

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 15, 2023 8:31:54 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 15, 2023 8:37:05 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:11
IP Address: 67.218.74.100

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

- 1.) Allow the take of hens during pheasant season.
 - 2.) Lengthen bird seasons to the end of February
 - 3.) Make the fall turkey seasons shotgun/archery only as they are in the spring.
 - 4.) Keep big game seasons as they are relative to timing and length.
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#2

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 16, 2023 7:29:41 AM
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IP Address: 98.97.38.239

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Q1

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Sportsman in Region 1 want the elk population brought back to historical numbers. Region 1 Wildlife Biologist should be putting forth proposals to do this at these meetings. Then let Sportsman chew on the ideas. They are the professional Wildlife Biologists with education, experience and local knowledge, lets use them. Proposal should include time frames, season structures, study need, and no political interference. Look to bring back the numbers sportsman realize, we may have to give up 5 week season, B tags or schedule weeks to hunt.

For the time being eliminated all cow tags in Region 1.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, June 17, 2023 7:08:38 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, June 17, 2023 7:11:49 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:11
IP Address: 98.97.33.247

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Q1

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Please remove the trophy deer unit from 103 in the north fisher area. This special draw is not based in science, it goes against CWD guidelines, in my opinion the law has created lots more poaching, it has now created challenges for other people trying to hunt in the area by limiting where people can go and now with SPP closing down even more of the fisher this year it's going to force even more hunters to smaller amounts of area. Please remove this unit like you did in many of the other areas in the state!

#4

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Time Spent: 00:17:35
IP Address: 192.230.161.29

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Q1

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I can't attend the season setting scoping meetings (like most people), yet appears I have no direction here as what I can comment on during this scoping period as is stated above and under 'public input' on the biennial season setting page. Appears either incompetence and/or lack of communication to get this comment process right OR perhaps FWP higher-ups don't really want to hear what the public has an interest in so leave the comment process rather vague and can take the hunting season(s) direction(s) any which way they prefer...similar to FW commission process. The latter appears to be the norm nowadays. Sad and quite frustrating.

#5

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IP Address: 69.145.134.131

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Q1

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What are the “ few specific proposals” that will be discussed or presented?

Where / what is the status of the Elk Management Plan? Would this not somewhat dictate quotas in regions and hunting districts?

#6

COMPLETE

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IP Address: 72.255.162.249

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Limit to 1 mule deer per hunter in 620, 621 680 and 622. 3 point or better Buck only general tag in those areas for everyone.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, June 19, 2023 8:12:04 AM
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Time Spent: 00:06:04
IP Address: 174.198.132.190

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

A complete revamp of our general season mule deer hunting opportunities. Eliminate a general rifle season that encompasses the month of November.

Ideas:

900 archery deer season August 15 to September 30

General Rifle Deer October 10- November 10.

Special Permit Mule Deer. November 15-25.

Eliminate the heritage season.

Draw specific Mule deer hunting.

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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IP Address: 174.199.98.147

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

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#9

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see the General Firearm Mule Deer Season moved forward. Mule deer bucks are especially susceptible to harvest in mid-late November. I believe this season adjustment would allow Montana's buck age structure to improve. Currently, Montana has very poor mule deer buck age structure; I choose to hunt out of state for mule deer or whitetails in Montana. Eastern Montana is a slaughter in November - this needs to change.

#10

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Hello, How about being a little more friendly on out of State owners that have property in Montana for the past 15 years, Montana hunting has really change to the worst for us out of state landowners and hunters our family really enjoyed the past hunting but over the past 7-8 years it has really has turned to the worst for us on the prices and not be able to get a license even the over the counter licenses are a thing of the past. From Minnesota a family that is a law abiding always ask for permission and respect land owner property with respect.

We have built a relationship with a lot of ranchers,, private owners in Eastern Montana Miles City to Ashland area. We are really considering selling our cabin and property and re-investing into a different state for hunting. There are ranchers out there that are making false allocation's about out of state hunters dong all this horrible things yes maybe there are some but myself have never seen it or run across hunters doing what the rumors are. Honestly I have seen more Montana license plates hunters doing things that aren't very sportsmanship over the out of State hunters but its the out of State hunters getting the blame for it. Thanks and hope some things can get changed for the better for the out of state property owners that spend money in Montana

#11

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IP Address: 47.45.185.167

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

To Whom it May Concern:

Why don't you try to apply the law equally? The Wilkes Brothers consistently & continually herd Elk on their ranch by using vehicles to run property lines and by also using a helicopter (my wife has video). It's criminal and the FWP does nothing as the Wilkes donate millions of dollars to the FWP and most hunters know this!! It truly is disgusting!!

#12

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

It is reasonable to say that the Mule Deer Survey will not be a good indicator of public opinion because the questions are extraordinarily generalized and not specific enough to the individual's hunting method, status, district, residency etc.

#13

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Hello, getting rid of come home to hunt, nonresident native and nonresident student tags would lower the hunting pressure quite a bit. If you don't live in Montana then you should have to go through the nonresident draw that is capped. I understand that FWP makes a lot of money off these tags and that keeps the resident tags lower. I rather pay more for my tags to keep all the nonresident hunters away. Also, I also understand that the come home to hunt, nonresident native and student tags don't come out of the nonresident cap that is set for the draw. That is a bunch of bull.

#14

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 9:54:52 AM
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Please stop catering to large landowners and outfitters. I am a U.S. Marine combat veteran and father of 3 kids who love the outdoors. We are DIY hunters and should not be punished for this. Guaranteed tags for landowners and outfitters literally favor the wealthy and take away opportunities from regular, everyday hardworking Montanans.

#15

COMPLETE

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Time Spent: 00:01:07
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

How's about a 4 pt or better restriction on mule deer? Do a trial of 2 years to see what horn growth does and it would take a lot of pressure of young bucks so they can grow.

#16

COMPLETE

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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

With the archery equipment becoming so user-friendly and high tech in my opinion there isn't to much difference between rifle season and archery season. I archery hunt the 410 district with success my only worry is it will get harder and harder to draw a tag as it used to be unlimited. I would like to suggest some kind of traditional only for maybe 200 of the 1900 tags. I think it is more challenging by far and if you are willing to put in the time and effort chances of drawing a tag may be better. Just a thought and thanks for all you do!!!!

#17

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Allow general tags to be used during archery season only, for brow-tined bulls in draw units.

Open up a swan tag for the Canyon Ferry Lake area.

#18

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:06:47
IP Address: 155.254.9.100

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Bighorn hunting district 302 should return to unlimited status. I hunted this district under the old unlimited rules just prior to the big die-off in the 1980s. At the time of the closure and as part of transplant plan to re-establish the herd, it was stated by FWP that the district would return to unlimited status after the population was healthy. This never happened. With modern technology such as satellite phones and texting, there is no reason that this district should not return to unlimited status with a quota of 3 and 24 hour reporting rules. FWP should live up to its promises.

#19

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Why don't we have a spring water fowl season. In NW MT. Was have a migration of birds that you don't see in fall season. Second we have thousands of birds in the Flathead area this time of year

#20

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

You need to bring back public land cow elk tags in unit 580. Private land access is difficult and plenty of times the majority of elk are on National Forest land.

#21

COMPLETE

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Time Spent: 00:08:27
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Q1

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For Region 7- Mule deer hunting has become increasing harder and harder to find deer let alone quality bucks. Increasing number of non residents and residents in the area taking younger deer has caused the average mule deer age class to drop. It would be nice to see some sort of regulations on harvest class like 4 point only for mule deer. This would increase hunter happiness in seeing more deer reach an older age class, and let some of these smaller forked horns getting shot reach a more mature age. As well as a better age structure in the heard. Also eliminating fall turkey season for hens would be beneficial for future spring hunting. As turkey numbers drop across the country more and more people are coming in state to hunt spring turkey. Giving these birds more of a break will create better opportunity for everyone in the main spring season.

#22

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Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 11:13:12 AM
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Q1

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I would like to see a much simplified Mountain Lion Reg book. I just finished the survey on quotas. The Mountain lion Reg book is by far the most complicated refs published, even to the point of Game Warden's not being able to give answers. We call Cat hunters for help, and they can't even decipher that book. It doesn't have to be rocket science! Simply state when the seasons start/end, allow hunters to shoot/hunt cats during archery, rifle, and winter (few hunters have hounds). You will experience more people purchasing cat tags when you switch to common english and simple common sense.!!! And finally, this State Desperately Needs a Grizzly Bear Season!!! We hunt extremely hard and often during spring and fall black bear season in all of western Montana. It is ridiculous that we are seeing more grizzly than black bears. The bear hunting community and many of the locals in these infested areas are scared and very tired of grizzlies every where and out numbering black bears!!!! We know you get a law suit filed every time you try to open the griz season, but it has to be done fast before people and children get killed. It's not the 1700s or 1800s . Our people population is over 1.2 million. You can't have grizzly numbers as high as when there were only 500 thousand humans in the state!! That makes no sense and is dangerous to human life and our deer/elk/moose populations. Fight the law suits with our hunters money and implement the grizzly season--- And don't just hav "One or Two" tags (that would be childish). With the numbers we are seeing every year, we need a SIMPLE "any species bear tag" when we purchase our Spring/Fall bear tags. Believe me and the rest of the bear hunting community, THAT WON'T HURT THIS OUT OF CONTROL GRIZZLY POPULATION!!!! That you, Wayne Walker.

#23

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It would be helpful if Antelope tags were drawn when the "B" tags are drawn so those people that draw a tag will have time to scout and reach out to land owner for permission to hunt. This will also help Land owner relations because they are not being hit all at once due to the short time between the drawing results and the time of the hunt.

#24

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In general, you are doing great, stay with the basic archery/rifle season formats as you have now.

However, here in region 2 (and I live in 211) I really think you should restrict the rifle season on mule deer to exclude the peak of the rut.

Additionally, I request that you add some limited quota opportunities over time for hunting across at least elk, deer and antelope with modern muzzleloaders - I suggest you use the same weapon descriptions as New Mexico (no scopes or electronics but otherwise modern inline is OK).

#25

COMPLETE

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Q1

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Either shorten seasons or limit tags for mule deer bucks state-wide. Mature mule deer bucks are getting more and more difficult to find as private land access issues push more hunters onto public land. This seems to be causing higher harvest numbers in smaller accessible areas. If this is not properly managed the mule deer buck age class will likely continue to decline. Additionally management for trophy quality mule deer in some districts should become a priority. If population management is the goal, increase the number of doe tags or add management buck tags (i.e. Deer 270-51) rather than adding more either sex or (any) buck tags which hurts age class and genetics.

#26

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Time Spent: 00:18:00
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Q1

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It is my understanding that mtfwp is considering increasing the mountain lion quota and I am very opposed to that. I actually think that in area 285 it would be a good idea to reduce the female sub quota. I spend a lot of time chasing lions in the winter and the population has been declining over the last few years. Some days in ideal conditions I cover the majority of the area and am unable to find any tracks at all which is quite a change from 5 years ago. With the changes already made to the regulations I believe that if the quota stays the same or increases it is going to be very difficult to find a mountain lion to chase in the coming years.

#27

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Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 11:48:16 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:31
IP Address: 174.234.6.96

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Q1

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All male deer licenses should be 3 points and larger and all doe permits should be drawn. This will allow the the bucks to mature and give the young a chance to survive to maturity.

#28

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 11:52:52 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 12:08:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:16:05
IP Address: 172.58.47.24

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Q1

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I completed the hunter survey about falconry season today, totally unacceptable. After meeting with Mt F W and P several times earlier this year I was very disappointed that you blindsided the falconry community in Montana with this. We (Montana Falconry Association) came away from said meetings with the idea that there was agreement on our proposals about refraining on hunting sage grouse leks in March but leaving the hunting season unchanged. Someone at FW&P is trying to sabotage our agreements and I for one am upset about it. It seems you have a solution in search of a problem that doesn't exist

#29

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I think that fwp need to implement that if landowners are putting in for landowner.preference on elk it should be like deer and antelope and should have to be taken on that property, also bring back outfitter sponsor tags at least to some degree. I believe they need to go region specific for mule deer buck harvests and region 7 needs hold special draw for mule deer buck, shut down mule deer doe harvest in region 705 all together, the state as a whole should be more like 700 district and broke into bigger areas for less district that would help simplify the regulations not just give in to the special draw areas and there landowners,

#30

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Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 12:28:28 PM
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Q1

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I would like to see Region 343 offer the opportunity to attain more moose tags for hunters. At the present time, I believe they only offer one for the region. I would like the region to add at least a couple more tags. However, I do not want the tags for moose to reach a level greater than 5 maximum. Adding two additional tags would seem ideal being that the moose population in that region seems to support a small increase in tags available.

#31

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 12:44:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:40
IP Address: 98.97.34.47

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Q1

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I think you should leave the falconers' season alone and pay more attention to the so-called dog training season. More disturbance .and foot traffic on the leks. The MFA has a club policy about March hawking that could be printed on your website as well as on the upland bird brochures.

#32

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:00:21
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

There are way to many out of state hunters in Montana

#33

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 1:19:39 PM
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Shorten the HD Season Length, so not to be hunting during the rut, when breeding occurs and the Mature Mule Deer bucks are less aware of hunters and hunting pressure on the deer. Each District should be re-evaluated annually or Bi-annually. Amendments to management strategy might have to include limiting hunters in some HDs. HD location to Montana population centers can be a factor. Every HD can have unique factors to be considered. Some of these management decisions will not be popular among Sportsmen and Outfitters.

#34

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 2:54:07 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:15:05 PM
Time Spent: 00:20:57
IP Address: 198.162.78.5

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Mule deer numbers are lower than I can remember in my lifetime. I recommend the following changes for deer:

No doe hunting on public land.

Move the deer season up and/or shorten it.

Put a cap on the number of deer hunters in each region. The eastern half of the state has been carrying the deer hunting load for a long time and it is no longer sustainable.

Manage for a diverse age class of deer.

Consider making the Frenchman Creek area on the Hi-line a special permit area.

Elk recommendations:

Reinstate quota ranges for the former 900 bundle archery districts. I think these are the only permits in the state that don't have a quota range. This handcuffs the local biologists and doesn't allow them to easily make needed changes in permit numbers from year to year.

Quotas for some archery permits are far too high and should be reduced. See surplus permit numbers for 595 and 411 as an example.

When it comes to archery, the Snowies (411 & 535) should be managed as one area for elk (just like rifle). It's the same population on both sides of the mountain so it shouldn't be split up. It also makes no sense that the objectives are based on west/east sides of the Snowies while the hunting districts are based on north/south sides of the Snowies.

I also recommend FWP implements mandatory reporting. I hunt other states that use mandatory reporting and I don't find it a burden at all. I believe it would also restore some trust in the department from the public. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

#35

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:25:59 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:26:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:42
IP Address: 63.153.25.149

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Please make hunting mule deer in the rut a limited tag and close the regular season early

#36

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 11:45:18 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:33:44 PM
Time Spent: 03:48:25
IP Address: 108.174.122.106

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Guaranteed land owner tags for deer and elk for those land owners that use their own money to improve habitat for wildlife on their property(160 + acres). I know in states like Nevada, ranchers in some areas would get a deer tag for every 50ish mule deer that would stay on their properties. They could use the tags or sale them. These extra funds from tags sold would help improve habitat or help fix fence or replace feed that elk destroyed etc. We run a large ranch is in unit 270 and rarely ever get tags to hunt mule deer. While other land owners with 160 acres or more who put nothing into their land for wildlife improvements ,seem to consistently draw tags. My boss who owns this ranch puts 100s of thousands of dollars of his own money into improving this land for wildlife on an annual basis. He may get a tag once every three years. The managers never get a tag , but take the public out on the ranch(free of charge) the entire rifle season with ranch vehicles, gas and time. Its enjoyable to help people fill their freezers. It would be nice to get land owner tags based on number of mule deer and elk that live on these various ranches. I don' t think it is fair that anyone in this particular unit that has 160+ acres should be able to put in for land owner preference mule deer tags. Many of them just have the land for the mule deer tag and put nothing into the land for any wildlife improvements. Those land owners that improve there land and put forth an effort to make it better should be the ones rewarded with land owner tags. Just seems fair that those who do the work get the reward(mule deer buck tags). Even if its just management buck tags every year for land managers and trophy tags for owners. Should happen state wide.

#37

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:36:20 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:38:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:55
IP Address: 161.7.87.77

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Mule deer hunting opportunity needs to be limited for the health of the resource. Hunting mule deer bucks during the rut should only be by permit, not general license. 454 elk permits are also being abused; they should only be issued for large tracts of land (>640 acres for landowner preference) that allow substantial public access for cow elk.

#38

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:50:38 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:52:28 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:50
IP Address: 174.234.7.188

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Bring back the 900-20 elk archery tags. What benefit has there been since getting rid of it.

#39

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:32:56 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:54:32 PM
Time Spent: 00:21:36
IP Address: 35.133.20.243

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

My name is Richard ARVISH I was at last night meeting in Anaconda. Kirstie the 200 reigon biologist said there was 600 elk in the ARCO triangle area. My comment is since the elk do not leave and there is little hunting pressure is it possible to trap some elk and move them to 214 which is below the amount you want in the unit? 214 is right there next to Triagle the Triangle is open elk are easy tracable they will nt leave I sure Arco will work with FWP. Krstie said to think out of the box this could help both units. THANKS

#40

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 5:37:16 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 5:39:40 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:23
IP Address: 153.90.18.170

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Change regs so fewer units have the opportunity to kill an antlered mule deer on a general tag during general rifle season. Mule deer quality and numbers are in decline. This change paired with reduced hunting pressure on buck mule deer can help restore quality and health to mule deer.

#41

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:09:45 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:11:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:48
IP Address: 97.121.221.132

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Make all antlerless tags, for all species, private land only. There are few, if any, places in Montana that can sustain antlerless harvest on public land. By restricting those antlerless tags to private land, it would direct the harvest, and the hunting pressure, to the place where problems exist; that being private land.

#42

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:25:39 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:33:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:42
IP Address: 174.234.18.49

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Age class of mule deer on public land in general tag units is marginal at best. We have units already in place- draw units are extremely limited presently. Manage mule deer buck numbers (draw only) as most other states do to provide a real chance at a mature buck. Genetics, age class, buck/doe ratio are all part of a healthy mule deer herd. Limited public land especially in eastern Montana has a high number of hunters (including block management) and the 3-year old 4 point is harvested. Cut the doe tags especially on public land.

#43

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:45:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:42
IP Address: 216.220.10.18

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

designate some areas for Elk and Deer as trophy hunts and only allow more mature Bulls and Bucks to be shot, for example the unit is a 4 point or better unit only.

#44

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:48:21 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 8:03:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:01
IP Address: 209.161.136.18

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

My opinion to cut down on hunters overcrowding mule deer areas, is to first limit out of state hunters from shooting bucks. Give them a 3 or 5 year waiting time. And have them pick a hunting region

#45

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 9:47:30 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 9:48:20 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:50
IP Address: 216.14.234.83

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Why are you not putting the draft regulations online to read? Transparency please.

#46

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 22, 2023 7:39:47 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 22, 2023 7:42:06 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:19
IP Address: 174.45.101.84

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Listen to your biologist's when deciding your hunting and fishing regulations, not outfitters or others that might not be as concerned for the long term health of the resource.

#47

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 22, 2023 9:54:52 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:01:11 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:18
IP Address: 69.144.120.250

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

We're landowners in the Little Snowies where most elk stay on private land all year long. We believe that landowners of more than 640 acres should get a bull tag if they apply. We get a tag every couple of years, but get public hunters by the dozen requesting access every year. Our stance has become that if landowners can't hunt, then the public can't hunt.

#48

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:02:00 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:07:07 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:07
IP Address: 174.204.69.2

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Quit giving out more nonresident tags than the 17000 !!! We know it is a money issue now days , because if they don't draw one of the 17,000 they can just go buy an over the counter nonresident tag ! It is destroying our game population that is resident hunter have worked hard to build up and protect!!!

#49

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:06:36 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:19:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:14
IP Address: 174.231.82.127

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see the early rifle season in 316 expanded to include early rifle in the wilderness areas in 565 and 525 for mule deer.

I would like to see black bear unit 520 split up into a few different units so that those of us that want to hunt the wilderness area do not have the season shut down by those killing sows on private and the front before we can even access the wilderness.

I think the last 2 weeks of the regular rifle season should be a draw for mule deer bucks in every unit in the state.

Non residents should not be able to buy more than 1 B tag per species.

I think Mule deer b tags should be cut drastically in most of the state.

Non residents should have to draw mule deer and elk general tags valid for only one region.

Whitetail and mule deer tags should be separated and species specific.

