Hunting License Trends in Montana

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Adjusting License & Permit Numbers
Population Management & FWP's Management Tools

Population Goals

• Population size
• Age structure
• Male to female ratios

Tools

• Number of hunters
• Method of harvest
• Season Length & Timing
• Bag limits
• Access
Population Management

A Licenses: Antlered or Either-Sex
• Used primarily to target antlered animals
• Manage population age structure and male to female ratios
• Does not significantly affect population trajectory unless the population is substantially under objective

B Licenses: Antlerless
• Manage population trends
Licensing Overview
Hunting License vs. Permit

**License**
- Provides an opportunity for a license holder to harvest and possess the carcass of an animal

**Permit**
- Used in conjunction with a license
- Expands or restricts a license opportunity
Resident & Nonresident Deer & Elk Licenses

**Resident**
- A Licenses
  - General Deer and Elk Licenses
- B Licenses
  - Some Deer B and Elk B Licenses are limited by a quota while others are available without a quota

**Nonresident**
- A Licenses
  - Limited by statutory quotas and allocated by drawing
- B Licenses
  - Limited to a maximum of 10% of a drawing-based license quota unless all resident applicants receive a license (MCA, 87-2-506)
Statutorily Limited Nonresident Deer & Elk Licenses

• Big Game & Elk Combination:
  • Combined Quota: 17,000 (MCA, 87-2-505)

• Deer Combination:
  • Quota: 4,600 (MCA, 87-2-501)

• Landowner Sponsor Deer Combination:
  • Quota: 2,000 (MCA, 87-2-511)

• Come Home to Hunt (MCA, 87-2-526)
  • Big Game Combination:
    • Quota: 500
  • Elk Combination:
    • Quota: 500
  • Deer Combination:
    • Quota: 500
Nonresident Deer Combination Licenses

• The base quota for Deer Combination Licenses is 4,600 (MCA, 87-2-510)
  During the drawing, deer licenses are added to the quota from the following sources: (MCA, 87-2-511)

  • Landowner Sponsored Deer Combination (LOS)
    • Unclaimed Landowner Sponsored Deer Licenses are added to the Deer Combination License quota
  • Elk Combination
    • For each Elk Combination License holder, an unclaimed General Deer License is separated from a Big Game Combination and added to the Deer Combination quota
2022 Nonresident Combination License Drawing

• 17,000 Big Game & Elk Combinations
  • 12,617 Big Game Combination Licenses issued
  • 4,383 Elk Combination Licenses issued
    • = 4,383 Orphaned Deer Licenses
  • 955 LOS Deer Combination Licenses issued
    • = 1,045 unclaimed LOS Deer Combination Licenses

• 4,600 Base quota + 1,045 LOS + 4,383 Orphaned Deer = 10,028 Deer Combination Quota
10% Nonresident Restriction: Example #1

- Quota of 100
- 150 applicants (120 residents and 30 nonresidents).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Type</th>
<th># of Applicants</th>
<th>Quota Limit</th>
<th>Successful Applicants</th>
<th>Percentage of License Holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
License Example #2

- Quota of 50
- 50 applicants (30 residents and 20 nonresidents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Type</th>
<th># of Applicants</th>
<th>Quota Limit</th>
<th>Successful Applicants</th>
<th>Percentage of license holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
License Example #3

• Quota of 150: 100 applicants (80 residents and 20 nonresidents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Type</th>
<th># of Applicants</th>
<th>Quota Limit</th>
<th>Successful Applicants</th>
<th>Percentage of License Holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Type</th>
<th>Licenses Available</th>
<th>Successful Purchasers</th>
<th>Percentage of Surplus License Holders</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Nonresident Licenses

• Deer and Elk
  • Native Montanan Licenses (MCA, 87-2-514)
  • College Student Licenses (MCA, 87-2-525)
  • Youth Licenses (MCA, 87-2-522)

• Birds
  • Upland Game Bird (MCA, 87-2-402)
  • Migratory Bird (MCA, 87-2-411)
  • Turkey (MCA, 87-2-403)

• Bighorn Sheep
  • 5 Unlimited Hunting Districts

• Other
  • Black Bear (MCA, 87-2-701)
  • Mountain Lion (MCA, 87-2-507)
  • Wolf (MCA, 87-2-524)
Statutory Changes to Licensing

I-161 Outfitter Sponsored Licenses

• Passed in 2010
• Variable price license
• Restrictions on nonresident license holders

House Bill 140

• 2015 Legislative session
• Created a base hunting license
• Standardized license fees and discounts
• Reduced the number of free licenses
Resident vs. Nonresident Prices

- License Packages
  - Resident: Sportsman's Combination without Bear $62
  - Nonresident: Big Game Combination $1,208

- Deer B License
  - Resident: $10
  - Nonresident: $75

- Elk B License
  - Resident: $20
  - Nonresident: $270
Resident & Nonresident License Revenue

![Chart showing Resident and Nonresident License Revenue from 2010 to 2022. The chart includes a line graph and a pie chart for the year 2022. The pie chart indicates 76% for Nonresident and 24% for Resident.]

