

ELK MANAGEMENT CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS
FWP STAFF ASSESSMENT
AUGUST 31, 2022

Develop User Friendly and Effective Methods to Collect Data

Division/Unit/Bureau	Staff Assessment
Accounting Bureau	No comment.
Comm Ed	Under this recommendation, we could develop a communication plan specifically looking at how to engage public with our elk monitoring data. During the past five years we've increased our social media footprint considerably. Additionally, we now utilize direct email for department communication at a much broader scale. In tackling this, we should also look internally at data accessibility and understanding. We could easily implement social media campaigns to collect data and other information on elk movements, but these efforts should be well coordinated with wildlife staff, landowners, and our TSD staff. We should be very deliberate on developing our objectives with this kind of effort and consider what outcomes we're looking to realize. Examples of tools we might use in this kind of communication effort are story maps, social media influencers, direct emails, and web-based surveys. All would involve collaboration with staff across divisions as well as potential partners including hunters, other agencies, tribal governments, and landowners.
Enforcement Division	No comment.
Legal Unit	No comment.
Licensing Bureau	No comment.
Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division	The division is seeking opportunities to improve data collection (and hunter management tools) as hunter access program functions are incorporated into XMT. Ideally, hunters could make site reservations and check-in through the MyFWP app, as well as provide hunter harvest and quality survey responses. This would alleviate administrative workload related to managing reservations, tracking hunter days with the current coupon system, and completing hunter harvest surveys. Ideally, collecting hunter use data in real time would also be done in a way that makes use statistics available to other hunters as they determine which sites to use or avoid based on current conditions/crowding.
Technology Services Division	The impact to TSD for this recommendation would depend on the type of data being collected, the amount of data being collected, and how the data would be used once it is collected. The description is vague, and it is unclear what is being asked for. If CommEd develops a communication plan, TSD should be included in discussions since maps, mobile app, and potentially, other IT tools will be involved. We would need to ensure that we have safeguards in place to ensure that we can collect data securely and not compromise current systems. There would also be a cost for the additional storage space required for this data.
Wildlife Division	<p>This is a logical recommendation that could be implemented with some direction to field staff by FWP. There are many examples of different Regions or individual biologists providing opportunities for the general public to receive, contribute to, and find data, but most of these methods are not standard practices statewide.</p> <p>For example, Region 6 issued a press release summarizing mule deer counts this past winter/spring. Many biologists send survey results from their area to local landowners and</p>

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	<p>interested hunters or members of the public. In several areas, FWP works with elk working groups (Devils Kitchen, MO Breaks) to share elk survey information and collaboratively develop management recommendations.</p> <p>Providing opportunities for the public to contribute to data collection is a bit more difficult, but FWP does have several examples of this as well. The Elkhorns biologist works with landowners on locations of elk sightings to ensure counts are inclusive. FWP uses citizens to assist in ground observation surveys for other species (such as mountain goats), however it is difficult to determine how citizens could assist with ground- based elk surveys, as the amount of land needing covered is quite large, and sightability beyond immediate road-sight distance is difficult from the ground on winter range. Additionally, using citizens science is of limited utility with only sporadic sightings being documented. Also, FWP would need to choose carefully the types of data that could be made available to the public, and when; for example, the ability to “track elk movement trends” could be misconstrued that it is not following fair chase hunting practices if these data are made public during hunting seasons. To be useful, a rigorous program and data collection methods would need to be developed. FWP will look for additional opportunities to involve citizen science while maintaining data collection integrity. Helping the public find data electronically is something we now have the means to do better.</p>