#50

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 22, 2023 3:17:38 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 22, 2023 4:30:05 PM
Time Spent: 01:12:26
IP Address: 50.52.64.149

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see this change: on the Permit to Adapt Achery Equipment (PTMAE) to change the word age on equipment used to include crossbows as a option, or for FWP to make a crossbow permit for PTMAE holders to purchase at a additional cost \$10-\$20 every year they wish to use a crossbow (if additional permit is created, the permit is that simple, it would be a crossbow permit with no other rules or equipment limitations). That way the option of equipment is up to the upper body disabled to use as that individual sees fit. There are less then 300 PTMAE current users in Montana and a lot of them have issues with a modified bow out in the field. Not all PTMAE holders are bound to a wheel chair and using a modified bow does not work with everyone. There is not a safe way to get a loaded modified bow into a tree stand, trying to load a modified bow in a tree stand opens the hunter to possibly falling with a loaded bow or falling while bending over to load the bow, faling aleep in the stand with a loaded bow. There are safety concerns with the equipment out in the woods as far as spot and stalk hunters are concerned. All I have to do is accidently hit my sting on something while moving around the woods and my fully loaded bow will fire. Dry fires can be brutal with a normal bow, what happens when my bow when there is a aluminum rod on it. What happens when my rod breaks? Dry fire while loading my bow means someone's foot is on the ground in front of my bow. I can not use a stabilizer and have to grip my bow introducing torque, there are reasons bow hunters do not grip thier bows however they use all thier upper body to draw the bow. Hunters like me hold the bow one armed and do not use all the upper body correct mucleles to draw and stabilize the bow because we can't a d i do not pull on my loc a draw because doing so will change the flight of my arrow drastically. There are bows on the market that can reach crossbow speeds, a hunter that has a 31 inch draw has a easier time achieving this, there are those hunters with long draws. Some current archers like speed bows and have arrow and bow set ups to maximize speed, other use heavier arrows and go for a slower more thump set up, crossbows can be set up the same way. Hunters on social media show archery hunters taking game at 70 plus yards with a bow, but cry with the thought of a upperbody disabled person possibly being able to do it to. My current bow can only be tuned so far due to the loc a draw I use, I am capped to maybe a 40 yard shot if the elk is broadside to me, if I had a crossbow I would most likely be capped the same distance due to off hand shooting a crossbow. To much things can get in the way of a long shot were I hunt because of foliage and trees, but why can a none disabled hunter do a long shot with a bow but a disable hunter can not even if they practiced to do it while using a crossbow? Being able to use a crossbow would also allow me to possably practice independently from my hunting partner. As is I am bound to my hunting partner, my shoulder issue does not allow me to draw my bow even with the foothold, so my hunting partner does this for me then hands me my loaded bow. I can only practice within his schedule to get better if I can with my equipment, using a crossbow would give me the ability to possibly practice on my own, I could look at tree stand hunting and see if I like it, I could pick a crossbow with dry fire safety so when I am spot and stalk hunting I can be more safely ready to set up and get ready. I could even look at crossbow with equipment to help me draw my own bow. Bassicly i would have options that i do not have right now. I am limited on the bow I can use due to weight. My current set up is under 4 lbs, holding a bow with one arm and without tension from drawing the string is not a easy thing to do. I also only have one anchor point with my bow, most archers use up to 2. I find it difficult to let the majority of hunters tell hunters like me that my equipment is good enough because they have never sighted in, used, fired, or taken a spot and stalk PTMAE hunter out in the woods, because they don't even know the equipment. Or they have the they can do it but I cant mantality, for example: they can take a long archery shot of 80 yards on a elk because they practiced, yet if I practiced with a crossbow, I'm the bad guy because a 80 yard shot with my current set up is unatainable due to equipment tuning limitations. Moving around the woods with a fully loaded bow is difficult while trying to change positions, having my hunting partner unload my bow , move with me into another shooting position then reload my bow is unpracticale in the field. Not all PTMAE permit holders will choose crossbow and some might go back to a modified bow, but that should be our choice not a none disabled hunters choice to determine what equipment best suites ones disabilities. this should be based on merit and not simple majority. To Try to limit the crossbow with certain equipment is acinine. Current bows are not limited with slide sights, drop rests, long draw folks, or poundage so the crossbow addition should not be either, us upper body disabled hunters have enough limits in the woods to begin with. If a additional permit is created I don't think any rules should be created to it, it should just be a simple permit that PTMAE holders would also carry that states name, year and crossbow permit on it. I rifle hunt on my own sometimes, granted I have to hunt smart and in cell service so someone can come help me if I get a game animal and I would like to have that option with a crossbow permit, i would like to try hunting deer solo with a crossbow. I have chor ic conditions and i am well aware of what i can do and not do on my own in the woods, i do not need someone else to tell me what I can do. As is with the PTMAE I have to have a hunting partner with me which I am OK

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

with when it comes to my modified bow, however if I have a crossbow I would like the ability to go solo hunt and hunt smart like I do in Rifle season. For other hunters telling me I need to have a hunting partner, my equipment is good enough, and no one tree stand hunts is wrong and a bit across the line when it comes to discrimination. I like chasing bugaling elk in archery so I want to hunt archery with safe equipment. Current equipment leaves me less than the average archery hunter, a crossbow may give me some ability to do a little more on my own and giving me that independence that none disabled hunters have that I don't even with a modified bow. The argument of crossbows can be used in rifle season is null and void, muzzle loaders are allowed in rifle yet we have another season for it. Us PTMAE holders that want to try possibly the safer, easier equipment to use is all that we are asking, we are not asking to block out the last 2 weeks of archery season just for PTMAE holders to hunt. We are asking for a reasonable accommodation due to equipment failures of current equipment. I have given you the 2 easiest ways of adding a crossbow to and for PTMAE holders, the qualifications for the PTMAE stay the same but would allow either the crossbow to be used as a option Following all PTMAE rules, or as a secondary permit that PTMAE holders can use. I would be happy with either one of those options, and so would other PTMAE holders. I also do not tolerate the confusion on PTMAE and hunt from vehicle permits, they are not the same thing and the crossbow should only be for those that have the permit to modify archery equipment. The rules and qualifications for the PTMAE permit already list a chronic condition and clearly explains the only ways that someone can qualify, so for those that are suddenly going to bring up abuse, we haven't had abuse with the PTMAE permit, because of what qualifies and the rules with it. I don't think hunters are going to suddenly run down to a doctor and persuade them to list a shoulder problem as chronic and sign off on the paper, it takes awhile to get most doctors willing to state a chronic condition as a chronic condition. The PTMAE permit is not a "easy" permit to qualify for and should not be considered fused with the rules, qualifications of hunting from a vehicle. Both those permits are for certain disabilities and just because one hunter has one does not mean they have both. Lots of hunters who have the hunt from vehicle can draw a bow, so they can not qualify for a PTMAE, those that qualify for a PTMAE can not draw a bow but may be able to walk and spot and stalk. Different disabilities and different permits, people should really educate themselves. So I propose adding crossbows for either : a additional permit for those that have the permit to modify archery equipment and this is just as simple as it sounds, the qualifier is do you currently have the PTMAE, no added restrictions or rules on the cross bow, just the ability to use a crossbow if the permit is purchased or to use the modified bow if so desired : or the word age on the PTMAE and in the regulations would change in the description of equipment used, and instead of stating no crossbows can be used it would change to or crossbows can be used, allowing PTMAE holders the choice of equipment used and all PTMAE rules would be in effect with the crossbow being used. This should not be a over complicated thing to do. Disabled people have their own "I cant" lists they don't need equipment that has its own "I can't list" as well. What are the none disabled people afraid of, do they think giving me a crossbow will magically call bull elk into me at 30 yards or under? I still have to work the elk, call, move around and play the wind just like they do, giving me safer equipment to do that with is reasonable accommodation. A small group of a small group is trying to be heard, the equipment is not what others think it is, it does not give us an edge and neither will a crossbow, it comes down to equipment limitations compared to a non modified bows capabilities, a modified bow is not comparable to a none modified bow. A modified bow is more difficult or more added parts are added to a weight specific need and gets overly bulky and difficult to use out in the field, they are not comparable already. My modified bow is a over size unsafe vertical crossbow, so why can I have the option to use the smaller, more safe option to see if it works better with my disabilities and my preferred hunting style?

#51

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 23, 2023 11:12:50 AM
Last Modified: Friday, June 23, 2023 11:28:08 AM
Time Spent: 00:15:17
IP Address: 72.255.188.158

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

1. A Montana FWP meeting on June 8, 2023 voted to allow public land training of gun dogs through March 31. It is unreasonable to disallow the non impactful take of upland game by falconers yet allow the training of dogs during the same time period.
 2. Falconers, by nature of their sport, avoid high use upland hunting areas the majority of their season. It is important that a portion of our season allows for opportunity to fly with the absence of gun hunters.
 3. January and February weather is often uncondusive to falconry. March offers the best opportunity outside gun season to practice our sport while both maintaining the best hunting conditions for our birds and avoiding impact during upland breeding seasons.
 4. Long-standing falconry regulation in Montana has always set March 31 as an end date because there is no biological, economic, or environmentally sound data, reason, or rationale for its shortening.
 5. FWP has not only included 1000 non-stakeholders as survey participants but has specifically targeted a group that may see our extended falconry season as unfair, posing the survey question in such a way that inaccurately implies falconry has an impact on upland populations.
 6. FWP should have the gun season dates for sharptail grouse and Hungarian partridge the same dates as pheasant season. It is a shame that gun hunters can shoot flocks of family groups of half grown chicks on Sept 1st . I'd add extra days at the end of the season so the number of days are the same.
 7. FWP should put antler restricitons on Bucks to 4 point or better except for youth hunters. The deer populations are down because there are not enough mature bucks to breed the does. This has been going on for a long time and now there are fewer does too.
 8. FWP should fight regulations of natives. Areas near Indian reservations are being impacted the most by Native Americans shooting game from the roads year round. I have a friend who is 1/16th Indian that uses a rifle during archery season because he says it's legal for him. He told me he has shot 33 bulls to date. This is an unfair advantage and should not be allowed.
-

#52

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 23, 2023 11:59:28 AM
Last Modified: Friday, June 23, 2023 12:01:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:48
IP Address: 98.97.113.178

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Quit catering to the out of state hunters. You give them too many tags. And too many of the special permits. We live here and buy license and pay taxes every year. Get back to making the resident sportsman or women a priority

#53

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 23, 2023 1:50:23 PM
Last Modified: Friday, June 23, 2023 2:15:21 PM
Time Spent: 00:24:58
IP Address: 72.255.188.36

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

We received a survey regarding the extended Falconry season that ends on March 31st. The survey is obviously a biased survey as not only was it sent to Falconers but every upland game hunter in the state who have no idea about the idiosyncrasies of Falconry. Falconry has no impact on upland game birds as evidenced by a federal impact study conducted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Your survey question in itself is incorrect as it states that Sharptail grouse and Sage grouse breed in March. They don't! The males start showing up to the leks in mid-March but breeding does not take place until April and beyond in which all hunting seasons are over by that time, including Falconry. Falconers use hunting dogs at all times of the season to find upland game birds. The fact that grouse start lekking by mid March is no reason to stop a sport that has no impact on populations. Currently turkeys are allowed to be hunted in the spring time while exhibiting breeding behavior. Elk are allowed to be hunted during the rutting season which is also breeding behavior. There is no biological reason to change any of the Falconry seasons. In addition, January and February can be a difficult time for falconers as winter usually has its hold on Montana. March offers a respite from the weather for falconers to fly their birds on wild quarry. As primary stakeholders, the Montana Falconers Association has worked as partners with FWP developing regulations regarding upland game birds, including Sage Grouse. These Raptors are not pets but hunting companions. Hundreds of wild Raptors hunt wild gamebirds daily throughout the year. Falconers are a small but dedicated group that may catch a few birds in the month of March, but have no impact on wild populations. Moreover, March offers falconers a safe time to fly their birds without the risk of the birds getting shot. Falconers have lost raptors during the gun season in many states, including Montana. In conclusion, Montana falconers have worked closely with regulators at FWP. We are completely blindsided by this transparent attempt to end our March season. Any issues that have come up in the past have been dealt with by the mutual cooperation of FWP and the Montana falconers, specifically the MFA. Given the great partnership that we have developed with FWP, I recommend no changes to the falconry hunting seasons.

#54

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 23, 2023 2:36:41 PM
Last Modified: Friday, June 23, 2023 2:55:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:18:41
IP Address: 8.22.11.60

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

At least Brain Wakeling had the balls to sign his name to the totally inappropriate survey regarding falconry in March. That way we now know that he couldn't care less about any science-based information having to do with season setting, only gut reactions. And he displays his own bias by providing just enough information to tip the scales, but not enough to fully inform the respondents. How about telling respondents that there is plenty of data showing that falconry has zero impact on upland game birds, anywhere and anytime? How about pointing out that turkey seasons and deer, elk and antelope season also are focused specifically on the mating season?

The notion that it is a good idea to ask competing interest groups whether they would like to restrict the seasonal access of others is pretty....lame. Is this going to be followed by 'informational surveys' asking whether falconers would like to shorten the hunting season of gun hunters? For example, how about starting the sage grouse gun season the same day as pheasant hunting? After all, if it's good enough for pheasant hunters the same rationale should apply to gun hunters.

Of course this leads directly to a survey about how gun hunters feel about early bow hunting seasons, special muzzleloader seasons, youth hunts, etc.

Instead of looking for ways to divide hunters, maybe think for a split second and try to find ways to unite hunters. Just a novel suggestion before your knee-jerk impulses tear down the whole model of science-based game management.

#55

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 23, 2023 9:11:12 PM
Last Modified: Friday, June 23, 2023 9:24:38 PM
Time Spent: 00:13:25
IP Address: 208.70.13.135

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I am both a gun bird hunter and falconer. Falconry has been shown to have no impact on upland Gamebird populations. The very nature of the sport limits the amount of Gamebirds taken to much less than gun hunting. Most falconers will catch a maximum of 2-3 sharptail grouse or sage grouse a season. This would be an average daily take for me gun hunting. It would make a big greater impact to reduce the bag limit from 4 sharptail grouse to two. I have seen a group of 3-4 gun hunters wipe out an entire family group of sharptail grouse in one flush in September. The gun season should be moved to October to reduce the loss of family sharptail groups. Lastly there are not many active falconers in Montana so by simple mathematics gun hunting is having a much greater impact on populations than a few falconers in the month of March. Thank you for your consideration.

Brett Bruggeman
Gundog trainer
Upland bird hunter
Falconer.

#56

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, June 24, 2023 7:52:30 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, June 24, 2023 7:54:01 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:31
IP Address: 76.75.6.205

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

It is absurd to allow dog training in March but consider ending the falconry season in February. Falconry has been shown to have no effect on wild populations.

#57

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, June 24, 2023 6:06:58 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, June 24, 2023 7:12:30 PM
Time Spent: 01:05:31
IP Address: 72.250.147.235

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

1. I agree with significantly cutting deer tag numbers in 535. There is not the public land to support the hunter pressure.
2. It is time to make hunter harvest surveys mandatory in Montana. The infrastructure is in place with the myFWP app. I am pleased with the app and I like the e-tag option. Even if the e tag remains optional I think a hunter report should be mandatory! I imagine it is hard to make regulation changes and I feel like that is the first step we need before we make knee jerk reactions like some hunters are suggesting.
3. With the increase of population and resident pressure, technological advances making harvest easier, and a struggling mule deer population, it is time to change season structure. Mule deer and elk should be managed separately. Leave the elk season structure if you want. However, I think the deer would benefit from the following season dates.
 Archery: Sep. 1-30
 Rifle: Oct 10-31
 Archery ONLY: Nov 1-30
 This would take some harvest pressure off rutting deer and still provide the opportunity that Montanans (myself included) cherish. Not to mention, the trophy potential would increase I would have to imagine. Montana is unique with the long seasons and opportunity and I do not want to see that go away. That's why I feel like the above season structure will help the deer while still keeping MOST of the opportunity. I do think something needs to be done to ease the harvest, especially in Eastern Montana. This would also open the potential for rut rifle hunt permits for rifle.
4. Make a mandatory 20\$ add on to hunting license that goes to BMA or other public access initiatives. People will complain about it but they'll ultimately pay. There is not enough incentive for a good piece of ground to enroll if they can command more money being leased by outfitters.
5. Landowner tags should only be used on private land. Period. I know guys that have landowner preference that kill trophy bulls on BLM. That is unacceptable in my opinion.

I believe the way we hunt deer in Montana is not sustainable. At the same time we have a heritage and culture rooted in opportunity. Let's not rush to an extreme limited season structure like other western states. It's not ok to have a deer tag every third year. I feel like the season dates I suggested might satisfy the best of both worlds. It will retain opportunity while help out the deer. Thank you for your time.

Owen Thatcher
 (406) 331-0879

#58

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, June 25, 2023 2:26:20 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, June 25, 2023 2:42:56 PM
Time Spent: 00:16:36
IP Address: 72.174.74.225

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Moose and mountain goat archery:

- o Should we recommend archery-only seasons for moose and mountain goat like we have for bighorn sheep? Yes if approved.
- o Would a season of Sept. 2-14 work like it does for bighorn sheep? Yes
- o Should this not apply in hunting districts with less than 3 tags? Yes

• Mountain lion quotas:

- o Should we change how we set quotas for fall mountain lion season? No

Length of season:

- o What do you think about permits or reduced seasons in areas where mule deer numbers are low? As wildlife managers I believe it's your job and obligation to manage healthy wildlife populations. If the numbers are low for a species, then permits should be limited or length of season to reduce harvest. Female animals shouldn't be taken to allow the population to grow.
- o Should the season be permitted for bull or either-sex for a portion of the season and open to a general license for any elk for remainder? I'm not sure what this is trying to address.

During the scoping session it was mentioned that there is concern about falconry in March. If there is concern of over harvesting in areas this time of year limit to resident only, reduce bag limits, or just close the season at the close of February.

It was also brought up that if a person would apply for limited deer permit and not draw, they would not be allowed to hunt mule deer bucks with their general permit. What is the point of a proposal like this? Fewer people will apply for limited areas reducing application money and won't have an impact of overcrowding on public lands. How would you enforce this? If someone applies and don't draw, they would receive a whitetail only tag?

#59

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 8:39:26 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 8:48:37 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:11
IP Address: 72.250.152.136

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Please do not go unlimited on archery antelope tags. Keep current quota. The current number is set well and accommodates enough hunters on the landscape without overcrowding and more non-resident pressure.

Consider capping general turkey, upland and bear licenses to limit non-residents.

Consider splitting nonresident combos into mule deer or WT deer to limit the number of young mule deer being taken and help with mule deer rebound.

KEEP SUBQUOTAS for male/female lions

Consider mule deer draws for rut hunts or eliminate the last two weeks of mule deer season and allow hunting over "dead week"

Limit elk B tags valid on public and private land in 004 & 005 and have unlimited available valid on private only.

Allow for early archery season for moose and goat to align with sheep for tag holders. This would not apply in goat units with already early Sept 1. opener.

#60

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 9:58:19 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 10:01:01 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:41
IP Address: 98.97.5.45

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

End shoulder season. I see people driving all over State lands during shoulder season. It interferes with multiple use such as hiking, walking my dog, etc.

#61

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 11:32:52 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 11:40:04 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:11
IP Address: 174.198.130.154

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Hi there,

In regards to declining mule deer populations, removing either sex options across the state (excluding youth) seems like it would be a great option. I'd be curious to know how many does are being harvested in these seasons anyhow.

Non-resident mule deer -

Reducing the number of non resident tags in region 7 specifically seems necessary. The majority of hunters (anecdotal evidence) out in region 7 are not from Montana. They are all harvesting young, immature deer to get their money out of their non resident tags.

Draw tags for rut mule deer -

Idaho does this in many units - the general season ends before the rut begins, but they offer draw tags for rut hunts. This could be applied to residents or non residents. This would Limit the amount of deer being taken in the rut when they are most susceptible. Non residents could have a more difficult draw for getting a rut hunt in region 7, residents could only hunt it every other year. Still allowing a resident to hunt every year (the primary concern of lost montanas, I'm assuming), but they can get a rut hunt every other year and having a great hunt with better mule deer populations.

Mandatory harvest reporting (online) - we should be collecting data on all harvest throughout the state. Making this an online option would be useful for many people who are at work when FWP calls for harvest information. I am always excited to give my harvest info but I may miss calls at certain times of the day.

#62

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 12:19:40 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 12:21:09 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:29
IP Address: 144.86.219.21

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Statewide Proposal Comments

- Length of season:
 - o What do you think about permits or reduced seasons in areas where mule deer numbers are low? I support.
 - o Should the season be permitted for bull or either-sex for a portion of the season and open to a general license for any elk for remainder? Establish seasons based on what the biologist recommends. Should we look for a standard way to consider this? Establish seasons based on what the biologist recommends.

Region 4

HD 410 - For the 410-02 antlerless elk license, remove the shoulder season that extends from the day after general season through Feb. 15, and remove the second antlerless elk opportunity via general license to holders of the 410-02. I support.

DEER

HDs 410 and 417- change from "antlered buck only" (AB) general license to limited-entry (LE) permits for both 6-week archery and 5-week general seasons. Proposed quota 200 in each HD. Proposed quota range 25-500. I support.

HD 426 - change five-week general rifle season opportunity to first three weeks antlered buck (AB) general license followed by the last two weeks limited-entry (LE) permits AB (no change to archery season—remains general license AB). Proposed quota 100. Proposed range 25 - 250. I support.

HDs 410, 411, 412, 417, 419, and 426 - mule deer B licenses - change from district wide to valid "Only on private land. I support.

#63

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 2:34:25 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 2:48:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:17
IP Address: 98.97.12.154

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see archery only seasons for Moose and Goat that look just like the Sheep season. I cannot see any drawbacks. The benefits would be simplified season structure and perhaps less pressure during the "anything goes" season. I do not think that we should institute an archery only season in the Goat units where they open early. As I believe we should not take opportunity away from other hunters.

Sincerely,
Stephen LePage
406-535-5636

#64

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 7:38:49 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 7:40:29 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:40
IP Address: 98.97.35.71

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Statewide Proposed New Season Opportunity

- Wilderness Area / Backcountry Hound season Sept.15 – April 14
- Closure 1st week of general rifle deer/elk except 150, 280, & 316
- Requires hound handler permit or any mountain lion tag
- Hunting districts include the existing 150 district, proposed 280 district, and all other designated wilderness areas in Montana
- Wilderness areas valid are the following: Absaroka Beartooth, Anaconda Pintler, Cabinet Mountains, Gates of the Mountains, Lee Metcalf, Mission Mountains, Rattlesnake, Selway Bitterroot, and Welcome Creek

1st week general rifle deer/elk season closure to limit unnecessary conflict

This would open up more area to traditional hound hunting than we have now and allow houndsmen and houndswomen to hunt areas that have significantly less wolves than the current 150 district and proposed 280 district. Currently most hound hunters are reluctant to take their dogs into these areas for fear of wolf conflict.

#65

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 8:42:30 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 8:47:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:02
IP Address: 69.145.21.32

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

270: Get rid of the unlimited permit for elk as a first choice only. Make it a second choice and require unit specific hunting cow or bull.

Or

Turn this back into a general tag since you are trying to increase the amount of elk harvest.

This unit has got to be one of the worst planned units in the state.

#66

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 10:57:16 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 11:05:56 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:39
IP Address: 72.250.152.136

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Please consider approving proposal allowing archery hunting early for moose & goat for tag holders.

