

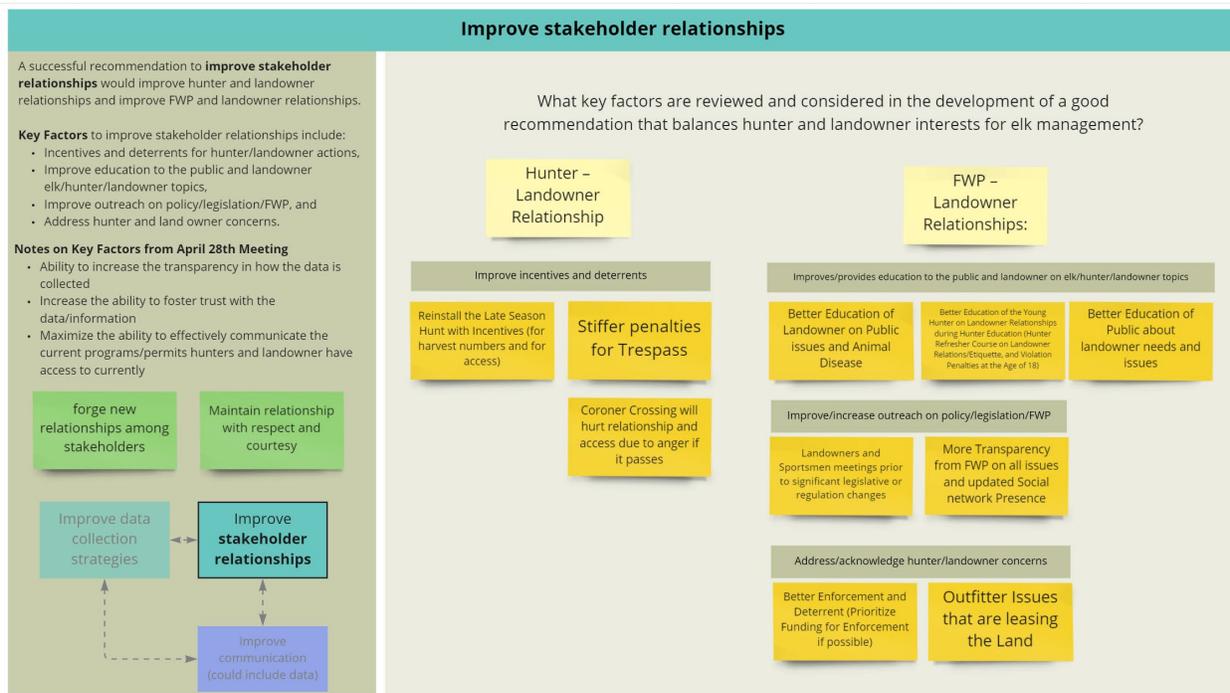
Action Items

Elk Management Citizen Advisory Group Members

Action Item: Members to review the draft meeting notes and provide comments/feedback by May 22, 2022

Action Item: All to review the key factors and begin to brainstorm one or two potential strategies to discuss in the next meeting. Please refer to the orange sticky notes below in “Figure 1: Example of Key Factors to Improve Stakeholder Relationships” as an example. If you develop strategies/bullet points that you would like to be captured in the meeting, please send them via email to me (Kimberly). Remember, bullets should approximately 7-10 words and capture the "intent" of your thoughts (please refer to the example below). Also, strategies should focus on areas FWP has the authority to act/could be granted the authority to balance hunter and landowner interest and/or foster relationships.

Figure 1: Example of Key Factors to Improve Stakeholder Relationships



Progress Summary

UPDATE: Below is a chart that summarizes our current progress.

Action	Progress	Location of Content
Identify issues recommendations will address	Completed	“Summary of Key Issues” document
Describe what success looks like for the issues in the recommendations	Completed	Meeting notes sentences beginning with “a successful recommendation...” (April 28 th and May 10 th)
Define key factors to consider for each issue in the recommendations	Completed	Meeting notes indicated by the heading “key factors” for each key issue (April 28 th and May 10 th)
Develop strategies that will clarify “how” we will address identified key factors for each issue in the recommendations	In progress	Meeting notes table for each key issue. EMCAG members are currently developing one or two strategies (May 10 th)
Evaluate effectiveness of strategies for each issue in the recommendations	Not started	N/A
Refine the strategies with more detail for each issue in the recommendations	Not started	N/A
Draft recommendations that incorporate the most/best strategies to achieve the described success for each issue in the recommendations	Not started	N/A

Meeting Notes for May 10th

REMINDER: The meeting notes will be a living document as we build our framework for the recommendations together. The notes will reflect the conversations and discussion from each meeting and will be updated as we progress through the process. Please review the notes and provide comments/feedback to ensure they capture the content appropriately.

