

## Press Release

The Colorado Mule Deer Association along with the Colorado Sportsmen Wildlife Fund, Safari Club International and Colorado Equality Task Force gave testimony to the Colorado Senate Agriculture Committee in regard to SB 235 the Habitat Stamp Reauthorization. The bill fixes the inequality in the cost of the Stamp between hunters and fishermen. Each group will now be required to purchase a \$10 stamp. The bill also no longer requires persons entering a State Wildlife Area to carry a stamp. This aspect of the old legislation was actually costing the Division of Wildlife money. SB 235 will no longer require that 60% of the funds go toward big game corridors and winter range. There is no provision as to where the money will be spent.

The Colorado Mule Deer Association testified in favor of the bill, but asked Senator Brophy to carry an amendment to require that 50% of the funds go toward winter range and migratory corridors. Senator Brophy's 50% amendment failed along party lines with the Democrats voting against. Another amendment by the Senator to sunset the habitat stamp bill in 2013 was passed when Chairman Isgar (D) crossed party lines and voted in favor of the amendment. The short sunset date will allow the legislature examine the spending by the Habitat Stamp Committee and make sure the lands that go into conservation easements are of benefit to sportsmen.

The bill was passed on to the Appropriation Committee, which will examine the economic aspects of the bill. The bill must still be heard in the House Agriculture Committee and then will have readings on the floor of the Senate and House. The bill could still be defeated or amended at any one of these steps.

The Colorado Mule Deer Association will continue to be engaged in the legislative process and will update members on the progress of the bill. If the bill passes, CMDA will continue to monitor the spending of the Habitat Stamp Committee to insure that the money is spent to secure conservation easements of mule deer winter range and migratory corridors.