Don't increase quotas on archery antelope permits or make them unlimited to prevent further overcrowding especially by non residents. Keep sub quotas on mtn lions- or the special permits are worthless bc everyone wants a tom and we all know females control the population so there needs to be incentive to harvest females too. Make 690 rifle tag good during archery season too like other trophy districts. Create B tags for elk & deer that are valid on private only and they can be unlimited in areas that are over populated but make public land b tags draw. It's part of the problem of overcrowding on public because of so many OTC tags that can be picked up by residents & nonresidents thinking there's abundant game on public- when there's not and no access to private especially regions 4 & 5 elk in particular.

Mule deer should go to draw only in districts under objective or stop rut hunts for a few years. If you put in for mule deer permits you should still be allowed to whitetail hunt however.

Thank you for listening & your hard work!

#67

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 10:55:30 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 11:19:01 AM
Time Spent: 00:23:31
IP Address: 75.143.208.82

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

RE: "HDs 410, 411, 412, 417, 419, and 426 - mule deer B licenses - change from district wide to valid

"Only on private land." FWP must make it very clear through marketing AND NOT the 144 page brochure WHAT private land is - is it BLM, is it DNRC, what is "private land" Especially in those far eastern districts there is a plethora of Public Land and making sportsmen hunt on the checkered "Private Land" may be an exercise in futility and your aging sportsmen are not fools, they are experienced, and they do not NEED to hunt, they hunt because they enjoy the sport, sportsmen do NOT need the meat to survive, the bounty is just frosting on the cake. If a private property owner is over whelmed with deer or elk then they need to be proactive - perhaps if a fence is painted Yellow vs orange, yellow would mean that hunters are welcomed and add a phone number so hunters can check in. I hunt private land because the rancher/farmer wants animals removed - I have removed as many as 7 muley does in 1 day - the rancher gives me the run of the ranch and lets me drive on his farm roads, there are deep coulees SO this is not a walk in the park. I started hunting this ranch because my father was handicapped and needed to be able to shoot from the truck; I still hunt this ranch, though my father has passed, BUT I always call and ask Russ if he wants deer harvested and I hunt with another handicapped hunter with a bad back, that was broken in a helicopter accident. THIS is a 2 way street; Sportsmen spend hundreds of dollars on fuel, licenses, tags, equipment, food, vehicles, etc. Sportsmen have skin in the game.

Over all, the other items in Region 4 seem to be based on Science with a goal to keep the deer and elk populations healthy and the herds size stable.

This box needs to be much larger and the link should be in the first drop down or even the first sentence: Comment Here ...

#68

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 1:11:33 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 1:18:46 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:12
IP Address: 152.132.10.14

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Length of season:

o What do you think about permits or reduced seasons in areas where mule deer numbers are low?

- Allow antlered deer only as the harvesting of does is what has been shown to have an effect on population numbers.

o Should the season be permitted for bull or either-sex for a portion of the season and open to a general license for any elk for remainder?

- No. People already complain that some HD rules/regs are already too confusing. Pick one or the other (bull only, browtined bull only, or either-sex). Then if you are wanting to help control numbers issue some Elk B tags.

o Should we look for a standard way to consider this?

-No. Standardization works well when there are patterns of similarity across lines. Each HD should be considered unique/individual as each one presents its own characteristics of opportunity, habitat, numbers, accessibility, winter kill, predation, etc... Each HD is not the same so they shouldn't be treated the same with some blanket standardization

#69

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 2:23:36 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 2:52:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:29:14
IP Address: 69.144.248.225

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I have heard rumors of Montana adopting "choose your weapon" hunting. I can not stress enough how against this I am. My father was raised hunting multiple season, and he raised me the same way. I want to raise my boys the same way. I think this would be a step back in ability to attract new hunters, and pass on traditions.

#70

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 3:35:18 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 3:38:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:03
IP Address: 199.96.16.11

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

each hunting district or region should have non resident quotas especially for mule deer but maybe for elk as well and it should be a choose a weapon for them when applying for general elk license

#71

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 4:30:35 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 4:30:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:07
IP Address: 161.7.39.7

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

From: shawn hendricks
Sent: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 3:30 PM
To: FWP General
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

Good afternoon,

I just wanted to take a few minutes and voice my opinion on the purposed changes to the elk season. I personally feel that fwp is not into management of the resources anymore and it's becoming money driven. There already rules and regulations that I personally feel keep some of us residents out of the woods. If there is any weapons restrictions made they be set forth on the nonresidents. Making them choose either archery or gun season. We as residents should not be restricted to use of weapon especially when we can't even control the population thru shoulder seasons.

Thank you
Shawn Hendricks
4062918904

#72

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 8:46:19 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 8:47:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:20
IP Address: 184.166.39.215

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Hunter should be able to purchase a second black bear tag if they so choose

#73

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:18:52 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:19:13 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:21
IP Address: 98.97.36.3

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Concerning

#74

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:19:36 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:41:02 AM
Time Spent: 00:21:25
IP Address: 98.97.36.3

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

The proposal to HD130- Deer I find supportive! This area is very dear to me, as I grew up in this valley. The deer population in this area has been in decline over the past 15 years. An area that once had a very healthy ungulate population (deer and elk) has become all but that. This should have been proposed atleast 5 years ago, when populations hit rock bottom. FWP and biologists need to be better at being progressive in regulations and wildlife management rather than reactionary when things are past critical!

#75

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:42:16 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 10:01:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:19:42
IP Address: 98.97.36.3

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

This is concerning BMU/HD 140, 141, 150 and 170 – Extend spring season to June 15.

I fully support the extended season for these areas. It's never made any sense for other districts in the state to have a June 15th end date, when these districts are in regions that have the highest concentration of black bears in the state. The areas being more remote and subject to late snow melt, most black bears are not accessible during the normal season dates. Also, ungulate populations in these areas are a fraction of what they use to be, historically speaking. Increase of harvest of more mature black bears, may help the severely decimated ungulate populations. Species such as Grizzlies, Mountain Lions and Wolves need to be looked at also, but that is not part of this specific proposal!

I believe that these districts should also be able offer the ability of two bear tags/individual. I know parts of Idaho do such for areas similar to these districts.

#76

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 10:14:25 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 10:20:28 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:02
IP Address: 205.149.9.25

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Dear Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks - we are both University of Montana grads and have practiced falconry for more than 100 years collectively. When we retired, we moved back to Montana to be closer to family and to enjoy practicing falconry in a State that managed upland game populations very well and protected habitat. We have enjoyed hunting with falcons and eagles in the month of March, and we hope that season will continue. The level of harvest by falconers is minimal and research has shown that falconers have no measurable impact on upland game populations, including sage grouse. Please keep March open for falconers, both resident and non-resident. Regards, Mike and Jocelyn Barker

#77

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 1:27:35 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 1:28:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:50
IP Address: 174.234.4.89

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I fully support picking a district and a draw system to where it might take 3 years to draw a hood tag but have a decent quality hunt with mature deer

#78

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 1:28:03 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 1:35:12 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:08
IP Address: 107.122.173.78

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Please extend spring black bear season in region 1 until June 15th. The early spring black bear season April 15-May15th is often comprised by road work and lingering snow. (ie: spring 2023 the south fork was closed to access until mid May). This creates unbalanced hunting opportunity, therefore causing predator populations to rise and prey to drop. Additionally, an opportunity to purchase two black bear tags would be very beneficial to trophy black bear hunters. 1 black bear to help management, and 1 opportunity to hold out for a mature boar. Thank you for this option.

#79

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 1:08:29 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 1:49:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:41:24
IP Address: 216.166.170.99

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I am responding and commenting to the surgery that asks my comfort level in eliminating all upland falconry in the month of March. I am a licensed Montana falconer. I am adamantly opposed to any modification of the march falconry season. In 2012 Montana falconers agreed and put a resolution in writing that we would not hunt sage grouse leks in march and that has worked fine for residents . After some out of state hunters misbehaved two seasons ago. We reaffirmed our resolution and published it in national falconry magazines All this even though there is no law against hunting on leks We need march to be able to hunt our falcons when gun hunters are not out. That's part of the reason falconry has a longer season in this and most western states. It is outrageous that an effort is underway to boot strap and stop ALL UPLAND in march when Huns and other grouse are not the issue . Why would you even consider cutting us off in march when you just gave it to the gun dog training guys and didn't restrict them at all in march. That makes no sense at all. Falconers have virtually no impact on game bird populations. Fwp used to survey falconers about sage grouse harvest. It was like a total of 25 for all falconers combined. ! for the entire season Fwp stopped taking those harvest surveys because the harvest numbers were so low. There are a million more effective ways to help sage grouse rather than making falconers artificial lambs and sacrificing our march season which won't help the grouse. All the present survey will do is incite non falconers and pit them against us Falconry is already horribly misunderstood this survey won't help that image If you want to protect sage grouse then consider shortening the season for non residents exactly like you did for the gun dog training license. Out of state dog trainers have a shorter season, do the same for out of state falconers as they have not demonstrated commitment to sage grouse like we have with our self policing resolutions for more than a decade without any problems of resident falconers hunting sg on leks !

#80

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 2:24:17 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 2:31:12 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:55
IP Address: 47.44.112.2

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

BLACK BEAR

BMU/HD 140, 141, 150 and 170 – Extend spring season to June 15. BMUs 140, 141, and 150 are difficult to access with 141 and 150 being in wilderness areas. Snow levels limit spring seasons and harvest of bears is generally low in these areas. Increasing the season length will offer additional opportunity. BMU 170 is primarily urban and private lands where we would like to reduce black bear density to reduce conflicts

This is a very good idea I support 100 %. This season extension and will both increase bear hunting opportunity/harvest as well as increase elk calf survival rates. I ask only that a similar season extension be considered in BMU 110 - North Fork of the Flathead River. This area is also difficult to access with spring snow levels. Bear numbers are high in this area and elk numbers are low. A season extension and subsequent increase in bear hunting opportunity and harvest in this area would help elk and moose calf recruitment.

#81

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 3:30:28 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 3:43:04 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:35
IP Address: 71.36.48.181

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I agree with extending spring bear season in 140 and 170 but also feel it should also be extended in 110 and 101 east of hwy 93. Bears numbers need to be reduced, especially where you have made strides with the mule deer restrictions in 101.

Should be allowed two bear tags in 170, 130, and 140.

I also agree with no doe season in 130.

There should not be any doe harvest on public land in 170 east of hwy 35 either.

Extend the same restrictions on mule deer bucks, with stopping season pre rut and go a draw throughout 110, 140, and 130. It has worked in 101. Be proactive not reactive. You know the mule deer numbers are tanking for 10 years. It is a slaughter of small bucks up Peters Ridge with early snow.

MT FWP needs to address the fact that archers make a giant difference in harvest. Modern equipment has shot distances of up to 120 yards. How do you not argue now that hunting archery then rifle then muzzleloader is now additive now and not just compensatory!!! Everyone bow hunts now. Long range archery is taking a giant toll on game. Time for choose your weapon or choose your district. Or both.

#82

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, June 29, 2023 4:11:40 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, June 29, 2023 4:19:47 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:07
IP Address: 174.231.83.30

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

We all know WAY too many mule deer are harvested statewide and that is the number one reason of decline. Does anyone consider how the over objective elk numbers also contribute to the low deer numbers? Yet it's increasingly difficult to draw an elk tag in the areas? Why tie the hands of residentst especially bow hunting when the elk are over objective? Why limit where permits may be used? valid only on private land? That hasn't helped gain access. Landowners don't care that you have a private only tag. they are either letting you hunt or not. Also the mule deer proposals. Simple . urb your non residents some how some way. Put a lower cap. sorry out mule deer numbers are low. single region by special permit only amd a antler size restriction 4x4 or 20 inch or better? . Residents statewide 1 mule deer every other year? or region specific ? Lots of ways to implant a plan to help our declining deer populations. But for God's sakes stop letting an out of state hunter kill a mule deer doe here or a pencil dick buck!

#83

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 30, 2023 8:01:36 AM
Last Modified: Friday, June 30, 2023 8:25:45 AM
Time Spent: 00:24:08
IP Address: 97.73.128.12

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I am opposed to and I resent the recent so called "survey " sent out by FWP concerning falconry and upland game bird hunting. I feel that the survey was misleading and did not provide sufficient information concerning falconry in the introductory section. No mention was made of the recent FWP Commission approval of a gun dog training season on upland game birds on public land until March thirty-first annually. Whoever made up the survey had plenty of time to include the dog training season in the survey information. No mention was made of the fact that in a FWP past survey of falconers at their license renewal period that only twenty-five sage grouse were killed in total by falconers in the previous season. The survey was unfair to, and biased against the falconry community and should not be used to determine the structure of future falconry seasons. Thank you. Blair Anderson. West Yellowstone

#84

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, June 30, 2023 1:36:29 PM
Last Modified: Friday, June 30, 2023 1:38:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:05
IP Address: 174.215.19.100

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Stop do not shoot more cows in 391 south. The biologist here is smoking Crack lived here most of my life and never seen the elk number this low.

#85

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 01, 2023 12:01:45 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 01, 2023 12:05:47 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:01
IP Address: 205.149.11.163

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Wow. Montana fish and wildlife has finally turned to anti-hunting. Taking away falconry season is not only not acceptable but also bordering the line of being an anti-hunting organization. Plus you surveyed people that know absolutely nothing about Falconry, including you Brian! This survey was created because one game warden thinks he knows best. Let's hope the governor appreciates what you've done.

#86

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, July 02, 2023 10:30:46 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, July 02, 2023 10:44:47 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:01
IP Address: 107.122.173.69

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

To the honorable Board.

I know up front that by your past actions ,the common hunter has no place in your Hunting Agenda.

That being said ,ive have to at least speak up,about your propasals ans so called requested rules changes.

1. Allow lead free muzzle loader projectiles to be authorized,such as those made by THOR,A COPPER SKIRTED PROJECTILE,ZERO LEAD,ZERO PLASTIC,So those of us wh have access to lead free restricted ranchs can be legal.
- 2.In 313 and 314 we have thousands of land locked public hunting grounds we all paid for,yet the Billionar ranch owners,will not permit public access.your good and giving these rich folks trophy elk tags,how about getting access for us,the common man who dont own 100s of thousands of acres.
- 3.DO NOT TAKE AWAY MY RIGHT TO HUNT BOTH ARCHERY AND MODERN GUN,You do not have the right to decide for me what I choose to hunt with.
- 4.Develope a Disabled Veteran Hunting permit for all our seasons,including 10 Bison tags,for resident veterans only,and not just purple heart recptiants.
- 5.Here in gardiner (313)we have thousands of cow elk ,we cant hunt,yet the NATIVES can come in and slaughter our animals from jan to april. Very unfair to Gardiner Residents and veterans.

Thank you for your time.

Ora Chester Evitt ,Gardiner Mt. 01211965-130

#87

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 03, 2023 10:47:37 AM
Last Modified: Monday, July 03, 2023 10:54:14 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:36
IP Address: 192.161.71.41

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

It sure looks like all these Proposals are just punishing Residents rather than Non-Residents. There is not ONE proposal to Reduce/Eliminate any non resident tags. If these mule deer populations/Hunting pressure is this out of hand, we need to start with Reducing Non-Resident tags. Residents should not be having to give up years and years of family Traditions to cater to these non residents! The Non-Residents should be the very first ones that are affected by reducing tags/season lengths far before any Resident hunter. Seems the last few years you see 2-3 Non resident vehicles to 1 Resident. Thanks

#88

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 03, 2023 11:03:04 AM
Last Modified: Monday, July 03, 2023 11:45:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:42:48
IP Address: 72.250.147.235

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

In regards to HD 426:

Please consider something different than your current season structure proposal. Having a three week general rifle season followed by a special permit might just draw more attention to the district and have the reverse affect. The common thinking among sportsmen might be that they can hunt a "trophy" unit on a general tag into November when bucks are very vulnerable. Take this year's dates for instance. According to your proposal a general tag holder would still be able to hunt up until November 10th if Im not mistaken. What are we trying to accomplish? There will be mature bucks rutting very hard at this time. Are you trying to grow bigger bucks or protect a declining population of deer? Either way I don't believe this proposal will help much if at all. Like I stated previously, this HD may be just enough under the radar now that designating it a "trophy unit" might bring increased pressure. Either leave this HD alone or truly manage it on a limited basis. There are nice deer in this district and with the agricultural and river breaks interface it is and always be great deer habitat. Please make harvest reporting mandatory before we make any major changes to districts such as these. Do we truly know how many deer are being taken out of these units? If the public consensus is that changing the season structure for this district is desired, please consider something as follows:

HD 426

General season

Sep. 1-30 = archery antlered Mule Deer

Oct. 10-31= rifle antlered mule deer

Nov 1-30 = archery antlered mule deer

Special permit

Nov 10-24 = rifle buck mule deer with quota of 50

Without having harvest information from previous seasons I believe these dates will provide benefit to both deer and hunters. This would be the perfect balance of opportunity and management for older and more deer. Hunters still have opportunity with archery equipment on a general license in November. Consequently, harvest will be far less than current numbers. I think these dates should be the norm for any general district in the state if changes are to be made. However, it is still my preference that nothing be done until we have data in place from a mandatory harvest report. Drawing attention to 426 by making a draw hunt, while still allowing general rifle hunting until November 10 is not a good idea!

Thank you

Owen Thatcher

406-331-0879

#89

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 03, 2023 12:31:56 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 03, 2023 1:06:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:34:13
IP Address: 98.97.9.155

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Mule deer need to be more protected during the month of November. However, I am also in favor of having lots of opportunity. In order to accomplish this there needs to be some big statewide changes to hunting seasons. For starters, I think the general rifle season for mule deer needs to be moved forward to the month of October. Archery season could be moved forward with an August 15th opener and run through September. That would leave a separate permit only period to hunt for mule deer with a rifle during November. Also, in order to keep plenty of opportunity we could have some more archery general season hunting during the month of November and December. I think the mule deer season should be separate from whitetail deer and also elk. They need to set seasons for those three species separately. These changes need to be statewide changes as well in order for it to work. Only changing a few units or regions won't work. It will just put more pressure on other areas. I understand there was a law passed making the muzzleloader season a general season requirement but I believe it should have been made a special permit draw. So, if in the future the law is changed, I would like to see muzzleloader season for mule deer put in August or September as a 9 or 10 day season and make it a special draw. Thank you for your time.

#90

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 04, 2023 12:00:01 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 04, 2023 12:03:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:25
IP Address: 184.166.225.226

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Change archery to "either/or", not both, for deer, elk, antelope, and special permits.

#91

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 04, 2023 2:12:56 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 04, 2023 2:29:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:16:47
IP Address: 69.145.83.100

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see Montana continue to lead the way in providing incredible opportunities to our hunters by creating an "unlimited" district for Bighorn sheep in the Mill Creek area of Deer/elk unit 317. There is a stable population of Bighorn sheep, residing in the rugged mountains on the east side of the Paradise Valley, which is predominately public land. I believe a quota of one legal ram, with a 10 day season at the start of September would ensure the unit is not over-harvested, and would also provide the highest probabilities of the sheep residing in the high country, national forest.

I think the unit is best served as an "Unlimited" hunt, due to the rugged nature of the country, low sheep density, and the personal belief that it serves in the best interest of the sports men and women of Montana by offering opportunity to hunt Bighorn sheep for those willing to work hard. It would further disperse hunters from the other 5 "unlimited" districts, and provide more revenue for wildlife management than a limited entry style hunt.

Thank you for your consideration.

#92

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 05, 2023 8:42:21 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 05, 2023 8:43:00 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:39
IP Address: 161.7.39.7

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I propose that we change units 101 and 110 to Permit Only for mule deer for the entire general season and eliminate these units (and all permit only mule deer hunts) from the "Heritage" muzzle loader season in December. I would leave the archery season alone.

Before providing my reasoning, I would like to thank Tim Thier, retired FWP biologist, for accomplishing the change in the Galton Range (now 101) to permit only for mule deer for the last two weeks of the 5 week general season. I know he met with resistance and would have liked to have achieved more. But we are starting to see more bucks surviving into older age class in 101, which is the goal for this effort.

But potential for further success is limited for the following reasons:

1. The area is small.
2. Reduced buck harvest the last two weeks can be over-ridden by increased pressure during the third week when the mule deer rut is underway and migration from 110 and British Columbia is occurring (first week October to second week November).
3. A spike in mule deer buck harvest has occurred when heavy snowfall occurred in early November moving bucks to easily accessible, even road huntable areas.
4. The "Limited Entry" moniker attracts an influx of out of region and nonresident hunters, especially during the third week. Making these units Limited Entry for all five weeks would eliminate this, and also activate the 10% nonresident cap for the entire general season.
5. Currently, hunting pressure is shifted to 110, especially the west side causing crowding and increasing all age class mule deer buck harvest there.

Therefore I propose closing 101 and 110 to general season over-the-counter mule deer hunting, and making both units permit only for all five weeks. Ideally I would split 110 along the Whitefish Divide, creating two sub units with 7 permits on west side, 8 on the east. 101 would remain 15 permits.

If FWP were unsuccessful in eliminating the "Heritage" hunt from permit-only areas, I would urge that road closures continue through that 9 day season. Currently snow mobiles are allowed to pass many of these gates after November 30.

Since the mid-90's hunters and game managers have been wringing their hands over the decline of mule deer across the western states, and our Region One in particular. During the severe winter of '96-'97, two friends and I organized a mule deer meeting here. We invited Colby Olford, a successful mule deer hunter, wildlife photographer, and outfitter from Colorado, to share his expertise and display his big buck collection and photos. Lou Kis, then a recently retired Warden Captain and professional photographer also shared his photos, and experience with the decline. I also attended a "Mule Deer Summit" in Bozeman, sponsored by FWP, with guest speakers from several western states. Public pressure in Colorado subsequently led to reduced tag numbers and other restrictions to limit hunting pressure, and it worked. Colorado became the best mule deer hunting state/province in North America.

