



2023 ELK HUNTING ACCESS (EHA) AGREEMENT PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

2023 Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Agreement Program Evaluation Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Agreement Program was created by the 2001 Legislature (House Bill 454, 87-2-513, MCA). These agreements, commonly called “454 agreements,” allow for a landowner to receive an elk license, permit, or combination of the two to hunt their own land in exchange for allowing free public elk hunting access to at least three public hunters - one of which may be selected by the landowner.

In 2023, the department received 50 complete applications with the Fish and Wildlife Commission approving 43 EHA agreements and the department issuing 70 licenses/permits to landowners or eligible designees. The license/permit type of 690-20 (rifle only in HD690) had more requests for licenses/permits available through this program and for the second year in a row all applications were sent to a post-commission random draw. The 2023 EHA program enrolled a total of 492,981 acres- some of which are also enrolled in Block Management.

To better understand the results of the 2023 EHA program, FWP staff sent a direct-mail survey to landowners and designees (if applicable) as well as the statutorily required public hunters to evaluate the landowner and public hunter harvest success and satisfaction. A replacement mailing was mailed to nonrespondents approximately 2-3 weeks after the initial mailing, and thereafter at least two phone calls were made to nonrespondents to boost the survey response rates.

Landowner satisfaction

Responses were received from landowners for all 43 agreements regarding their satisfaction with the program. Results suggest most landowners (92.8%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the experience they had being enrolled in the EHA program in 2023. Likewise, most landowners were satisfied or very satisfied (97.6%) with the behavior of the people who hunted lands enrolled in the EHA program with most landowners (69.8%) wanting to participate again in the future.

When asked if landowners provided free public elk hunting access during the archery and the general rifle season in addition to the statutorily required public hunters, 37 of 43 landowners responded to the question. For those who responded, 27 indicated they provided additional free public access above the minimum required. Overall, landowners reported providing free access to an additional 677 public hunters. However, some of these additional public hunters were identified because a landowner provided additional access through their simultaneous enrollment in Block Management.

Landowner/designee harvest

Responses were received from 67 of the 70 landowner/designee hunters regarding their days spent hunting and harvest on enrolled lands. Of the respondents, five did not hunt and nearly half (49.2%) of landowners and/or designees harvested elk on enrolled lands. Most landowners and/or designees harvested a branch antlered bull (86.7%) during the general rifle season (79.3%) hunting for an average of eight days.

Landowner-selected public hunters

Responses were received from 38 of the 52 landowner-selected public hunters regarding their satisfaction and harvest on enrolled lands. Of the respondents, most (73.7%) found it was easy or very easy to get in contact with the landowner (or ranch manager) to plan elk hunting trips to the enrolled property. Eight landowner-selected public hunters (21%) did not attempt to contact the ranch to ask for permission and two (5.3%) found it to be very difficult to get in contact with the ranch to plan an elk hunting trip.

For respondents who hunted enrolled lands (63.2%), most saw elk (91.7%) and just over half (54.2%) of the landowner-selected public hunters harvested elk hunting an average of 5.2 days each. For those who hunted, most were satisfied or very satisfied (91.6%) with their experience and for those who harvested elk, most (92.3%) harvested a branch antlered bull during the general rifle season (92.3%).

FWP selected public hunters

Responses were received from 140 of the 160 FWP-selected public hunters regarding their satisfaction and harvest on enrolled lands. Of the respondents, about two-thirds (61.9%) found it was easy or very easy to get in contact with the landowner (or ranch manager) to plan elk hunting trips to the enrolled property. Nineteen FWP-selected public hunters (13.7%) did not attempt to contact the ranch to ask for permission and eighteen (12.9%) found it to be very difficult to get in contact with the ranch to plan an elk hunting trip.

For respondents who hunted enrolled lands (50.7%), about two-thirds saw elk (64.8%) and just over one-third (33.8%) of the FWP-selected public hunters harvested an elk hunting an average of 2.6 days each. For those respondents who hunted, about two-thirds were satisfied or very satisfied (63.4%) with their experience and for those who harvested elk, most (92.3%) harvested an antlerless elk during the general rifle season (100.0%).

New for 2024

Based on the results from the past two EHA program years, the changes made by HB596 during the 2023 legislative session, and an EHA administrative rule update, FWP developed a new application, a new agreement template and a new standard operating procedure (SOP) for the EHA program in 2024. The SOP can be found here: <https://fwp.mt.gov/hunt/landownerprograms/public-elk-access-agreements>

Important changes for program include:

- If a landowner elects to select up to one-third of the public hunters eligible to hunt lands enrolled, FWP will email a list of potential public hunters to the landowner. The landowner must make their selections known to FWP no later than three weeks prior to the agreement start date (i.e., the first hunting season the landowner/designee will utilize their license/permit). If a landowner fails to make their public hunter selections in the required timeframe, landowner public hunter selections will be forfeited and FWP will fill the spots with FWP-selected public hunters;
- Landowners must own at least 640 acres of occupied elk habitat (except smaller acreages are eligible if the department determines site conditions exist to accommodate successful public

hunting) and can enroll private land they lease from another landowner for agricultural purposes;

- For every permit/license issued to a landowner or designee, at least one of the department-selected public hunters must hold the equivalent license, permit or combination of the two that is issued to the landowner or the landowner’s designee;
- The public sign-up for all EHA opportunities will occur from July 1-July 15 through myFWP.

The reports that follow are summaries from the responses of the surveys sent to landowners (or designees) and the landowner-selected and FWP-selected public hunters. These reports were compiled by FWP’s Human Dimensions work unit and provide more data specific to each group surveyed.

Report Table of Contents

Landowner Evaluation Survey.....	5
Landowner/Designee Harvest Survey.....	19
Landowner Selected Public Hunter Satisfaction and Harvest Survey.....	22
FWP Selected Public Hunter Satisfaction and Harvest Survey.....	28

Results from the Landowner Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Program Evaluation Survey

2023 Montana Hunting Season



MONTANA **FWP**

Background Information. Following the general hunting season, a Landowner Evaluation Survey for the Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Program was mailed to each of 43 private landowners enrolled in the program for the 2023 Montana hunting season. A replacement mailing was mailed to nonrespondents approximately 2-3 weeks after the initial mailing, and thereafter at least two phone calls were made to nonrespondents to boost the survey response rate. All 43 landowners responded to the survey, resulting in a 100 percent survey response rate. However, some survey respondents did not answer all the survey questions. This document provides the results of this survey.

