

— *Annual Report 2019* —

HIGHLIGHTS



*Ensuring the Conservation of
Mule Deer, Black-Tailed Deer
and their Habitat*

MDF 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

MDF IS COMMITTED TO

- Restoring, improving and protecting mule deer and black-tailed deer habitat
- Encouraging and supporting responsible wildlife management
- Supporting regulated hunting as a viable component of conservation
- Promoting public education and scientific research
- Recruiting, retaining and reactivating new hunters
- Supporting and encouraging responsible and ethical behavior and awareness of issues affecting mule deer and black-tailed deer

2019 MDF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

TOTAL REVENUE
15,534,098.00

MDF MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT
\$13,607,890.00

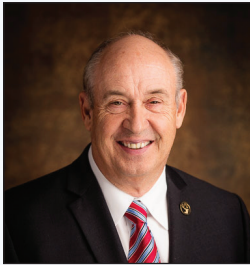
FUNDRAISING EXPENSE
\$807,733.00

ADMINISTRATION
\$1,118,455.00

FUNDRAISING
5%

ADMINISTRATION
7%





HABITAT RESTORATION

Key to Mule Deer & Black-tailed Deer Future

Welcome to the Annual Report of the Mule Deer Foundation. The Mule Deer Foundation has worked tirelessly for over 30 years to ensure the conservation of mule deer, black-tailed deer and their habitat. In 2019, Mule Deer Foundation once again raised a record amount of funds and restored or enhanced a record number of acres of habitat. We could not have accomplished this without the support of our local Chapters, members, volunteers, State and Federal partners as well as our corporate sponsors.

While we have accomplished much over the past 30 years, we still have much to do to ensure that there is abundant mule deer and black-tailed deer populations for future generations to enjoy. Mule deer are the "Icon of the West" conjuring up images of a long past era when deer numbers exploded across the western landscape. Today there are many factors contributing to the decline of deer populations across the West. Mule Deer Foundation is committed to be an organization that will do everything we can to reverse the decline of deer and ensure sustainable huntable populations exist for generations to come.

How does Mule Deer Foundation address these challenges? First, as you see on the pie chart on the previous page, 88%+ of all dollars raised goes towards mission accomplishment. Commitment to be the most efficient and transparent organization we can is at the core of how we are working to fulfill our mission.

HABITAT RESTORATION – The key to increasing deer populations is habitat. The urban migration across the West has seen open spaces replaced by residential, commercial and industrial development. Increased traffic on our highways has resulted in increased vehicle/wildlife collisions. As such, conserving or enhancing habitat remains one of our top priorities.

MIGRATION CORRIDORS – Recent research with new technology has enabled biologists to more precisely pinpoint mule deer migration routes from summer range to winter range and back. Mule Deer Foundation is working with private landowners, State and Federal agencies and other NGOs to identify and conserve these important corridors.

PUBLIC ACCESS – As the West grows, public access to our public lands is important to allow hunters and other outdoors enthusiasts the ability to enjoy their favorite hunting or camping spots. Mule Deer Foundation is committed to working to keep public lands public.

WORKING LANDS – Mule Deer Foundation is also committed to keeping working lands working. Mule deer spend most of the year on private lands. Keeping these lands from being developed into strip malls and subdivisions is a high priority. Through tools like conservation easements, private multi-generation landowners are able to remain on the land, which is good for mule deer and all wildlife.

WILDLIFE TRANSPORTATION CROSSINGS – A major factor impacting deer populations is animals being struck by vehicles crossing highways. Mule Deer Foundation is working with State Wildlife and Department of Transportation Agencies to identify areas of high deer mortality. Research technology is once again an important tool in identifying these key crossing points.

POLICY – Mule Deer Foundation works in Washington, DC to advance policies and programs benefiting mule deer, while also advocating to ensure the future of our hunting heritage. It is important that Mule Deer Foundation and our members have a voice at the national, state and local level and Mule Deer Foundation works tirelessly to ensure that.

While the above list is not all Mule Deer Foundation does, it gives you an idea of how complex the many issues are that impact mule deer, our hunting heritage and public access. We could not accomplish this without the commitment and dedication of our members and volunteers. For all you do to help mule deer and black-tailed deer, we thank you! Members and volunteers are the backbone of Mule Deer Foundation and we salute your efforts. Thank You!

