



9 November 2023

November 2023 RAC Proposals
C/O Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Main Office
Box 146301
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6301

Re: November 2023 RAC Proposals

Dear Wildlife Board Members and Director Shirley:

On behalf of Safari Club International, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the November 2023 RAC Proposals. SCI would like to provide opposition comments on 3 items, specifically items 1, 3 and 4.

Item 1 deals with mandatory reporting requirements and late fees for general elk and deer permit holders. While SCI understands the desire for reporting requirements for scientific wildlife management, prohibiting the non-reporting party from participating in the following season's hunt seems penalty enough without the \$50 late fee, particularly when the fee is equivalent or more than the cost of the original permit at the resident prices.

Item 3 contains information on a buck deer hunting proposed research study. In particular, SCI has concerns with the hunt restrictions related to four-point or more on one side antler restrictions. Antler point restrictions unnecessarily restrict hunters from self-selecting the animal that best suits their individual needs and may result in taking the first four-point animal encountered, which may be a younger animal, rather than waiting for a "trophy" animal and possibly ending up taking nothing. As you know, the key to increasing the age class of deer is to reduce opportunity when the deer are most vulnerable, i.e. the rut.

Item 4 contains technology and hunting recommendations, in particular muzzleloading equipment. The proposal would remove the use of optical scopes on muzzleloaders except in any legal weapon seasons. It does not appear that the removal of scopes has any biological basis on a landscape scale. As such, SCI opposes the removal of the scopes from muzzleloading equipment. Allowing individual choice for all constituents who want to use muzzleloading equipment should override the concerns of a vocal minority aimed at individual competition, and allowing scopes on muzzleloaders does not force any individual to use a scope.

SCI believes that sound science-based conservation involving hunting as the primary management tool, while maximizing opportunities for all huntable species, is necessary to the long-term health of wildlife.



Hunters have long paid the way for conservation, both game and non-game wildlife, and maximizing opportunity for hunting is also key to long-term funding for all conservation. Hunting benefits wildlife conservation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the 2023 November RAC Recommendations. SCI is dedicated to protecting the freedom to hunt and we appreciate the continued partnership with the Division and the Wildlife Board. SCI is always first for hunters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Laird Hamberlin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

W. Laird Hamberlin
Chief Executive Officer
Safari Club International