What about our Region One? We finally eliminated mule deer doe hunting in 2012. We can now hunt wolves. Mountain lion predation is arguably unchanged. We have had extensive wild fires since 1988 in 110 and subsequently in 101 with some negative results. Considerable logging has been and is being done on State, private and some USFS lands, but our mule deer population has continued to decline (after a temporary rebound in 2002-2005 in recovery from the severe '96-'97 winter kill).

Region one and Western Montana has seen a tremendous increase in human population, along with an explosion in interest in hunting big mule deer bucks. A big heavy racked muley buck has become the Holy Grail of the new generation of "wilderness athletes" with their advanced technology, long range weaponry, and propensity to advertise their success on social media. Previously the only thing allowing a few mule deer bucks to reach maturity despite unlimited over the counter hunting through Thanksgiving weekend was deep snow, dense forests and difficult limited access. We are now overcoming those limitations. It is time that we recognize ourselves as the main predator on older age class mule deer bucks (at least in 101 and 110), and do more to limit ourselves.

Others at the 6/29/23 meeting offered even more extensive limited entry hunting in Region One as follows:

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

1. East of HWY 93.
2. All major mountain ranges (Whitefish Range, Cabinets, Upper Yaak (Grizzly Peak, Roderick Mountain), Swan Range, Middle Fork and South Fork Flathead River.
3. ALL of Region One.

The more limited entry mule deer units we have, the better the draw odds will be for drawing a tag for those who complain of such things.

Thank you for considering my proposal.

Respectfully yours,

Bennie J. Rossetto, M.D.

#93

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 05, 2023 6:16:16 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 05, 2023 6:54:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:37:46
IP Address: 174.198.132.250

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I believe most of the state should be permit only for mule deer. The age class is very young with few mature bucks roaming around. I hunt as hard as they come and im lucky to see maybe 2 mature bucks a year and i travel the state. Possibly could be my luck as of the last few years but most deer i see are younger 2 pts and 3 pts. I still happen to find a mature buck every year but its certainly not how it use to be 10 years ago. Especially in the little belt mountains. Little belts could have huge trophy potential if it was managed correctly. I wish this state would manage the mule deer for trophy potential vs opportunity for all. Or at least make it more 50/50 throughout the whole state.

Antler restrictions would be nice but i understand it doesn't help the herd gene pool. But maybe consider antler point restrictions on Nonresidents? As they tend to shoot any buck they can find as their trip comes to an end. I've seen plenty of "I'm not going home empty handed" comments yet quite a few areas does are open on a general tag. Also consider antler point restrictions state wide to resident and nonresident hunters. But allow any buck to youth and seniors. If that isn't enough fwp could also do a limited # of any buck permit per unit.

I do believe in a permit system for mule deer. But allow maybe 4 or 5 choices with the obvious 1st choice of being a trophy district for most hunters. Then the rest, hunters will have options but for the permits to work THEY NEED TO BE CAPPED QUOTAS. No unlimited. In areas over or close to objective offer more b tag opportunities.

Also if fwp is worried about over crowding they should actually cap nonresident hunters. Ya the combos and all antlered tags are capped but then there are b tags and surplus b tags. A good start would be only successful general tag holders can purchase surplus licenses. Possibly maybe even limiting nonresidents even more on the b tag drawing as well? Also throw out a survey asking if residents would be willing to pay more for tags if it meant decreased nonresident pressure. I know i sure would.

As far as the moose and mountain goat archery only season i believe to go forward with it. It won't change the harvest amount per unit. Just gives more opportunity to those who hold a permit. Also gives those who would like to harvest these 2 animals with archery equipment equal opportunity without having to where orange or worry about other permit holders in the area with rifles while they're trying to harvest with a bow.

Before implementing a choose your weapon consider just going to a liberal draw state wide in all general units with a liberal but sorta capped capacity. Also making nonresidents choose a specific district may help but at the same time maybe not as they seem to usually have a plan set in place but you never know!

#94

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 05, 2023 7:31:38 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 05, 2023 7:55:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:23:46
IP Address: 184.167.63.168

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I'm writing to urge the MT FWP to consider implementing a bighorn sheep season in the Mill Creek region on the east side of the Paradise Valley. According to the area biologist, the highest recorded count for this herd this past year was 62 sheep. This count is comparable to other sheep herds in the Absaroka and Beartooth ranges, which currently support an 'Unlimited' hunt structure and have done so for decades. Introducing an 'Unlimited' season structure in this region would help disperse hunter pressure and provide a unique opportunity for both resident and non-resident hunters.

The terrain in the region is extremely rough and similar to the Beartooth districts that currently have a two-ram quota. In my opinion, a 10-day hunt in September, similar to HD 300, could be sustainable in this area. Additionally, a 24-hour closure period could be considered if the biologists want to mitigate the chance of exceeding the district quota. New technologies such as Inreach could enable faster harvest reporting to ensure the harvest remains within the objectives set by the region biologist.

There are numerous creative options to allow for hunter opportunity while still maintaining a healthy sheep herd. District boundaries, season dates, season lengths, reporting times, etc., can all be modified to suit the respective area and its unique habitat, sheep habits, migration patterns, accessibility, and more. Thank you for your consideration. -Isaac Nelson

#95

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 06, 2023 7:52:26 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 06, 2023 1:45:06 PM
Time Spent: 05:52:40
IP Address: 98.97.39.114

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to propose that MT FWP start to research the feasibility of adding Unlimited Sheep Hunting Districts, to expand Bighorn Sheep opportunities.

Primarily, I believe two areas could be used for Unlimited Sheep opportunities -

1st - Mill Creek Drainage, which does have a sustained population of sheep, but does not have an assigned HD, currently.

The boundary could be:

Southern Boundary = north boundary of HD 303

East Boundary = west boundary of HD 500

North Boundary = Speculator Creek, up to Marten Peak, to Black Mountain, Down Pine Creek, to the Yellowstone River

West Boundary = Yellowstone River

2nd - I believe HD 302 could be a successful Unlimited sheep district. This is a rugged unit with lower sheep populations. Primarily, a majority of the harvest occurs after October 1st. Hunting season dates would need to be different than 'normal' Unlimited season dates. 1st September - 30th September would be a great season, as these sheep often push down to where they are visible from the highway when the snow flies. Cap the quota at 3 rams, with the same guidelines as the Beartooth units.

I also HIGHLY recommend that FWP changes ALL bighorn sheep ram tags to LEGAL RAM, ONLY. To protect, as much as possible, younger rams. I don't quite understand why 'any ram' tags are even issued.

Also, I would again, highly recommend, that MT FWP remove all bighorn ewe tags from all districts, except the breaks. And limit the harvest of ewes to 10 tags per district.

MT FWP should limit mule deer harvest to '4pt or better' in HD's, as other states have instituted this type of regulation, with great success. Montana should have a very robust population of mule deer, with high quality animals that reach older than 4 years old.

In reality, Montana has very low populations of older age class bucks. I also believe this has to do with having a general rifle season that extends into the rut. We should stop all deer hunting, with a general tag, after October 15th.

#96

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 06, 2023 10:46:18 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 06, 2023 11:04:31 PM
Time Spent: 00:18:13
IP Address: 67.218.74.100

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

- 1.) I feel that buck only mule deer harvest on a general tag makes sense in areas where mule deer numbers are low.
 - 2.) I am against restricting hunters to one limited entry mule deer district , but could accept being limited to one region for hunting mule deer bucks. I feel that priority should go to residents who live in the region followed by Montana residents who live in other regions and then non-residents. If regions went to limited entry mule deer buck permits, I feel that residents should be able to apply and draw every other year.
 - 3.)I feel that CWD testing should remain optional.
 - 4.) I feel that it is best to keep the season lengths the same, and instead control mule deer populations through controlling doe harvest.
 - 5.) Upland game bird seasons should end at the end of January for all manner of take. (Shotgun, archery, falconry)
-

#97

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 06, 2023 11:09:34 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 06, 2023 11:28:41 PM
Time Spent: 00:19:06
IP Address: 67.218.74.100

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

For Mule deer hunting, I feel there is a large shortage of deer so I recommend a drawing for mule does and bucks to 1, let the mule deer population grow and 2, deter hunters from other areas hunting to prevent overcrowding of hunters instead of shortening hunting season for mule deer, promoting hunter crowding.

In my opinion, mandatory CWD testing is not applicable because of difficulty to enforce and high expense so CWD testing should remain optional.

For Falconry, The season should be the same length as other upland bird seasons, harvesting with firearms or birds of prey.

#98

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 07, 2023 11:45:36 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 07, 2023 11:49:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:40
IP Address: 50.52.64.149

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Region 1 should be managed for CWD, we have been keeping the percentage down, but we are still getting some deer on the borders of the management area, or outside the management area. Maximizing the hunters in the woods is what we need to be doing for this area. Mule deer travel distances up here, We do not need CWD getting to Troy or up into Eureka by white tails, mule deer, moose, or elk. 103-50 had a positive in that area, that area needs to be removed, it is the only buffer closest to Libby before Eureka. Eureka does not want CWD!

#99

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 07, 2023 11:55:03 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 07, 2023 12:25:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:30:03
IP Address: 50.52.64.149

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I think that FWP should use the mule deer hunter survey results to help them make decisions about mule deer management. I support the idea that unsuccessful applicants for mule deer permits not be allowed to hunt mule deer with a general deer license for the year, this question has been posed to hunters several times, and permit areas have been established with that as one of the arguments, but FWP has always taken opportunity from the hunters that prefer opportunity while allowing those that say they prefer to hunt once every several year to have their chance at a special hunt while not giving up any sort of opportunity. I would support elk permits limit hunters to the HD and season that the permit is for, permits for a HD archery would prohibit a hunter from hunting bull elk statewide during the general season, and unsuccessful applicants be prohibited from hunting bull elk statewide. I would also support regional licenses for deer. Season length should be kept as is people enjoy the 5 week season, and a 3 week season is least popular in Region 2 where the Commission implemented a 3 week season for mule deer. The 199-20 B tag for the Libby CWD area should not be limited due to state law, why should this B tag be any different than other B tags as far as ability to have more than 1. also for any B tag offered for CWD reasons should require mandatory CWD testing. In areas with low or under objective mule deer populations. harvest of bucks should not be limited unless low buck numbers are limiting does being bred and reduced harvest would help the population. In Region 1 and regions with CWD, CWD management should be prioritized. I also support mountain lion quota being removed for archery and general seasons, the harvest of lions in these seasons is minimal and only takes away from those that choose to hunt lions in the winter season. I also do not support a elk split season.

#100

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 07, 2023 4:17:01 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 07, 2023 4:17:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:40
IP Address: 50.52.78.28

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I support CWD management in Zone 1.

#101

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 07, 2023 3:58:30 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 07, 2023 4:18:19 PM
Time Spent: 00:19:49
IP Address: 107.191.174.238

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I do not mind adding a archery season to moose and mountain goat, I support mountain lion general season quota being removed, I support 2 bear teeth , I support the water fowl proposal, I support the elk management plan, I do not support getting rid of the mule deer doe tags unless limiting them has failed, I do not support capping mule deer hunters but support reginal tags, I support restricting hunters that put in for mule deer draw areas and would also like to see this for elk (I believe doing this, and possibly having regional tags would reduce hunters and give FWP a more clear vision of where people want to hunt to be able to adjust seasons more appropriately as well as reduce hunters in certain areas), no more permit areas it does nothing for the health of a population nor increases the population, I support having to check animals due to CWD, I support Region 1 managing for CWD and maximizing hunters, I do not support split season for deer or limiting the season length- I like the 5 week general season we have and like to hunt every year, I support each areas current regulations for seasons pacific to elk and not the state wide proposal of split season with bull then either sex, I support 199-20 continuing to follow state law as 7 permits are permitted for B tags across the state- I believe that is legislation that handles that and FWP is not above legislative decisions, I support the longer bear seasons listed for those certain areas, I support removing either sex from hunt from vehicle permit holders around Kalispell, I support mandatory call in of Moose, I support both the proposals of mountain lion for HD 141, 150 : I support the turkey tag increase and boundary changes that are proposed for region 1.

#102

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 07, 2023 5:15:32 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 07, 2023 5:16:05 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:32
IP Address: 107.122.173.49

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I want region 1 to be managed for CWD and maximize hunters.

#103

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 08, 2023 11:06:30 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 08, 2023 11:08:45 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:14
IP Address: 144.86.210.14

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I completely support the proposed deer changes in 410, 417 and 426. The deterioration in the deer herd has been significant with a dramatic reduction in the number of mature bucks. Units with significant public land have no chance of improving without limiting tag numbers.

#104

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, July 09, 2023 1:05:50 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, July 09, 2023 1:54:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:48:36
IP Address: 216.228.40.162

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

- Moose/Mtn goat archery season - No to this. This very much favors archers. If I draw a moose tag and spend time scouting, only to have an archer shoot the moose before I had the opportunity, I would be upset. Archers already get way too many perks in Montana.
- Mountain Lion -The only quota should be applied to those using hounds. For those who choose to hunt lions without the use of hounds, this take should not be a part of the quota.
- Waterfowl hunting along the Yellowstone River in Custer and Rosebud County. Open this up. The situation is way different than 30 years ago. I believe landowners would love to see more geese harvested.
- Mule deer buck only hunting - This would be controversial, but may be useful in some areas. I am afraid this would result in a low buck-doe ratio that would not be well received by Montana hunters. A better option would be to significantly limit the number of antlerless deer tags issued. Where antlerless tags are issues, in instances with deer populations below the long-term average, they need to be issued by hunting district or even a smaller subset of a hunting district. Eastern Montana has for a long-time utilized an adaptive harvest management plan for mule deer. As with most plans, some revisions may be needed, but please continue using this plan.
- Mule deer hunting & Overcrowding - FWP needs to understand the only way to reduce overcrowding and in some instances over-harvest is to reduce hunter numbers. The first proposal where if a hunter applies for a limited draw mule deer tag, he would then not be able to hunt anywhere else, would not significantly reduce hunting pressure. Some hunters will be fine with knowing that if they don't draw, they won't be able to hunt mule deer that year. Those who want to hunt every year will simply not apply to hunt the special draw areas. I like option 2 (with caveats) which would restrict hunters to only being able to hunt in one FWP administrative region. If this were adopted, there could be no limits on the number of general tags being issued OR if the number of tags were restricted there needs to be preference for those who reside in a particular hunting district.
- Placing more mule deer hunting districts on a permit-only system. This would work to reduce overcrowding, but would do little in the long term to increase age-class.
- Overcrowding in general - Again, to reduce overcrowding, the number of hunters needs to be reduced. Start by greatly reducing the number of non-resident tags issued.
- CWD sampling - Yes make CWD sampling mandatory. Looking at the data from eastern Montana there are holes in the areas where adequate samples have been received. Unfortunately, this often coincides with large tracts of inaccessible lands, often leased to outfitters. In addition, it is these areas where CWD prevalence has the potential to be higher. A subset (25%) of individuals who obtain a permit to hunt cervids should be required to have their animals tested.
- Length of season - Simply shortening the season without reducing the number of hunters will likely have minimal impacts on mule deer numbers. In addition, losing the long-standing tradition of hunting deer during the rut would not be well received.
- Region 7 Moose - Prior to making a decision regarding whether to issue two moose permits for Region 7, FWP needs to conduct interviews with landowners or their spokespersons and ask if they would generally be willing to open their lands to the public (non-paying) hunter. If there is support to allow for free public hunting, then go forth. However, if there is reluctance to open lands to the general hunter, this proposal needs to be put on ice.

#105

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 10, 2023 10:58:53 AM
Last Modified: Monday, July 10, 2023 11:21:22 AM
Time Spent: 00:22:29
IP Address: 67.143.192.158

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see more early season opportunities with different weapons. An early rifle and muzzle loader OTC season(s) for elk and mule deer in September and early October (it's unfair archers get 6 weeks only statewide during prime elk estrus cycles and early season buck opportunity and the weather is better for access to public lands earlier in the season). I believe we should separate the deer and elk seasons to reduce incidental yearling/juvenile buck harvest and increase more elk opportunity. I believe we need to move the entire deer season two weeks earlier and end general season no later than November 8th or 11th (this will still give hunters the last week of Oct. and the first week of Nov. for mule deer rut opportunity). Our mule deer are struggling from overcrowded elk herds. We need more September elk harvest with muzzle loader and rifle seasons to give hunters more opportunity and spread hunter pressure and relive animal pressure throughout the seasons. We can try it for 1-3 seasons and see if this works for everyone, not just traditions. We poses the ability to try some new things while giving hunter opportunity, animal opportunity and have better management and better hunter participation by just moving some things around within the current toolbox we have. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment and be apart of my public wildlife.

Steven Stieler
Townsend, MT

#106

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 10, 2023 5:58:26 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 10, 2023 6:06:32 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:06
IP Address: 98.97.5.214

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I think the proposed changes the mule deer in region 4 is a very good idea and I support all proposed changes affecting 410, 417, and 426 reducing mule deer buck harvest. 410 and 417 have been hit hard in recent years and the numbers and quality of bucks have really been depleted. The 3 week season proposed in 426 is a great plan as well. Protecting the bucks in the rut will help reduce additional harvest from displaced 410 and 417 hunters. I would also support going to a three week mule deer buck season in 412 to help reduce hunting pressure from displaced 410 and 417 hunters. I would support eliminating mule deer doe tags entirely. If numbers get to be an issue locally they can be managed with a game damage hunt.

#107

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 10, 2023 7:09:30 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 10, 2023 7:12:24 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:54
IP Address: 174.212.227.239

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Cutting the sheep tags in 214 is ridiculous. There are plenty of sheep. Getting a tqg is almost impossible as it is. Cutting down to 1 sheep tag, should not be done.

#108

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 10, 2023 10:23:33 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 10, 2023 10:50:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:27:02
IP Address: 67.143.192.215

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

There should be NO new limited Entry hunts. All hunts should be OTC Limited (to keep the non resident quota to 10%). It is important to hunt every year within a 5 year period for mule deer bucks (if hunters can't draw tags in a draw system every year then they will spend their money in another state and that's not good for the department). Limited Entry permits decrease opportunity and are unnecessary and bad management (point draw systems do not work). Antler point restrictions work in places where needed and should be used in the toolbox to help certain age class deer live a few more years. We should limit every hunter to chose a region only to hunt (ie. every district in region 3 only). We should have the entire mule deer season moved back 2 weeks earlier and end the general season no later than November 8th or 11th ish (to give more bucks and the biggest bucks less breeding pressure). We should have an early rifle season and an early muzzle loader season in September and early October for bull elk and mule deer bucks to provide more hunter opportunity and distribute hunter pressure (this will be the only hunt they can hunt, no more carry over to a later season, make it a 2-3 week season). We should separate the deer and elk seasons to reduce angry elk hunters killing young bucks indecently. All elk districts that are over objective or at objective should be either sex tags (any bull or cow/calf). Residents of the state should have OTC tags for mule deer bucks, we only have 1.14 million people in the state. I stay in Montana for the OTC opportunity and the quality of animals are here despite what lazy hunters are complaining about. I want to hunt mule deer bucks every year, period.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on my public resource.

Steven Stieler
Townsend, MT

#109

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 6:54:01 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 6:57:22 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:20
IP Address: 161.7.122.88

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see the residents of a Region be able to buy a Atag over the counter, and have non-residents and residents that live out side of a Region have to apply for a permit in that Region. Ex if i live in Region 7 i can buy a OTC Atag. If my friend lives in Region 5 and wants to hunt a Buck Deer in Region 7 they have to apply for a limited (capped) draw license. As always i would have all Non Res apply.

#110

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 9:02:48 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 9:07:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:04
IP Address: 4.1.154.228

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see a 4 point or better regulation for mule deer in regions 3 and 4. There seems to be a lack of mature bucks. Youth and seniors could be exceptions.

#111

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 10:34:14 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 10:49:03 AM
Time Spent: 00:14:48
IP Address: 72.250.156.177

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

1. The Biennial review process in 2022 for the 2022-2023 seasons intent was to "streamline and standardize and simplify" - When the 900 - 20 tag was changed - some of the new areas were deemed 1st and only choice areas at the very last commission meeting at the final setting of the regulations. We now have areas that are 1st and only choice next to areas that are 1st and 2nd choice - prime trophy areas like 410 and 380 that are 1st and 2nd and the many of the old 900-20 areas that are 1st and only - with no previous dialogue.

I believe the commission has the responsibility to manage game and provide maximum opportunity to hunt both sexes of game. My recommendation - do not allow this last minute change and last minute group think action by previous commission carry forward - lets simplify - and standardize and manage game to objectives off of new elk management plan.

2. The proposal / thought for mule deer permit applications to apply and if not draw to not be able to hunt any other area that year is absolutely unsatisfactory. Again - to take opportunity away for a year to hunt other areas just for applying in one area and not "winning" that hunt is a penalty and not an opportunity that the commission should be honoring and safeguarding. Every year is a gift and we should not take for granted that we will have another

#112

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 12:40:22 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 12:41:24 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:02
IP Address: 98.97.38.64

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I strongly support FWPs suggestion to move to limited entry for mule deer in units 410/417/426. The hunter overcrowding in this part of the state is extreme, and the proposal makes sense.

#113

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 1:38:24 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 1:47:18 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:54
IP Address: 216.14.231.18

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I support the proposed changes in regards to the LPT 199-20 B license. Allowing an individual to harvest up to 7 whitetail bucks or does in this small area can have a big negative impact on micro populations of whitetail deer. If CWD testing becomes mandatory with this license, FWP needs to keep the CWD testing trailer open more than 2 days a week. I would like to see it open 7 days a week. I have killed 2 deer and helped others kill several more with the 199-20 tag. None of these deer were tested for CWD due to the testing trailer not being open on the days that we were in the area hunting. If FWP is going to have tags and hunts established to test for and decrease CWD prevalence, they need to provide an easy and convenient way for the testing to be done especially if it is mandatory.

#114

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 2:09:40 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 2:16:20 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:39
IP Address: 216.220.18.11

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I am very opposed to the proposed elk shoulder season in HD 413. This wintering herd needs to be managed through game damage hunts, not through pay to play shoulder hunts which is exactly what will occur, especially on ranches that have new owners from out of state. The wintering herd in this area can't be accessed during the general season as several private landowners East of HWY 98 don't allow any hunting without trespass fees. If the landowners are complaining of elk numbers, the solution is simple, allow access during the general season.

