

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 23, 2022 10:24:40 PM
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Chris Schwartzman
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 200

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 200 is 300 (range 240-360). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 200, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 24. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	MICHAEL GULLETTE
City	Superior
State	montana
Email (optional)	mgullette@blackfoot.net

Page 2: HD 201

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

no shooting of 2 elk one elk per person. We want more elk go back to cow permits.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

we want more elk

Q4

Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 201 would be ~ 2,000 elk (range = 1,600-2,400). Do you think this population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

increased to 4000 elk

Q5

Should sub-objectives be maintained for certain portions of the HD? If so, where? What should the ranges be?

don't need sub-objectives

Q6

In HD 201, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows, or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

there should be a bull objective of at least 10 or higher per 100 cows. Cow permits should be offered

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

are we satisfied with the current elk distribution in this district ...No....we want more elk

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

improve winter and summer range , predator management the one state elk plan doesn't fit the whole state...it needs to be different for each Region

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 6:08:31 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 6:11:38 PM
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jeff Neville
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 201

Q2**Respondent skipped this question**

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 201 would be ~ 2,000 elk (range = 1,600-2,400). Do you think this population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

Should sub-objectives be maintained for certain portions of the HD? If so, where? What should the ranges be?

Q6

In HD 201, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows, or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Only brow tine bulls

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

One elk per licensed hunter

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Less wolves

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 01, 2022 3:45:23 PM
Last Modified: Monday, August 01, 2022 3:54:54 PM
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	JERRY BAUER
City	superior mt
State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 201

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Transplant elk from other areas, and Kill more wolves. We want the elk objectives raised, To at least 3000. All elk are found on private property because the wolves have moved them down low.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

biennial

Q4

Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 201 would be ~ 2,000 elk (range = 1,600-2,400). Do you think this population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

increased 3000

Q5

Should sub-objectives be maintained for certain portions of the HD? If so, where? What should the ranges be?

no

Q6

In HD 201, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows, or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

yes

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Kill the wolves, They hamstring there prey and eat them alive, how humane is this.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

more wildlife burns. Kill the f wolves Its a no brained.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 12, 2022 10:01:11 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 12, 2022 10:06:20 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:09
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Joe Carr
City	Missoula
State	MT
Email (optional)	josephdcarr90@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 201

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

continue current methods

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

A 3 year average would be a better approach to avoid skewed data in a given year.

Q4

Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 201 would be ~2,000 elk (range = 1,600-2,400). Do you think this population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

This is a large unit, and a population objective of 3,000-3,500 would be better. Limit cow harvest to private land only to help achieve this goal.

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

Should sub-objectives be maintained for certain portions of the HD? If so, where? What should the ranges be?

Q6

In HD 201, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows, or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

This is appropriate.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Force non-residents to pick a unit when they are awarded a general tag. Cap the number of non-resident general licenses by unit and make non-residents select a unit to hunt. This would drastically change the non-resident pressure on any given unit.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

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Page 2: HD 201

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I agree with Short term 3 year averages. Also in tough to survey units you should use hunter harvest data instead of flight surveys

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year would be better

Q4

Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 201 would be ~ 2,000 elk (range = 1,600-2,400). Do you think this population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would like to see more elk in 201. I would like the quote to be 2,500 and B tags limited

Q5

Should sub-objectives be maintained for certain portions of the HD? If so, where? What should the ranges be?

Split sub groups based on old unit boundaries

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 201, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows, or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No. Too many elk on private and not enough on public

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brian McKirdy
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 201

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

maintain current objective

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

individual surveys

Q4

Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 201 would be ~2,000 elk (range = 1,600-2,400). Do you think this population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

maintained

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

Should sub-objectives be maintained for certain portions of the HD? If so, where? What should the ranges be?

Q6

In HD 201, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows, or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

there should be a bull objective and should be increased to 15 per 100 the new b tag cow system in my view is going to decrease the bulls tremendously. one elk a year per hunter is enough also after the first 2 weeks of bow season it should be cows only to take pressure off bulls when rut is heavy

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

no i think wolves have dispersed elk into areas they normally use to frequent occasionally but now stay there

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 201

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 201 would be ~ 2,000 elk (range = 1,600-2,400). Do you think this population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased so that number includes only elk on public land.

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

Should sub-objectives be maintained for certain portions of the HD? If so, where? What should the ranges be?

Q6

In HD 201, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows, or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

This low level of post-season bull to cows is unacceptable. Montana has the habitat and the potential to improve that bull to cow ratio by a significant amount. This post-season adult bull to cow ratio should be above 20:100.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No. Elk distribution could/should be improved and can be done with more creative season structures and season dates. Adjust season dates and types to move elk that have been conditioned to private lands because of intense pressure over very long seasons.

Designing season dates and types to move elk to public lands addresses landowner concerns and increases availability to hunters. Intense hunting pressure over many months, year after year, has conditioned many elk to become private land residents, complicating the distribution of elk and making it hard to use hunting as a tool for management.

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:09:08
IP Address: 216.47.58.112

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	MICHAEL GULLETTE
City	Superior
State	montana
Email (optional)	mgullette@blackfoot.net

Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

we want more elk

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

the 3 year average or individual surveys

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

increased 1500 to 2000

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

don't need sub-objectives

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

8 to 10 bulls per 100 cows

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

no...we want more elk

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

improve summer and winter range more predator management, no shooting of 2 elk, we want more elk do more wildlife burns

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 12:03:27 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:21
IP Address: 216.47.58.112

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	MICHAEL GULLETTE
City	Superior
State	montana
Email (optional)	mgullette@blackfoot.net

Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

we want more elk

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

individuaul survey or 3 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

increased to about 1500 to 2000

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

don't need sub-objectives

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

8 to 10 bull per 100 cows maybe after a few years a few cow permits issued

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

more elk

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

leave our rifle season alone.....better predator management, do wildlife burns ,improve summer and winter range,one whole elk plan doesnt fit the whole state it should be by regions

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 6:12:54 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 6:17:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:05
IP Address: 174.199.41.178

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jeff Neville
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 202

Q2**Respondent skipped this question**

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Objective is fine retained

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Objective fine

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Stay with brow tine only

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Fewer wolves

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 01, 2022 3:55:03 PM
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	JERRY BAUER
City	superior mt
State	Montana
Email (optional)	bauerbunch@blackfoot.net

Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Transplant elk, Kill the wolves they ham string there prey and eat them alive. How sporting is this

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

600, how many elk are in petty creek. I don't live in petty creek, i live in superior. What good does this due me, What about the elk the the f wolves are killing. I don't eat wolf steak.

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

no sub-objectives.