All the best,

Miles Moretti – Mule Deer Foundation President/CEO



PROJECTS

The Mule Deer Foundation put approximately \$3 million on the ground this year in the form of habitat projects. Some of those projects include water catchments (guzzlers) of all shapes and sizes. Providing water encourages deer to use habitat that would otherwise go uninhabited without viable water sources. A good portion of Mule Deer Foundation funding also goes to fire rehabilitation. We work closely with wildlife biologists in all of our mule deer states and count on them to help us select and purchase the correct seed mixes to provide a sustainable food source for mule deer so that once a fire has removed the vegetation, we can reseed with everything they need to thrive.

Regarding winter range improvement, many of our chapters participate in planting bitterbrush, serviceberry and sagebrush. It is very important that our winter range hold and sustain mule deer through the winter months. Unfortunately, winter range continues to decline for various reasons, making it more important to make every acre count. With dwindling winter range and competition from expanding elk herds, mule deer need even better transitional and summer range to ensure that they arrive on the winter ground in the best condition possible.

Mule deer face many other challenges including highway mortality, predation and disease. Rest assured that the Mule Deer Foundation is actively engaged in every aspect of mule deer management and conservation, making every effort to ensure a brighter tomorrow for mule deer and black-tailed deer.



VOLUNTEERS / CHAPTERS

The Mule Deer Foundation is a volunteer-based organization. Without our volunteers we would not be able to accomplish our conservation goals to enhance mule deer and black-tailed deer populations and sustain continued hunting opportunities. Mule Deer Foundation volunteers are an amazing group. They hold fundraising events that generate the revenue used to purchase plants, seed and materials to build guzzlers for mule deer. They give of their time and resources for a species and a traditional way of life that we have grown to love. Our volunteers sit on wildlife boards for their respective states and represent us in working groups throughout the West. Our volunteers regularly participate in habitat projects, watching money they raised at their events come full circle in the form of habitat enhancement. Mule Deer Foundation volunteers have a voice that we rely on to help guide our organization through all things mule deer and black-tailed deer.

The Mule Deer Foundation is expanding. We are a fast-moving train of passionate volunteers and disciplined leadership. We are currently expanding our footprint with new chapters in Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and more. There are mule deer hunters and conservationists everywhere that want to join the fight. Non-traditional mule deer states are holding fundraising events for mule deer and allocating funds raised from those events to support efforts in the West.

If you care about mule deer and opportunities to enjoy seeing that buck of a lifetime, consider joining the only organization in the United States that is focused entirely on mule deer and black-tailed deer.

OUTREACH

In 2019, the Mule Deer Foundation continued developing and implementing programs focused on recruitment and retention of youth into our outdoor traditions. Teaching the next generation of wildlife enthusiasts the importance of hunting, shooting sports and wildlife conservation is an important step in ensuring the future of mule deer and black-tailed deer and their habitat, as well as our hunting heritage.

The M.U.L.E.Y. Program (Mindful. Understanding. Legal. Ethical. Youth.) is designed to safely introduce and mentor youth in hunting and shooting sports, while educating the participants on the importance of wildlife conservation. Since its inception, M.U.L.E.Y. has introduced and instructed over 100,000 youth in hunting and shooting sports activities. Each year, Mule Deer Foundation chapters throughout the West host M.U.L.E.Y. hunting camps, shooting sports events and wildlife conservation activities aimed to inspire the next generation of avid hunters, shooting sports enthusiasts and wildlife conservation advocates.

Participation in the hunting and shooting sports as well as wildlife conservation, are all projected to decrease dramatically over the next 20 years. Without active participants, the long-standing traditions of hunting, shooting and conservation will end. It is the vision of the M.U.L.E.Y. Program to help reverse this trend by actively engaging youth in a variety of hunting and shooting sports activities, while also teaching conservation principles, safety, and ethics. Our goal is to create life-long stewards for hunting, wildlife and conservation.

Additionally, in an effort to reverse the decline in participation, the Mule Deer Foundation, in partnership with New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, New Mexico First in Field and New Mexico Council of Outfitters and Guides, has created a new program, D.O.E.S. (Discovering the Outdoors and Encouraging Sportsmanship). The D.O.E.S. Program is designed to introduce women, at any skill level, to hunting, fishing, shooting sports and wildlife conservation. Women are the single fastest growing demographic in the hunting and shooting sports industry and teaching and supporting this group of enthusiasts is critical to the continuation of our hunting heritage.

As we look forward to 2020, you can expect to see an increased effort in the Mule Deer Foundation's outreach endeavors. An expanded emphasis on (R3) Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation along with increased grassroots initiatives are currently being planned.

Through these programs and expanding public outreach efforts across the West, the Mule Deer Foundation continues its commitment to wildlife conservation and the future of mule deer and black-tailed deer. With support from Mule Deer Foundation membership, volunteers and partners, we are collectively doing our part to ensure the future of our hunting, shooting sport and conservation heritage.