Response to Question 1: “As part of enrollment in the Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Program, landowners may also offer additional public elk hunting access beyond the minimum three public hunters required by statute. How many additional hunters, if any, did you provide free access to hunt elk on your lands between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season)?”

RANCH	Response
Big Spring	4
Bold	No response to this question
Brewington	0
Browning	100
Clark Fork Cattle Co.	13
Cowan	200
DePauw	1
Doering Land Co.	0
Dunn Canyon Cattle Co.	No response to this question
Elk Creek	8
Freeman Investment Properties	No response to this question
Gardner	No response to this question
Groover Bros Farms	0
Hahn	6
Heart K	0
Henderson	4
J & L River	0
Lencioni	4
Lone Tree Cattle Co.	8
N Bar	200
OW Land & Cattle Co.	1
P & L Cattle Co.	10
Parrott Creek	0
Peterson	0
Radley	4

Roat Family	8
Rocket Land & Livestock	16
Sand Creek	40
Sheehy	0
Skogen	0
Solf	4
Stange	1
Swanz	7
Swinging H Cattle Co.	No response to this question
Teigen	4
Volf Landholdings	15
Waid	1
Wapiti Mountain	0
Winderl	No response to this question
WMR	3
Wolf Prairie	1
X Hanging Diamond	9
Yaeger	5

- A total of 677 additional hunters were reportedly provided free access between September 2 and November 26, 2023.

Frequency distribution for Question 1 (includes 37 ranches who responded to this question).

Response (number of additional hunters)	Number of ranches	Percent
0	10	27.0
1	5	13.6
3	1	2.7
4	6	16.2
5	1	2.7
6	1	2.7
7	1	2.7
8	3	8.1
9	1	2.7
10	1	2.7
13	1	2.7
15	1	2.7
16	1	2.7

	40	1	2.7
	100	1	2.7
	200	2	5.4
Total		37	100.0

Response to Question 2: “On a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), how satisfied were you with the behavior of the people who hunted elk on your lands via the EHA Program this past season?”

RANCH	Response
Big Spring	4
Bold	4
Brewington	4
Browning	4
Clark Fork Cattle Co.	4
Cowan	4
DePauw	4
Doering Land Co.	No response to this question
Dunn Canyon Cattle Co.	5
Elk Creek	5
Freeman Investment Properties	5
Gardner	5
Groover Bros Farms	4
Hahn	5
Heart K	5
Henderson	5
J & L River	5
Lencioni	5
Lone Tree Cattle Co.	5
N Bar	4
OW Land & Cattle Co.	5
P & L Cattle Co.	4
Parrott Creek	5
Peterson	No response to this question
Radley	5
Roat Family	4
Rocket Land & Livestock	5

Sand Creek	4
Sheehy	5
Skogen	5
Solf	4
Stange	5
Swanz	5
Swinging H Cattle Co.	4
Teigen	4
Volf Landholdings	3
Waid	5
Wapiti Mountain	5
Winderl	5
WMR	5
Wolf Prairie	5
X Hanging Diamond	5
Yaeger	4

Frequency distribution for Question 2 (includes 41 ranches who responded to this question).

Response	Number of Ranches	Percent
1 Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0
2	0	0.0
3	1	2.4
4	16	39.0
5 Very Satisfied	24	58.6
Total	41	100.0

Comments received for Question 2.

RANCH	Big Spring	Hunters were respectful.
	Bold	It is hard to tell as we are also enrolled in Block Management. With XHD Ranch, combined, all but three of the hunters on the list called. Not all came to hunt for various reasons.
	Brewington	I think that most hunters respect your property.
	Browning	Most are very grateful.
	Clark Fork Cattle Co	Only one elk was taken legally. Two poached.

Doering Land Co	Never heard from any hunters.
Elk Creek	Didn't have to kick anyone off.
Hahn	None of them ever contacted me or came to hunt this year.
Henderson	Only Brady and Tony contacted me for hunting. The third person never did call.
J & L River	All those hunters were very courteous and respectful.
Lencioni	Great to work with the hunters!
Lone Tree Cattle Co.	We didn't have any problems with EHA hunters this year.
Peterson	No one hunted.
Radley	All the public hunters were courteous, and we received positive feedback from them.
Roat Family	I don't know if any EHA hunters fell into the "dumbshit" category or not, but we did have a few moments of stupidity on the hunter's side this year on the BMA.
Rocket Land & Livestock	EHA Program hunters were extremely good this past season. All were successful in harvesting elk. One EHA hunter declined the opportunity to hunt.
Skogen	We allowed only the EHA hunters to make sure they had a quality experience. Our family hunted only three days.
Volf Landholdings	Two of the six people were rude! Only after trophy bulls.
Wolf Prairie	We had few dealings overall. Most hunters did not come to hunt.
X Hanging Diamond	Eliminated those that came in illegal. Great!
Yaeger	They were fine.

Response to Question 3a: “Do the Montana elk hunting regulations for 2023 offer an elk shoulder season in the hunting district where your ranch is located?”

RANCH	Big Spring	YES
	Bold	YES
	Brewington	YES
	Browning	YES
	Clark Fork Cattle Co.	No response to this question
	Cowan	YES
	DePauw	YES
	Doering Land Co.	YES
	Dunn Canyon Cattle Co.	NO

Elk Creek	YES
Freeman Investment Properties	YES
Gardner	YES
Groover Bros Farms	YES
Hahn	NO
Heart K	YES
Henderson	YES
J & L River	NO
Lencioni	YES
Lone Tree Cattle Co.	YES
N Bar	YES
OW Land & Cattle Co.	YES
P & L Cattle Co.	YES
Parrott Creek	YES
Peterson	No response to this question
Radley	NO
Roat Family	YES
Rocket Land & Livestock	YES
Sand Creek	YES
Sheehy	NO
Skogen	YES
Solf	YES
Stange	YES
Swanz	YES
Swinging H Cattle Co.	YES
Teigen	YES
Volf Landholdings	YES
Waid	YES
Wapiti Mountain	NO
Winderl	YES
WMR	NO
Wolf Prairie	NO
X Hanging Diamond	YES
Yaeger	YES

Frequency distribution for Question 3a (includes 41 ranches who responded to this question).