Overview of Key Issues and Recommendations

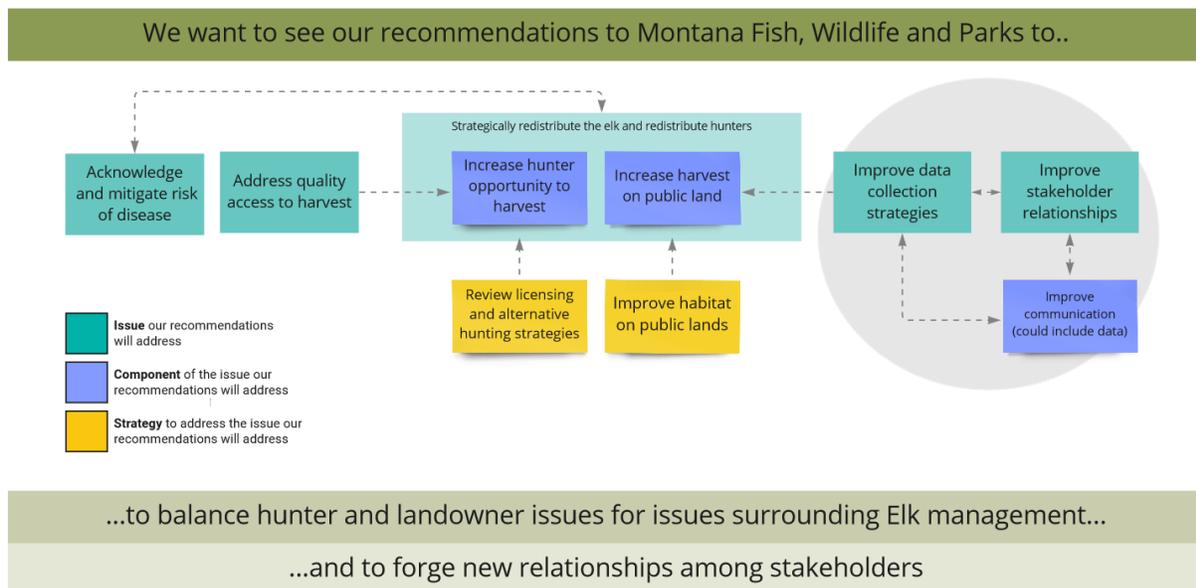
The Elk Management Citizen Advisory Group (EMCAG) defined the key issues that they will be addressing in the recommendations to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to forge new relationships among stakeholders and collaboratively develop new and creative ideas and recommendations for issues surrounding elk management in Montana to balance hunter and landowner interests. The elk Management Citizen Advisory Group want to see their recommendations to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP):

- address quality access to harvest elk,
- strategically redistribute elk and redistribute hunters,
- recognize and reduce disease,**
- improve stakeholder relationships and,
- improve data collection.

***Please note this key issue was originally “acknowledge and mitigate risk of disease”. From the small group discussion, Brent Race, Scott Tinklenberg, and Heath Hansen, requested the change in the May 10th Elk Management Citizen Advisory Group meeting.*

The diagram below shows the relationship between the issues that will be addressed in the recommendations, components of the issues, and potential strategies identified. Please refer to the “Key Issues Summary Document” for more detail on how the issues were developed.

Figure 2: Issues for Recommendations Chart



Strategically Redistributing Elk and Redistributing Hunters

A successful recommendation to strategically redistribute elk and redistribute hunters would increase the hunter’s opportunity to harvest elk (on either public or private lands) and increasing the elk harvest on public lands (by increasing the number of elk present on public lands during the hunting season, through redistribution of current populations). In other words, this recommendation will develop strategies to increase the opportunity for elk and hunters to be at the same place, at the same time, during the hunting season. This recommendation recognizes the importance of the “quality of access to harvest”.