Safely introduce and mentor youth in hunting, shooting sports and wildlife conservation.



D.O.E.S.

*(Discovering the Outdoors and Encouraging Sportsmanship)
Provide a field-to-table learning experience for women to encourage involvement in hunting, angling, shooting sports, and wildlife conservation.*



STEWARDSHIP

“An ethic that embodies the responsible planning and management of resources.”

Mule deer and black-tailed deer live in diverse habitats across the western landscape. Mule Deer Foundation's on the ground success also relies on its diversity within its habitat programs. Mule Deer Foundation's Stewardship Program, the largest stewardship program in the West, allows us to make a large-scale impact in partnership with State and Federal Agencies.

In 2019 the Mule Deer Foundation's Stewardship Program put approximately \$3 million into large scale projects, impacting around 42,500 acres. Many of these projects are multi-year projects that will ultimately impact tens of thousands of acres when they reach completion.



MDF's Stewardship program actively works across many states throughout the western landscape.

2019 STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS

ARIZONA

- 10 X-Kaibab National Forest – Restoration/Thinning

COLORADO

- Roat Cap-GMUG National Forest – Restoration/Thinning
- Long Creek-Moore/Payne GMUG National Forest – Restoration/Thinning
- BLM Statewide Agreement Projects – Restoration/Thinning

IDAHO

- BLM-South Central Idaho Shrub Planting Project – 92,500 Sagebrush Seedlings Planted

MONTANA

- EDLV-Beaverhead/Deer Lodge National Forest – Restoration/Thinning



STEWARDSHIP



NEW MEXICO

- Cunningham Gulch-Carson National Forest – Restoration/Thinning

UTAH

- Alma-Cart Creek – Restoration/Thinning
- Left Fork-Dixie National Forest – Restoration/Thinning
- BLM-Henry Mountain Partnership – Restoration/Thinning

CALIFORNIA

- Lassen SPA – Crossroad Arch Surveys
- Plumas – Crossroad Wildlife Surveys
- Eldorado – Roads Assistance Surveys through National Forest
- Stanislaus – Roadway Engineering
- Sequoia – Restoration/Thinning
- Indian Ford – Aspen Treatment – Wildlife Friendly Fencing



Before Restoration/Thinning

After Restoration/Thinning



Mule Deer Foundation continues to make a difference in advocacy and policy on behalf of mule deer, black-tailed deer and hunter-conservationists. A majority of deer habitat in the West is on public land. As new Administrations come and go in Washington, DC so do the priorities around policies impacting deer. Mule Deer Foundation is one of the leading conservation groups engaged in fighting to make sure that when policies or laws are enacted, they don't negatively impact deer, access to public lands and our hunting heritage. Mule Deer Foundation remains vigilant in watching the policy makers and the rules and regulations that impact deer and our hunting heritage.

We also work with the Federal agencies to shape new policies that support our mission. One example is **Secretarial Order 3362** signed by former Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, at the Western Hunting and Conservation Expo in Salt Lake City, Utah in February 2018. This policy entitled "Migration Corridors and Big Game Winter Range" was enacted to identify and protect critical migration corridors for mule deer, elk and pronghorn. Also, the SO instructed agencies within the Department of the Interior to place a high priority in managing and protecting big game winter range. This resulted in Mule Deer Foundation creating a Migration Corridor and Big Game Winter Range Initiative to address the priority this created. The Habitat Section of this report highlights the activities in that area.

One of conservation's most important pieces of legislation is the **Farm Bill**. While this bill covers many areas, the section



on conservation is very important to wildlife, especially on private lands. The Farm Bill is the single largest contributor of funds to wildlife conservation across the country. Mule Deer Foundation, working with Former Senator Hatch (UT) and Senator Heinrich (NM), were able to have an important piece of legislation added to the bill. Specifically, the Sage Grouse and Mule Deer Habitat Conservation Restoration Act requires the Bureau of Land Management to expedite removal of pinyon-juniper trees to benefit both sage grouse and mule deer. This will allow Mule Deer Foundation, State and Federal agencies to accelerate the work being done on the ground to help restore rangelands to a healthy condition.

One of the most critical issues facing hunters and wildlife managers is **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)**. This disease impacts mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk and moose. Mule Deer Foundation is supporting federal legislation to provide much needed funding to state wildlife agencies for monitoring of wild deer populations and research. Mule Deer Foundation also advocates for CWD funding as a Board member of the National Deer Alliance. As a member of the Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance, Mule Deer Foundation provides updated information on new outbreaks of CWD, current factual information on research and the changes in regulations regarding transportation of harvested deer across state lines.

