



Congratulations to Bob Christensen of the Ashley National Forest, on Receiving the 10th Annual Mule Deer Conservation Award!

The Mule Deer Conservation Award was established in 2002 to recognize a Forest Service unit or individual for their outstanding contributions toward the conservation of mule deer or black-tailed deer. The focus of the award varies from highlighting a specific project to celebrating lifetime achievement accomplishments of individuals. For all recipients, the MDF has played an important role in planning, implementing, and completing the work accomplished.

On February 11, 2012, Marlene Finely, Deputy Regional Forester of the Intermountain Region of the Forest Service, presented the 10th Mule Deer Conservation Award to Bob Christensen from the Ashley National Forest. The award was presented at the annual Mule Deer Foundation convention, held in conjunction with the Western Hunting and Conservation Expo, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Bob came to the Ashley National Forest in 2003, and immediately initiated his efforts to restore mule deer habitat with the Anthro Mountain Wildlife Enhancement Project. This multi-phase project is designed to improve habitat conditions at a broader, landscape scale. Implementation of Phase I began in 2006, targeting two types of shrub communities:

- Pinyon-juniper forests treated in the 1970s to favor Wyoming big sagebrush, birch-leaf mountain mahogany, and rubber rabbit brush. Today, pinyon-juniper is re-emerging, again encroaching on these shrub communities and decreasing forage conditions for mule deer.
- Untreated shrub communities of mountain big sagebrush and black sagebrush also threatened by conifer encroachment.

As part of the Anthro Mountain Project, hand crews removed encroaching conifers with chainsaws, improving almost 7,000 acres of habitat for mule deer between 2006 and 2011. These treatments benefited many other species such as sage grouse and Brewer's sparrow. Phase II of this project is underway and is expected to restore another 12,000 acres of habitat.

Bob Christensen has been instrumental in the coordination and implementation of this project. Through collaboration with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and their partners, particularly the Mule Deer Foundation, he significantly increased a joint capacity to treat large acreage to benefit mule deer.

Congratulations Bob!



Pictured from left to right: Marlene Finley (Deputy Regional Forester, Intermountain Region), Bob Christensen (Ashley National Forest), Miles Moretti (CEO/President MDF)