#115

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 2:03:33 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 2:30:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:26:49
IP Address: 216.14.231.18

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Over the past several years the amount of bear hunters in NW Montana seems to have increased substantially. The places I frequent have seen a large increase in both resident and non resident DIY as well as outfitted spring bear hunters. This has resulted in overcrowding, less enjoyable hunting experiences as well as a large increase in bears killed. Since 2010 total bear hunting licenses sold has increased 74% and non resident bear license sales have increased 197% in that same time period. This has resulted in an increase in bears harvested in region 1 by 34% and in region 2 a 55% increase in bears harvested. The current bear hunting system is unsustainable in NW Montana and regulations need to change to correct this before it becomes more of an issue. I recommend either implementing district or regional male/female quotas or a regional permit drawing for at least non residents if not both residents and non residents.

#116

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 7:21:42 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 7:38:15 AM
Time Spent: 00:16:33
IP Address: 192.161.71.31

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I already made this comment on a Black Bear survey since I purchased a Black Bear license but will take this opportunity for this recommendation. I do not believe hound hunting should be allowed in the Pryor Mountains, H.D. 510. The Pryor's are under a small quota, 2-female sub quota, 5 black bear total quota. With hound hunting hounds men could harvest all the bears in a short time period and have an advantage over the regular spot and stalk bear hunter. Hound hunting should not be allowed in an area with a QUOTA. Now, a Grizzly bear has been documented in the Pryor's, which throws another issue with hound hunting. Thank You. Doug Dreeszen-Ballantine MT.

#117

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 7:45:11 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 7:47:01 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:49
IP Address: 98.97.37.85

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

380: The proposed change is to reduce the general license antlerless elk rifle season opportunity (spike bull or antlerless elk regulation) for youth ages 12-15 and hunters with a PTHFV from the current full five weeks to the first three weeks.

I think it could be trimmed down even more to a week or two, or eliminated all together.

#118

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 8:58:37 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:06:13 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:36
IP Address: 65.132.153.66

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

- In response to the statewide proposal question regarding antlered-buck only mule deer hunting in districts where mule deer populations are lower than desired, I agree completely with this proposal. Mule deer populations are struggling in many areas of the state, and generally speaking mule deer are in a population decline as well. Mule deer face many obstacles across the state, including development resulting in habitat destruction, competition with whitetail deer in historically mule-deer only areas, winter range reduction, harsh winters, predators, and disease, only to name a few. Eliminating antlerless mule deer harvest is an easy way to help the population. I believe antlerless mule deer harvest should be eliminated statewide, or at a minimum eliminated on public lands.
- In response to the statewide proposal question regarding overcrowding and potential mule deer management strategies to combat crowding (too many hunters), I agree completely with the proposals.
 - o I believe it is a great idea to restrict hunters that apply for special mule deer permits from hunting antlered mule deer bucks on their general license. This would help limit hunters who truly want to hunt mule deer on their general license verses those who want to hunt a special permit, but may not draw, and therefore fall back on their general tag and create more crowding in general districts.
 - o I also believe it is a great idea to limit mule deer hunters to be region-specific, and also placing a cap on mule deer hunters in each region.
- In response to the statewide proposal question regarding placing more hunting districts on a permit-only limited entry draw system, I agree with this approach as well. Hunters do not need to hunt mule deer bucks every year, and during any five year period, we may only be able to hunt mule deer bucks a time or two. This is a sacrifice we as hunters have to be willing to make.
- These mule deer proposals are a step in the right direction for mule deer management in the state of Montana. Taking measures like these are necessary in order to gain a more quality hunting experience with less crowding, create a better age-class structure for mule deer bucks on the landscape, limit overall pressure on the mule deer herds during hunting season, promote mule deer to utilize public land ground verses private land sanctuaries, and help the mule deer herds as a whole and turn around the mule deer population declines.
- Proposals like these will always be met with some opposition, as will anything going against the status-quo. However, hunters can always adjust their hunting / application strategy to better align with how often they want to hunt. By setting more limited entry districts, in conjunction with other mule deer proposals previously mentioned, hunters can choose which strategy best aligns with their desires. Whitetail deer populations are also doing very well statewide generally speaking, and hunters can always turn to whitetail deer hunting in the years they don't draw a mule deer buck permit.
- Without some sacrifices, mule deer hunting in Montana will continue to suffer and continue its downward trajectory. As a lifelong hunter myself here in Montana, as well as three generations of hunters in my family before me in Montana, dating back to my great-grandfather, my family and I have witnessed the steady decline of mule deer hunting in the state of Montana. It is sad to see the current state of mule deer hunting, but times have changed and so must the management strategies. With increasing Montana-resident population growth, and decreasing mule-deer herds, the current management strategies are not sustainable. The large portions of the state managed on a general tag for mule deer is not sustainable. Neither is the 5+ week long season of rifle hunting mule deer during the rut, the most vulnerable time of year for bucks to be hunted.
- I would strongly support changes to the length of season for mule deer hunting. A reduction in the length of season and/or changing the timing of the season would be a huge benefit to the mule deer herds. For example, the mule deer rifle season could be changed to Oct 1 – 31. This would move the bulk of the season outside of the mule deer rut, as well as limit the overlap with the general elk season. Many elk hunters end up shooting a mule deer buck in their general tag each year, as a result of seeing a “target of opportunity” on their elk hunt and not specifically hunting for deer. By changing the season dates, this would limit this type of harvest and also limit harvest of young immature mule deer bucks during the vulnerable rut. Perhaps rut dates for mule deer hunting could be reserved for limited entry draw permits only, while the general rifle season occurs in October.
- Many of the areas where mule deer populations are not being hit as hard are private lands. Similar to elk herds, mule deer have learned to find sanctuary on large tracts of private lands and avoid the heavy hunting pressure found on public lands. By reducing hunting pressure through the use of these beforementioned measures, it will promote mule deer herds to re-occupy public grounds in lieu of private land.

-Ryan Maroney
Bozeman, MT

#119

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

In response to the statewide questions regarding general proposals:

1.) In HD's where mule deer populations are low, should FWP limit antlerless harvest more?

I say YES. Mule deer populations in MT are experiencing low adult female survival, and this is a measure that could improve mule deer population growth.

2.) Should FWP restrict hunters who apply for special mule deer permits from hunting in other HDs on their general tag, to reduce over-crowding?

I say NO. Expanding BMAs, adding WMAs, and increasing access to public land via corner crossing etc. will help the over-crowding issue more. I doubt restricting special permit applicants from hunting mule deer will have an effect on crowding, and may have the overall effect of decreasing enthusiasm for hunting mule deer in MT. Fewer people will be excited to put in for special permits if that means they will most likely not be able to hunt mule deer at all that year.

3.) To improve age structure, should FWP place more HDs on a permit-only system?

I say NO. I think the bigger problem is low mule deer populations. Restricting doe harvest may help solve this problem, but restricting buck harvest will not. Restricting buck harvest might increase age structure, but I think having healthy mule deer populations and abundant hunter opportunity is more important than having trophy bucks in MT. Opportunity is what our state is known for, and the ability to hunt mule deer regularly will keep enthusiasm for conserving this species alive.

4.) Regarding CWD sample submissions, I think FWP should require sample submission for specific deer/elk licenses. I do not think the requirement should vary with specific portions of a hunting district. That will be too confusing for hunters and too difficult to implement.

#120

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:29:28 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:42:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:25
IP Address: 64.89.211.36

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I have no problem with adding archery season to sheep and moose as long as tag numbers are not increased.

Mule deer are in trouble in Montana. Local region 7 staff does not even have a clue how bad it has gotten. I support any restriction to mule deer hunting. If you apply for a limited tag you should not be able to hunt mule deer on a general tag. We need to go to pick your region and regional caps need to be put in place and kept to a reasonable level. The ultimate fix would be to move to an October season to keep as many people in the field as possible. FWP staff is very resistant to this change and most the sportsman I talk to in region 7 are very open to this idea. Mule deer doe tags should not be issued at all in region 7. If they are they need to be valid for PRIVATE land only. This is a very simple solution yet fwp staff is very resistant to that idea. I am very concerned about our mule deer herd and feel the Fwp staff is way behind on this issue. I would also support going limited entry for the whole state. At minimum we need to go to pick your region and NO doe tags.

The region 7 proposal for 2 moose tags I have no problem with I also believe 1 bighorn sheep tag should be issued with the caveat that it will be a hard tag to fill and most animals will likely be on private. Sheep are no different than moose in region 7.

Many of Montana's problems could be helped with season structure. Elk and deer season should not be concurrent. long seasons have added to the problems with private land access and congregated animals from all the pressure.

I do not support limited entry elk licenses going to general for part of the season.

#121

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:44:20 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:44:57 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:37
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I support going to pick a region for mule deer hunting. Seems like a reasonable step going forward.

#122

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 3:12:13 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 3:18:52 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:39
IP Address: 72.255.136.111

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Prohibiting hunters that unsuccessfully apply for special antlered mule deer bucks on their general license from hunting antlered mule deer in other hunting districts would penalize hunters whose hunting grounds span two or more HDs and have the ability to shift grounds as conditions warrant. The current system (if you apply and do not draw, you may still hunt general areas), is correct in that it should motivate hunters to have backup areas and the ability to shift from district to district if needed.

Limiting hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions would likely help to destroy a long held Montana family tradition of gathering over the long Thanksgiving weekend to hunt mule deer (and other species) with relatives scattered across the state. Traditions like this often help recruit and retain young hunters that otherwise might be lost if their mule deer hunting is restricted to hunting in only one region. This idea belongs on the cutting room floor unless FWP is trying to discourage recruitment and retention of young hunters.

Jim Homiaon
Stanford, Montana

#123

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4:42:52 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4:50:38 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:46
IP Address: 199.96.16.11

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Moose and mountain goat archery:

o Should we recommend adding archery-only season dates for moose and mountain goat similar to the archery only bighorn sheep season (Sept 2 – 14)?

I dont believe this is nessecary its such a rare tag the tag holders should be happy to hunt the animal.

In hunting districts where mule deer populations are lower than desired, FWP recommends antlered mule deer buck ONLY hunting seasons to limit antlerless mule deer harvest. While this season structure limits harvest of antlerless deer, buck-only seasons may also reduce buck to doe ratios. This is a season structure that is used in many areas of western Montana. How acceptable to you would it be for FWP to have an antlered buck-only mule deer hunting season on your general license in specific hunting districts with low mule deer populations that don't already have one?

I feel like this is a great idea

Some hunters complain about overcrowding during their hunts. Below are two potential mule deer management strategies for areas in Montana where crowding may be an issue (e.g., places where there are too many mule deer hunters based on public feedback). How acceptable would each of these strategies be to you?

I believe either one of these would help, but also wont fix the issue. I think it would a great effect on keeping non resident pressure from a single area. I would much rather see the last 2 weeks of rifle season for mule deer transfered into a draw tag. Residents would still get a opportunity to hunt every year and the deer would be protected during the rut. By allowing the first 4 weeks to be general it should also help with the cwd. We are the only state that allows rut rifle hunts let alone the enitre state to do it. Without shortening the general season the mule deer will continue to decline

Chris Gasner Region 5 208-697-7093

#124

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4:52:08 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 5:01:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:01
IP Address: 174.198.133.149

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I'd like to see several changes considered:

- 1) no hunting does on public land
- 2) put a NR cap on each unit. Currently, 80% of hunters can hunt 20% of the units, leading to overcrowding issues.
- 3) move the rifle season up a week earlier and end it early November, but still allow archery hunting through November. This would still allow opportunity, but give the deer a break during the rut. Could also make rifle hunting in November permit only along with these 2 changes.

I'm not in favor of making you choose between applying for limited entry or hunting general, that seems a little too restrictive.

#125

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 7:34:51 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 7:40:20 PM
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Statewide proposals

- Moose and mountain goat archery:

- o Should we recommend adding archery-only season dates for moose and mountaingoat

- o similar to the archery only bighorn sheep season (Sept 2 – 14)?

- o No additional licenses issued, just addition of archery only season dates o Would a season of Sept.2-14 work like it does for bighornsheep?

- o Should this not apply in hunting districts with less than 3 tags?

I would say if this is applied it shouldn't apply in districts with less than 10 tags.

Considering the downward trending Moose and Goat hunting opportunities and populations throughout much of the state I am not for extending hunting seasons and the coinciding pressure on these species across the entire state.

Moose permits available in 2006- 610, 2022- 328. Goats 2006-293, 2022-180.

- Mountain lion quotas:

- o Should we change how we set quotas for fallmountain lion season?

- o Do they need a separate quota,do they need a quota,or should we continue to allocate up to 20 percent of the take during this season?

- o May be a quota applies to the entire season without allocating to different seasons?

These fall hunting season quotas are rarely filled anyway, I don't think it matters too much one way or the other.

Waterfowl hunting has been closed between the confluence of the Bighorn and Yellowstone Rivers to the Rosebud-Custer County line since 1959. Because waterfowl are currently abundant, FWP is considering a recommendation to open this stretch of river to waterfowl hunting in 2024.

The private ag fields around the area sees significant hunting use currently. Opening this stretch of river may offer increased public access opportunities without having a negative impact on the resources. Though river conditions during this time of year may make access negligible.

In hunting districts where mule deer populations are lower than desired, FWP recommends antlered mule deer buck ONLY hunting seasons to limit antlerless mule deer harvest. While this season structure limits harvest of antlerless deer, buck-only seasons may also reduce buck to doe ratios. This is a season structure that is used in many areas of western Montana. How acceptable to you would it be for FWP to have an antlered buck-only mule deer hunting season on your general license in specific hunting districts with low mule deer populations that don't already have one? I am in favor of reduced antler less take on mule deer to address decreasing populations, while at the same time concentrating pressure on bucks which should help decrease cwd spreading.

Some hunters complain about overcrowding during their hunts. Below are two potential mule deer management strategies for areas in Montana where crowding may be an issue (e.g., places where there are too many mule deer hunters based on public feedback). How acceptable would each of these strategies be to you?

- o Restrict hunters that apply for special mule deer permits from hunting antlered mule deer bucks on their general license in other hunting districts (e.g., if you apply for a special permit, you would NOT be able to hunt antlered mule deer in other hunting districts even if you did NOT draw the permit you applied for Currently, if you DRAW a special permit, you are not able to hunt antlered mule deer in other hunting districts but if you apply and do not draw, you may still hunt general areas).

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

Im really not sure that this will have much of an effect on the general deer units, as I feel most people will choose the general opportunity. Though it may increase odds of drawing a limited entry permit. For this to have an impact on the general hunting units, I think we would need to increase the amount of permitted units available. Currently there are only 26 deer permits across the state.

o Limit hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions. There may be a cap placed on the number of mule deer hunters that could hunt in each administrative region of Montana.

We need to be concentrating on habitat improvement on the western side of the state. The majority of our public land in the state is on the west side of the state, yet our game populations are at all time lows over there. Working on the habitat will increase game numbers, create more hunting opportunity and fix the issue of folks traveling away from west side of the state to hunt the east. Forcing people to pick a region is a bandaid on the bigger issues facing our diverse state.

To reduce hunter crowding and possibly increase age structure within a mule deer population, FWP could place more hunting districts on a permit-only limited entry draw system. If that were to occur, mule deer hunters would not be able to hunt antlered mule deer bucks every year. During any five-year period, how many years should mule deer hunters be able to hunt antlered mule deer bucks in Montana?

This idea is getting closer, but I would start with a compromise of just permitting the last two weeks of the season and allowing general opportunity for the beginning of the season. This will ease pressure during the rut while still acknowledging Montanas long standing opportunity season structures. And again, this needs to be considered on a unit to unit basis, based on populations, cwd presence and hunting pressure. Offering a spectrum of opportunity across the state from season long permit areas, to partial season permits, to season long general areas. With increased permit areas and opportunities combined with the above permit or nothing choice that could make a positive impact on hunting pressure in the general areas. Additionally if the public still does not find these ideas to be palatable they could be tested on Non residents first. Im sure resident hunters would accept that.

An additional out of the box idea that might address hunt quality/hunter pressure concerns while still balancing hunter opportunity would be to implement a rolling cycle through the above mentioned season restrictions, where for a period of time, perhaps 3 years, individual units would cycle through being a general unit for 3 years, then move to an increased restriction unit, having a reduced season length or some other restriction for 3 years, then a limited entry unit for 3 years, then back to a general unit, etc, etc. Working a few units with in a Region into this cycle each offset by a year would offer hunters a variety of opportunities.

This would require a commitment to see it through by the department, along with a requirement for sportsmen to be up to date and familiar with their regulations and season structures.

- In portions of the state, FWP does not receive sufficient samples of harvested deer and elk to adequately assess the prevalence of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in harvested animals. In specific circumstances, FWP could implement a mandatory sample submission from harvested animals, which would be accompanied by a biological check station to assist in sample collection during specific hunts and dates.

#126

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:04:59
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Regarding the statewide suggestions on mule deer, in favor of

- Buck only in units below objective or when populations drop dramatically
- Pick a region is a great idea to get an idea of where pressure is greatest
- Select units should be made limited entry permit
- reduce season length or split the season in pieces and make the second half (prime rut for MD) limited entry.

Also in favor of mandatory submission of harvest samples to determine CWD prevalence.

Also in favor of making elk bull permits limited entry while cow tags general for more units.

Thanks for thinking of these changes. Please try something. Anything.

#127

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:02:26
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Very in favor of most all the mule deer proposals. Especially more limited entry mule deer units as well as the proposal of only hunting mule deer in the unit you apply for even if you don't draw the tag. Lastly very much so like the proposal to quit shooting mule deer does.

Region 7 moose tag is a fantastic idea and can easily support a harvest of 2 moose per year.

#128

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 10:42:03 PM
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to see an early archery only season for mountain goat and moose. Dates would be from opening day of archery season until September 15th mirroring the current big horn sheep season. To be clear this is not taking away hunting days from the current mountain goat and moose season but adding additional days for archery only opportunities prior to September 15. Thank you!

#129

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I attended the meeting in Miles City. Thank you for having that meeting. It was informative.

It was nice to see that FWP is increasing the objective for the number of observed elk. The old number in hunt district 799 was unrealistic. The new number is much more realistic. I still worry that with so many elk spending much of hunting season on private land with little hunting, elk numbers could soon be over objective even with the new numbers. One way to help avoid this would be to remove district 702 from the 799 bundle. 702 is mostly private land and much of it is only hunted by a select few. 702 just does not fit well with 704 and 705 where there is much more public land and better access. If FWP thinks that 702 is too small to stand along you could combine 702 with the portion of 704 north of the southern boundary of Custer County. This part of 704 is also mostly private and fit in well with 702. I feel it is time to divide the 799 bundle into two districts that better reflect land ownership and access. There was also talk of dividing up the region wide pronghorn unit in region seven. The most logical way to do this would be a boundary from east to west along the Yellowstone river and maybe north and south along the Powder River. I think that dividing the region wide pronghorn tag into two or three units would be a good idea.

The most concerning part of the Miles City meeting was the proposal to go to general elk licenses in units that are chronically over objective. This would be a disaster for several reasons.

This proposal would incentivize landowners that only want to sell elk hunts to harbor elk so that the objectives are never met so licenses for paying hunters are easy to get.

In eastern Montana there is very little rough and road less land were elk can escape hunting pressure. Elk will escape hunting pressure by moving from public land to sanctuaries on private land. We already have this issue in 799. If 799 were to go to general tags this migration of elk from accessible public to is sure to happen in greater numbers and earlier in the season. I feel that it is likely that the number of elk harvested will decrease if 799 is changed to a general unit. I also see the potential for real conflicts between hunters and ranchers that graze cattle on public land if 799 is a general unit.

One of the issues for mule in 799 is all the people the elk attract even with elk licenses limited. Almost all the hunters with an elk tag also have an over the counter deer tag. So do all the friends that tag along to help find a big bull. If 799 is a general unit, mule deer are going to also see an increase in hunting pressure. We must consider the what the effect of this idea will have on mule deer. I strongly oppose the proposal that would turn over objective units into general units in eastern Montana.

There was two proposals regarding mule deer presented at Miles City. One was to not allow does to be harvested using an A tag. I will support this proposal, but I don't think it goes far enough in addressing doe harvest in region seven. The region wide mule deer doe tags are just not working. It doesn't matter if 11,000 or 1000 are issued. I feel far too many of the tags are filled in the easily accessed parts of public land where deer numbers are low and too few does are harvested on private land were deer numbers are high, There need to be away to way to insure that does are harvested where deer numbers need to be reduced. The region wide tags will not accomplish this. Even if public land can handle the extra doe harvest it is just not worth the political hit FWP is taking by continuing with the region wide tags.

The second proposal for mule deer had to do with hunters having to pick their region. In order for this to work there would have to be some limits on the number of hunters in each region. I support having to pick your region. With more and more units in western Montana going limited entry units it is just a matter of time until Eastern Montana will also have to be limited. Pick your region with limits is a step in the right direction.

I would dearly like to keep the over the counter five week season, but after hunting mule deer for more than forty years and seeing the decline in both quality and number of mule deer I believe the current season is unsustainable. I am pleased that FWP is looking at alternatives.

Art Hayes
Birney, Montana

#130

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I'd like to see the requirement that if you draw a limited entry elk permit, you can only hunt that unit go away. This is good in theory, but the problem I've seen is that these limited entry units have too big of tag quotas and it leads to overcrowding on public lands, which a lot of these units have very little of. In the unit I've hunted, I've seen hunting pressure get significantly worse, rather than better. If hunters were still able to move to a general unit, it'd balance out the pressure and not force you to hunt with the pressure and drive more animals to private.

I'd also like to see the 900-20 archery elk tag come back. Many of those units are being pressured more now because people have to choose and stick with that unit, rather than move away from the pressure. Also, a lot of those units only have little slivers of public land, which makes them unattractive to apply for and hunt only in that unit, but when combined with other units with the ability to move around, it seems to give good opportunity. My experience with the 900 tag was that it was not overcrowded, allowed for great archery opportunity, and the ability to hunt different landscapes and areas, which was a ton of fun.

