

**DRAFT**

**NORTH PARK PRONGHORN  
HERD MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**DATA ANALYSIS UNIT PH-3**

GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS 6, 16, 17, 161, & 171

PREPARED FOR  
COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE



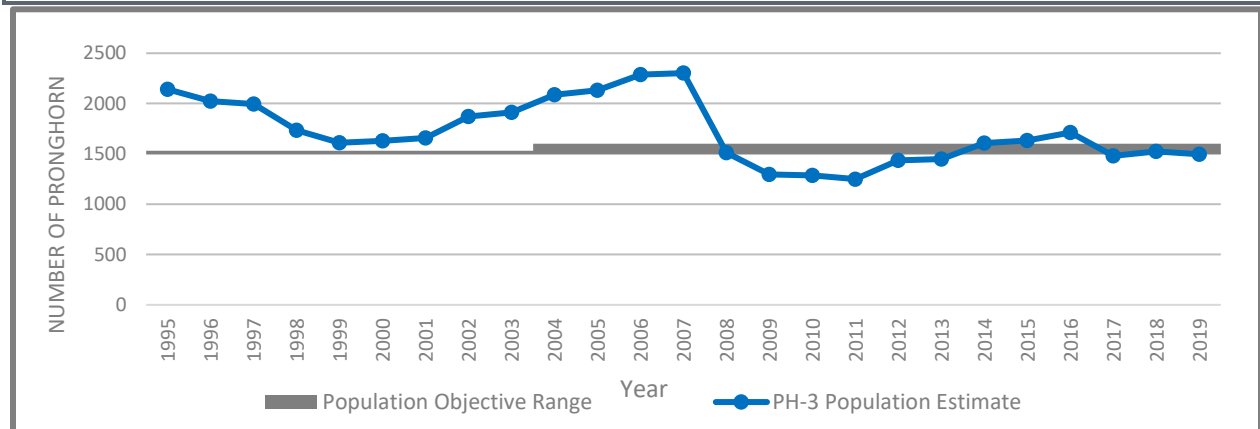
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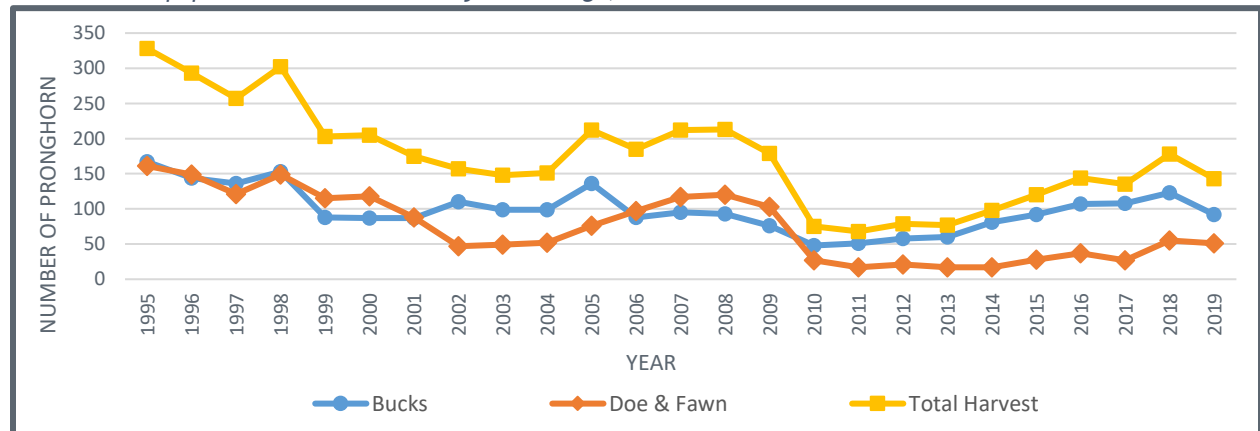
THIS PLAN WAS APPROVED BY THE COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION ON  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