Response	Number of Ranches	Percent
NO	8	19.5
YES	33	80.5
Total	41	100.0

Response to Question 3b: “On a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely), what is the likelihood of you allowing additional public hunting access on your ranch during the elk shoulder season?” *Only ranches that responded “YES” to Question 3a (e.g., shoulder season) are included in this analysis.*

RANCH	Response
Big Spring	4
Bold	5
Brewington	3
Browning	5
Cowan	5
DePauw	1
Doering Land Co.	5
Elk Creek	5
Freeman Investment Properties	3
Gardner	No response to this question
Groover Bros Farms	1
Heart K	3
Henderson	5
Lencioni	No response to this question
Lone Tree Cattle Co.	5
N Bar	3
OW Land & Cattle Co.	1
P & L Cattle Co.	4
Parrott Creek	1
Roat Family	5
Rocket Land & Livestock	5
Sand Creek	5
Skogen	3
Solf	2

Stange	1
Swanz	5
Swinging H Cattle Co.	5
Teigen	5
Volf Landholdings	5
Waid	2
Winderl	5
X Hanging Diamond	5
Yaeger	4

Frequency distribution for Question 3a (includes 31 ranches who responded to this question).

Response	Number of Ranches	Percent
1 (Very Unlikely)	5	16.1
2	2	6.5
3	5	16.1
4	3	9.7
5 (Very Likely)	16	51.6
Total	31	100.0

Response to Question 4: “Overall, on a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), how satisfied were you with the experience you had being enrolled in the EHA Program this past season?”

RANCH	Response
Big Spring	4
Bold	4
Brewington	4
Browning	5
Clark Fork Cattle Co.	5
Cowan	5
DePauw	4
Doering Land Co.	4
Dunn Canyon Cattle Co.	5
Elk Creek	5
Freeman Investment Properties	5
Gardner	4

Groover Bros Farms	4
Hahn	5
Heart K	5
Henderson	5
J & L River	5
Lencioni	5
Lone Tree Cattle Co.	5
N Bar	4
OW Land & Cattle Co.	5
P & L Cattle Co.	3
Parrott Creek	5
Peterson	No response to this question
Radley	5
Roat Family	5
Rocket Land & Livestock	5
Sand Creek	5
Sheehy	5
Skogen	5
Solf	4
Stange	5
Swanz	5
Swinging H Cattle Co.	4
Teigen	2
Volf Landholdings	3
Waid	5
Wapiti Mountain	5
Winderl	5
WMR	4
Wolf Prairie	4
X Hanging Diamond	5
Yaeger	4

Frequency distribution for Question 4 (includes 42 ranches who responded to this question).

Response	Number of Ranches	Percent
1 (Very Dissatisfied)	0	0.0
2	1	2.4
3	2	4.8
4	13	30.9
5 (Very Satisfied)	26	61.9
Total	42	100.0

Comments received for Question 4.

RANCH	Comments
Big Spring	Good experience.
Brewington	Being enrolled in EHA was okay but the season should be open for bulls and cows to February because the elk don't get on my property until after general. We don't get any reduction in elk numbers until later.
Browning	It was a very fun experience for our family and ranch.
Clark Fork Cattle Co	Things went well.
Doering Land Co	Need hunters chosen by FWP to contact us.
Elk Creek	Stills needs tweaking, step in right direction. Large amount of contiguous acres should equal additional tags.
Freeman Investment Properties	Thank you for this opportunity.
J & L River	Both of our years in the EHA Program have gone very well.
Peterson	No one asked to hunt land--weather and ranch conditions were bad.
Radley	The EHA Program has worked very well for us.
Rocket Land & Livestock	EHA Program worked well for us.
Teigen	Very limited area to hunt compared to other hunters.
Volf Landholdings	I would like to choose more from the list, people I know in the area that are likely to show up.
Winderl	Didn't get an opportunity this year. Even with this tag, personal reasons.
Wolf Prairie	We were somewhat frustrated with "some" hunters asking for extra access by vehicle to more remote areas. We also asked hunters where they would like to hunt (as a starting point) one then seemed unhappy with not seeing sign (recent sign) while another was instead very gracious for the opportunity.
X Hanging Diamond	Tags them all (<i>non-legible text</i>), lots of elk and that affects them financially.
Yaeger	It was fine, problem was elk were scarce this year.

Response to Question 5: “Are you interested in being enrolled in the EHA Program in the future?”

RANCH	Response
Big Spring	YES
Bold	YES
Brewington	UNSURE
Browning	YES
Clark Fork Cattle Co.	YES
Cowan	YES
DePauw	YES
Doering Land Co.	YES
Dunn Canyon Cattle Co.	YES
Elk Creek	YES
Freeman Investment Properties	YES
Gardner	UNSURE
Groover Bros Farms	UNSURE
Hahn	YES
Heart K	UNSURE
Henderson	YES
J & L River	YES
Lencioni	YES
Lone Tree Cattle Co.	YES
N Bar	YES
OW Land & Cattle Co.	UNSURE
P & L Cattle Co.	UNSURE
Parrott Creek	YES
Peterson	YES
Radley	YES
Roat Family	YES
Rocket Land & Livestock	YES
Sand Creek	YES
Sheehy	YES
Skogen	YES
Solf	UNSURE
Stange	YES
Swanz	YES
Swinging H Cattle Co.	YES
Teigen	UNSURE

Volf Landholdings	NO
Waid	YES
Wapiti Mountain	UNSURE
Winderl	YES
WMR	UNSURE
Wolf Prairie	UNSURE
X Hanging Diamond	YES
Yaeger	UNSURE

Frequency distribution for Question 5 (includes 43 ranches who responded to this question).

Response	Number of Ranches	Percent
NO	1	2.3
UNSURE	12	27.9
YES	30	69.8
Total	43	100.0

Response to Question 6: “What suggestions do you have about how to improve the EHA Program?”

RANCH	Browning	Maybe be more specific about the rules to people that get drawn. We had one that was very positive his 410-21 archery tag would convert to a 410-20 tag when the season changed.
	Cowan	Make the tags for landowners be guaranteed instead of put in a pool for drawing.
	Elk Creek	New statute--if you have 2,500 as owner you get one tag. Would also like to participate in that if that is correct. Large amount of contiguous acreage should equal additional tags.
	Groover Bros Farms	Allow landowners to pick cow hunters and provide the option to take local families instead of one person at a time which usually ends up being a weekend. Causing the cow hunting process take up to eight weeks to complete.
	Henderson	Could we modify the program to include letting a friend use the landowner tag. I have friends that help me fence here.
	Lencioni	Get the landowners the hunters phone numbers.
	Roat Family	Being a BMA type II. The successful hunters in the EHA Program need to call early to reserve a spot. The Roat Ranch BMA starts filling up in August.
	Sand Creek	Give the landowners the tag and not go through a drawing!
	Skogen	We would consider allowing bow hunters as credit against our EHA Program.