2022 Revenue:
- Nonresident: 76%
- Resident: 24%
Deer & Elk License Revenue

2022 Deer & Elk Revenue

- 80% Nonresident
- 20% Resident

Graphs showing revenue trends from 2010 to 2022, distinguishing between Nonresident and Resident.
License Sales
Total License Sales 2010-2022

- Resident: +457,647
- Nonresident: +571,366
- Overall: +1,029,013
Deer A License Sales 2010-2022

- Resident: +7,203
- Nonresident: +2,667
- Overall: +9,870
Elk A License Sales 2010-2022

- Resident: +10,446
- Nonresident: +401
- Overall: +10,847
Other Nonresident Deer A 2010-2022

- 2010: 651
- 2022: 2,707
- Overall: +2,056
Other Nonresident Elk
A 2010-2022

- 2010: 651
- 2022: 1,494
- Overall: +843
Deer B License Sales 2010-2022

- Resident: -18,491
- Nonresident: +1,708
- Overall: -16,713
Elk B License Sales 2010-2022

• Resident: +7,724
• Nonresident: +2,141
• Overall: +9,865
Upland Bird Season License Sales 2010-2022

- Resident: +32,683
- Nonresident: +5,805
- Overall: +38,488
Hunter Numbers
Total Hunters 2012 vs. 2022

- Resident: -13,578
  - 2012: 189,696
  - 2022: 176,118
- Nonresident: +31,681
  - 2012: 39,621
  - 2022: 71,302
## Deer and Elk Hunters
### 2012 vs. 2022

- **Resident:** +5,196
  - 2012: 158,299
  - 2022: 163,495
- **Nonresident:** +11,326
  - 2012: 47,687
  - 2022: 59,013

![Bar chart comparing resident and nonresident hunters between 2012 and 2022](chart.png)
Other Species Targeted by Nonresident Hunters

• Black Bear
• Wolf
• Mountain Lion
• Migratory Bird
• Upland Game Bird
• Turkey

• Antelope
• Moose
• Sheep
• Goat
• Bison
Hunter Locations and Days
Deer Hunter Distribution by Region

2010

2021
Elk Hunter Distribution by Region

2010

2020
### Regional Changes in Hunter Distribution

#### Deer
- **Greatest Increase**
  - Region 3: +2,136
  - Region 6: +1,033
- **Greatest Decrease**
  - Region 1: -3,338
  - Region 5: -3,104

#### Elk
- **Greatest Increase**
  - Region 3: +3,244
  - Region 5: +3,124
- **Greatest Decrease**
  - Region 1: -3,779
  - Region 2: -1,434
Statewide Deer Hunting Days

- Resident: +55,752
- Nonresident: +51,447
- Overall: +107,199
Statewide Elk Hunting Days

- Resident: +131,073
- Nonresident: +25,177
- Overall: +156,250
Deer Hunter Days by Region

2010

2021
Elk Hunter Days by Region

2010

2020
Regional changes in Hunter Days

Deer
• Greatest Increase:
  • Region 6: +14,580
  • Region 7: +11,588
• Greatest Decrease:
  • Region 1: −45,288
  • Region 5: −7,437

Elk
• Greatest Increase
  • Region 3: +70,046
  • Region 4: +34,925
• Greatest Decrease:
  • Region 1: −29,597
  • Region 2: −3,512
Hunting Access
## Block Management 2009-2021

- Enrollment has declined by 1,468,978 acres, a decrease of 14%.
- Hunter days have increased by 133,000, an increase of 28%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Change in Acreage</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-78,721</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-216,752</td>
<td>-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-89,897</td>
<td>-17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>+47,611</td>
<td>+4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>-267,152</td>
<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>+183,314</td>
<td>+14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-772,184</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Block Management Acreage
Block Management use by residency for 2021

- Regions with the greatest percentage of nonresident hunters
  - Region 6: 42%
  - Region 7: 41%
Summary

1. Resident and Nonresident license sales have increased since 2010
2. Resident hunters have decreased, Nonresident hunters have increased since 2010
3. Hunter efforts have shifted from West to East
4. Hunters are spending more time in the field
5. Private land open to hunting has decreased over time
Questions

• Email: FWPLegislativeLiasons@mt.gov