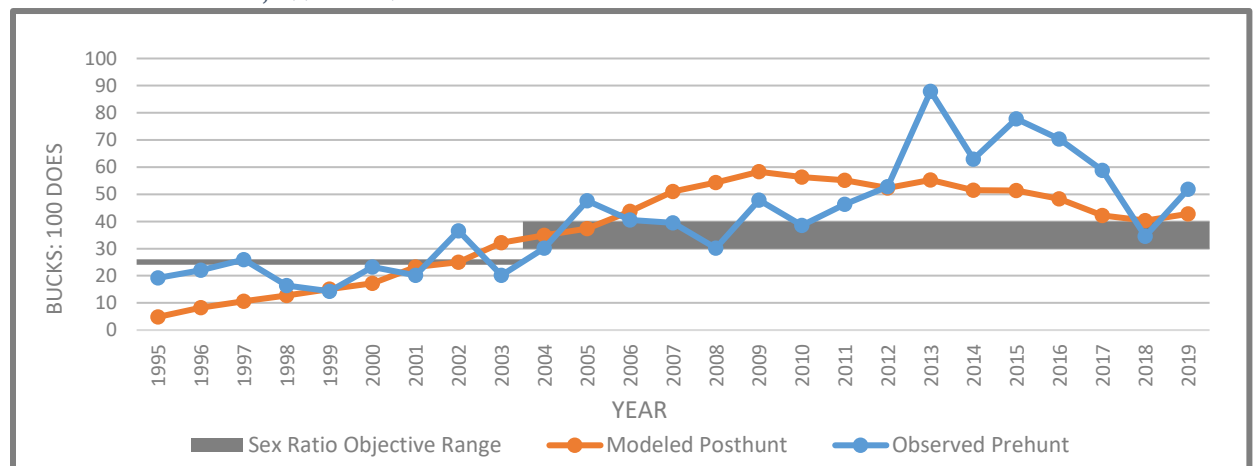
<b>North Park Pronghorn Herd (DAU PH-3)</b>	<b>GMUs: 6, 16, 17, 161, &amp; 171</b>
Posthunt Population: Previous Objective: 1,500-1,600 pronghorn; 2019 Estimate: 1,496 pronghorn. Preferred Alternative: <u>1,400-1,600 pronghorn</u>	
Posthunt Sex Ratio (Bucks: 100 Does): Previous Objective: 30-40; Prehunt 2019 observed: 51.9 modeled: 35.3. Preferred Alternative: <u>30-40 bucks: 100 does</u>	



PH-3 modeled population estimate and objective range, 1995 - 2019.



PH-3 Harvest Estimates, 1995 - 2019.



PH-3 Observed Prehunt, Modeled Posthunt, and Sex Ratio Objective Range, 1995 - 2019.

## Background Information

Pronghorn DAU PH-3 is located in north-central Colorado and includes Game Management Units (GMUs) 6, 16, 17, 161, and 171. The area is commonly known as North Park and is comprised of nearly all of Jackson County. The Wyoming border is the northern boundary of the DAU. PH-3 encompasses 1,618 square miles and is a mix of public and private land.

Cattle ranching and grass hay production have historically been, and continue to be, primary land uses in North Park. This high elevation, cold, semi-desert habitat has a strong agricultural base of irrigated hay meadows and cattle grazing. These conditions also provide productive wildlife habitat for big game, sage grouse, waterfowl and numerous nongame species. Timber harvest is also an important land use. Hunting and fishing provide significant revenue and jobs to the local economy. In recent years, oil and gas exploration and production have been increasing with potential to expand exponentially.

The pronghorn population in North Park was very high in the late 1880's but was completely eliminated by unregulated hunting by the 1930's. The population was re-established by natural immigration from nearby herds in Wyoming in the 1950's and limited harvest began in 1968. By the mid 1970's, the population was estimated at approximately 500 animals and, by 2004, was roughly 1,500 pronghorn.

The current modeled post hunt population is at the low end of the current objective of 1,500 to 1,600 pronghorn in the post-hunt population with a pre-season sex ratio of 51.9 bucks per 100 does. CPW manages the North Park pronghorn population for a quality hunt; not just for trophy class bucks but for limited doe hunting with minimal hunter crowding. Licenses are limited for all methods of take (archery, muzzle loading and rifle). In years when the pronghorn population is at or above objective licenses may need to be increased, to the point where some hunters feel crowded, in order to keep the population within the objective ranges.

## Significant Issues

There are few significant issues with pronghorn in North Park. The herd is generally at a sustainable and tolerable size and there are very few conflicts. Access to good public land pronghorn hunting is available in all units in North Park and harvest success rates are very good for hunters on both public and private land.

## Management Alternatives

Three post-hunt population objective ranges were considered: (1) decrease from the current objective to 1,200-1,400 pronghorn, (2) an objective of 1,400-1,600 pronghorn similar to the current objective of 1,500-1,600, (3) increase the objective to 1,600-1,800 pronghorn.

Three post-hunt sex ratio objectives were considered: (1) 20-30 bucks:100 does to maximize recruitment, (2) 30-40 bucks:100 does which would allow good recruitment and trophy potential, or (3) 40-50 bucks:100 does to maximize trophy production.

Through the DAU planning process and public input, a post hunt population of 1,400-1,600 pronghorn and a sex ratio of 30-40 bucks: 100 does were selected as future management objectives. This preferred population range represents a wider range than the current population objective.