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

maintain at least 8% or more.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Transplant elk

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

More wildlife burns

#5

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 05, 2022 8:22:30 PM
Last Modified: Friday, August 05, 2022 8:23:02 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:31
IP Address: 63.153.107.250

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Laurien Riehl
City	Missoula
State	Mt

Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~ 450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 05, 2022 8:45:22 PM
Last Modified: Friday, August 05, 2022 9:01:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:38
IP Address: 63.153.107.250

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Laurien Riehl
City	Missoula
State	Mt

Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

10 years with no cow tags. 6 point or better on elk giving younger bulls a chance to grow.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Actual physically seen elk surveys not harvest surveys. If you spend the winter in these areas you know the true numbers of deer and elk. Biologist should be doing actual physical counts. Like one day a week through a drainage counting tracks and physical sign and get averages based on 6 or 8 week studies.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased.

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Increased.

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Lower bull harvest and make the area a 6 point or better on bull elk. Harvesting 3 year old 5 point bulls does nothing to help herd dynamics.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Elk distribution is almost all in lowland farm areas. these elk are just now starting to move back into mountain areas now that wolf numbers are stabilized and trending down. We need more elk safe zones within districts which become feeders for population growth.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Shorter hunting seasons. Hunters need to choose bow hunting or rifle.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 11:39:52 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 11:56:18 AM
Time Spent: 00:16:26
IP Address: 69.165.127.43

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Kayla Papesh
City	Superior
State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Using a long-term average does a disservice to the other factors at play, for example the extension of wolf hunting and trapping season. The statistics from previous years will likely largely differ from the 2021-22 season because less wolves will have influenced the number of elk.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual surveys would best show correlation between elk and wolf numbers and create more accurate data.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

With the influx of elk hunters in NW and NC Montana in the past few years, a higher number of elk would probably be ideal. More elk means more harvestable bulls and less hunters whining about how the "wolves kill all the elk". So long as there is enough public land to accommodate higher numbers.

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

The Elk Management Plan needs to tie directly into the Wolf trapping and hunting season regulations. Wolves are over hunted in NW Montana and are therefore unable to help maintain healthy elk populations. More wolf hunting and trapping restrictions are a MUST. Wolf hunting and trapping is unnecessary as has been proven unnecessary by many wolf biologists. Their presence is essential to the natural management of elk. Politically and financially motivated wolf hunting and trapping enthusiasts are a huge detriment to the ACTUAL science behind elk and wolf management.

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 16, 2022 8:21:21 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 16, 2022 8:43:44 AM
Time Spent: 00:22:23
IP Address: 174.231.85.111

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Patrick Day
City	Polson
State	MT
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Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Keep current form.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year averages but also stil show year to year counts.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 600.

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Increased.

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Ideally 20% bull objective.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:12:47 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:23:31 AM
Time Spent: 00:10:43
IP Address: 66.109.153.26

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brian McKirdy
City	Alberton
State	mt
Email (optional)	alb4552@montana.com

Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

maintain

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

individual

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

increased to at least 1000

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

i think should be increased by 10% in each area the elk in fish creek has dropped dramatically in the past 20yr

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

shuold be no less than than 12%

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

no i have worked and hunted fish creek for 50 years and the decline in elk is unreal

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

maybe elk hunting for fish creek should be permit only like mule deer which have seemed to rebound

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:32:35 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:34:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:12
IP Address: 174.45.73.245

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 202

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 202 is 350 (range 280-420). However, the hunting district boundary expanded in 2022 so that the eastern boundary is now Petty Creek (HD 202 now includes portions of former HDs 240 and 203). Based on the combination of population objectives from former HDs, the population objective for new HD 202 would be ~450 elk (range 360-540). Do you think the estimated population objective of ~450 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased. This is a lot of land and has low elk numbers.

Q5

In the 2005 Elk Management Plan, there were sub-objectives for the North Fork of Fish Creek (50-100 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Given the boundary change in 2022, the sub-objectives for this HD would include: between Sawmill Gulch and North Fork of Fish Creek (100-175 elk), between Quartz and Cougar Creeks (50-100 elk), and between Thompson and Cold Creeks (200-300 elk). Should subunit objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Maintain. Increase.

Q6

In HD 202, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 8% bulls in the total elk observed during aerial surveys or an observed bull count of 28. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

This is laughable and unacceptable. Montana has the habitat and the potential to improve that bull to cow ratio by a significant amount. This post-season adult bull to cow ratio should be above 20:100.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Manage this unit for its own specific needs. The one-size fits all of season types, season dates, is unique to Montana. This unit, like all units, need to be managed with a higher level of customization for what is best for the elk resource. Make female elk hunting by permit only, including during archery season.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:29:17 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:37:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:42
IP Address: 108.174.125.178

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Kenneth Wolff
City	Stevensville
State	Montana
Email (optional)	khwol983a@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 204

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I believe elk populations should be increased as much as possible.. Our economy is in recession and many middle to lower income families depend on wild game to suplliment income ... There is a growing disparity between the working class and those who have bought property, moving here from other states, driving up costs... Those who own property here should be responsible for the wild game living on, or crossing their land...

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 204 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

increased if winter habitat allows...

Q5

In HD 204, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys , and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

More big bulls, bring in hunting dollars and boosts the economy...

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 16, 2022 8:56:50 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 16, 2022 9:24:23 AM
Time Spent: 00:27:32
IP Address: 23.167.160.2

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Mark Reiling
City	Florence
State	Montana
Email (optional)	mreiling@towle.com

Page 2: HD 204

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Maintain current approach.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

A three year average makes sense.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 204 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

It is okay and would not want it lower. Prefer somewhat higher, say 700. There are not too many elk in my opinion.

Q5

In HD 204, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys , and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

15 bulls:100 cows preferred. Remove the 7% alternative. I do not believe based on my observations that 10% of the bull population is 6pt or larger. I would be somewhat surprised to hear that 10% of the bulls taken are 6pt or larger. I would like there to be more 6pt or larger bulls and manage to that objective. If that would mean restricting taking a smaller sized bull, I am okay with that (e.g. no harvesting of 5 pt. bulls).

The 40% brow tine bull harvest is a kind of misleading statement, since all bulls harvested have to be brow tined, except antlerless.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Why do you word the bull objective questions differently in 204 and 260? Somewhat confusing as I am answering for both HD's.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, October 04, 2022 5:39:10 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, October 04, 2022 5:47:17 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:07
IP Address: 184.166.151.48

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Keegan Shea
City	Missoula
State	MT
Email (optional)	keeganshea29.29@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 204

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

The objective should be set according to the best available data on habitat and carrying capacity. Using a long-term average isn't helpful if the land is capable of supporting a lot more elk. Also, "landowner tolerance" should take a backseat to carrying capacity.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

COUNT THEM YEARLY!!! I understand that the legislature might control the purse-strings, but yearly counts should be the standard.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 204 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

INCREASED! According to the data provided above, it looks like the land is capable of sustaining between 1000-1200, but I'm not a biologist. Set it as high as the best available science says it can be. "Landowner tolerance" should be a secondary concern, behind carrying capacity.