To develop a successful recommendation to strategically redistribute elk and redistribute hunters, we will review and consider how each recommendation addresses the following **key factors**:

1. Seasonal distribution of the elk (defined as the location, and time/season the elk are in a location)
2. Ability/effectiveness to reduce overcrowding in hunting areas
3. Flexibility/nimbleness in providing access to hunters (including on smaller acreage)
4. Ability/effectiveness in mitigating unintended consequences (e.g., the timing of when a pressure is applied to the elk and the changes to distribution it may cause and/or grazing patterns)
5. Ability to hunt cow verses bull elk (population control/management)
6. Durability of the recommendation over the long term (to ensures lasting effects)
7. Ability/effectiveness to address local concerns and/or resources (e.g., the location of the hunter and point of access for the hunt)
8. Actions to improve elk habitat (e.g., prescribed burns and/or logging)
9. Mitigate the risks associated with the actions of hunters on a landowner’s property
10. Promote respectful and ethical actions are occurring on a landowner’s property
11. Respect private property rights (including trespassing)
12. Evaluate the effects of predators on the elk
13. Research potential road closures during hunting times

Key Factor Addressed	Potential Strategies for a Recommendation Strategy
Key Factor #2	Restricting the number of people on the land to improve the habitat (April 28 th meeting)
Key Factor #8	Improving habitat on public lands to encourage the elk to return to/remain on public lands (April 28 th meeting)
Key Factor #2 and 5	Review licensing and alternative hunting strategies (April 28 th meeting)
Key Factor #5, 9, and 11,	Review the incentives provide to landowners based on number of hunters (quantity) that access the land and quality of the habitat/consistent land management/presence of elk
Key Factor #3 and 5	Review the incentives for hunters based on the type of hunt (e.g., population control (hunting bull vs. cow), damage hunts, fair chase etc.)

Discussion from April 28th meeting: A hunter’s opportunity to harvest elk (on either public or private lands) may be affected by the ability access quality hunting grounds, number of elk present at the hunting location, number of hunters present on the land, landowners harboring elk on private lands, awareness

of hunting opportunities (local availability and on smaller acreage), and communication about the types and application of hunting permits available.

The opportunity to harvest elk on public lands (meaning increasing the number of elk present on public lands during the hunting season, through redistribution of current populations) may be affected by quality of the habitat on public lands, and the movement of the elk caused by pressures (e.g., moving off public lands to avoid hunters). In the May 10th meeting, members identified concerns with disease by moving elk from one location to another (when disease is present).

Address Quality Access to Harvest

A successful recommendation to address quality access to harvest elk would increase the hunter's ability to access locations that have a realistic opportunity for the hunter to harvest an elk. Currently, hunters have multiple hunting location options to access elk (on public and private lands) and there is recognition that the quality of those options may be poor meaning the hunter does not have “a realistic chance of killing an elk”. Addressing the quality access to harvest an elk is important because it is a strategy to reduce elk numbers where the elk is over objective, reduces the potential spread of disease, and can reduce overcrowding on the lands. There is also recognition that the quality of habitat (including predation) and quality of access are related.

Similarly to “strategically redistribute elk and redistribute hunters”, a hunter's opportunity to harvest elk (on either public or private lands) may be affected by the number of elk present at the hunting location, the number of hunters present on the land, landowners harboring elk on private lands, awareness of hunting opportunities (local availability and on smaller acreage), and communication about the types and application of hunting permits available.

In addition, the ability to have quality access to harvest elk may be affected by certain programs that landowners enroll in which required landowners to allow access (which makes granting access a “stick”).
Note: We recognize that we will not be able to “grant access everything”.

To develop a successful recommendation to address quality access to harvest, we will review and consider how each recommendation addresses the following **key factors**¹:

1. Improve/provide education/training to the landowner on elk/hunter on ethics
2. Improve the ability of the hunter locate an access point that is within proximity to their location
3. Engage hunt coordinators when needed
4. Promote management of land/quality of habitat
5. Enhance the landowner and hunters' relationship
6. Provide “guardrails” for the landowner (e.g., enforcement)
7. Streamline the access process for hunters and landowners (e.g., reduce frequent/early morning calls with a call service line/better signage)
8. Address unethical hunter and/or landowner behaviors
9. Provide incentives for the landowner to grant access to the land
10. Provide incentives for the hunters based on the purpose of the hunt
11. Engage multiple landowners in providing access (preferably connected landowners)
12. Address limiting factors/deterrents to access (e.g., access fee for the hunter)

¹ The Key factors based on the April 28, 2022 meeting discussion (listed below) have been removed based on the Elk Management Citizen Advisory Group meeting discussion on May 10, 2022 and replaced with the key factors identified in the May 10, 2022 meeting.

