

COMMUNITY MEETING

Monday, Nov. 9, 7:00 PM, Livermore Community Hall

What is happening to the deer population in the Laramie Foothills?



Photo Credit: Bruce Gill

Many people who live in the Livermore area are concerned that they don't seem to see many mule deer in areas where deer were historically abundant. A new research project by Colorado State University will determine where the deer population is headed and how chronic wasting disease (CWD) is influencing population growth. The success of this project will depend on a partnership between Colorado State and the people of the Laramie Foothills community. We are seeking your support and participation.

New research by Colorado State University: Colorado State University is beginning a five-year study of the deer population in the Laramie Foothills. The study, sponsored by the United States National Science Foundation, seeks to improve our basic, scientific understanding of the dynamics of deer populations infected with CWD. The project will determine if the population is growing or declining. Researchers will seek to understand how CWD influences population growth relative to other factors like hunting and predation. During January 2010 we plan to capture deer, determine if they have CWD, and fit them with radio telemetry collars. We will track these collars throughout the year to determine when animals die and the cause of death. During 2011-2014 we plan to recapture deer each winter to learn which animals became infected and why.

How do we capture deer? We will trap deer in nets shot from a helicopter. Deer will be blindfolded, hobbled, and slung to nearby sites where we will collect samples and fit them with radio collars. The entire process generally takes less than 30 minutes for each deer. Almost all of the captured deer will be adult females. Our capture procedures have been reviewed and approved by the Colorado State University Animal Care and Use Committee to assure these procedures are safe and humane. Deer may also be captured using drop nets, which are like a small tent that is dropped over a group of deer that have been drawn to a site using bait.

Where will we capture deer? We are now choosing study sites. We work only in areas where landowners give us specific, written permission to come onto their land.

How will this project affect the deer? We will contract with trained experts to capture deer. These contractors are professionals with extensive experience capturing deer in a way that is safe and humane. Although trapping animals involves some risk to them, we will not deliberately harm or kill any deer as part of the research.



Photo Credit: Eric Bergman, Colorado Division of Wildlife

How can you get involved? The Colorado State research team seeks a partnership with the citizens of the Laramie Foothills to assure this project is a success and that it provides information valuable to the community. The success of this project depends on our ability to track and capture the same deer each year. We will need your help to get this accomplished. CSU researchers may be in touch with you to ask for permission to come onto your land. We would like to involve citizens in data collection whenever feasible. We will give semi-annual reports to the community on the progress of our research. We will establish an advisory committee of landowners and natural resource managers to provide input to our research team throughout the project. We need your help to learn about the deer population in the watershed where you live.