Q5

In HD 204, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys , and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Between 7%-10% seems reasonable, but this objective should also be based on the best available science regarding bull to cow ratios and age classes.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I did see less elk last year than previous years in unit 204. The data provided above seems to corroborate that observation. I think the unit (kind of a large unit) can support many more elk. "Landowner tolerance" should fall behind carrying capacity when the Dept/Commission sets the objective.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Incentivizing public access to private land.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:00:05 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:19:34 AM
Time Spent: 00:19:28
IP Address: 69.146.140.233

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ravalli County Wildlife Association
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	cjourdonnais@mpgranch.com

Page 2: HD 204

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

We support raising the population objective to 800 elk, as long as that increase occurs in the southern portion of the HD, south of Ambrose Creek. Current triggers in this HD include calves/100 cows and sex ratios. We support current calves/100 cows figure but support raising sex ratio to 20 bulls/100 cows.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 204 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 204, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys , and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#5

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 11:12:05 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 11:12:35 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:29
IP Address: 205.220.129.31

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

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State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 204

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 204 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 204, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys , and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:10:52 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:11:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:51
IP Address: 209.200.195.28

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Lily
City	Missoula
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 204

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 204 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase. 1200 elk.

Q5

In HD 204, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys , and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Increase bull objectives.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Increase elk objectives. Terrible habitat in the wilderness area. Most of these elk are on the MPG ranch. They elk should not be counted towards the objective since they do not come off the ranch and are already managed on the ranch. There are hardly any elk on public land. Majority of cows are on private land which is detrimental to archery hunting since the bulls go on private land for the cows. Increase bull to cow ratio as well.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:06:11 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:09:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:56
IP Address: 174.45.73.245

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 204

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 204 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased so they meet objective only on huntable land.

Q5

In HD 204, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys , and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

This low level of post-season bull to cows is unacceptable. Montana has the habitat and the potential to improve that bull to cow ratio by a significant amount. This post-season adult bull to cow ratio should be above 20:100.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Elk distribution could/should be improved and can be done with more creative season structures and season dates. Adjust season dates and types to move elk that have been conditioned to private lands because of intense pressure over very long seasons. Designing season dates and types to move elk to public lands addresses landowner concerns and increases availability to hunters. Intense hunting pressure over many months, year after year, has conditioned many elk to become private land residents, complicating the distribution of elk and making it hard to use hunting as a tool for management.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Manage this unit for its own specific needs. The one-size fits all of season types, season dates, is unique to Montana. This unit, like all units, need to be managed with a higher level of customization for what is best for the elk resource. Make female elk hunting by permit only, including during archery season.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 14, 2022 12:43:52 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 14, 2022 12:50:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:49
IP Address: 66.119.214.98

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Dean Moody
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State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 210

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I am happy with the current form of objective.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD, or would you recommend some other approach?

I think a combination of an individual survey but at the same time comparing it to a 3 and 5 year average.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would increase the objective. We own a 2,000 acre ranch with cattle. We have more than enough grass on our ranch and national forest leases to handle quite a bit more elk and deer. I think cow or shoulder hunts are not effective and should not be allowed.

Q5

In HD 210, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I would like to see a higher bull to cow ratio in 210. We see tons and tons of cows but very few bulls. And most of these bulls are not older mature bulls. The bulls we see are young brow tined and spikes.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I think we end up with a lot of elk on our ranch once hunting pressure and winter hits. We are fine with the elk on the ranch but they do really go after the hay and run the cattle off the hay. But at the same time, I would like to see more elk. If we have problem elk, I think that is a different question of property damage control and its not a hunting issue.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I would like to see a plan for allowing land owners to have access to deer and elk tags based on acreage. I think this helps keep moving elk around a bit more. This is how other states do it and it seems to work in states like Oregon. Its really not enough tags to make a huge difference but it can allow elk to be hunted on private land that might normally not be able to be hunted.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 1:48:10 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 2:30:09 PM
Time Spent: 00:41:58
IP Address: 172.226.136.36

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Scott Schulz
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	scottbschulz@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 210

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I think long term average would be a better way to determine elk numbers. Please see last comment for full details of my thoughts on this hunting district.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD, or would you recommend some other approach?

I think individual surveys as long as shoulder and cow hunting is to persist. Not sure of a solution, but surveys show herds of a vast area using a specific winter range and not the whole picture of where these elk are living during the summer and fall.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

See my last comment, the elk population in the northern part of the district should be increased 4-5 times the amount current minimum

Q5

In HD 210, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

See my last comment, the Bull to Cow ratio I saw in my area was 50/50. Not enough cows to go around, only enough cows for one herd bull.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No, see my last comment for further details. Herd near the northern part of the district is close to be eliminated.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I had a friend who recently purchased property bordering the Harvey Creek Ranch on the south side of I-90 near Bearsmouth and we have hunted elk 11 days during three different weekends so far this season on the property and surrounding national forest. During this time we identified only 20 elk. 10 bulls and 10 cows, only 1 calf from this year, and only one small bull that was either a large 1.5 year old or small 2.5 year old. 4 of the Bulls are on the mature side and the others are 3.5 years old. The 10 cows are herded up with a mature herd bull, and all the other bulls are acting as satellite bulls. I also have several trail cameras in place that support this along with talking with neighboring landowners that say the same thing. I am not sure if you have spent time in this area, but the country is incredible well suited for a sizable and healthy elk population. I have hunted in 54 of Montana's hunting districts and this is some of the most lush and healthy forest with healthy grassy meadows that I have seen. It's feels like elk paradise. This goes without mentioning the 4 irrigated fields that are on the Harvey Creek Ranch that should be drawing in elk from far and wide, especially given the landowner doesn't appear to be concerned with game damage and wouldn't mind having a larger elk herd. I could easily see the terrain supporting a main herd of 50-75 elk on Harvey Creek Ranch and the surrounding couple sections alone, while also having several smaller roaming herds in the general area. We spent time at high points glassing many miles and it appears these 20 elk are all that are living in a vast area of public and private lands including antelope creek, Harvey creek, and over towards Tyler creek. I believe the area has been lumped into the the healthy elk herds further south in 210 and 211 by Philipsburg and thus has been allowed to be hunted to near demise. My concerns are that if the shoulder season and even cow hunting is allowed to continue in this area there will no longer be an elk herd in the Lower Harvey Creek drainage in the near future. I would make recommendations that some sub districts be created to protect elk herds in certain parts of these hunting districts. I hope you are able to find this information helpful. Please reach out if you have any further questions. Thank you for your time and consideration. Have a great week!