- Ability to minimize the risk of disease spread in over objective areas
- Ability to minimize the risk of disease spread in areas where landowners harbor elk
- Ability to maximize the mitigation of a disease (not simply monitoring the disease)

Strategies that could be used to develop recommendations for FWP include:

Key Factors Addressed	Potential Strategies for a Recommendation Strategy
Key Factor #5	Establish enforcement regulations (e.g., increase trespassing fines)
Key Factor #3	Promote landowners/practices that support year round habitat management strategies/improve habitat quality
Key Factor #1	Develop an education campaign on hunter/landowner ethics (possible training and certificate/badge)
Key Factor #3	Review the incentives provide to landowners based on number of hunters (quantity) that access the land and quality of the habitat/consistent land management/presence of elk (e.g., Block Management)
Key Factor #4	Review the incentives for hunters based on the type of hunt (e.g., population control (hunting bull vs. cow), damage hunts, fair chase etc.)

Recognize and Reduce Disease

A successful recommendation to recognize and reduce disease will reduce the potential spread of diseases transmitted from elk to cattle. Potential diseases that will be considered may include blue tongue, Brucellosis, Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease, and Chronic Wasting Disease. Disease spreading via elk may have significant impacts on the elk populations, cattle, landowners, hunters, and the economy. Formal recommendations, guidelines, and plans are currently in place to reduce the potential spread of diseases transmitted from elk to cattle and should be considered.

To develop a successful recommendation to recognize and reduce disease, we will review and consider how each recommendation addresses the following **key factors**²:

1. Reduce commingling of cows and elk (created by small group)
2. Reduce overcrowding or high densities of elk (created by small group)
3. Increase hunter/landowner awareness on how to reduce the spread of diseases (May 10th discussion)
4. Ability to minimize the cost/burden of the selected recommendation on the landowner (mitigation strategies should not be at the cost of the landowner) (April 28th and May 10th discussion)
5. Work for and support funding sources (general fund, USDA APHIS) for brucellosis mitigation, including testing costs within the DSA
6. Use FWP's status as a partner on the IBMP to maintain bison within existing spatial and temporal separation guidelines. (Bison are the reservoir of brucellosis in the GYE, elk are the vectors.)

Strategies that could be used to develop recommendations for FWP include:

Key Factors Addressed	Potential Strategies for a Recommendation Strategy
Key Factor #2 and #3	Develop an education campaign about the risks of disease for landowners harboring elk (April 28 th)
Key Factor #4	Address potential disease spread could include reviewing risk assessments (and livestock mitigation) (April 28 th)
Key Factor #3	Develop an education campaign for hunters on how transporting elk (including carcasses) and field dressing can unintentionally transmit disease (May 10 th)
Key Factor #3	Because brucellosis is self-sustaining in elk, our recommendation should have stronger language supporting livestock producers within the DSA and a recommendation that FWP focuses on mitigation strategies, which would include different types of management practices for elk.

² The Key factors based on the April 28, 2022 meeting discussion (listed below) have been removed based on the Elk Management Citizen Advisory Group meeting discussion on May 10, 2022 and replaced with the key factors identified in the May 10, 2022 meeting.

- Ability to minimize the risk of disease spread in over objective areas
- Ability to minimize the risk of disease spread in areas where landowners harbor elk
- Ability to maximize the mitigation of a disease (not simply monitoring the disease)

Discussion: Clarification on how diseases are transmitted from elk to cattle, and the process ranchers must use to minimize the spread of disease on their ranches. Clarification on hazing, potential incentives to support a hazer, and Elk Management Removals. Clarification on the importance of DSA funding.