Teigen	I feel we should be able to hunt all land we control access to and neighboring property with permission. We opened up land locked public land but were unable to hunt it and elk relocate with pressure to neighbors.
Winderl	Let me shoot my bull in the shoulder season.
Wolf Prairie	It should be made clear that these opportunities are for cow elk (of course obvious with B license) still had requests regarding bulls.
X Hanging Diamond	Hunters calling in advance to set up a time to hunt helped in coordination.

Results from the Landowner/Designee Hunter Harvest Survey for the Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Program

2023 Montana Hunting Season



MONTANA FWP

Background Information. Following the general hunting season, a Landowner/Designee Hunter Harvest Survey for the Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Program was mailed to each of 70 landowner/designee hunters for the 43 ranches enrolled in the program. A replacement mailing was mailed to nonrespondents approximately 2-3 weeks after the initial mailing, and thereafter at least two phone calls were made to nonrespondents to boost the survey response rate. A total of 67 landowner/designee hunters responded to the survey, resulting in a 96 percent survey response rate. This document provides the results of this survey.

Response to Question 1: “About how many total DAYS did you hunt elk on this ranch between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season), as allowed by the terms of the landowner’s agreement?”

Response (number of days)	N	Percent
0	5	7.6
1	6	9.1
2	6	9.1
3	7	10.6
4	7	10.6
5	8	12.1
6	1	1.5
7	9	13.6
8	1	1.5
9	1	1.5
10	1	1.5
11	1	1.5
14	3	4.6
15	1	1.5
18	1	1.5
20	4	6.1
29	1	1.5
30	2	3.1
38	1	1.5
Total	66	100.0

Note: One landowner/designee hunter did not respond to this question.

The median number of days hunted for those who hunted was 5 days; the average was 8 days.

Response to Question 2: “Did you harvest an elk on this ranch during this timeframe*?” *Only landowner/designee hunters who reported they hunted as least one day are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
NO	31	50.8
YES	30	49.2
Total	61	100.0

*Timeframe was between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season).

Response to Question 3: “What was the elk you harvested on this ranch?” *Only landowner/designee hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
Calf	0	0.0
Antlerless elk	4	13.3
Spike bull	0	0.0
Branch antlered bull*	26	86.7
Total	30	100.0

*Branch antlered bulls harvested: 5 x 5 (n=4), 5 x 6 (n=2), 6 x 6 (n=17), 6 x 7 (n=2), 7 x 8 (n=1).

Response to Question 4: “Did you harvest this elk during the archery season or during the general rifle season?” *Only landowner/designee hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
Archery Season*	6	20.7
General rifle season**	23	79.3
Total	29	100.0

*The following elk were harvested during the archery season: 6 x 6 bull (n=6).

** The following elk were harvested during the general rifle season: antlerless elk (n=4), 5 x 5 bull (n=4), 5 x 6 bull (n=2), 6 x 6 bull (n=10), 6 x 7 bull (n=2), 7 x 8 bull (n=1).

Note: One landowner/designee hunter did not respond to this question.

**Results from a
Survey of Landowner Selected Public Hunters
for the Elk Hunting Access
(EHA) Program**

2023 Montana Hunting Season



Background Information. Following the general hunting season, a survey was mailed to each of 52 landowner selected public hunters for 43 ranches enrolled in the Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Program. A replacement mailing was mailed to nonrespondents approximately 2-3 weeks after the initial mailing, and thereafter at least two phone calls were made to nonrespondents to boost the survey response rate. A total of 38 landowner selected public hunters responded to the survey, resulting in a 73 percent survey response rate. This document provides the results of this survey.

Response to Question 1: “On a scale from 1 (very difficult) to 5 (very easy), how difficult or easy was it for you to get in contact with the landowner (or ranch manager) to plan elk hunting trips to this ranch?”

Response	N	Percent
1 (Very difficult)	2	5.3
2	0	0.0
3	0	0.0
4	3	7.9
5 (Very easy)	25	65.8
Did not attempt to contact ranch	8	21.0
Total	38	100.0

Response to Question 2: “Did you hunt elk on this ranch between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season), as allowed by the terms of the landowner’s agreement?”

Response	N	Percent
NO	14	36.8
YES	24	63.2
Total	38	100.0

Reasons reported for not hunting.

Response	N	Percent
Illness, injury, health reason	2	7.7
Heard or was told there were not elk on the ranch	1	7.7
Hunted and/or harvested an elk at another location	5	38.5
Other reason*	6	46.2

Note: Percentages add up to greater than 100 percent because respondents could select more than one reason.

*Other reasons listed for not hunting (verbatim responses):

- Did not attempt to contact ranch.
- Moved to North Dakota.
- Don't hunt this area.
- Because you over-allocated hunters and said I didn't get to hunt.
- Too busy with school.
- They assumed I had a "B" license, which I did not and did not want me to harvest a bull. They also would not return calls so I could archery hunt. Very uncooperative.

Response to Question 3: “About how many total DAYS did you hunt elk on this ranch between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season), as allowed by the terms of the landowner’s agreement?” *Only landowner selected public hunters who reported they hunted are included in this analysis.*

Response (number of total days)	N	Percent
1	7	29.1
2	5	20.8
3	3	12.5
4	1	4.2
5	3	12.5
8	1	4.2
16	2	8.3
19	1	4.2
20	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

The median number of days hunted was 2.5 days; the average was 5.2 days.

Response to Question 4: “Did you see any elk while hunting elk on this ranch during this timeframe?” *Only landowner selected public hunters who reported they hunted are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
NO	2	8.3
YES	22	91.7
Total	24	100.0

*Timeframe was between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season).

Response to Question 5: “Did you harvest an elk on this ranch during this timeframe*?” *Only landowner selected public hunters who reported they hunted are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
NO	11	45.8
YES	13	54.2
Total	24	100.0

*Timeframe was between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season).

Response to Question 6: “What license did you use to harvest this elk?” *Only landowner selected public hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
General elk hunting license	1	7.7
Special elk hunting permit	11	84.6
Elk B license	1	7.7
Total	13	100.0

Response to Question 7: “What was the elk you harvested on this ranch?” *Only landowner selected public hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
Calf	0	0.0
Antlerless elk	1	7.7
Spike bull	0	0.0
Branch antlered bull*	12	92.3
Total	13	100.0

*Branch antlered bulls harvested: 3 x 5 (n=1), 5 x 5 (n=1), 6 x 6 (n=7), 6 x 7 (n=1), 7 x 7 (n=1), 7 x 8 (n=1).