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 9:57:57 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:04:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:00
IP Address: 209.200.195.28

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Lily
City	Missoula
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 210

Q2 Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD, or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual surveys.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased. 3,000. Or what the habitat can actually support.

Q5

In HD 210, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Yes. This bull objective is extremely low. 20 bulls: 100 cows would be a good start.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No. More elk distribution on public lands.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Population objectives should be determined with averages. I am unsure what time span because we also need to account for events or weird trends in elk numbers. My concern is lowering objectives if the populations keep dropping in some areas. Elk numbers should be boosted, not lower objectives because elk numbers decrease because of too much hunting opportunity. Current population should increase. The new range should be determined by what the habitat can support. I believe the habitat can support more elk. Our bull to cow ratio should be increased. I am not happy with the distribution of elk at all. Public land is empty and quiet and we can see that out in the field as well as on trail cameras. Cows should not be harvested on public land. 20 bulls:100 cows is a good start but there could be more bulls. Objectives for 210 and 211 should increase. If we count them together then at least 3,000 elk. There are elk that winter on the northern end of 210 and this is all private land and they should not be counted towards the objective. The elk on the northern ranches in 210 do not leave the private property even during hunting season. There needs to be better elk distribution on public land. No more shoulder seasons.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 11:22:21 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 11:29:41 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:20
IP Address: 216.14.244.57

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brett Graybeal
City	Hall
State	MT
Email (optional)	dahlwholesale@blackfoot.net

Page 2: HD 210

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

FWP needs to take another approach to counting and surveying the game. Doing a more intensive survey for a few years would help get a more accurate average in the long run.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD, or would you recommend some other approach?

Flying more than once a year would be a great start. Also using GPS collars on elk would help determine how many elk migrate out of the unit.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I think FWP needs to increase the objective but then also do a better job in the north end of unit 210 and not count those elk in with the whole unit of 210 and 211.

Q5

In HD 210, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

More elk would solve the majority of the problems.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Not satisfied. Not enough elk in the North end of 210.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

FWP needs to count elk in the fall when its hunting season. They would get a more accurate count of how many elk are actually in the unit and how many are even hunt able.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:59:28 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 1:00:04 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:36
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Steven Stieler
City	Townsend
State	MT
Email (optional)	smstieler@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 211

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q5

In HD 211, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls of the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, October 04, 2022 5:25:10 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, October 04, 2022 5:38:45 PM
Time Spent: 00:13:35
IP Address: 184.166.151.48

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Keegan Shea
City	Missoula
State	MT
Email (optional)	keeganshea29.29@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 211

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Count every year (or as often as feasible). Objectives should be set based on habitat and carrying capacity. Luckily, 211 is mostly public land, so "landowner tolerance" shouldn't factor into calculating objectives in this unit.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

COUNT THEM EVERY YEAR! I understand the legislature probably controls the purse-strings, but yearly counts should be the standard.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to an objective supported by the best available data on the units habitat and carrying capacity. Let the biologists figure that out, not landowners. Anecdotally, I have seen enough elk this fall to make me happy, but I am not convinced there are "too many" in this unit.

Q5

In HD 211, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls of the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls ≥ 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Between 7%-10% seems reasonable, however, I think this objective should be set according to the best available science on healthy elk herds, bull to cow ratios, and age classes. I see enough bulls to make me happy, but I am not a biologist.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Honestly, I am satisfied with the number of elk I see in 211. The current data suggests they are over objective, so then the objective needs to be raised because the elk and habitat seems to be in good condition. However, I do see issues with cattle grazing on National Forest land. The cattle are very destructive to the habitat, they eat all the grass, and the elk seem to dislike them. I would posit that the bovine numbers are over objective, not the elk.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Account for the impact of cattle grazing, possibly reducing the number/duration of cattle on National Forest land.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 11:10:08 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 11:31:13 AM
Time Spent: 00:21:05
IP Address: 161.7.39.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brian Robbins
City	Anaconda
State	MT
Email (optional)	brian.robbins1969@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 211

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I'm a lifelong Montana resident with 41 years of hunting seasons. I've harvested 30 elk. I've been hunting 211 for 30 plus years and feel like I have a good pulse on the existing conditions. 210 and 211 elk should not be counted together. Why would elk residing near Drummond, be counted in the same "herd" as elk in 211? Furthermore, the elk numbers in 210 alone would make 211 "over objective" even if no elk were counted in 211. Yes I understand that some elk cross the skalkaho highway from 211 to 210 and vice versa but not to the extent to combine them.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

See comments above.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

There are so many inaccessible elk counted that it skews the narrative. Think about this. The number of inaccessible elk on private land continues to increase despite of the "war on elk". Yet the amount of accessible elk on public land continues to spiral downward due to the "war on elk". As a public land hunter, it truly is sickening to see how much public land is essentially void of deer and elk.

Q5

In HD 211, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls of the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I still feel the issue is in the way elk are counted. If you looked at accessible elk only, there's no way you meet this objective under current management.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Stop issuing 100 cow tags for public land in 211! I'd have a hard time believing there are 100 elk on public land in 211. In reality, there shouldn't be an antlerless tag issued on public land in most of western Montana. See comments above on the elk trends. I truly have to believe you know how horrendous public land hunting for elk has gotten.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:05:08 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:08:12 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:03
IP Address: 209.200.195.28

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Lily
City	Missoula
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 211

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 210 and 211 is 1,450 (range 1,160-1,740). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase.

Q5

In HD 211, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls of the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Increase bull objectives.

20 bulls: 100 cows

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

no. More elk distribution on public land.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Population objectives should be determined on an average to account for population changes year to year. Current population should increase. The new range should be determined by what the habitat can support. I believe the habitat can support more elk. The majority of 211 is public land and therefore should be able to support more elk. Reminder that elk on private are not supposed to be counted. 211 also has a landowner that harbors elk. 210, 211 and 216 should be managed separately. Managing them together skews how many elk may be in one unit. No more shoulder seasons.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 21, 2022 12:06:15 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 21, 2022 12:25:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:19:18
IP Address: 209.137.243.132

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Mark Olson
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State	Montana
Email (optional)	markoleolson@aol.com

Page 2: HD 212

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

There is currently no population objective in HD 212. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

The majority of elk are no longer wild, but kept on private property closed to hunting. These property owners shouldn't ever get any monetary help fromFWP.