Improve Data Collection Strategies

A successful recommendation to improve data collection strategies would provide a “baseline of facts” for the public and allow for improved decision-making processes. Improving data collection strategies may include reviewing elk movement trends to evaluate if the elk are learning or establishing new migratory plans and/or evaluate the success of implemented recommendations. For this reason, improving data collection strategies and strategically redistributing the elk and redistributing hunters may be related. In addition, clear and transparent communication with data is linked to increasing trust and improving stakeholder relationships.

Potential additional sources of data to consider include citizen science (data and collection processes), other agencies/organizations (potentially those that are self-funded), and the application of social science.

To develop a successful recommendation to recognize and reduce disease, we will review and consider how each recommendation addresses the following **key factors**³:

1. Ability to improve the decision-making process (better data lead to better decisions)
2. Ability to track elk movement trends
3. Ability to track the timing of the elk count in each district
4. Ability to evaluate if an implemented recommendation was successful or not
5. Effective translation/interpretation of the data provided (May 10th)

Strategies that could be used to develop recommendations for FWP include:

Key Factors Addressed	Potential Strategies for a Recommendation Strategy
	Biologists touch base and discuss data/information with landowners
	Develop user-friendly and effective methods to collect data

Discussion: The methodologies and type of data FPW collects was discussed. Future meetings will discuss how/what information is communicated outward by FWP.

³ The small group did not meet to discuss Improve Data Collection Strategies, and the EMCAG discussed the key factors for approximately 15 minutes. For this iteration, the key factors will remain as is.

Improve Stakeholder Relationships

A successful recommendation to improve stakeholder relationships would improve hunter and landowner relationships and FWP and landowner relationships. One component of improving stakeholder relationships discussed was communication. Clear and transparent communication was linked with increasing trust and improving stakeholder relationships and there was an emphasis on the importance of FWP’s communication to foster trust. In addition, the behaviors and actions of landowners and hunters were discussed as it relates to relationships and being granted access to land. *Please note this recommendation currently does not identify FWP and hunter relationships as needing to be improved. A key factor identified in the April 28th meeting, and removed from the May 10th discussion, is “Maximize the ability to effectively communicate the current programs/permits hunters and landowner have access to currently”.*

To develop a successful recommendation to improve stakeholder relationships, we will review and consider how each recommendation addresses the following **key factors**⁴:

1. Improve incentives and deterrents
2. Improve/provide education to the public and landowner on elk/hunter/landowner topics (*Note we are not taking about agricultural producers. We are referencing out of state, nonresident landowner that loves elk and denies access, thereby becoming a safe haven for elk that congregate in large numbers.*)
3. Improve/increase outreach on policy/legislation/FWP
4. Address/acknowledge hunter/landowner concerns

Strategies that could be used to develop recommendations for FWP include:

Key Factors Addressed	Potential Strategies for a Recommendation
Key Factor #1	Reinstall the late season hunt with incentives (for harvest numbers and for access)
Key Factor #1	Stiffer penalties for Trespass (e.g., losing a hunting permit for unethical behavior)
Key Factor #1	Corner Crossing will hurt relationship and access due to anger if it passes
Key Factor #2	Better Education of Landowner on Public issues and animal disease
Key Factor #2	Better Education of the Young Hunter on Landowner Relationships during Hunter Education (Hunter refresher course on landowner relationships/etiquette, and violation penalties at age of 18)
Key Factor #2	Better education of public about landowner needs and issues
Key Factor #3	Landowner and sportsman meetings prior to significant legislative or regulation changes

⁴ The Key factors based on the April 28, 2022 meeting discussion (listed below) have been removed based on the Elk Management Citizen Advisory Group meeting discussion on May 10, 2022 and replaced with the key factors identified in the May 10, 2022 meeting.

- Ability to increase the transparency in how the data is collected
- Increase the ability to foster trust with the data/information
- Maximize the ability to effectively communicate the current programs/permits hunters and landowner have access to currently

Key Factor #3	More transparency from FWP on all issues and updated social network presence
Key Factor #4	Better enforcement and deterrent (prioritize funding for law enforcement if possible)
Key Factor #4	Outfitter issues that are leasing the land
Key Factors #1 and 4	Working with landowners that provide public access to see what their key issues are compared to the landowners that will never change their minds on access
Key Factors #1 and 4	Identify alternative enforcement methods or deterrents (a FTE Warden may be expensive and other enforcement alternatives may exist "Coordinators")* <i>Deb will provide information on the cost of a Warden</i>