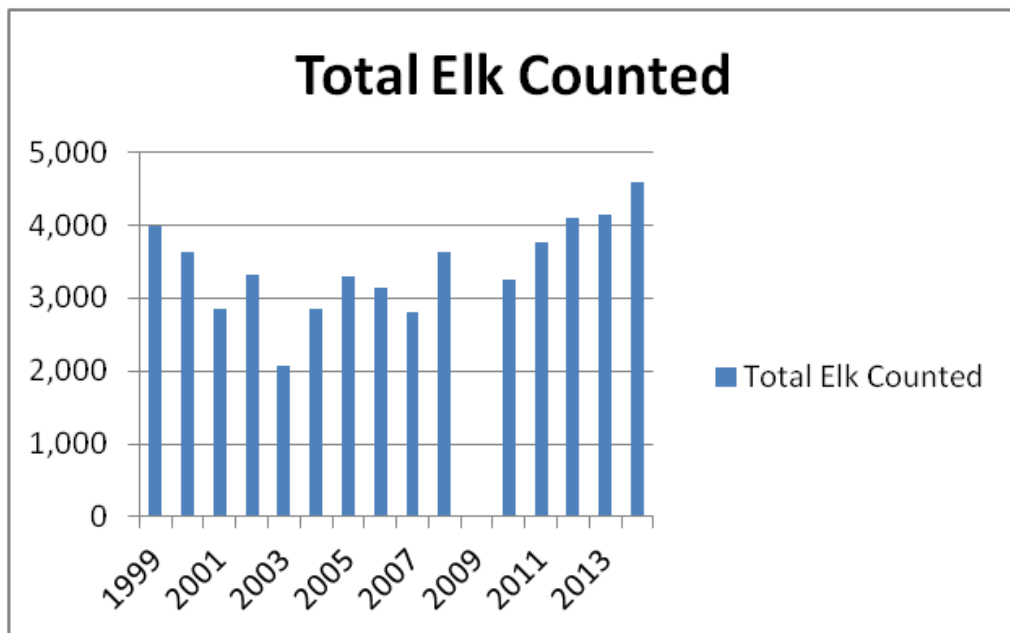


Sheridan Region Monthly Newsletter

February 2015

Trend Counts in the Buffalo-Kaycee Elk Hunt Areas

Buffalo Wildlife Biologist Dan Thiele conducted post hunting season elk trend counts in the Buffalo and Kaycee elk hunt areas. During the trend counts a total of 4,587 elk were observed. Thiele counted 1,437 elk in Hunt Area 33, 1,222 elk in Hunt Area 34, 926 elk in Hunt Area 35 and 1,002 elk in Hunt Area 36. The total number of elk counted after the 2014 hunting season was 444 higher than after the 2013 hunting season when 4,143 elk were counted. There were increased numbers of elk observed in Hunt Areas 33, 34 and 36. The winter count data will be used to develop 2015 hunting season recommendations.



Graph of post hunting season elk trend counts from 1999–2014 in elk Hunt Areas 33, 34, 35 and 36.



A herd of elk in Hunt Area 33 using a salt station.



A herd of elk wintering in Hunt Area 35 near Bald Mountain west of Buffalo.



Sheridan Region Monthly Newsletter

February 2015

North Bighorn Mule Deer Summit

In early February, game wardens and wildlife biologists from the Sheridan and Cody Regions met at Bear Lodge near Burgess Junction for the first "Bighorn Mountain Mule Deer Summit". Participating were Sheridan Wildlife Biologist Tim Thomas and Greybull Wildlife Biologist Leslie Schreiber, along with Dayton Game Warden Dustin Shorma, Sheridan Game Warden Bruce Scigliano, Lovell Game Warden James Hobbs, Greybull Game Warden Bill Robertson and Worland Game Warden Matt Lentsch. They were joined by Sheridan Regional I & E Specialist Bud Stewart, who assisted by keeping notes.



The Mule Deer Summit was convened to discuss mule deer management in the northern portion of the Bighorn Mountains, primarily the North Bighorn Mule Deer Herd Unit (Hunt Areas 24, 25, 27, 28, 50 - 53). There have been concerns expressed by both resident and nonresident hunters in recent years about the quality and quantity of mule deer, primarily on national forest lands.

During a spirited discussion led by Thomas, managers identified a wide variety of concerns and discussed potential options. This group will likely be meeting again over the next couple years in an effort to address constituent's concerns regarding mule deer management in the northern Bighorn Mountains.

Sheridan Region Personnel Teach Hunter Education Classes



PLPW Coordinator Troy Tobiasson teaching a Hunter Education class in Kaycee.

Private Lands Public Wildlife Coordinator Troy Tobiasson and Kaycee Game Warden Grant Gerharter taught a Hunter Education class at the Kaycee School. Fifteen students and several parents attended the class. All 15 students were certified.

South Gillette Game Warden Dustin Kirsch, North Gillette Game Warden Jackie Otto, Moorcroft Game Warden John Davis, Gillette Wildlife Biologist Erika Peckham and Terrestrial Habitat Biologist Todd Caltrider combined to teach a Hunter Education class the third week of February. The class successfully certified all 32 students in attendance during the class.