Q5

In HD 212, there are bull objectives to maintain a 2-year average bull:100 cow ratio of 10:100 or at least 7% bulls of total elk observed during post-season surveys and to maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of at least 50% brow-tined bulls, of which at least 10% harvested bulls are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

99% of the bulls are not huntable. They are harbored on private property. Why do any study?

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

NO, most of 212 (I live there) is devoid of any elk on public land, Due to wolf pack predators, and an over abundance of mountain lions, and bears. Wolves have mostly left, since there is no game left. 2 bears in my yard today. Ned to reduce lion population by 90%.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Montana wide there should be NO bull elk tags given to landowners. If their land is over objective they likely don't allow the public to hunt, or have SOLD it to outfitters. Giving your buddy outfitters OUR licenses for BULLS is BS! In order to control populations COW tags are the answer NOT BULL TAGS! The FWP director needs to be fired for this obvious theft of our licenses to give monetary rewards to his outfitter parasites! Same with Gianforte, he as to GO! Both have a conflict of interest here and have proved they care nothing for native Montanans heritage, which is NOT for sale to these outfitter BUMS!

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 11:29:49 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 11:40:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:11:09
IP Address: 216.14.244.57

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brett Graybeal
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 212

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

FWP needs to update how they survey elk. If they are updating numbers from 2005. Maybe they should update how they are surveying and getting game count and be more proactive.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

FWP needs to survey twice a year in the winter and the fall during hunting season. And also use GPS collars

Q4

There is currently no population objective in HD 212. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

How does FWP not have a population objective for this unit? FWP needs to have some sort of idea on how many elk need to be in this unit. Maybe FWP should get rid of unit 217 and have 212 take over that area.

Q5

In HD 212, there are bull objectives to maintain a 2-year average bull:100 cow ratio of 10:100 or at least 7% bulls of total elk observed during post-season surveys and to maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of at least 50% brow-tined bulls, of which at least 10% harvested bulls are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

More elk would solve most of the problems.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Not satisfied FWP. Should consider 212 taking over unit 217 and making it a larger general elk and deer unit.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

FWP needs to consider flying in the fall when the elk are on private ground that doesn't allow hunting and count how many elk are being harbored and protected. Then take those elk out of the actual survey number. Those elk might be in the unit but they are not huntable elk.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, September 11, 2022 6:25:52 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, September 11, 2022 6:32:40 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:47
IP Address: 98.127.77.214

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Almir Lopes
City	Missoula
State	Montana
Email (optional)	almirlopes@att.net

Page 2: HD 213

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

FWP should maintain the current form of objective.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

A 3-year average of surveys would be more appropriate.

Q4

The current objective for HD 213 is 1,150 elk (range = 920-1,380). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased by 20%

Q5

In HD 213, there are bull objectives to maintain a 2-year average bull:100 cow ratio of 10:100 or at least 7% bulls among observed elk and to maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of at least 50% brow-tined bulls, of which at least 10% harvested bulls are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Yes, there should be bull objectives. The current bull objectives are appropriate.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Yes

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Request feedback on this after 3 years.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 9:19:03 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 9:23:46 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:42
IP Address: 35.133.36.202

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

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State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 214

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Maintain

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual

Q4

The current objective for HD 214 is 450 elk (range = 360-540). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Maintained

Q5

In HD 214, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Appropriate

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Satisfied

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

No cow tags until population is closer to current objectives

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 8:31:32 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 9:06:55 PM
Time Spent: 00:35:22
IP Address: 216.47.50.41

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Richard A McCort
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I have no idea what any of this means- "...desired number of elk counted...", "...long-term average..." so I can't form a valid opinion. All I can say is I think your numbers are over estimated. Counting the number of elk seen in an area seems like the best way to handle things as long as the area counted isn't some unique place that will produce an unrealistic count.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I prefer an annual survey. I worry that some long term average will not see dangerous trends quickly enough.

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased. I'd be satisfied with the count we currently have as long as the biologists feel that the available food will support this number. I'm aware that having too large of a heard can spread disease and strip the area of feed. Unfortunately, like all game animals, elk tend to move toward the safer private property areas when they are pressured so no matter how many elk we have a lot will be unavailable for the hunt due to them being on private land.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I've read that Colorado trys to keep their male to female ration about twice the number that we seem to have, 20:100 seems to their low end with some places as high as 70:100. I'd like to see something higher than 10:100 but I don't want to see the hunting oportunity to be worse in order to get a higher ration. Personally I have a problem with the bow hunt being so close to the general rifle hunt, I think that they are too close together. I have no proof but I feel that the bow hunters have an easier hunt (success rate?) since they hunt directly during the rut and general hunters can't get to the field until the bow hunters have pushed the animals around and the rut is finished.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No I'm not. I live in south of Elliston and most of the elk are on private land. What's more, some people from out of state are now buying land that they turn in to their private game park. One new owner to the north of my property has about 1600 acres and he's actually killing the natural grasses and such to develop feed that attracts elk. He brags that he wants a private game preserve of trophy class elk for his own hunts, I suspect that he will eventually sell hunt opportunities to pay back his costs. I own 20 acres on the edge of the Helena Ntl. Forest and I would assume that I'd see a lot of elk off season according to your count numbers but I usually see one or two small heards of 20 elk in July/August and then once in a while I see one or two cows from time to time. The only solution I can think of is to change the actual hunt dates so that bow and rifle hunters hunt on either side of the rut.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Quit closing roads in to some of the so called winter feeding grounds. The Spotted Dog is almost impossible to hunt now unless you're a independently wealthy 25 year old that can backpack in for a couple of weeks, it's almost as difficult to get access to as the Bob. I don't get elk very often but at 65 I still like to get out there and make the effort but you guys are making it almost impossible for people like me to hunt. Unless I own horses and can setup a large camp with canvas tents and beds and cooking facilities, I just can't make my old bones handle the ruggedness of hunting. I can still hike 2 or 3 miles in and back out in a day but it's impossible for me to have to hike 10 miles or more in a day and that's what it takes to get to some of the better hunting spots. I do like the brow tine rule and think that it should continue.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 05, 2022 11:05:17 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 05, 2022 11:12:52 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:34
IP Address: 65.19.244.226

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Nate Thompson
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

My understanding is there is a downward trend on livestock in this hunting district. If I am wrong, then current population objectives seem correct. However, if livestock numbers in the HD are decreasing, then the elk population objectives should be increased.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year averages seem better. If you look at the data for 2017 - 2020, 2019 count is definitely an outlier. However, such a drop in a count year over year can cause immediate concern, since no guarantee on what a subsequent year count could result in. Basing objective status on a 3 - 5 year trend would be best, with cow tag/permit allotments based annually.