Response to Question 8: “Did you harvest this elk during the archery season or during the general rifle season?” *Only landowner selected public hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
Archery Season*	1	7.7
General rifle season**	12	92.3
Total	13	100.0

*The following elk were harvested during the archery season: 7 x 8 bull (n=1).

** The following elk were harvested during the general rifle season: antlerless elk (n=1), 3 x 5 bull (n=1), 5 x 5 bull (n=1), 6 x 6 bull (n=7), 6 x 7 bull (n=1), 7 x 7 bull (n=1).

Response to Question 9: “Overall, on a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), how satisfied were you with the elk hunting experience you had on this ranch via the EHA program?” *Only landowner selected public hunters who reported they hunted were asked this question.*

Response	N	Percent
1 Very Dissatisfied	1	4.2
2	0	0.0
3	1	4.2
4	4	16.6
5 Very Satisfied	18	75.0
Total	24	100.0

Comments received (verbatim responses):

- I had a great experience and would love an opportunity to hunt other bull elk on this ranch.
- Landowner allowed me one morning. Told me not to shoot the bull we got on with promise to get me a bigger one. Several texts/phone calls later, no permission because younger brother had a tag to fill.
- I harvested a bull on December 15th muzzleloader heritage season. 5x6 bull elk.
- There were tons of elk and it made it easy.
- The ranch and its representatives were first class.
- Very good experience.
- Great to be able to hunt an area with mature animals.
- The landowner was fantastic to work with. Landowner very accommodating.
- Not only did they let myself and my boys hunt, but allowed a couple of buddies also hunt.
- No elk there, but not the landowners fault.

Response to Question 10: “On a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely), what is the likelihood of you hunting elk on this ranch during the elk shoulder season this year, as allowed by the terms of the landowner’s agreement?”

Response	N	Percent
1 (Very unlikely)	16	45.7
2	1	2.9
3	4	11.4
4	3	8.6
5 (Very likely)	11	31.4
Total	35	100.0

Note: Three landowner selected public hunters did not respond to this question.

Response to Question 11: “Would you want to be a participating or selected elk hunter again for this ranch if it is enrolled in the EHA Program in the future?”

Response	N	Percent
NO	3	8.1
UNSURE	5	13.5
YES	29	78.4
Total	37	100.0

Note: One landowner selected public hunter did not respond to this question.

Response to Question 12: “What suggestion do you have about how to improve the EHA Program?”

Verbatim suggestions received:

- FWP seems to be having issues with either giving the right amount of permits or counting how many get to hunt via the EHA Program. The worst part is FWP told me I would be gaining access to another property and I never heard from FWP again. Terrible customer service!
- When emails go out to hunters notifying them of their selection as a public hunter in the EHA Program, my suggestion is to make sure your email comes from FWP. When I look at my emails and didn't recognize "FWP" as the sender of the email, I immediately sent it to my trash. I only knew I had been selected because the ranch manager reached out to me! Also, a suggestion would be to put something on our "MyFWP Page" online notifying us of our selection as well.
- There needs to be a minimum amount of days they have to let you on the ranch. It is more than frustrating that as a kid, born and raised in Lewistown can't harvest a bull in is own backyard. This ranch should not be allowed to use my name and half a day's hunting towards their EHA Program. They should also be penalized for not allowing me to shoot a bull when given the opportunity and then refusing me access the rest of the season. Everyone wants to be a Wilks.
- The notification process was not until very late. I had already been set up with my own camp on National Forest.
- Include heritage season dates in the EHA survey.
- Further incentivize the Program so more hunters have opportunities.
- Area 690 is unique in that there are few permits given for a large geographic area. It would be nice if hunters had access to more than a single ranch. I found access to other ranches difficult.
- No good program.
- Remove landowner from the Program. They have blocked access to State and Federal lands.
- Ranch? Not a nice landowner, was not agreeable...stated "I am going to fill my family's tags before I let anyone else on". This was his response both times landowner called.

**Results from a
Survey of FWP Selected Public Hunters
for the Elk Hunting Access
(EHA) Program**

2023 Montana Hunting Season



MONTANA FWP

Background Information. Following the general hunting season, a survey was mailed to each of 160 FWP selected public hunters for 43 ranches enrolled in the Elk Hunting Access (EHA) Program. A replacement mailing was mailed to nonrespondents approximately 2-3 weeks after the initial mailing, and thereafter at least two phone calls were made to nonrespondents to boost the survey response rate. A total of 140 FWP selected public hunters responded to the survey, resulting in an 88 percent survey response rate. This document provides the results of this survey.

Response to Question 1: “On a scale from 1 (very difficult) to 5 (very easy), how difficult or easy was it for you to get in contact with the landowner (or ranch manager) to plan elk hunting trips to this ranch?”

Response	N	Percent
1 (Very difficult)	13	9.3
2	5	3.6
3	16	11.5
4	19	13.7
5 (Very easy)	67	48.2
Did not attempt to contact ranch	19	13.7
Total	139	100.0

Note: One FWP selected public hunter did not respond to this question.

Response to Question 2: “Did you hunt elk on this ranch between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season), as allowed by the terms of the landowner’s agreement?”

Response	N	Percent
NO	69	49.3
YES	71	50.7
Total	140	100.0

Reasons reported for not hunting.

Response	N	Percent
Couldn't get in contact with the ranch	14	20.3
Illness, injury, health issue	1	1.4
Family or work related issue	6	8.7
Heard or was told there were not elk on the ranch	5	7.2
Hunted and/or harvested an elk at another location	28	40.6
Didn't think it was worth the time to hunt elk there	2	2.9
Other reason*	26	37.7

Note: Percentages add up to greater than 100 percent because respondents could select more than one reason.