Last, I'd like to see the general tag for non-residents be capped by region or district. There are too many hunters hunting the same units on this tag and it's created a lot of overcrowding on public. This could be a good step in eliminating that.

#131

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:09:08
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

-I am for moose and mountain goat archery seasons, assuming that the tag numbers do not increase. This would be a way to shift opportunity to hunt these animals into less effective mechanisms, which could help preserve populations better while still providing opportunity.

-I am absolutely 110% for the mule deer antlered buck only on a general. The mule deer populations are not high enough on the public land I hunt in region 3. We need to eliminate doe harvest assuming the buck to doe ratio does not drop so low that does go without having fawns.

-With regards to the overcrowding on mule deer hunts, I vote for choose your region on mule deer, the second provided option. We need to limit mule deer hunting opportunity to reduce pressure. Option one would also be acceptable

- I would say giving hunters an opportunity to hunt mule deer bucks every other year would be acceptable. It would also put more pressure on hunting whitetails. I would have to switch to hunting whitetails on years I dont draw, and currently I dont hunt whitetails at all, and their populations are too high in a lot of places and outcompeting mule deer in certain locations if I understand correctly.

- Mandatory cwd sampling is totally acceptable to me in any form. I send all my samples in already. I think this ties into mandatory harvest reporting. Both should go together

-With regards to length of season for mule deer, I think rut hunting in areas of low mule deer population need to be eliminated. I think that elk seasons should remain the way they are.

#132

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I don't like shoulder seasons. I realize it's great for the landowners and guides especially... They can guide for bulls in the regular season and then let the public hunt cows only during Feb, when they are half starving. Also I'm not interested in gutting out a cow with a 5 month along calf in her belly!

If the district is over populated give out more regular season cow elk permits and more either sex permits.

#133

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 13, 2023 11:26:17 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 13, 2023 11:26:33 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:16
IP Address: 174.234.11.103

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the general proposals being considered by FWP for the 2024/2025 hunting regulations. For the statewide proposals being considered I would offer the following comments:

- Moose and Mountain Goat Archery
 - o I would support adding an archery-only season for moose and mountain goats similar to the season for bighorn sheep. So long as no additional tags were issued I do not believe this would have a negative impact on anyone's experience that draws one of these tags, in fact, it should increase opportunity.
- Mountain Lion quotas
 - o I would suggest that so few lions are killed during the fall season without the use of dogs that no quota is actually necessary for this quota. Given the struggling Mule Deer populations across the state we should probably be encouraging a more robust management of the predator population as one means of helping to increase the deer population.
- Waterfowl hunting on the Yellowstone in Rosebud County
 - o I would fully support opening this stretch of the Yellowstone to waterfowl hunting. The population of Canada geese in SE MT is unbelievable at this time and it seems ridiculous that any restrictions as to where they can be hunted would be in place.
- Mule Deer Antlered Buck Only Season
 - o I would cautiously support such a proposal but only for very limited time frames. I believe that I have heard FWP biologists state that the number of antlerless MD harvested and tagged with an "A" tag is an extremely low number of hunters, therefore I would question just how effective it will be in the actual benefit to the antlerless deer population. That coupled with the potential risk to an already low buck to doe ratio really causes me to be skeptical, however something needs to be done to support a very low MD population so giving this a try in the very short term may be worth the effort.
- Over Crowding
 - o My first statement on overcrowding is that before we start restricting Montana Resident hunters we first need to curb and/or better manage the number of non-resident hunters that are hunting in our state. According to an article this past January in the Billings Gazette, the number of nonresident tags to be issued by FWP is capped by statute at 17,000 but over the years give aways to special interests have increased that number to 66,000. That is a very significant number of nonresident hunters competing for the resource for those of us that live and work in MT. In my opinion Montana is so appealing to these nonresident hunters because their states are so restrictive in their opportunities so they come here. I'd suggest that we return the favor and make MT more restrictive in opportunities for nonresidents before we restrict the residents that live, work and pay taxes in our state. I realize the all mighty dollar drives the desire for more nonresidents but I know that I, and many of my friends and colleagues have said, we, as residents would be more than willing to pay more for our opportunities to hunt and fish in MT if it limited the number of nonresidents competing for the resource. I'm not going to do the math but a relatively small increase in fees spread out over all the residents would likely easily offset the revenue lost by limiting nonresident tag allocations back down to the 17,000 spelled out in statute.
 - o In my opinion the only thing that the first proposal here would accomplish is decreasing the number of hunters that put in special draw areas. This might be good for those that do put in as it will likely increase their odd of drawing that tag but I don't believe it will do anything to reduce hunter crowding.
 - o I have given some thought to the second proposal to essentially pick a region and only be able to hunt that region. I would suggest modifying this proposal to: If you are a resident of a FWP Region you can hunt MD on your general tag in that region only. Then set a cap in that region for the number of MT residents of other Regions and nonresidents to apply for if they want to hunt a region outside of where they live. The example would be: As a Miles City resident I live in Region 7 therefore I would be able to hunt MD in Region 7, but if I wanted to hunt MD in Region 2 I would have to apply for a limited number of Region 2 MD tags. My main concern for this proposal as it was proposed is two fold. First, certain regions of the state are just simply more popular for and better known for MD hunting so more people will want to hunt in those regions, therefore drawing a MD license in the region that I live could become more akin to trying to draw a bighorn sheep tag and I'm simply not willing to risk not being able to hunt MD in the area that I live once every 5, 10 or maybe even 20 years. If I wanted to be somewhere like Utah or South Dakota I'd move there. Secondly, I truly do not believe this proposal will have the desired affect on crowding because the opportunity to hunt whitetails in these areas would not be limited and I believe, especially on legally accessible public land and even more so on blocked public lands such as the

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

Ashland Ranger District of the Custer Gallatin National Forest, you will just see the same number of people, nonresidents especially, just now hunting for whitetails.

- In general I do not support placing more district in a permit only unless first, the number of nonresident hunters in MT is significantly curbed. I could support some similar to the modified proposal I lined out above where residents of a region could still hunt that region but those from outside the region and a limited number of residents could apply for a limited number of tags.
 - I don't have a strong opinion on securing CWD samples other than to say making things mandatory generally doesn't seem to achieve the desired results and then also make for an enforcement issue that didn't exist previously.
 - Length of season
 - o My main thought/observation in reducing the length of the season is that you will now concentrate the same number of people and harvest into a shorter time period and you won't effect the number deer harvested.
 - o I do not support making areas that are currently permit only for bull elk a general permit for any length of time for the season. In areas where there is limited and or blocked public lands that would only further exacerbate the over crowding issues that we currently face.
 - I would support the region 7 proposal to add special draw moose permits. It is obviously a unique opportunity in this region and if it doesn't work out it can be changed or taken away.
-

#134

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 13, 2023 11:58:39 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 13, 2023 12:19:36 PM
Time Spent: 00:20:56
IP Address: 72.175.210.90

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

It seems that nothing is being considered to change the regulations concerning muzzleloader hunting for deer and elk.

Currently, the muzzleloader season occurs after the general rifle season (December). Hunters are limited to traditional muzzleloading equipment only. This placing hunters with a muzzleloading firearm at a great disadvantage.

By December the elk have been chased by archery hunters and rifle hunters making them very weary and nearly impossible to approach within 100 yards, the typical effective range of the traditional muzzleloader firearm.

FWP allows the use of technologically advanced archery equipment. Why not allow advanced muzzleloading firearms? If traditional muzzleloaders remain the requirement, how about moving the muzzleloader season to the week prior to the general rifle season and extend the rifle season by one week?

There has been no published statistics on hunter success during the muzzleloader season. I assume the stats for this season are lumped into the rifle season. This is not a fair assessment of the success rate for muzzleloaders.

#135

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 13, 2023 12:22:03 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 13, 2023 1:48:51 PM
Time Spent: 01:26:47
IP Address: 98.97.9.108

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I agree with all mule deer proposals for Region 5 and encourage all Regions to consider eliminating antlerless tags where and when populations are declining.

Other proposal comments:

1. Add archery-only season dates for moose and mountain goat similar to the archery only bighorn sheep season (Sept 2 – 14) inside units that have 4 or more tags. It would be wise to maintain a quota to both seasons.
 2. Reopening waterfowl hunting between the confluence of the Bighorn and Yellowstone Rivers to the Rosebud-Custer County line due to population upticks must also take into consideration future impacts of the current Avian Flu effects.
 3. Completely acceptable and encouraged for FWP to have an antlered buck-only mule deer hunting season on a general license in specific hunting districts with low mule deer populations that don't already have one.
 4. Acceptable in only those areas where overcrowding is a problem: Limit hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions. There may be a cap placed on the number of mule deer hunters that could hunt in each administrative region of Montana
 5. Mule deer hunting districts on a permit-only limited entry draw system ONLY where overcrowding is confirmed to be a problem or the public identifies a area to be conserved as a quality buck deer hunt over opportunity buck deer hunt: drawing a tag every 2-3 years.
 6. In areas where mule deer numbers are low set a limited quota buck deer only permit structure with the addition of mandatory reporting within 48 hours. See AZ late season archery seasons.
 7. Should the season be permitted for bull or either-sex for a portion of the season and open to a general license for any elk for remainder? Season setting should be specific to the region, population, objectives and changes over time.
-

#136

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 13, 2023 3:56:45 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 13, 2023 3:57:18 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:33
IP Address: 161.7.123.238

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Region 3:

-I am strongly opposed to creating a liberal either-sex mule deer season in a newly created portion of 335, north of Lump Gulch Road. I grew up on flank of Sheep Mtn north of Clancy, and the mule deer situation there is not good. The yard deer of Helena have very little to do with the deer in Clancy, MT, and the deer on Sheep Mountain migrate over Lump Gulch and Clancy Creek - both areas in rough condition in terms of mule deer age class and population - than they do with Helena. I suggest making the boundary of this new portion Jackson Creek Road, to the Brooklyn Bridge Divide, and then along Travis Creek Road down toward Grizzly Gulch. The proposed boundary portion change is way too far south into 335.

-I support the reduction of the liberal elk season in 370 from 5 weeks to two weeks.

-I support changing the number of the 380-01 antlerless white-tailed deer B-license (Only valid on Canyon Ferry WMA – including Canyon Ferry WMA in HDs 380 and 391) to an administrative number not associated with one of the HDs where the license is valid; would suggest a number from 381-387 (-01).

-Do not reinstate antlerless mule deer tags in 318 and 335. These districts are shells of their former selves, and still have very low mule deer numbers. There's no reason for it.

Statewide:

-I oppose the expansion of moose and mountain goat archery seasons. Though this would bring those seasons in line with others, I believe that generally, we seem to only add "drops to a bucket" that is already overflowing. More hunter-days on the landscape is the last thing we need, even if small.

- I am in favor of either of the mule deer hunting crowd reduction methods being proposed. In particular: Limit hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions. There may be a cap placed on the number of mule deer hunters that could hunt in each administrative region of Montana.

-I support putting more districts in a Limited Entry model for mule deer bucks. To the question of how many years within a five year period should a hunter be able to hunt mule deer, I ask that you focus on the resource first. We have more hunters every year, different access dynamics, etc. To model management around such a question would be setting yourself up for failure.

-I support reduced season length in areas where mule deer numbers, and mule deer buck/doe ratios are low. I'd also ask that you consider the age class of the population in these areas where season length reduction is being considered.

#137

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 13, 2023 6:43:35 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 13, 2023 6:52:20 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:44
IP Address: 144.86.210.14

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

The deer population and age class structure has been decimated. I support making units with significant public lands limited entry. I also support making residents choose a region and making non-resident tags limited entry in every unit. Non-residents are responsible for 30-40% of the deer kill in many of the units with significant public land and should be limited to 10%. Making 410, 417, and 426 limited entry is a great start.

There are far too many archery elk tags being issued in 411, 412 and 535. The elk are getting pushed off the public land very early in the season.

The number of non-residents hunting spring turkeys has increased exponentially. Action should be taken to reduce pressure by limiting tags and/or increasing tag cost.

#138

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 13, 2023 8:59:04 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 13, 2023 9:12:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:13:20
IP Address: 72.175.126.37

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Statewide Proposals

I support the statewide proposal of adding archery-only season dates for moose and mountain goat similar to the archery only bighorn sheep season. This should be applied to any moose or mountain goat permit issued by FWP.

I would support the recommendation of limiting hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions. I would also suggest that there should be caps placed on the number of mule deer hunters hunting in each administrative regions.

I support limited entry permits or reduced season length in areas where mule deer numbers are low.

Region 4 Proposals

Elk

For 410-02 antlerless elk license, I support removing the shoulder season that extends from the day after general season through February 15 and remove the second antlerless elk opportunity via general license to holders of the 410-02.

Deer

For HD's 410 and 417 I support changing to "antlered buck only" (AB) general license to limited-entry(LE) permits for both 6-week archery and 5-week general season. With the proposed quota of 200 in each HD, with a proposed quota range of 25-500.

Thank you for your time.

Justin Doll
Great Falls, MT

#139

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 13, 2023 8:56:33 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 13, 2023 9:47:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:51:02
IP Address: 97.121.202.223

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I don't mind antlered mule deer hunt in areas with low mule numbers, so long as the area opens to antlerless mule deer hunting when numbers rebound. Everyone has to remember that populations fluctuate, especially if there has been a rough winter. I rarely see other people when I am out deer hunting. If anything, there is overcrowding during antelope season, not during deer season. During any five year period, a person should have the option to hunt antlered mule deer all five years. People will simply need to work harder to get their deer. I would be willing to pay more for a general deer tag to cover the cost of lost revenue by reducing nonresident tags to help reduce overcrowding. I see no need to add more permit-only limited entry draw districts. I would be happy to provide samples for CWD testing, but I live in Glendive. Where would I be able to drop off a sample? Miles City FWP office? That's a 2 hour round trip for me. Would it be open on the weekends? If not, that's time off work, and I save my vacation time for hunting and fishing trips. Can I mail samples in? Could drop boxes be made available? IS there a video available on YouTube showing how to collect a sample? I think limiting antlerless harvest of mule deer and reducing nonresident licenses are better options for reducing pressure in areas where mule deer numbers are low rather than changing or reducing the season. I have two children that hunt, in 4 more years I will have 3. I will need all the time I can get to give them the individual time they will need for mentoring and creating an opportunity to harvest a deer. I support a moose season in Region 7 if the population can support it. I think more needs to be done to reduce the pressure on antelope and spread hunters out. I've seen 3 trucks pulled over and 3 groups gunning at the same herd. It's too much pressure on the antelope population, and it's not safe.

#140

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 14, 2023 7:12:18 AM
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Time Spent: 00:04:23
IP Address: 216.228.49.1

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

please consider closing general deer season two weeks earlier and opening it up one week earlier. This would take some pressure off the deer during the rut and also prevent some of the slaughter when early snow forces deer down to their winter range early,

#141

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 14, 2023 8:14:15 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 14, 2023 9:29:05 AM
Time Spent: 01:14:49
IP Address: 184.63.21.70

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

Dear FWP:

These comments are in response to the "survey" question sent out to hunters and some falconers regarding the March Upland Game Bird Season for falconry.

The USFWS determined decades ago that falconry has no negative impact on the populations of raptors they employ nor on the populations of game they pursue. This was presented in an Environmental Assessment on Falconry and has been the basis of season setting ever since. This determination was made based on the very low numbers of falconers in the U.S. and the inefficiency of falconry as a means of hunting (very low success rate).

Furthermore, falconers hold a high ethic for flying their birds daily. Flying hawks and falcons during gun hunting season can be dangerous, so it has always been important to extend the falconry season beyond the gun season for safety reasons. This also allows the falconer to meet the needs of the raptor and maintain its health and stamina. Since there is no impact on game populations this has been the norm for falconry regulations country-wide for decades. The falconry season has traditionally run through March in Montana. Montana falconers have enjoyed this extended season and cherish the opportunity to fly their birds post gun season.

It is important to understand that falconers have historically, and currently been deeply involved in conservation of birds of prey and of upland game species, particularly sage-grouse. The Peregrine Fund, responsible for the re-introduction and re-establishment of the once endangered peregrine falcon is a good example. These biologists were all falconers. The Grouse Partnership was started by falconers and has worked to conserve native habitats for several grouse species. Falconers regularly donate their time for educational and conservation activities, as evidenced by the recent fence marking campaign in Glendive for sage-grouse lek protection.

In line with their concern for the conservation of grouse, the Montana Falconer's Association has had an agreement with FWP in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which stipulates that falconers agree not to fly their birds within the vicinity of known breeding grounds for sage-grouse (leks). This MOU has never been breached by Montana falconers! The only enforcement incident that has ever occurred was perpetrated by a few Texas falconers two years ago. This activity was immediately chastised by Montana falconers and the Montana Falconer's Association, who published a warning in their national publication to all falconers, making them aware of our concern for sage-grouse and the MOU we have with FWP.

Now for some reason the FWP has initiated a push to eliminate Montana falconer's March season for all upland game birds, based on one enforcement incident by non-resident falconers. This would be like changing the resident elk season because of one violation by a non-resident. No competent wildlife manager would suggest such a change. The fact that the change would have NO impact on sage-grouse or any game species makes the suggestion even more ludicrous. I simply punishes a group of dedicated Montana sportsmen and woman for absolutely no benefit to game populations. It is time for FWP to stop over-regulating activities that have no impact, and start addressing the real problem for sage-grouse. Habitat.

In conclusion, the "survey" question sent out by FWP is non-scientific, and the "background information" is limited, one-sided, lacks context, and leading. It basically implies that falconers are interfering with breeding grouse, without mentioning the MOU nor the reasons falconers have extended seasons in the first place. What's worse is that falconers were not notified of the survey beforehand, and were blind-sided. We are the major stakeholders, and to sneak this out without prior discussion builds distrust and animosity. I have never seen such a biased "background" to any public survey question, and any statistician would laugh at the way the question was asked.

As a biologist, rancher, conservationist, and falconer...as someone who has spent the better part of my life conserving grouse and peregrine falcons, this attempt to eliminate my ability to pursue upland game in March with my falcon is insulting, non-biological and throws falconers under the bus, while doing nothing to protect the resource. I suggest you abandon the push to eliminate the March season for falconry and publish an apology to the good sportsmen and woman of this state for this underhanded action.

Bob Hollister
Ballantine, MT

#142

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 14, 2023 11:10:47 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 14, 2023 11:19:38 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:50
IP Address: 216.228.40.136

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Doug Stickney

Miles City MT

I support many of the changes being proposed in regard to mule Deer management. Pick your region and regional caps as long as they are reasonable would be my preference. Moving the season out of the rut would provide the most opportunity and keep as many people in the field as possible. Regional staff seems very resistant to this so opportunity is going to have to be limited to continue to go forward with the season dates.

Region 7 needs to be conservative with elk permits adding more permits is not decreasing populations it is just congregating more hunters on public and pushing the wildlife off of it. Private landowners have the tools to manage elk with cow tags.

I support adding two moose tags and think it would be reasonable to give 1 sheep tag as well.

#143

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 14, 2023 11:44:18 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 14, 2023 11:45:03 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:45
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I support pick your region for mule deer and I hope caps will be placed at a reasonable level

#144

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 14, 2023 1:13:58 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 14, 2023 1:17:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:59
IP Address: 216.228.40.46

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I support FWP Region 7's proposal for a moose season. With moose, sheep, and goat opportunities so limited, providing additional opportunity where available is very important.

Additionally I would like to know why a bighorn sheep season is not being proposed? Bighorn sheep herds exist both north and south of the yellowstone river in huntable numbers.

Region 7 should not be providing mule deer doe opportunities right now except for private land only. I realize 1000 mule deer doe tags is not a high number but public land mule deer numbers in Region 7 are the lowest I have ever seen in over 30 years of hunting them in Region 7.

#145

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 14, 2023 1:35:43 PM
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Time Spent: 00:13:54
IP Address: 158.68.192.125

Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I am supportive of either of these alternatives and would have no issue with implementing both. Crowding on assessable public lands during deer season has been a deterrent for me to hunt close to home in R6.

If I could only select one of the alternatives, I would place regional caps. While the crowding issue is not only a NR issue, it was brought up at the Havre meeting that approximately 30%+ of the "deer" hunters were from out-of-state. I understand this was not a hard number since it was queried during the meeting, it does prove the point that NR are much higher than they would be with a hard mule deer A-tag cap of 15% availability for NR mule deer hunters. I think the cap can be liberal enough that nearly all Resident mule deer hunters would be able to draw. Hopefully this would reduce what I, and many others, consider a crowding issue on public lands in R6. It would also be easier to "manage" the resource with more than limited doe tags.

Craig Miller, Havre MT Preferred Alternative for mule deer statewide management.

- o Limit hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions. There may be a cap placed on the number of mule deer hunters that could hunt in each administrative region of Montana.

#146

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 14, 2023 2:02:45 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 14, 2023 2:03:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:59
IP Address: 47.47.174.162

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Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

July 14, 2023

RE: Biennial Hunting Season-Setting 2024/25 Statewide Proposals

Dear Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks:

On behalf of the Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (MT BHA), please see the comments below regarding the statewide proposals discussed and distributed at the statewide biennial hunting season-setting scoping meetings.

First, we appreciate the efforts of the Department to be transparent and provide ample opportunity for public engagement with these efforts. The public scoping meetings provided needed information to public hunters, and we applaud the Department for providing us with the opportunity to ask questions and to be heard.

Many of our supporters and board members will be submitting comments focusing on regional proposals, but regarding the statewide season proposals, we have a few suggestions related to the proposals that we believe most directly affect our membership and mission. Specifically, we would like to speak to the proposal to require mandatory submissions in CWD areas and efforts to reduce hunter crowding.

The Montana Chapter wholly supports mandatory submissions in CWD management areas. CWD is one of the biggest threats to the health of our wildlife and our future hunting opportunities, and any and all efforts to curb the spread are greatly appreciated. Enhanced and more accurate data collection will only help the Department with this effort, and we fully support mandatory testing in specific deer/elk hunting license or special permit areas, or by specific portion(s) of a hunting district (on a specific range of dates), or both.