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased if trend of livestock production in HD has been decreasing.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Current tag allotments are perfect for maintaining a bull to cow ratio that maintains a healthy elk population in this HD. No need to change current objective or management strategy.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Yes, and hopefully more public access can be achieved.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Rifle shoulder season has a negative impact on archery season. Please make it to where archery season can not be impacted by rifles in this HD. We're asking for trouble having an overlap between rifle and archery with rifle shoulder seasons.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 09, 2022 8:46:08 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 09, 2022 8:58:12 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:03
IP Address: 69.145.146.237

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Nick Gazzara
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

+30% considering the amount of herds that are pushed to private land (not accessible) in the deer lodge, garrison and Avon areas.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual. We must make drastic changes to our elk management. The amount of pressure and huntable elk on public grounds has been decreasing the last 22 years since I've hunting this unit.

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased, at least 2000 considering the amount of elk the stay year-round on rock creek cattle company, Angelos, Little Valley Ranch, Clairon, Applegates and more.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I would say closer to 30 would make sense considering the lack of bull sightings and harvest numbers.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Bonus point system, limit the tags for better quality hunting

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

The beetle kill and predator numbers have effected elk patterns in this unit

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 11:40:19 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 11:48:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:40
IP Address: 161.7.22.230

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Shane L Pegram
City	Helena
State	MT Montana
Email (optional)	bowman2925@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

It appears that the long term average would increase the objective. I'm in favor of increasing the objective in this HD.

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I saw significantly more elk in the portion of this HD that I hunt from 2012 to 2016 than I've seen from 2017 to 2021. In addition the number of nonresident hunters has steadily increased, drastically so in 2021, from my perspective. I'd prefer to see an increased objective, more in the range of 2000 to 2500 and some mechanism to reduce encounters with crowds of nonresident hunters.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I'm always for more bulls, but don't know how to get there without reducing hunter numbers. I don't want to see it go below 10 bulls/100 cows.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I don't like that I've seen a significant decrease in elk in the area that I hunt, but I don't know if it's partially a result of redistribution, hunter numbers, or the overall decrease in the herd.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 11:56:00 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 12:11:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:21
IP Address: 172.58.45.194

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Dakota Crowe
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Weather patterns, hunting pressure, and the loss of beneficial summer habitat are fluctuating the elk numbers in HD 215. I believe a more accurate population objective could be obtained using a long term average.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

215 provides winter range for the surrounding districts and the number of elk on the district fluctuates year to year with different weather patterns. A 3-year average would work best in this unit due to the mobility of elk between neighboring districts.

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

HD 215 should increase the objective to 2000 elk.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

The current bull objective should increase for HD 215. At minimum a range of 20-25 bulls would suffice. HD 215 has great genetics and habitat.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

The elk distribution has changed alot over the last 5 years. They primarily hold up on private property now from August on. It's hard to distribute elk to public grounds when you hunt them for 6 months. I believe creating a separate season for bull elk whether that is limited permits or not would be beneficial.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Limited bull permits or separate male and female seasons. Habitat management. Higher bull to cow ratios

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 5:39:41 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 5:47:38 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:56
IP Address: 184.167.210.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jake Petersen
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State	Mt
Email (optional)	jacobpetersen2@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

In this area the biologist would actually have to fly to get proper data

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Again I would actually like to be able to trust the numbers in this are first before we figure out what is the best plan

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 2000 elk

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

20 bulls to 100 cows

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

The distribution of elk in the south end of 215 is absolutely terrible and this is because of liberal cow tags and mismanagement. The spotted dog game reserve is an absolute joke to

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Better management period this used to be one of the best hunting districts around the current 215 biologist has absolutely no idea how to manage anything

#7

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 5:39:41 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 5:57:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:17:18
IP Address: 184.167.210.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jake Petersen
City	Butte
State	Mt
Email (optional)	jacobpetersen2@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 5:57:00 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 6:04:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:15
IP Address: 184.167.210.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jake Petersen
City	Butte
State	Mt
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Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Maintain current system
 Averaging is not a good system

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

2000

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

20 per 100

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Work on establishing herds in the south part of 215 to 2010 numbers

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Split 215 into north and south again using cottonwood road and remove cow tags from south region of this area

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 22, 2022 2:51:22 PM
Last Modified: Monday, August 22, 2022 2:56:32 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:09
IP Address: 161.7.84.186

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Alan Peterman
City	Helena
State	MT

Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20% seems appropriate

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

average of last 5 years

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

slightly increase objective to 1500 - 2000. This unit can maintain a large amount of elk and public grassland habitat has increased dramatically since initial plan was written with the acquisition of Spotted Dog.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Maintain a 10:100 bull cow ratio with at least a minimum number of adult bulls. Would be nice if there was a stated goal for older age class bulls. This unit has very few

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

distribution is good. Lots of public opportunity.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Elk are overpressured on public lands. Strategy to address this should be considered. Also, strategies to increase number of older age class bulls should be considered.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 09, 2022 11:01:58 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 09, 2022 11:04:04 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:05
IP Address: 209.180.189.212

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Dan Gagner
City	Helena
State	MT
Email (optional)	dgagner33@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I'd like to see a more adaptive approach, like using the latest 5 year average. The problem with using a fixed number like what has been done up to this point, is that it's too much of a process to update that number.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Using an average would be more appropriate to avoid any major changes that could result from a poor survey. The survey should also pay particular attention to elk that are not publicly accessible during hunting season, which affects unit wide management. These elk need to be excluded to avoid over pressuring the elk on public land and pushing them off to private, unhuntable land.

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I'd like to see 4,000 as an objective for this unit.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I'd like to see a minimum bull/cow ratio of 20:100 here.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No, there are too many elk on private. I'd like to see unlimited cow hunting on private and no cow hunting on public.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

We need to have a provision that excludes elk that are inaccessible to private lands and it needs to be followed. In the last EMP, on page 55, we had this provision, but the only unit it was ever applied to was in HD 270. In nearly every unit in central and eastern MT, we had the vast majority of elk spending all their time on private, inaccessible property, while the tag quotas were based off the unit wide counts, which in effect just put more hunting pressure on the public and pushed anything remaining onto the private ranches. This was an absolute failure, we're paying dearly for it now as these elk have learned to stay on these safe havens, and cannot happen again.

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, September 12, 2022 11:11:45 AM
Last Modified: Monday, September 12, 2022 11:34:40 AM
Time Spent: 00:22:54
IP Address: 4.4.78.43

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jeff Ingram
City	Helena
State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 215

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

There is so many variables from what time of year the counts are done (weather, wolves, etc) using some type of average would be more accurate.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Looking at the information in the table below, an average would be accurate. There is no way the population grew by 1000 plus in one year as the table shows.