*Other reasons listed for not hunting (verbatim responses):

- The ranch owner never returned my phone call/message.
- Bow hunters harvested the good bulls.
- Traveled overseas; was gone during the season.
- Too long of a drive.
- Was not told they had been selected.
- I was told the hunt will be in the shoulder season after the general rifle season.
- Was told hunt will not take place until the shoulder season.
- Was not contacted until 11-29-23.
- Waiting for the end of season to hear from landowner for late season.
- Wasn't sure he was selected.
- Bad experience with landowners/ranch.
- I did not get notified until December. Hunted late season.
- FWP sent me the wrong information and wasn't able to schedule any days in the regular season.
- Was called by ranch to shoulder hunt. Hunted late season.
- Landowner never let me know whether or not there were elk there, and a time to go hunting.
- Rescheduled for Elk B.
- Didn't know he was selected.
- Landowner finally texted me after several attempts of calling and leaving messages and said I could hunt the last few days of the rifle season only.
- Disappointed that the area was a Block Management and not a special hunting area...therefore did not go.
- Landowner wanted me to hunt state land nearby. Because they shot elk the night before.
- Ownership maps initially sent did not align with hunting unit.
- Scheduled to hunt during shoulder season (Jan/Early Feb 2024).
- I found the two-day window for hunting to be somewhat challenging. Unfortunately, due to being out of town, I was unable to take advantage of the last-minute opportunity presented on those specific days.
- Ranch halted all communication.

Response to Question 3: “About how many total DAYS did you hunt elk on this ranch between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season), as allowed by the terms of the landowner’s agreement?” *Only FWP selected public hunters who reported they hunted are included in this analysis.*

Response (number of total days)	N	Percent
1	31	43.7
2	13	18.3
3	11	15.5
4	7	9.9
5	4	5.6
6	2	2.8
7	1	1.4
14	1	1.4
15	1	1.4
Total	71	100.0

The median number days hunted was 2 days; the average was 2.6 days.

Response to Question 4: “Did you see any elk while hunting elk on this ranch during this timeframe?” *Only FWP selected public hunters who reported they hunted are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
NO	25	35.2
YES	46	64.8
Total	71	100.0

*Timeframe was between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season).

Response to Question 5: “Did you harvest an elk on this ranch during this timeframe*?” *Only FWP selected public hunters who reported they hunted are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
NO	47	66.2
YES	24	33.8
Total	71	100.0

*Timeframe was between September 2 (e.g., the start of the archery season) and November 26 (e.g., the end of the general rifle season).

Response to Question 6: “What license did you use to harvest this elk?” *Only FWP selected public hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
General elk hunting license	3	12.5
Special elk hunting permit	9	37.5
Elk B license	12	50.0
Total	24	100.0

Response to Question 7: “What was the elk you harvested on this ranch?” *Only FWP selected public hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
Calf	1	4.2
Antlerless elk	15	62.5
Spike bull	0	0.0
Branch antlered bull*	8	33.3
Total	24	100.0

*Branch antlered bulls harvested: 5 x 5 (n=1), 5 x 6 (n=2), 6 x 6 (n=3), 6 x 7 (n=2).

Response to Question 8: “Did you harvest this elk during the archery season or during the general rifle season?” *Only FWP selected public hunters who reported they harvested an elk are included in this analysis.*

Response	N	Percent
Archery Season*	0	0.0
General rifle season**	24	100.0
Total	24	100.0

*No elk were harvested during the archery season.

** The following elk were harvested during the general rifle season: calf (n=1), antlerless elk (n=15), 5 x 5 bull (n=1), 5 x 6 bull (n=2), 6 x 6 bull (n=3), 6 x 7 bull (n=2).

Response to Question 9: “Overall, on a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), how satisfied were you with the elk hunting experience you had on this ranch via the EHA program?” *Only FWP selected public hunters who reported they hunted were asked this question.*

Response	N	Percent
1 Very Dissatisfied	4	5.6
2	7	9.9
3	15	21.1
4	9	12.7
5 Very Satisfied	36	50.7
Total	71	100.0

Comments received (verbatim responses):

- Hard hunting.
- Appreciate the chance.
- This was a great experience. I would have hunted the property for the three-day period granted, if I had not filled the tag elsewhere.
- It's already Block Management, unlimited hunters can access this property without contacting the landowner. Just a sign in box!
- Contacted landowner and was told there was no difference between me and any other hunter. Just sign into the Block Management box and hunt.
- Didn't hunt enough to be happy or sad.
- I did not observe elk on this ranch.
- Nice, easy access, lots of land.
- I was only allowed to hunt in a certain area of the 620 acres, it seems that a lot of area was not available for me. I didn't realize how easy it was to go on the ranch, called one day, hunted the next. It would have been nice to know that I could have hunted more than one day though. This was new to me and I opted to participate at the end of the season.
- To walk in from the road, shoot a cow elk and walk out packing it for a total of 8-10 miles--not worth it! I would do it for a bull elk--packing out with a horse, would have been nice.
- Great hunt, just didn't see any cow elk, only bulls.
- Not a lot of elk sign. Hit or miss.
- EHA provided nothing for this particular ranch. Only could hunt designated BMA area which is already open to the public.
- Most property is a BMA that already provides access and EHA did not open any new opportunity.
- I thought it would be a good hunt, however the weather was very warm and no snow made it difficult to find any elk.
- Landowners were very nice helpful people.
- This is my first EHA experience so it is hard to determine what my expectations were. Sounds like there's often elk on the property. They just didn't happen to be there on the day I could get on.
- Landowners were very polite, easy to work with. Would do it again!!
- The rancher was great and accommodating. There were plenty of elk. Just couldn't get close enough.