Additionally, we encourage the department to take the necessary steps to require mandatory reporting statewide, across all reported species. This would provide far more accurate data for not only pressing issues like CWD, but also broader concerns like wildlife (and hunter) distribution, harvest rates, age class, and success rates by weapon/season, among other things

Regarding the proposals to address hunter crowding by limiting "hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions," we ask the Department to first consider applying this sort of change to nonresidents only. Doing so, along with the proposed "cap placed on the number of mule deer hunters that could hunt in each administrative region of Montana," and applying that to nonresidents only would distribute hunting pressure from the group of hunters responsible for growing hunter numbers, according to data from the Department, without forcing resident hunters to make sacrifices to their hunting traditions. At least not yet.

This, coupled with the impacts from SB 281 passed this session (which limits the number of deer B tags nonresidents can purchase to one or two) could lead to better hunter (and wildlife) distribution, fewer hunters days from nonresidents in overcrowded regions, an increase in hunter harvest rates for all, and improved mule deer population numbers, all desirable outcomes for Montana's hunters.

Applying these changes to nonresidents and implementing mandatory reporting together would provide the needed data after a five year period to better understand if this sort of change is helping, hurting, or worth reconsidering.

Furthermore, we believe the idea of restricting "hunters that apply for special mule deer permits from hunting antlered mule deer bucks on their general license in other hunting districts (e.g., if you apply for a special permit, you would NOT be able to hunt antlered mule deer in other hunting districts even if you did NOT draw the permit you applied for)" is intriguing, but likely too drastic of a change and sacrifice in opportunity to gain the needed favor amongst resident hunters, according to the research done by the Department. We

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

remain neutral on this.

The proposal to limit mule deer hunting to antlered deer only in areas where mule deer populations are lower than desired seems reasonable. However, this begs the question of how to define 'lower than desired.' We encourage the Department to launch a statewide mule deer management plan to help answer that question and outline specific management objectives. In the meantime, we remain neutral on this.

Finally, regarding a proposal to expand waterfowl hunting, we support expanding waterfowl opportunities within the framework of the existing federally controlled seasons in whatever areas of Montana that the shared public resource can sustain. The area between the confluence of the Bighorn and Yellowstone Rivers to the Rosebud-Custer County seems like it now fits that description. Let's open it.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and we look forward to engaging further this fall during the draft regulation proposals comment period

We appreciate your careful consideration,

Jake Schwaller, Billings, MT

Volunteer Board Member,
Eastern Montana Conservation Leader
Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

#147

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

2024-2025 Statewide Season Setting Comments

- I support the statewide proposal for archery-only season dates for moose and mountain goats. Season dates of September 2-14 seem appropriate. I would support this applying in hunting districts with 3 or less permits to keep things simple and consistent statewide.
- I strongly support antlered buck only season structures for general deer licenses in specific hunting districts to limit antlerless mule deer harvest. Most hunting districts across eastern Montana would benefit from this structure.
- Regarding hunter crowding, I strongly support the proposal to restrict hunters that apply for special mule deer permits from hunting antlered mule deer bucks on their general license. This is a great proposal. Hunters would need to choose if they want to apply for a special permit for mule deer or hunt with their general license.
- The proposal to limit hunters to hunting mule deer in only one of the 7 administrative units with their general license, is the best and most likely successfully impactful proposal currently proposed. I strongly support this proposal. Public land mule deer hunting in Montana has never been more crowded. Generally public land mule deer hunting across Montana is awful in terms of quality and quantity of deer. This proposal is a step in the right direction.
- I strongly support more mule deer units going to a limited draw structure. The question about how many times should a hunter be able to hunt mule deer in 5 years is a very poor question. I support not hunting mule deer as many years as needed to ensure sustainable quality mule deer hunting in Montana. Its time for hunters and social questions such as this to stop driving the conversation on mule deer. The biologists recommendations should be followed. However, the biologists need to be well trained and experienced(They should get some experience in Wyoming and Colorado). Currently they are not. Mule deer hunting in Montana is horrible compared to neighboring states due to long standing poor management and biologists not doing their jobs and keeping/recommending the status quo.(Except in Region 2 and now Region 4 proposals – Great job!! This gives me a glimmer of hope)
- Mandatory CWD testing is normal in neighboring states. I support it in Montana.
- Season Length: I strongly support reduced season lengths and/or limited permits for mule deer units with low numbers. This should be implemented on all public lands in eastern montana for mule deer immediately. However, I do not support partial limited permit seasons for any existing limited entry elk units. Such as limited entry for the first half of the season and general for the second half of the season. Limited entry elk seasons should be left alone. I wouldn't have any issue with additional restrictions or split seasons on existing general season elk opportunities.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide comments.

Guy Stickney
 Miles City, MT

#148

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

To whom it may concern,

I am a big supporter of Limited Permits for Antlered Mule Deer. Please continue to develop ways of bringing quality mule deer back to the landscape.

Thank you,
Doug Krings

#149

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

It's really disappointing that region 7 has no proposals regarding mule deer. The mule deer herds in region 7 are really in rough shape. Other regions biologists have proposals to address this. Why is region 7 not proposing anything? Come on, we expect better for the management of our wildlife resources.

#150

COMPLETE

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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Montana mule deer hunting is in an incredible downward spiral and needs action immediately. The state has had a huge influx of residents and the population/quality can't maintain itself on a general season that extends through the rut with any weapon.

1. Make everybody put in for a region so you can at least see where pressure is located at. I promise you'll see north and south east Montana being absolutely pounded by hunters. Quality is absolute junk now. Everybody will still draw "their tag" so nobody loses out on "their right" to hunt a deer for the year. Base the following seasons structure off that data. You guys have no idea how many hunters are hunting where right now and the impacts it's having. It's terrible to see where this state has landed over the last 20+ years with their mule deer population/quality.
2. The rut hunt needs to be a draw. Rifle and bow technology have changed over the years, the population has increased, and the state keeps managing the deer population like it's the 1950s. CHANGE something to protect the resource for future generations.
3. Make mandatory harvest reporting online a requirement or you can't enter the draw or buy your tags. Having people call to do phone surveys is a waste of time and resources. Most people don't answer phone numbers they don't recognize.

I would fully support not being able to hunt mule deer bucks across the state for 3-5 years if I knew when I had a tag in my pocket the quality and experience was going to be positive. I haven't hunted deer in the last 5 years in this state because the experience isn't enjoyable with the lack of quality game and the amount of hunting pressure. Does it take a hunter six weeks to shoot their rutted up "meat buck" or could they shoot their meat buck in the first 2-3 weeks before the deer are running next to every road rutted up? You don't need to change everything at once, but if you started making decisions for management based off actual data vs the free for all for resident hunters it would help.

#151

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Statewide proposals

- Moose and mountain goat archery:

- o Should we recommend adding archery-only season dates for moose and mountain goat similar to the archery only bighorn sheep season (Sept 2 – 14)?

- I support – no downside

- o Would a season of Sept. 2-14 work like it does for bighorn sheep?

- I support those dates

- o Should this not apply in hunting districts with less than 3 tags?

- Should apply to all districts regardless of tag numbers

- Mountain lion quotas:

- o Should we change how we set quotas for fall mountain lion season?

- Yes for non-chase

- o Do they need a separate quota, do they need a quota, or should we continue to allocate up to 20 percent of the take during this season?

- No quota for non-chase

- o Maybe a quota applies to the entire season without allocating to different seasons?

- Non-chase would have minimal impact

- Waterfowl hunting has been closed between the confluence of the Bighorn and Yellowstone Rivers to the Rosebud-Custer County line since 1959. Because waterfowl are currently abundant, FWP is considering a recommendation to open this stretch of river to waterfowl hunting in 2024.

- Support reopening this stretch of the Yellowstone River

- In hunting districts where mule deer populations are lower than desired, FWP recommends antlered mule deer buck ONLY hunting seasons to limit antlerless mule deer harvest. While this season structure limits harvest of antlerless deer, buck-only seasons may also reduce buck to doe ratios. This is a season structure that is used in many areas of western Montana.

- How acceptable to you would it be for FWP to have an antlered buck-only mule deer hunting season on your general license in specific hunting districts with low mule deer populations that don't already have one?

- Not acceptable. Unlike years gone-by where this strategy was used effectively, today's overcrowded HD's would have a very heavy impact on buck populations. The strategy would still work if a limited number of buck permits were issued.

- Some hunters complain about overcrowding during their hunts. Below are two potential mule deer management strategies for areas in Montana where crowding may be an issue (e.g., places where there are too many mule deer hunters based on public feedback). How acceptable would each of these strategies be to you?

- o Restrict hunters that apply for special mule deer permits from hunting antlered mule deer bucks on their general license in other hunting districts (e.g., if you apply for a special permit, you would NOT be able to hunt antlered mule deer in other hunting districts even if you did NOT draw the permit you applied for Currently, if you DRAW a special permit, you are not able to hunt antlered mule deer in other hunting districts but if you apply and do not draw, you may still hunt general areas).

- Do not support. Would probably make the situation worse as those who are moving away from areas closer to home that have low deer populations to areas with more deer would not opt out of a restrictive draw process. Nothing to gain by doing so.

- o Limit hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions. There may be a cap placed on the number of mule deer hunters that could hunt in each administrative region of Montana.

- Do not support. Basically, for the same reasons listed above. Hunters are looking for huntable deer populations, not necessarily

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closeness to home.

- To reduce hunter crowding and possibly increase age structure within a mule deer population, FWP could place more hunting districts on a permit-only limited entry draw system. If that were to occur, mule deer hunters would not be able to hunt antlered mule deer bucks every year. During any five-year period, how many years should mule deer hunters be able to hunt antlered mule deer bucks in Montana?

Public lands – 2 or 3 out of 5. Private lands – 5 out of 5 (private landowners simply limit access as population numbers are reached)

- (CWD) in In portions of the state, FWP does not receive sufficient samples of harvested deer and elk to adequately assess the prevalence of chronic wasting disease harvested animals. In specific circumstances, FWP could implement a mandatory sample submission from harvested animals, which would be accompanied by a biological check station to assist in sample collection during specific hunts and dates.

o How acceptable would it be to establish a mandatory CWD sample submission requirement for a specific deer/elk hunting license or special permit?

Acceptable – even though the results appear to be ineffective (no end game). Large private landowners who are not allowing any CWD management are now becoming the epicenters of the disease

o How acceptable would it be to establish a mandatory CWD sample submission requirement for specific portion(s) of a hunting district (on a specific range of dates)?

Not acceptable. Split requirements within the same HD leads to confusion and noncompliance

- Length of season:

o What do you think about limited entry permits or reduced season length in areas where mule deer numbers are low?

Support - limited entry permits.

Do not support - reduced season length (leads to increased crowding)

Should the season be permitted for bull or either-sex for a portion of the season and open to a general license for any elk for remainder

Do not support – creates a confusing management position (limited and unlimited for the same population??)

Do not support – rewarding landowners with general either sex licenses who have created excess populations by not allowing any management is flat wrong. This tactic is becoming widespread and has even resulted in lawsuits against MTFWP. Please hold your ground and do not allow this kind manipulation to become the rule rather than the exception.

Closing thoughts.

It appears we are headed down the same road that other states have taken when addressing overcrowded conditions and resulting low game populations. Limited permits have almost exclusively been the answer, with a very impacted hunting culture becoming the result. The option seldom taken is that of effectively increasing private land access to relieve some of the growing pressure on the public. There is plenty of room in Montana to retain a quality experience in the field if the landowner / sportsman relationship is improved. New approaches to nurture that relationship will be needed. I would like to see us (Montana) become the first state to turn around this seemingly inevitable fall into increased limitation by looking at it from a new lens. If there is a way, we need to be finding it before this amazing Montana hunting culture is diminished or lost.

I have lots of ideas in this regard. Let's start brainstorming!

Rick Miller - Colstrip

#152

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

It is interesting every region came up with adjustments to mule deer for every region but region 7. Region 7 we get 2 moose tags. Biologists and wildlife managers in region 7 need to take a hard look in the mirror at themselves. Mule deer are in the worst shape I have ever seen them in and they are doing nothing.

#153

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

All my comments are in regard to region 7. I support a mule deer draw for 2024 season. If I'm not hunting in the fall I am likely out working in the areas I would be hunting and it is terrible. All those years of letting people harvest too many does and drought and predation have done their toll on the population I hunt. If we don't do something my kids won't ever know what Montana mule deer hunting can be like. It's hunting not killing. Not everyone is gonna harvest a deer and they should understand that going into the hunt. I've been hunting for 25 years and done my part to help let these deer mature and then a pickup load of people catches them on a public section and wipe out half of a herd. I also support a bighorn sheep tag for region 7. Who cares if it's mostly private. They aren't on it all the time. Just state in the draw that you may have to spend more time in the field to find a legal spot to hunt them. Been too many years of selling quantity and now no one has quality.

#154

COMPLETE

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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Flathead Wildlife, Inc. (FWI) Comments on 2024-25 Biennial Hunting Regulations

Flathead Wildlife, Inc. (FWI) submits the following comments on the 2024-2025 biennial hunting regulation proposals and scoping. FWI would like to note what appears to be a major change in the hunting regulation process. Scoping, as provided by this process, is important to bring forth ideas in a timely manner so they can be analyzed. In the past, tentative regulations were then provided to the FW Commission in a meeting where hunters could also comment on tentative changes or bring forth their own proposals. To that point, any and all proposals were on the table. The FW Commission would then amend as desired and adopt tentative regulations to be put out for public comment where hunters could accept the new proposal or advocate for the existing regulation (either-or). The FW Commission would then consider public comment and adopt final regulations.

From what FWI was told in the regional scoping meetings, the tentative meeting is now eliminated and replaced by this scoping process. That change is not clear to hunters. It appears that one public input step has been eliminated and hunters will be presented with either-or tentative proposals in September and October. It could be possible for the FW Commission to adopt major changes at the December meeting but those would then need to go out for a short public comment over the holiday season and would also compress the time available between adoption of the final regulations and the time required to create and publish new hunting regulations. FWI objects to the change in process without adequate explanation to hunters and to an apparent removal of one public involvement step.

Statewide Proposals

- Waterfowl hunting closure between the confluence of Bighorn and Yellowstone rivers to Rosebud/Custer County line. Waterfowl, particularly Canada geese, are abundant and this closure is no longer warranted.
- FWI supports restricting mule deer hunting to antlered bucks only in hunting districts where mule deer numbers are lower than desired. In particular, some of our members have hunted in HDs 410 and 621 and were concerned with mule deer numbers being much lower than historical abundance. Mule deer in some areas have been hit by hard winters but do not seem to be rebuilding. While this change could affect buck:doe ratios, we feel the herds must be given an opportunity to recover by reducing doe harvest.
- While some limited entry mule deer districts have a very low probability of drawing a permit, FWI does not favor a restriction that anyone simply applying for a limited entry mule deer permit could not hunt in any other district. While that would certainly improve draw odds, this would mean (unsuccessful) hunters looking for a quality hunting experience could not hunt mule deer anywhere most years.
- FWI does not support limiting hunters to hunting mule deer in only one FWP administrative region. It is not immediately clear how that would reduce hunter crowding. Even if regions went to limited entry, crowding could still occur in popular areas. It appears the best solution to crowding concerns would be limited entry by district.
- CWD is a growing concern in Montana requiring adequate sampling to determine the spread and prevalence of CWD in areas. Hunter harvested animals are a good way to gather samples. In districts where sampling is inadequate, FWI would support requiring successful hunters to submit their kill for sampling. This will require FWP make a broad range of checkpoints available so hunters are not unduly inconvenienced.
- Length of season and limited entry permits for mule deer. Mule deer statewide in general and in Region 1 in particular have decreased in abundance with the occurrence of mature bucks also decreasing. Region 1 is already bucks-only for mule deer. FWI would support looking at whether limiting mule deer harvest to the first 3 weeks of the season would increase the occurrence of mature bucks or would simply compress harvest into a shorter time frame. Not every hunting district will produce significant older age mature mule deer bucks. In those districts with potential for trophy mule deer, FWI would support limited entry hunting for buck mule deer. But northwest Montana has abundant whitetail deer providing harvest opportunity. These restrictions might not work or be as popular in regions where mule deer are the primary species.
- Heritage season muzzleloader hunt. FWI is concerned that a December muzzleloader hunt puts undue pressure on mature mule deer bucks and also mature bull elk in areas like northwest Montana that might experience heavy snowfall to compress animals into vulnerable areas. Hunting at that time also puts undue stress on bucks and bulls trying to recover enough from the rut to survive winter. While late season muzzle loader hunting might be appropriate for some species and in some areas, the FW Commission should be given the authority to direct where that hunting can occur.

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Region 1 Proposals

- FWI supports removing the either-sex harvest opportunity for PTHFV permit holders in HD 120 and 130 and removing the WT either-sex harvest opportunity in HD 130 the 1st week of the season. HD 120 and 130 currently have lower than expected WT deer abundance and need some relief to recover.
- FWI supports limiting the LPT WT 199-20 either-sex B license to 1 per hunter and to require mandatory CWD sampling.
- FWI supports adding a 170-00 elk B license valid on private land in HD 170 to deal with the growing elk herd.
- FWI supports requiring mandatory CWD sampling for MD bucks harvested with HD 130-50 permits to increase the number of samples.
- FWI supports requiring successful black bear hunters to submit 2 pre-molars from their harvested bear under the hunter sampling system to ensure a valid sample is submitted.
- Moose numbers are low in northwest Montana. FWI supports requiring mandatory reporting on harvested moose to a call center to gather more information.
- FWI supports increasing the number of Region 1 199-01 turkey tags from 1 to 4 per hunter. Turkeys are overabundant in many areas but access can be difficult. Allowing more turkey tags per hunter should increase harvest.
- FWI supports the proposed boundary changes to add Bad Rock WMA to HD 170 and to clarify the boundary junction between HD 170 and HD 140.

Region 4

- FWI supports eliminating the elk shoulder season in HD 410.
- FWI supports changing from the either-sex mule deer the entire season in HD 410 to something more restrictive to allow mule deer abundance to recover.

Region 6

- FWI supports eliminating the late elk shoulder season in HD 621.

Jim Vashro, President

Flathead Wildlife, Inc.

#155

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

As a resident of southeastern Montana, I am concerned with the population of mule deer and general over crowding on public lands. These are some of the lowest deer numbers I've seen in my lifetime. I think the mule deer doe tags should be very minimal to none. The population of mule deer can not take large harvest numbers as well as tough winters and strong spring storms. I fear there will not be any mule deer for future generations if this harvest plan continues. As far as overcrowding, I think the idea of applying for specific regions to hunt mule deer is a good plan. Even with limitation on the number of given tags, the quality of hunt would hopefully improve. I, along with many hunter I know, would gladly hunt mule deer fewer years with a chance at a mature buck instead of hunting them ever year.

#156

COMPLETE

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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I am not in favor of having extra either sex tags for mule deer to control CWD. It is not going to solve the issue and we are not in an abundant numbers of mule deer as it is. I am in NE montana and after the whitetail die off form EHD, the mule deer are slowly increasing but not to a number of concern.

#157

COMPLETE

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

On behalf of the Montana Wildlife Federation, Montana's oldest and largest sporting conservation organization, we submit the following comments relative to Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Park's biennial season setting proposals for the 2024/2025 seasons.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. By-and-large, we appreciate the fine-scale approach to FWP's season setting process, however we do wish to express concern about the

Statewide Season Setting Proposals:

Moose and Mountain Goat Archery Seasons: MWF believes that if applied judiciously and only in units when there are three or more licenses available, that establishing a separate archery season for Moose and Mountain Goats may help spread out hunter pressure and create a better experience.

While this may be a small shift in opportunity, it does signal a continued perception of FWP in that the opportunity to hunt often takes precedence over the management goals of all species as well as perceived overcrowding.

Mule Deer:

We applaud FWP's efforts to look at a myriad of new tactics & strategies related to Mule Deer Hunting. Mule deer across the west are facing difficult times, and Montana is no different. Between loss of habitat, harsh winters, disease and aggressive hunting seasons, Mule deer in Montana are at low populations.

We also wish to highlight that SB 281 changed antlerless opportunity for non-residents by creating a legislative expectation that only 1 non-resident antlerless license may be sold to someone applying if they do not hold a B10 or B11 combination license, and that non-residents that hold a B10 or B11 may only purchase 2 antlerless licenses. We have not seen this reflected throughout the document, although MWF applauds the agency's willingness to cut antlerless opportunity in favor of increasing deer herds after a rough few years of both harsh winters and drought-stricken summers.

MWF is supportive of a variety of measures outlined in the season setting document in the following order:

If areas where mule deer hunting has been based primarily on opportunity but now has significant loss of herd size, we support more restrictive methods to restore the overall herd numbers as well as seek a more diversified age structure in antlered animals. To this end we support moving to limited entry in more areas first and foremost as FWP can have a much more granular management strategy relative to hunter pressure, harvest metrics and overall quality of hunt while still allowing harvest if and where appropriate.

Moving to only antlered mule deer in districts that had been antlerless/antlered is another good alternative but not as selective and not as easily managed for hunter distribution and overall management of the resource.

MWF supports eliminating significant opportunity for non-resident doe hunting, as lined out in SB 281 from 2023, but we also understand that some licenses and permits have been drawn. We would rather FWP err on the side of resource protection than hunter opportunity at this time and as such, FWP has the authority to void any antlerless license and issue a refund. We encourage this in areas where winter kill has been especially harsh.

Restricting hunters to a specific region for Mule Deer does not seem to do much in terms of reducing pressure on deer as it will likely concentrate hunters in areas that are closer to their cities and towns where mule deer numbers are likely less than optimal, and it would create significant barriers to entry for younger members traveling with older hunters to camp, etc. While "choose your district" may work for a species of abundance such as elk (at this time), it is likely to put more pressure on low density units rather than provide a pressure relief valve. Furthermore, if FWP does move forward with a paradigm that is designed around limited entry for bucks while also reducing mule deer harvest, we suggest following the allocation of licenses in a limited fashion before looking at

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restructuring hunter mobility at this time.

