

Introduction to Deer and Elk Workshop Special Issue - Part 2

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The Mule Deer Working Group (MDWG) was established by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (WAFWA) president and directors in 1997 to address concerns about a long-term decline in mule deer numbers at the time. The MDWG is made up of a representative from each of 24 western state, provincial, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies in North America. MDWG representatives have technical expertise and oversight of matters involving black-tailed and mule deer within their respective jurisdictions. The group reports directly to the WAFWA board of directors. Since the time of the MDWG's inception, the group has been successfully addressing concerns shared among wildlife agencies in western North America. The working group's Statement of Purpose is:

1. Develop and refine strategies to conserve black-tailed and mule deer populations and their habitat throughout western North America;
2. Improve communication and collaboration among black-tailed and mule deer biologists throughout the West;
3. Provide research and management information to stakeholders that fosters collaborative conservation;
4. Provide a forum of experts to respond to information needs from wildlife and habitat management agency administration.

With a collaborative approach, the MDWG has produced multiple publications and products to provide biologists with useful information to aid in black-tailed and mule deer management. The working group also produced materials to help inform the public about issues that affect deer and their habitat. This ecoregional and range-wide approach to mule deer conservation allows natural resource administrators to make science-based decisions and provide up-to-date and accurate information to their stakeholders. All these materials are available online at www.muledeerworkinggroup.com.