- The landowner was an excellent individual to work with. Excellent numbers of elk, excellent experience. Being 100% disabled vet I am so grateful for a hunt like this!
- Great program.
- Not much for elk sign.
- It felt a bit too "guided". Would have preferred just doing it alone, but in the end, appreciated the help.
- The landowner was wonderful. But the property is small and the elk are only likely there during snow events or early season. They had elk but shot three bulls opening weekend. When we came over after that the herd had pushed off.
- Seen lots of elk. Couldn't get closer than 400 yards. They called me back to go second time but my driver got the flu. Couldn't get back on again to go back.
- I had a great experience. I was originally offered to hunt on the ranch but was later told I cannot hunt the ranch--just another nearby location. It was still a great experience, but I was disappointed I couldn't hunt the ranch.
- FWP messed up the drawing so I actually got to only hunt land locked public land. I'm very dissatisfied in that aspect. I think I should have got to hunt the ranch or gotten an equally as good opportunity, which I did not feel I got.
- The landowner only allowed a very small section of his EHA property to be hunted or the maps published in the program are not accurate. Additionally, the ranch property went on the market at the end of November.
- Experience was fine, people/country fine. But no animals.
- Felt like the owner did not want to disclose information and that the window to hunt was very limited and favored the landowner's friends and family.
- Landowners were awesome.
- Ranch and their personnel were great.
- The ranch fulfilled their end of the deal. They were very accommodating.
- This property was already part of Block Management and was heavily hunted throughout archery and first part of rifle. Called as soon as I was emailed and could not get on till end of October.
- It's very small, therefore very hit/miss. Elk have to be passing through to more desirable bedding areas. Low odds therefore more adjacent lands are needed.
- We did see one elk for a second, the ranch gets very high hunting pressure.
- The ranch manager I hunted with was very polite and knowledgeable, as it rained hard the night before he did not want to drive where he would tear up the roads. Safety was his main concern which I liked. I hope more people get to experience this.
- Knew the pastures I have hunted them in the past so didn't feel the need to contact ranch owner when he emailed me the permission slip.
- It was difficult to hunt only one pasture for three straight days that's only 951 acres.
- Great place to hunt! Ranch was huge in helping me to retrieve my elk.
- I was never allowed to hunt on one side of the county road. Hunted hard for three days. Saw spikes and cows day one, cows day two, on cow day three.
- The ranch was great. A lot of land however didn't get to walk much, mainly used side by side to try and spot elk. Didn't get a full day, owner was tired by 2 pm.
- The weather was very mild and the elk just weren't there at the time. The owner was very accommodating.

- It was awesome. The ranch has great people, they even brought tractor out and helped me field dress my elk. Great times. Thank you.
- I followed ranch instructions on how to hunt his property and was successful the first morning. Ranch loaded it up on his truck in the field after gutting and then front end loader so I could get it out and then put it in my pick-up!! The biggest (329 3/8") and easiest elk I ever got! Landowner is a PRINCE!
- I only hunted a small area and ran into one group with one person having a valid tag. No one leaves the roads.
- Very polite and helpful landowner.
- Landowner was very professional and accommodating to our schedule. He is a class act!
- Ranch hand was awesome...very helpful.
- I was treated like an old friend by these people. Provided lodging, transportation and guiding. Manager dressed my elk and put it in my truck.
- It was a great experience. The landowner was very active in helping find elk. They went out of their way to try to make hunt successful. Great time!!!
- I put in for 10 days and was going to come back for second day and had some things come up. I never called back or heard from them. They seemed to not like the other days I asked for.
- No elk and lots of wolf sign.
- It would be better to stack 2-3 consecutive days to hunt. The first day on new land is a learning day.

Response to Question 10: “On a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely), what is the likelihood of you hunting elk on this ranch during the elk shoulder season this year, as allowed by the terms of the landowner’s agreement?”

Response	N	Percent
1 (Very unlikely)	58	46.0
2	9	7.1
3	16	12.7
4	9	7.1
5 (Very likely)	34	27.1
Total	126	100.0

Note: Fourteen FWP selected public hunters did not respond to this question.

Response to Question 11: “Would you want to be a participating or selected elk hunter again for this ranch if it is enrolled in the EHA Program in the future?”

Response	N	Percent
NO	19	14.0
UNSURE	33	24.3
YES	84	61.7
Total	136	100.0

Note: Four FWP selected public hunters did not respond to this question.

Response to Question 12: “What suggestion do you have about how to improve the EHA Program?”

Suggestions received (verbatim responses):

- Other ranches were participants, difficult to get a hold of people, specifically during the shoulder season.
- Clearer communication from FWP about process and don't burden landowner with calls or emails.
- Ranch owner needs to communicate with the hunter and allow access. This appears to be a scam from the landowner. They received extra tags but did not participate with granting me access and/or communications.
- These ranches are overrun with elk, needs to be more tags issued!
- EHA should not be included in a current Block Management Program. Especially with a landowner that don't care how many hunters are hunting at a time.
- The EHA for the ranch was not really EHA. There was no difference that any other hunter.
- When I contacted this ranch I was informed that this was not a special opportunity--they are a Block Management and anyone can sign in using the sign-in box. This was all very confusing and not at all a rare opportunity.
- A return call from the rancher! Couldn't get in contact with ranch.
- To walk in from the road, shoot a cow elk and walk out packing it for a total of 8-10 miles--not worth it! I would do it for a bull elk--packing out with a horse, would have been nice.
- Maybe offer more dates, especially the late season. Offer deer hunting and elk hunting on certain pastures.
- I would still like to hunt but cannot get in contact with the landowner. Landowner should be charged with license if they were already given license off of my ability to access.
- Not satisfied with program. Need to clean up your act. Department failed to give any information to contact the ranch or that he had been selected.
- Provide special access to people who draw EHA. I didn't gain any special access to property even being one of the three drawing winners. When calling to ask for permission to hunt during the first week of rifle season, was told they were full. That was a few hours after they were open to taking calls.
- Couldn't get a hold of landowner and only referred to BMA property. Thought the whole point of program was for giving landowner tags. They should be opening more access than the property already being paid for by Block Management.
- There were dozens of names on the sign-up sheets on gate posts. Couldn't understand how this was an exclusive privilege. No explanation and landowner did not return phone call. Would like to be told

what the parameters of the hunt are. Was initially told I was one of four who were selected. When I went over there for a look, there were dozens of hunters names on the sign-up sheet. No return call from the ranch. Led me to wonder if FWP and the Montana public really gained any benefit from giving the landowner free tags?