Chronic Wasting Disease Sampling: CWD is an ongoing and serious concern for native wildlife and for those who live and work around wildlife. Understanding the spread and severity of the disease, Montana can make better decisions relative to managing species at risk, as well as funding new research based on harvest metrics used in the management of CWD to help ensure better management in the future. We encourage the department to institute a mandatory reporting requirement that is not invasive to the hunter, helps educate the public to the need of the reporting, and sets up a warning system for those who do not follow this new protocol. This will be a difficult and complex issue that will require the help of the wildlife and hunting NGO community as well as a large public relations push by the agency and new rule-making processes. To that end, if FWP elects to go down this route, we suggest starting first with some pilot areas where CWD is known to exist and a control area where FWP has not found CWD yet.

Season Length: Montanans pride themselves on the long hunting seasons, and have done so for over 50 years. In that time, significant changes have happened in Montana, with the state now over 1 million human inhabitants, significant increase in winter range development, persistent drought, habitat degradation on public land and significantly altered animal behavior based on our storied and historic traditional hunting seasons.

While MWF does not purport to have the answer on what season length should look like, we do encourage the agency to delve deep into what other states are doing relative to staggered openings for different regions/districts/emu's and look at how current models in Montana such as the 3 week general rifle season in areas like 441 or 404 are working. We also encourage FWP to look at ways to disperse hunters onto more private land for herd management hunts when it comes to elk. To that end, we suggest the following:

- 1.) To help deal with elk distribution and hunter success, make A tags available for cow elk harvest on private land only in districts that are chronically over-objective. In those districts, MWF suggest putting antlerless elk harvest on permit only for public lands (this includes DNRC Trust, FWP owned and Federally owned public lands) in order to create more favorable conditions on public land for elk security.
- 2.) Study the other states who stagger season start dates and look to improve hunter distribution through this approach rather than simply cutting the traditional 5 & 6 week hunting seasons for rifle and archery.
- 3.) Seek legislation to eliminate the statutory requirement dates for the Muzzleloader season.
- 4.) Move to limited entry hunts in more districts in order to better control age diversity in antlered animals and help ensure better overwinter survivability of calves. By employing more limited entry hunts, even if you maintain large quotas for bulls, you control hunter pressure significantly while also ensuring that ample opportunity for antlerless elk exists on landscapes in which pressure needs to be applied. Limiting hunters to permits for antlerless elk also helps decrease public land hunting pressure.

Region Specific Season Setting Proposals:

Region 1:

Elk: MWF supports both suggested changes for elk in the Region 1 document.

Deer:

MWF supports the creation for an antlerless B tag for HB 101 that is good on private land only.

MWF supports the changes suggested in HB 130 & LPT 199-20.

MWF supports mandatory reporting at this time and would prefer to see education and interdiction at field check stations instead of a

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program that hasn't had time to be tested given technological issues within FWP's web portal.

Black Bear: While MWF understands and sympathizes with FWP's desires to decrease bear conflicts in the urban-rural split in HD 170, we remain concerned about the optics of hunting bears that close to suburban development, especially in a time when public perception of hunting large carnivores is at an all time low. MWF is ambivalent about the extension in the other districts, but would encourage FWP to continue to ensure that bear hunters in northwestern Montana have the tools necessary to distinguish between a black bear and a grizzly bear, and that subquotas for female mortality are kept.

Moose: MWF supports the stated action under the moose section (Mandatory reporting of harvest).

Mountain Lions: Mountain Lions are a native and cherished wildlife species. Conservation minded hunters have done a remarkable job bringing lions back from the brink and helped ensure that adequate regulatory mechanisms were in place to make sure we would not repeat the sins of the past when wildlife was extirpated for reasons well below the ethical and moral necessities of modern management prescriptions. As such, the Montana Wildlife Federation cannot support eliminating a stand-alone license for lions in units 141 & 150. Similarly, moving to an "unlimited" quota would be a better option, it does not address the management issues which the agency seemingly wishes to impose, which would be to increase harvest in a low harvest unit that can sustain the increased take of some lions. To that end, we ask the agency to look at other methods including working with outfitters and local hunters to come up with ways to improve hunter participation in the wilderness lion hunts rather than reduce the ethical parameters of the hunt.

Turkeys: MWF supports the agency's desire to increase the number of turkey licenses and individual can hold from 1 to 4.

Region 2:

Elk: In general, the Region two elk and deer proposals are well thought out and look to encompass the vast majority of hunter comments that we have heard through our members and affiliates. We greatly appreciate the region's willingness to pull back on shoulder seasons and adjust hunter pressure based on the resource's needs.

HD 204: MWF supports both proposed actions for this hunt district.

HD 210: MWF supports both proposed actions for this hunt district.

HD 217: MWF supports both changes suggested in the season setting tentatives, although we would prefer to see a damage hunt situation rather than a shoulder season for those two weeks.

HD 262: MWF supports adding the 20 permits for antlered bull harvest.

HB 270: MWF supports ensuring that B license opportunity is focused on private land

Deer: MWF supports the actions proposed in the Deer section of the season setting document.

Bighorn Sheep: MWF supports the recommendations made by FWP on HD's 214, 250 and 270

Mountain Lion: MWF supports the changes to LMU 150.

Region 3:

Elk:

Elk B License 397-00: MWF supports making antlerless B licenses valid only on private land, and excluding all state and federally managed public land from this license type. Furthermore, we would suggest adding antlerless opportunity on private land only through the use of the A tag if this herd is considered to be chronically over-objective or if problematic concentrations of wildlife are known to occur.

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Elk B HD 360: MWF supports keeping the permit system in place for antlerless licenses. Moving to a more liberal license contributes to hunter crowding, leading to lower success rates and longer than average hunter days to fill a tag. Increasing opportunity in this manner will only further exacerbate the issue of low harvest and increase the issue of problematic concentrations of elk on inaccessible land with only minimal gains in terms of harvested elk.

HD 340: MWF does not see the justification to enable antlerless hunting on a general tag in a district that is within objective range. We suggest maintaining the brow-tined bull only regulation and adding a lower quota range antlerless permit system if there is a need to harvest cow elk.

HD 370: MWF supports the proposed structure for HD 370.

HD 339: MWF supports the proposed structure for HD 339.

HD 343: MWF supports the proposed structure for HD 343

Removing restriction of 394-00 & 396-00: MWF supports the proposed structure for the 394-00 License, but questions why the need exists to run this structure with the 396-00 license that is inside of two districts that are within objective range.

Eliminating 314-00: MWF supports the targeted application of limited entry permits for antlerless elk harvest as permits are shown to be more effective in terms of increasing hunter success, lowering public land hunting pressure and creating a better path to herd management than wide-open opportunity. Given that HD's 309 & 3211 are within objective range, we request that they be removed from this package and a separate permit is issued for antlerless harvest while keeping a tighter control over hunter distribution in 312, 390 & 393 through more permits. If the agency decides to proceed with this change, then we would prefer to see antlerless harvest be focused on private property to deal with elk concentration issues while giving elk on public land the ability to be secure and not flood on to inaccessible private.

HD 380: MWF supports the proposed structure change to HD 380.

Shoulder Hunt for HD 391: HD 391 is currently only slightly over objective and therefore MWF does not feel as though there is a need for a prolonged shoulder season. We suggest going back to damage hunts if there are continued problematic concentrations of wildlife rather than a shotgun approach that simply moves elk further on to inaccessible lands.

Deer:

MWF supports the proposed structural changes within the document with the exception of restoring antlerless permits in HD's 318 & 335. If that is not adopted, then MWF asks that FWP further add a restriction to non-resident hunters so that they may only purchase 1-2 antlerless licenses, per SB 281 which passed in the 2023 legislature and takes effect for this season.

Antelope: MWF supports the proposed changes in the season setting for Region 3 pronghorn hunting.

Moose: MWF supports the department's proposed changes to Moose hunting regulations in Region 3.

Bighorn Sheep: MWF prefers to see the "legal ram" definition in order to try and rebuild flocks and create more age structure and diversity within these populations.

Mountain Lion: MWF supports the proposed structure changes to the Mountain Lion Season.

Bison: MWF supports the proposed quota range for the backcountry hunts.

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Weapons Restriction: MWF supports the proposed action in the Region 4 document relative to the Blackwood Exclusion Zone.

Wildlife Management Areas: MWF is concerned about increasing hunter access to concentrated elk on a piece of property specifically purchased for elk to exist on during times of high stress - The Wall Creek Wildlife Management Area. By allowing more hunters to access the WMA, FWP runs the risk of increasing problematic concentrations on unavailable private land, further complicating hunting success and overall herd management. Rather than adjusting the boundary, if FWP believes that some hunting could be beneficial in the current exclusion zone, we suggest limited entry permits for antlerless hunting so as to maximize hunter success and efficacy while also encouraging elk to stay on the WMA rather than disperse on to private property.

Boundary Changes: MWF supports the proposed boundary changes in Region 3.

Region 4:

Elk:

HD 415: MWF supports the proposed change to antlered bull from browtined/antlerless.

HD 410: MWF supports the proposed changes for HD 410, especially the elimination of the shoulder season.

HD 413: MWF has traditionally been skeptical of shoulder seasons as they have ballooned from experimental to a full fledged season. If FWP feels the need to have a shoulder season in HD 413, we strongly suggest that they make this valid only on private land and run no later than January 31st, or have a basic quota that you want to fill based on actual access availability.

HD 417: MWF supports the HD 417 boundary change.

Deer:

HD 448: MWF supports the creation of a b license for mule deer, but given the low population counts and tough winter, we question the 100 quota and recommend either providing justification for this number or reduce it to a quota of 50.

HD's 410 & 417: MWF strongly supports the creation of a limited entry permit for these districts. We also ask for a justification on the overall quota number of 200.

HD 426: MWF supports the proposed structure as written.

HD's 410, 411, 412, 417, 419 & 426: MWF supports the proposed change to private land only for B licenses.

Region 5:

Deer:

HD 502: MWF supports this restriction and would be supportive of moving to a limited entry system for antlered mule deer in order to create a better age class structure and hopefully find some deer that are CWD resistant.

HD 515: MWF supports this restriction and would be supportive of moving to a limited entry system for antlered mule deer in order to create a better age class structure and hopefully find some deer that are CWD resistant.

HD 535: MWF supports this approach to the Hunt District.

HD 555: MWF supports removing antlerless opportunity relative to this unit and we further suggest limiting the harvest of antlered mule deer by moving to either a limited entry permit or by eliminating the last two weeks of the rifle season.

Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public Input

HD 590: MWF supports restricting harvest in this district but requests further restrictions in terms of antlered buck harvest with a limited entry permit to better diversify age class structure.

Region 6:

Elk: MWF strongly supports the removal of late elk shoulder seasons. We applaud the agency's willingness to remove these seasons.

Deer: MWF is mostly supportive of the changes listed under the deer section. However, we have some concerns about increasing the quota of B licenses while also loosening regulations to allow for the harvest of a second buck. Our understanding is that the CWD prevalence in Mule Deer bucks is widely known for HD 600 and the issue there is to ensure that more antlerless samples are achieved. While these districts may not be seeing the similar kind of die off that others have, and we support the increased harvest of antlerless in these specific districts, we also desire to have the buck/doe ratios such that we do more than simply maintain the herd without looking for older age class bucks that have either withstood CWD or have some kind of natural immunity to it.

Lion: MWF supports the recommended changes proposed.

Region 7:

While MWF supports the one change within Region 7, we are concerned that some other changes have not been suggested relative to hunter crowding, decreasing harvest of antlerless deer and elk and/or removing B licenses from public lands. As Region 7 remains over objective in total, we suggest FWP look at ways to increase harvest of antlerless elk on private land only, while creating better conditions for elk to thrive on public land through the limiting of hunter pressure, similar to the cuts from 2023.

Frank Szollosi,
Executive Director
Montana Wildlife Federation

#158

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 15, 2023 10:34:18 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 15, 2023 10:34:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:20
IP Address: 174.198.132.233

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I would like to express my support for extending spring black bear season in BMU/HD 140, 141, 150 and 170 to June 15. Access in these areas are very limited due to road closures and deep snow conditions, preventing adequate black, bear harvest. This is a well thought out common sense change, which I am very supportive of. I would also recommend looking at extending the black bear season in the districts along the north fork of the flathead river for the same reasons.
Thanks Ian Wargo

#159

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 15, 2023 11:02:18 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 15, 2023 11:06:21 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:03
IP Address: 174.198.133.37

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Oh Ty got tf

#160

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 15, 2023 3:59:57 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 15, 2023 4:00:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:35
IP Address: 184.166.87.229

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

Elizabeth Bradley
Regional Wildlife Director
Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks-Region 2
3201 Spurgin Rd
Missoula, MT 59804

Re: 2023-2024 Season Setting Public Comment Opportunity

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Walker Conyngham and I am the president of Hellgate Hunters & Anglers, a Western Montana-based organization that represents over 500 sportsmen and women across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2023-2024 Season Setting Draft Regulation Proposals for Region 2 and statewide. Further, we would like to thank the Department for putting forward tentatives prior to soliciting public comment. This timing allows Montana hunters and organizations like ours to consider our policies in the context of those policies that the Department would like to implement.

We submit the following comments regarding the draft proposals for Region 2:

Elk

We question the addition of HD 210 to HD's 211, 212, and 216 for cow elk B-tags under the existing license structure. While there are migratory elk herds within these units, HD 210 has seen a decrease in available hunting opportunities for elk on public land. Increasing hunting pressure where there are ample refuges for elk on private land across the HD where public access is not allowed will only further the scarcity of elk on public land.

We support the addition of rifle bull elk limited quota for HD 262, and ask that the Department continue its work to expand public hunting opportunities within this district. Harboring of elk is a significant issue in this district, and this opportunity will hopefully redistribute late season bulls away from subdivision backyards back onto public land.

We oppose the 50 percent increase of the 270-01 b-license. Having the population at the upper end of the objective range is not sufficient reason for this large of an increase, and we expect that this will increase hunting pressure and thereby reduce hunter success in this unit.

We oppose the re-addition of an HD 281 B-tag opportunity. This population has suffered a significant decline in recent years, and public enthusiasm for the opportunity is not a good enough reason to reinstate a tag that was removed because of a declining population, when that population has not experienced a significant recovery.

Deer

We support the removal of the HD-240 B-tag, and ask that the Department continue and expand its study of mule deer declines in Western Montana.

While we support the principle that declining populations should prompt reduced hunting opportunity, as seen in the proposed quota reduction for HD 261, we ask that the Department bolster its study of spring mule deer populations rather than relying on hunter harvest numbers.

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Bighorn Sheep

We support all the draft proposals for sheep hunting opportunities in Region 2, and thank the Department for its responsiveness to population declines.

HHA submits the following comments for the statewide regulation proposals:

We strongly support antlered buck only hunting opportunities in those hunting districts where mule deer populations are in decline. This should be a governing principle for deer management in our state, and not subject to the whims of the hunting public. We are witnessing a severe decline in the quality of Montana's mule deer hunting opportunities, which already ranked below those of our neighboring states.

We support a single-region principle for mule deer A-tags, where appropriate. However, we ask that the Department further evaluate—and submit for public comment—how this would be implemented and whether it would negatively impact Regions 1 and 2.

We support the reduction of antlered-buck hunting opportunities in those regions where buck-doe ratios and age class structure are sub-optimal.

We support a change in the season structure to reduce hunting pressure on mature mule deer during the rut. Montana's mule deer hunting opportunities need to be improved.

We support FWP implementing a mandatory sample submission state-wide from harvested animals to adequately assess the prevalence of chronic wasting disease.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to continuing to engage in the season setting process.

Sincerely,

Walker Conyngham
President
Hellgate Hunters & Anglers

#161

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Sunday, July 16, 2023 2:51:44 PM
Time Spent: 02:02:18
IP Address: 63.153.106.178

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I am against any mandatory CWD tests for harvested game, even on a local scale. This should be the hunter's choice, as such a mandate would complicate the harvest, and in the future, it could easily be abused to discourage lawful hunting by adding extensive and unnecessary details to the already rigorous demands inherent to fair chase.

I am also opposed to preventing mule deer permit applicants from hunting mule deer bucks on their general license in other districts, in the case that they do not draw. General deer license holders should not be restricted to hunting mule deer bucks in only one region, either. These propositions are said to address supposed hunter overcrowding, but I have seen no conclusive evidence that hunter overcrowding exists on a large scale. It is my experience that a short hike often brings one into relatively untouched country.

I support the addition of adult bighorn ewe permits for HD 270. A special archery season for moose and goat is a great idea as well. It is a good way to maximize opportunity for hunters who draw a rarely acquired permit, and I see no reason to make an exception for areas with fewer than three tags.

Joshua Krebs
Montana resident and hunter

#162

COMPLETE

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Time Spent: 00:00:07
IP Address: 98.97.33.159

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

These comments support the proposed elk season in the north portion of HD204 (Eightmile to Turah). Elk populations present a challenge for private landowners, as elk tend to form large herds on private land. The proposed season structure will increase harvest on private land through public hunting. As manager of MPG Ranch, it's been challenging to reduce elk numbers through public hunting. A season structure that allows more hunters to kill two cows will help.

When elk gather in large groups in large private refuges, they may stay there for weeks during the rifle season. It's a tough problem. Allowing hunters to take two cows when available will increase the harvest. If the extra pressure makes the elk hold even more tightly to private land refuges, we should back peddle. But, for now, this measure will give us a new tool to explore. My main interest in controlling the elk is their effect on mule deer, agriculture on our neighbor's places, and the ecosystem.

Mule deer are struggling in the hunting district. Part of the problem is likely elk overabundance. Elk overrun our neighbor's field and keep aspens and cottonwoods from recruiting in the river bottom. Many species depend on the aspens and cottonwoods. As such, this well-thought-out proposal will foster effective wildlife management, better relationships between landowners and public hunters, and the broader ecosystem.

-Phil Ramsey, MPG Ranch Manager and Lead Scientist, 406.546.0699

#163

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 17, 2023 4:00:38 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 17, 2023 4:07:27 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:48
IP Address: 209.137.230.210

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

It's come to my attention that there may be a possibility to use a general elk tag to harvest cow elk in HD204. If a hunter also held a B tag, the hunter could then feasibly shoot two cow elk back to back.

I'm in support of this. I've hunted private lands in HD204. It seems that the opportunity to kill two elk at once is highly possible, assuming the elk are on the private land I'm hunting. So often, the elk are either there or not. So if they're present, harvesting multiple elk would not only help reduce the population, it'd be a welcome protein boost to my family.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

#164

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 17, 2023 5:57:11 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 17, 2023 5:58:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:14
IP Address: 174.45.153.32

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I support the HD535 and HD590 mule deer proposals as outlined below. Also, as a landowner in HD535, the mule deer buck 535-50 quota should be dramatically reduced based on the current dimally low mule deer buck population in HD535.

HD535: This proposal is to remove the general license mule deer antlerless opportunity and change the mule deer buck 535-50 quota range from recognizing the continued decline in mule deer numbers, the need to shift harvest away from the antlerless segment of the population, and in response to lower mule deer buck harvest.

HD590: This proposal is to change the general license mule deer season from either-sex to antlered buck recognizing the continued decline in mule deer fawn-doe ratios and a need to shift harvest away from the antlerless segment of the population to increase recruitment.

#165

COMPLETE

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Time Spent: 00:11:50
IP Address: 174.45.153.32

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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

In hunting districts where mule deer populations are lower than desired, FWP recommends antlered mule deer buck ONLY hunting seasons to limit antlerless mule deer harvest. While this season structure limits harvest of antlerless deer, buck-only seasons may also reduce buck to doe ratios. This is a season structure that is used in many areas of western Montana. How acceptable to you would it be for FWP to have an antlered buck-only mule deer hunting season on your general license in specific hunting districts with low mule deer populations that don't already have one? I strongly support this approach given the dismally low mule deer populations in many areas across Montana.

Restrict hunters that apply for special mule deer permits from hunting antlered mule deer bucks on their general license in other hunting districts (e.g., if you apply for a special permit, you would NOT be able to hunt antlered mule deer in other hunting districts even if you did NOT draw the permit you applied for. Currently, if you DRAW a special permit, you are not able to hunt antlered mule deer in other hunting districts but if you apply and do not draw, you may still hunt general areas). I support this proposal.

Limit hunters to hunting mule deer on their general license in only ONE of FWP's seven administrative regions. There may be a cap placed on the number of mule deer hunters that could hunt in each administrative region of Montana. I do not support this proposal.

Should the season be permitted for bull or either-sex for a portion of the season and open to a general license for any elk for remainder? I do not support this proposal at all. Also, in MTFWP Region 4 and 5, limited quota bull elk (either-sex) permits should not ever be removed and replaced with a general license for bull elk. Control elk populations through increased cow elk harvest, and maintain bull elk age class structure in MTFWP Region 4 and 5 by continuing limited quota bull elk (either-sex) permits. Also, inaccessible and un hunted or virtually un hunted elk should never be counted to determine overall elk population counts and associated elk population objectives.

#166

COMPLETE

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Time Spent: 00:07:49
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Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I support the proposed changes to the elk season in the north part of HD204. The elk herd in this district is over objective, and because not all private lands in the 204 allow hunting access, it's difficult to effectively manage the herd. Where numerous hunters have access to these elk, allowing these hunters to harvest two cows each will help. I hunt elk on private land in this district, and have seen that when hunters, landowners, and FWP are working together, we can more effectively manage this herd. Thank you for your continued efforts to balance everyone's concerns as we work together to improve access and manage the elk population.

#167

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Tuesday, July 18, 2023 8:17:49 AM
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Page 1

Q1

Please provide recommendations you would like to see FWP consider when crafting the draft hunting regulations for the 2024/2025 hunting seasons. Please be as specific as possible. You can also comment on ideas FWP is currently considering and discussing during the seasons setting meetings in June and July.

I strongly support the proposed elk season in the north portion of HD204 (Eightmile to Turah) as it provides private landowners with the necessary tools to manage the overabundance of elk, reduce game damage issues, and protect the interests of wildlife and agricultural operations. This season will help maximize harvest potential and assist Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in effectively managing the elk herd.