To directly engage our Board members and volunteers with Mule Deer Foundation's advocacy efforts, we periodically conduct a **Washington, DC Fly-in**. During this visit to our nation's capital, we meet with members of Congress and their staff, Federal Agencies and our other wildlife conservation partners. The face-to-face meetings are very productive in moving forward issues critical to Mule Deer Foundation's mission.

Mule Deer Foundation encourages our local chapters and members to be involved at all levels of government. Your voice can make a significant difference with your elected officials.



People. Process. Technology. Commitment.

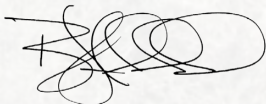
Successful organizations require the right people performing strategic and efficient processes, leveraging technologies that enable, rather than inhibit, best practices. Over the past year or so, Mule Deer Foundation has completed the most significant **TECHNOLOGY** transformation in the organization's history. This transformation touched all aspects of our business from membership, finance and accounting to how we manage our warehouse and support our fundraising efforts. While this investment will undoubtedly pay many long-term dividends, it did not happen overnight.

Major technology transformations are never seamless and ours was no exception to this rule. However, what differentiates successful transformations from those that fail often rests upon the **PEOPLE** directing the change and the **PEOPLE** deploying the new systems and applications. For Mule Deer Foundation, this means our IT contractors, our employees and, in many cases, our volunteers! Without a doubt, Mule Deer Foundation's technology transformation tested the skills, institutional knowledge and patience of everyone involved and WE PASSED!

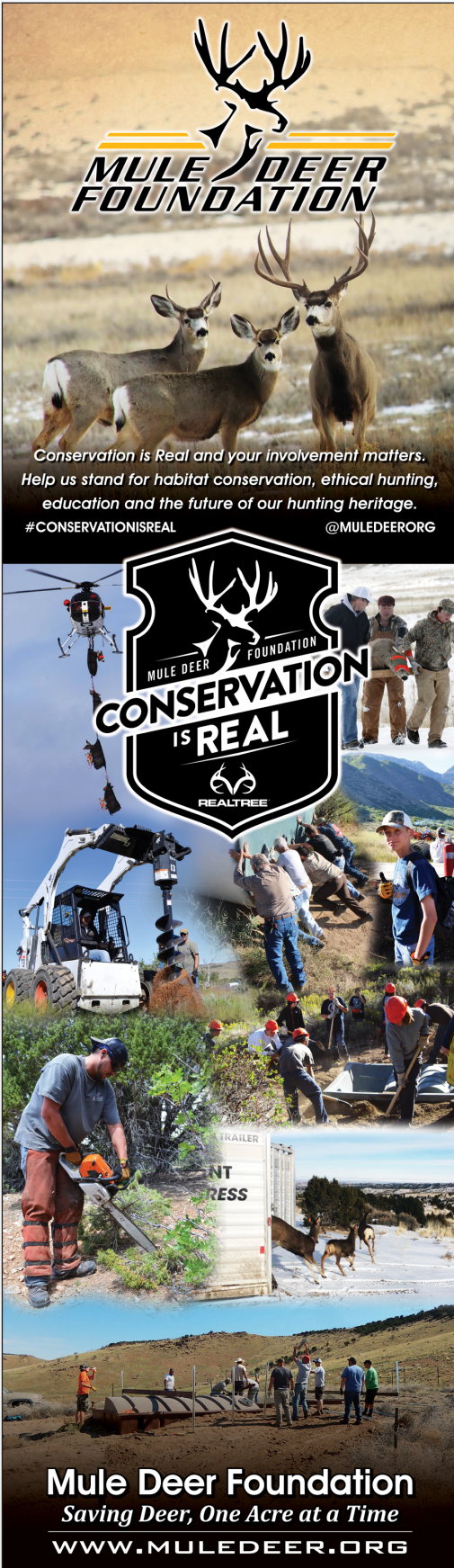
While the successful technology transformation highlights the people of Mule Deer Foundation and their commitment to our organization, it is also worth noting the significant effort many of these same people put forth each day in how we conduct our business ... our **PROCESSES**. Specifically, Mule Deer Foundation is increasingly focused not only on working harder, but on working smarter as well. Continuous improvement across all aspects of our business will be our motivation as we move forward.

Our **COMMITMENT** to you along this journey is a commitment to the Mule Deer Foundation mission, recognizing the people, processes and technologies required to support this mission. 2020 is the next step in this journey and you can expect to see improved membership value, enhanced Chapter support and increased mission accomplishment. We hope that each of you will join us!