- More than a total of five days allow for hunting should be provided--plus time during the archery and shoulder season.
- Our main difficulty was finding days that worked for both myself and the landowner. I was mainly only able to hunt on weekends and the ranch preference was weekdays. Not sure that the EHA Program could have done anything different.
- Maps to the area to be hunted...BMA type maps.
- Verified success of hunters invited on to the ranch prior to issuing of bull tags to landowners.
- Better communication. I am not sure if I will have the opportunity to hunt on the ranch even though I was drawn for a hunt and contacted.
- Not sure why I was contacted during regular season. No elk living on this property, only pass through.
- I very much appreciate the program. If I was the ranch owners, however, I would ask for more officer patrol. I personally saw a lot of violations. And what a shock it was all out of state folks.
- Since the EHA Program is new it would be helpful if there were printed info on how the process goes. FWP not well informed.
- Offer elk and deer to harvest.
- Let the Regions handle the program as they have the on-the-ground knowledge and contact with the landowners. Helena does not possess the intimate knowledge to do so.
- Wasn't clear how many days or how flexible the dates were when. I chatted with the landowner. Lack of cell service, working with manager made it a bit challenging.
- I think the EHA Program has some good intentions, but it is being taken advantage of. From my perspective (and it's only been via one terrible experience) the good that comes from the program for hunters like me is far less than what it rewards rich landowners with. In summary: (1) do not allow landowners who are given these tags to also be allowed to apply for them. Why should landowners get to "win" a tag as well as be given one that they can then give to whomever they want. Not to mention, they are using landowner preference applications already. The odds of landowners getting multiple tags like the owners of this ranch is too much. (2) Another thing to consider/talk about is that I think there needs to be a buffer period for who can apply. I think that people should have to own their ranches for an actual working period of time before they are awarded free permits. The amount of times I was told these owners bought the ranch in part because they wanted tags is astonishing.
- Less bull tag to cow elk tag ratios. More cow elk hunters to bull tags. Min land size, min days per agreement. My experience was good but it's very clear that without a min land/property size and min number of days guaranteed to hunt that this program is ripe for abuse. Cow hunters should get guaranteed opportunity through the entire season. Or perhaps they need to have cow hunters be successful before they get a bull tag.
- Better contact and contact information (with ranchers and FWP).
- Better communication.
- Better management of FWP side of it. Never heard back on it because email was sent out wrong. The ranch guide worked hard trying to get me close. Said it would have been better earlier (handicap).
- As previously stated, I was offered to hunt the ranch, but 2-3 weeks later I was told (by FWP) that option was no longer available (due to landowner selection of a hunter at a later time). That communication could be improved. I would loved to have the opportunity to hunt the ranch.
- Improve whatever drawing system FWP has so what happened to me doesn't happen to someone else. I honestly think I deserve the opportunity to hunt the ranch next year rather than just public land.

What happened was inexcusable and shouldn't be overlooked!

- Ensure that accurate properties eligible to be hunted are clearly identified in the application phase so hunters can hunt all eligible properties.
- If owners get a tag, needs to be open access. Very limited access. Felt the owner was difficult until the end of the season.
- Readability of property map could be improved--property boundaries hard to discern.
- I am very impressed and thankful for the opportunity! Ranch was phenomenal. They did everything they could to provide the best opportunity for me to get an elk!
- Vet the landowners better for their intentions. Seems like the landowner had no real intention of letting public hunters go hunt.
- This property was already part of Block Management and didn't need to go through special selection to hunt. Property was approx. 2 mile square and allows up to 10 hunters per day.
- Get more landowners on board.
- Ranch is not large enough to have multiple hunting parties every day.
- Don't include Block Management Areas in EHA. The BMA was already almost full when I got the email.
- Landowner didn't get contact information of hunter until halfway through the general rifle season.
- Knowledge from landowner on if elk are actually on the property so not going in blind and more than 951 acres to hunt.
- Better communication.
- I wish I could have had access during the archery season. Lots of elk camp on this ranch. I hope someone else was able to take my spot since I filled my tag earlier. I did notify FWP and the ranch. Not sure if four days of ranch access is normal but that is what I would have been allowed to hunt. Seemed short but I was happy to be chosen either way. Thanks!
- Letting hunters hunt the land without being accompanied by the landowner. Or if they are accompanying, guarantee a full day of hunting at least.
- Get more ranches involved. I saw over a hundred bulls on another ranch and they were so fat and happy there that it made the rest of the place worthless! Very frustrating!
- I suppose the landowner shouldn't be eligible for a bull tag if he doesn't hold up to their of the bargain. I talked to landowners twice which I initiated and both times was told landowner would be in touch to tell me when I could come hunt. Ranch did seem thankful FWP "upgraded landowner to a bull tag". Maybe landowner lost my number, I am willing to give the ranch the benefit of the doubt but perhaps there needs to be more oversight to ensure hunters are truly given access during the season rather than after.
- My first time participating in this so I didn't understand how it worked. Maybe you could inform the person how many other drew this opportunity and what order they may hunt in?
- Selected landowners that will answer calls and are interested in allowing people to hunt and honoring the EHA Program requirements. I feel that this landowner had not intentions of allowing my son to hunt in 2023.
- Separate EHA's from BMA's. There was no additional opportunity being selected to hunt here as everyone can just sign into the BMA.
- I was excited when I found out I had been chosen to hunt a ranch but the landowner made it clear that it was not a unique hunting experience. Instead, it was a Block Management Area that any hunter can utilize with the proper sign-in procedure. This was very confusing as a hunter.
- This ranch is already included as a regular Block Management Area (BMA). It is not clear what benefit/difference there is between the BMA and EHA?
- I think it needs clarified how the Program works. You take a hunt. You aren't eligible for good ranches. I was 78 on list for this ranch, and number 3 on a list for a good ranch. Made me not eligible. I thought

when number is up you get to hunt. I also don't think should allow ranchers to dictate days of hunts. So they can shoot the best animals. Maybe need random drawing for day to hunt if ranchers or anyone have a tag. Then there are days. This ranch made sure they shot their animals first. Don't work for them. Then don't take the free tags. There is a lot I think should be done differently. But this is the main stuff.

- Maps initially sent were very confusing.
- Better map when selected. Was unable to easily find the location of the ranch.
- Allow "party" hunt application. Regulate the "trespass fee" system evolving with "landtrust.com". Paying to play is becoming the norm with all the new people moving here.
- Send updated maps and rules for contact, such as calling on specific dates and times. Also, limit BMA 2 access to special antlerless elk permit holders.
- The ranch contact had an "@" address to contact them. Never got a reply. I called and texted the phone numbers and finally got a very polite answer which stated the name of another persons that would I would be forwarded to, this never happened.
- Have a better way of contacting the landowner.
- This program is just another scam to allow wealthy landowners access to hunting tags that no one else gets. They get tags, do not allow hunting as agreed, no repercussions. Require landowners to allow hunting one year in order to get tags the following year. I called the contact and left message. I also emailed the contact not a whisper of a response.
- I would like to suggest extending the timeframe for hunting opportunities or providing more advanced notice whenever possible. This adjustment would not only allow for better planning on the part of participants but also increase the likelihood of a successful and fulfilling hunting experience.
- They asked for all the dates when enrolling. Seemed to have excuse for most dates I asked for. Would have liked a little more opportunity for more days. Partially my fault. I could have contacted them again and did not. Thought she would contact me.
- I would like to be a part of the program in the future, but not on this ranch. It took a while to get the correct number for the ranch manager from FWP.
- No suggestions for FWP, they did all they could. Ranch failed to hold up their end of the agreement.