

MULE DEER WORKING GROUP DIRECTORS REPORT
2022 Mid-winter WAFWA Virtual Meeting
January 8, 2022



Chair – Jim Heffelfinger, Arizona Game and Fish Department

New News

- Welcome to new member Toby Boudreau (ID) who returns to the MDWG after several years
- Our next [MDWG](#) meeting will be at the [Western Hunting and Conservation Expo](#) February 9, 2022 in Room 251 in the Salt Palace.

Fact Sheet Status

MDWG has prepared a fact sheet on the use of trail cameras and the final draft was sent to you all in December to review. We are asking for final approval of that fact sheet at this mid-winter meeting. We are working on additional fact sheets on topics like: Role of Hunters in Managing CWD, Economic Contributions of Mule Deer, Buck Hunting and Deer Abundance, and Technology and Management.

Range-wide Guidelines for Seeding Mule Deer and Black-tailed Deer Habitat

This document is complete in final draft form and ready for approval at this meeting. It has been reviewed by MDWG and other external experts. This is going to be a great resource for on-the-ground managers to provide the best science on mule deer habitat seeding projects. It includes an appendix with lists of preferred forage plants in each of the 7 ecoregions of North America. This will be published as a PDF with links to other useful resources and posted on the WAFWA website and shared via email. We will be discussing whether this document would be useful in professionally printed hardcopy. We will also be discussing the distribution of this document to get it in the hands of practitioners. After sending this to directors in December, we received a few minor comments to improve the draft. The authors addressed those comments and the edits made to the last version directors saw are provided in a separate document associated with the business meeting. The changes were helpful, but easily addressed at the last minute. We are asking that this document, as revised, be approved with the approval of this MDWG report.

2021 Deer/Elk Workshop

After debate and delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic the preparations for an in-person Deer and Elk Workshop (DEW) were converted to an all-virtual format held August 3-4, 2021. Delaney Meeting and Event Management was hired to oversee the virtual alignment and took care of setting up the WHOVA platform to run the Zoom presentations and allow for participant interaction. The DEW planning committee at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife hosted a great two-day event that included a virtual poster session. Attendance was high with 354 attendees from 23 states and 4 provinces. Aside from a free t-shirt shipped directly to participants and some prizes, there were no other costs besides Delaney and WHOVA. More than \$14,000 was raised and delivered to WAFWA to support future Deer and Elk Workshops. The Plenary Session was titled: *Integrating Nutrition into Deer and Elk Management: Why, What, and How?* It included speakers considered to be the nation's leading experts: Tom Stephenson, Charles DeYoung, Mark Hurley, Rachel Cook, and Mike Wisdom. A business meeting at the Workshop was held to discuss reporting requirements of the 2021 workshop and to plan for the host of the 2023 DEW. Arizona volunteered to host the 2023 meeting. The target date is mid-late May 2023 for the meeting. Workshop

leads will be the new Big Game Management Supervisor and Jim Heffelfinger. Congratulations to California for doing a great job organizing this workshop under difficult circumstances.

O. C. Wallmo Award and Excellence in Elk Country Award

The *O. C. Wallmo* and *Excellence in Elk Country* awards were presented during an open forum Zoom session at the Deer and Elk Workshop. Recipients Kevin Monteith (*O. C. Wallmo*) and Ian Tator (*Excellence in Elk Country*) addressed the virtual attendees live. We had very good candidates for the Awards which made for a hard decision among committee members to select a winner. Sara Holm and Julie Garcia will co-chair the 2023 *O. C. Wallmo Award Committee*. The RMEF *Excellence in Elk Country Award* selection process is handled by RMEF to select and present this award.

2021 Range-wide Status of Black-tailed and Mule deer

Just a reminder that this document is available on the WAFWA website:

https://wafwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021-Rangewide-Status-of-Black-tailed-and-Mule-Deer_Linked.pdf

Upcoming Meeting and Ongoing Projects

At the upcoming meeting in February, we will be discussing:

- Additional fact sheets
- Videos for use on social media based on our fact sheet messages
- Updates from MDF and the National Deer Association
- MDF's Mule Deer Summit
- Distribution and publication of mule deer seeding guidance document if approved
- Proceedings publication from 2019 & 2021 Deer and Elk Workshop and posting on website
- Brainstorm ideas for 2023 Deer and Elk Workshop
- Additional *O. C. Wallmo Award* bronzes
- Data storage and use
- CWD roundtable updates
- Mule Deer Book Update
- MDWG content on future MDF podcasts
- Corridor Mapping Team and SO3362 Update