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 2000 +/- . When the population used to be in that range in the mid 2000's the elk in HD215 seemed to be more spread out throughout the HD.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Yes there should be a bull objective in HD 215. I feel the bull objective is ok. As a hunter i would always like to see the bull to cow ratio in the 20-100 instead of 10-100.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

After the spotted dog wma was opened and so much vehicle access to the winter range the distribution changed and a fair number of elk stay on the little private land there is and not as much on the forest (as with everywhere i suppose). We have even seen large herds cross the highway to the west towards Rock Creek Cattle during the hunting season.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I am a huge advocate of the current regulation that if you draw a cow elk tag you can NOT shoot a bull!

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 15, 2022 7:51:38 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 15, 2022 7:57:01 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:23
IP Address: 174.215.17.217

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Wade murphy
City	Deer Lodge
State	Mt

Page 2: HD 215

Q2**Respondent skipped this question**

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 215 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I think the population should be increased. I think 1600 is a better for this large area.

Q5

In HD 215, there is a bull objective to maintain an minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

1:10 is a good ratio

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Late season cow tags to protect ranchers.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 12:17:56 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 12:26:01 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:04
IP Address: 150.131.72.98

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Vince Colucci
City	Missoula/Opportunity
State	MT
Email (optional)	vincecolucci@msn.com

Page 2: HD 216

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Current methodology is reasonable if you are convinced you are getting accurate numbers and the management schemes have been working

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I favor individual surveys because of the change in variables from year to year.

Q4

The current objective for HD 216 is 325 elk (range = 260-390). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Depends on the habitat and management thereof. this seems like a reasonable number if the current habitat can support it

Q5

In HD 216, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

This B:C ratio is atrocious. States like NM have B:C ratios close to 40 in some areas. Now, they also draw for their hunting across the board and each area is limited entry but how about something in between. i'm not arguing for nothing but 350" bulls but a better ratio is reasonable, i.e., more bulls.

Limited draw, limited road and OHV access and better forest/habitat stewardship are must haves, IMO

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

not really sure of landowner:public land distribution other than the big wealthy ranch in Rck Crk and other private land that harbors elk. What has been the relationships with private landowners and public hunting?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:08:21 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:10:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:46
IP Address: 209.200.195.28

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Lily
City	Missoula
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 216

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 216 is 325 elk (range = 260-390). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase the objective. 600 elk

Q5

In HD 216, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain an annual bull harvest of at least 40% brow-tined bulls, of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Increase bull objectives. 20:100

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

no. More elk distribution on public land.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

No cow hunting on public land. THERE SHOULD BE NO ELK B TAGS FOR PUBLIC LAND. Also, why are we having B tags when we are under objective? The objective needs to be increased. Increase bull to cow ratios. Need more elk distributed on to public land. Some elk leave private land and go to public during the hunting season, only to be quickly pushed back on to private land because of all of the hunting pressure.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:10:12 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:14:05 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:52
IP Address: 209.200.195.28

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Lily
City	Missoula
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 217

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 217 is 600 elk (range = 480-720). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased.

Q5

HD 217 was formed after the 2005 Elk Management Plan, and there are no bull objectives defined in the current plan. However, the HD it was created from had bull objectives to maintain a 2-year average bull:100 cow ratio of 10:100 or at least 7% bulls among observed elk and to maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of at least 50% brow-tined bulls, of which at least 10% harvested bulls are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be a bull objective for this HD? If so, are these bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

These bull to cow ratios are skewed when so many cows were killed. Also it is a permit area where few public land hunters are successful.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Absolutely not satisfied. Way more elk distribution on public land.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Basically private land hunting in this unit. A majority of elk in this unit are on private land. I believe the bull to cow ratios are skewed because so many cows were taken out of this area. More distribution on public land needs to happen. It is an absolute nightmare to hunt this unit if you are a public land hunter. Yeah the bulls are on public during the spring and summer, but once august hits, they leave for the private land and dont come off. Why do we have a unit that basically only benefits landowners in the area? This is a terribly managed unit. Perhaps if it was a general tag, the elk would disperse more. They already dont leave Angelo's ranch and during rifle season, the surrounding landowners with the tag that border him basically make a wall that the bulls dont pass to get to public.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:57:17 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 11:21:05 AM
Time Spent: 00:23:47
IP Address: 216.14.244.57

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brett Graybeal
City	Hall
State	MT
Email (optional)	dahlwholesale@blackfoot.net

Page 2: HD 217

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Some other approach should be established especially because the elk in 217 migrate from Units 213 and 212. I think FWP should consider dissolving unit 217 and have 212 incorporate that are. And make 212 a general hunting unit again and get rid of the bull permit.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I think FWP should be more proactive and do multiple surveys in a year. One survey in the winter like normal and one in September when the elk are in the areas during hunting season.

Q4

The current objective for HD 217 is 600 elk (range = 480-720). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased by at least 50-75%

Q5

HD 217 was formed after the 2005 Elk Management Plan, and there are no bull objectives defined in the current plan. However, the HD it was created from had bull objectives to maintain a 2-year average bull:100 cow ratio of 10:100 or at least 7% bulls among observed elk and to maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of at least 50% brow-tined bulls, of which at least 10% harvested bulls are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be a bull objective for this HD? If so, are these bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

The bull objective is probably above normal because the unit has no more cows in it. And its a bull permit area where only a certain number of people can shoot a bull in a small unit. If we had more elk in the unit the bull cow ratio would be fine. But also if FWP got rid of 217 and made back into 212 it would solve a lot of problems also.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No not satisfied at all. This used to be one of the best hunting districts in the state now that it is a bull permit area and a small unit FWP completely ruined the hunting here. I would suggest getting rid of the 217 bull permit unit!!

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

FWP needs to realize that unit 217 is very small and it doesn't have very much public land to hunt. Especially during elk season when 90% of the elk are on private land and inaccessible. FWP should do elk counts in the fall when the elk are on the private lands where they cant be hunted by the public.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:23:28 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:26:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:39
IP Address: 174.45.73.245

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 217

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

The current objective for HD 217 is 600 elk (range = 480-720). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased. This is a draw only unit and the amount of huntable elk on the landscape should reflect the time/point investment required to hunt bulls here.