Yours in conservation,



Brian L. Fienhold – Mule Deer Foundation COO



MULE DEER FOUNDATION

Conservation is Real and your involvement matters.
Help us stand for habitat conservation, ethical hunting,
education and the future of our hunting heritage.
#CONSERVATIONISREAL @MULEDEERORG

CONSERVATION IS REAL

Mule Deer Foundation
Saving Deer, One Acre at a Time
WWW.MULEDEER.ORG

LEGACY



Each year, members just like you, along with MDF's sponsors, partners and other donors, dig deep into their pockets to generously support the MDF mission. Simply stated, support of this nature plays a prominent role in the sustainability of major initiatives across the organization.

Our hunting and conservation heritage, which stands squarely at the core of the fabric of our great nation, relies heavily upon organizations such as MDF to ensure its future. Through various habitat/stewardship, advocacy and outreach efforts supported by an army of dedicated and passionate volunteers, employees and directors, MDF steps up each day to embrace and advance the hunting and conservation agenda.

Did you know that ...

- MDF has restored over 2 MILLION acres of vital mule deer and black-tailed deer habitat over the years ... *yet there is so much more we can do*
- MDF has introduced tens of thousands of men, women and children to our hunting lifestyle and has done so in a way that reinforces the legal and ethical responsibilities

we all share as hunter-conservationists ... *yet there is so much more we can do*

- MDF has vigorously advocated for improved hunter access and habitat management practices at State and Federal levels ... *yet there is so much more we can do*

As we look back at 2019, we would be remiss if we did not take a moment to thank each of you who have made a gift during the past 12 months. Your trust in MDF and your support of our efforts are greatly appreciated and have been absolutely essential to the success of these efforts.

Yet there is so much more we can do!

Accordingly, as we look to 2020 and beyond, MDF will continue to position itself at the forefront of the wildlife conservation dialogue through our habitat/stewardship and advocacy efforts. Our Outreach program will continue to expand, introducing (or reintroducing in many cases) thousands of individuals to the hunting and outdoors lifestyle we so cherish.

Your continued support to the MDF mission has never been more important than it is today. While the challenges that lie ahead are significant, the opportunities to strengthen our nation's great hunting and conservation heritage are even more profound. Together we can ensure that our legacy will be one that will inspire future hunter-conservationists to achieve even greater success.

On behalf of everyone at MDF, we are excited and focused on making a meaningful difference in our conservation efforts and we hope you will join us as ... ***THERE IS SO MUCH MORE WE CAN DO!***

Brian L. Fienhold – Mule Deer Foundation COO



MULE DEER FOUNDATION CONSERVATION HERITAGE FUND

Icons of Conservation

We are pleased to introduce you to a new MDF conservation initiative for 2019/20 – the *Icons of Conservation* campaign. Introduced at the 2019 Western Hunting & Conservation Expo, the *Icons of Conservation* campaign officially launched in July. This campaign is a historic endeavor by MDF to raise \$1 million in a major gift campaign to directly impact critical mule deer and black-tailed deer conservation and habitat restoration efforts.

While this campaign seeks 40 “Founding Partners” to join in this endeavor by committing \$25,000+ to help reach this initial funding goal, other major gift donations of all levels are also welcomed and greatly appreciated. As part of this campaign, MDF has teamed up with Weatherby and Buck Knives, two iconic American brands in their own right, and is excited to be able to offer each “Founding Partner” a custom-numbered Weatherby Mark V rifle with matching custom-numbered Buck knife in appreciation of their extraordinary contribution to this initiative.

MDF’s *Icons of Conservation* campaign is focused on addressing present-day issues facing mule deer, while also offering donors the ability to support the MDF mission in

perpetuity. Accordingly, donors will have the choice to direct their contributions to immediate mission accomplishment, the MDF National Endowment Fund or both!

Working hand-in-hand with various state and federal agencies, MDF is committed to strengthening populations of this magnificent creature. Donors who support the *Icons of Conservation* campaign at any level will be joining forces with MDF to continue this work, ensuring future generations will be able to enjoy mule deer and black-tailed deer roaming the Western US landscape.

We look forward to meeting with many of you to discuss this campaign in more detail and answer any questions you may have.

To contact us directly, please call the MDF office at 801-973-3940 or email us at icons@muledeer.org.

Thank you for considering joining us as an *Icons of Conservation* donor and making an immediate and lasting impact on mule deer and black-tailed deer conservation, wildlife and wild places.





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