Q5

HD 217 was formed after the 2005 Elk Management Plan, and there are no bull objectives defined in the current plan. However, the HD it was created from had bull objectives to maintain a 2-year average bull:100 cow ratio of 10:100 or at least 7% bulls among observed elk and to maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of at least 50% brow-tined bulls, of which at least 10% harvested bulls are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be a bull objective for this HD? If so, are these bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

This low level of post-season bull to cows is unacceptable. Montana has the habitat and the potential to improve that bull to cow ratio by a significant amount. This post-season adult bull to cow ratio should be above 30:100 in this draw only unit.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Stop counting elk that herd up on the few riverfront properties against the objective. What is the true number of huntable elk in this unit?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Manage this unit for its own specific needs. The one-size fits all of season types, season dates, is unique to Montana. This unit, like all units, need to be managed with a higher level of customization for what is best for the elk resource. Make female elk hunting by permit only, including during archery season.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 12:46:39 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 12:52:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:03
IP Address: 63.153.81.196

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brandon Purcell
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	b.purcell.hunting@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 240

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

How many of the elk observed on private land account for the number of elk surveyed in 240?

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I'd like to know when the surveys are conducted? Are they taken in April or June?

Q4

The current objective for HD 240 is 1,000 elk (range = 800-1,200). HD 240 changed boundaries in 2022, and a portion of HD 240 became HD 201. Given the new boundary change, using current objectives within the new boundary the estimated population objective would be ~ 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the population objective level of 750 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

We need to eliminate quotas on mountain lions and increase the quota on bears to 2 per person to hopefully help populations grow. In the NF portion of the unit

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 240, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brown-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I think the southern bounty needs to be adjusted to include all lands north of the nezpeirce road. It's all very geographically similar and maybe would help get the elk to distribute into more of the unit if they could be more easily killed on private property north of the nez pierce road.

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 2:08:20 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 2:08:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:06
IP Address: 63.153.105.187

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Timothy Henke
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State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 240

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 240 is 1,000 elk (range = 800-1,200). HD 240 changed boundaries in 2022, and a portion of HD 240 became HD 201. Given the new boundary change, using current objectives within the new boundary the estimated population objective would be ~ 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the population objective level of 750 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 240, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brown-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 16, 2022 7:20:08 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 16, 2022 7:42:24 AM
Time Spent: 00:22:16
IP Address: 108.174.119.70

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Joseph Guarino
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	joeguarino1981@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 240

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I'm very new to this whole issue, but it seems to me that a 5 year averaging system should be in place (kept). Obviously weather dictates a lot of fluctuations, which we don't control.

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 240 is 1,000 elk (range = 800-1,200). HD 240 changed boundaries in 2022, and a portion of HD 240 became HD 201. Given the new boundary change, using current objectives within the new boundary the estimated population objective would be ~ 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the population objective level of 750 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 240, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brown-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I read an article in our local paper that put forward the idea of requiring hunters to claim either archery or bun season, but not both due to "pressure" on the elk. NOT good. 1) FWP will loose a revenue stream. Not that it is a massive amount of money, but it will be impacted because an bow hunter has to have a general hunting license then pay extra for archery. 2) this suggested requirement would cause more "pressure" on elk(and for that matter, any game) and the hunters. Lets face it, if I have to pick, I'm picking gun season. I personally believe that this suggested requirement is unnecessary regulation. The purpose to me is clear. The author of the suggestion probably believes that the bow hunter gains an unfair advantage in that they (bow hunter) obtains information as to where the elk are in a particular HD and would apply this knowledge during gun season. I say, thats too bad ! Become a bow hunter then. Attend the required certification course, pay the extra fee, go buy all the extra equipment and hit the bush (knowing your chances are pretty low), but don't restrict my ability to feed my family. Thanks

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 21, 2022 7:02:58 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 21, 2022 7:19:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:16:19
IP Address: 174.204.0.49

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jackie Weidow
City	Victor
State	Montana
Email (optional)	JackieWeidow92@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 240

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

FWP needs to take in the consideration that a substantial amount of elk are on PRIVATE. So there should be a count for private and a count for forest service. The elk on private are not going to be hunted.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual surveys would work best in 240 I believe.

Q4

The current objective for HD 240 is 1,000 elk (range = 800-1,200). HD 240 changed boundaries in 2022, and a portion of HD 240 became HD 201. Given the new boundary change, using current objectives within the new boundary the estimated population objective would be ~ 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the population objective level of 750 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I believe it should stay the same. There is a lot of country in HD 240 which holds a good portion of elk. They should give out more cow tags to help maintain the levels.

Q5

In HD 240, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I think it needs to be 10 bulls per 80 cows.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Yes I am satisfied.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

All the private land in HD 240 that doesn't get hunted.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:44:54 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:45:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:39
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Steven Stieler
City	Townsend
State	MT
Email (optional)	smstieler@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 240

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q4

The current objective for HD 240 is 1,000 elk (range = 800-1,200). HD 240 changed boundaries in 2022, and a portion of HD 240 became HD 201. Given the new boundary change, using current objectives within the new boundary the estimated population objective would be ~ 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the population objective level of 750 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q5

In HD 240, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:19:59 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:21:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:40
IP Address: 69.146.140.233

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	cjourdonnais@mpgranch.com

Page 2: HD 240

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

We support current population objective and calves/100 cows trigger. We support raising sex ratio to 20 bulls/100 cows.

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 240 is 1,000 elk (range = 800-1,200). HD 240 changed boundaries in 2022, and a portion of HD 240 became HD 201. Given the new boundary change, using current objectives within the new boundary the estimated population objective would be ~ 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the population objective level of 750 should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 240, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brown-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 21, 2022 5:55:36 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 21, 2022 6:01:56 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:20
IP Address: 174.204.0.49

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jackie Weidow
City	Victor
State	Montana
Email (optional)	JackieWeidow92@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I believe they should manage is the same way.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

It's going to change every year. So you should do a 3 year average.

Q4

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I believe it should stay the same.

Q5

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I believe the bull objective is correct. An should stay the same.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I believe you need to lower the cow number in 250 by increasing permits.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

They need to include that a majority of the elk they count go onto the private ranches and will never be hunted! 250 also has a very high predator population to consider also.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 2:30:14 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 2:38:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:09
IP Address: 69.145.21.77

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Keith Mullan
City	Hamilton
State	Mt
Email (optional)	keithcmullan@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2**Respondent skipped this question**

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase population object. There is far less human encroachment in this unit than anywhere else in the bitterroot. Get rid of the pointless (10) B tags.

Q5

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

No, they are not appropriate. After the 2004 cow slaughter the elk numbers never recovered. There should not be a set objective for bull numbers in an area that has less human encroachment.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No! Get rid of the B tags to help with population growth. Increase the amount of bull tags. It is sickening that I can not draw the bull tag with 11 points. This isn't even a trophy unit. This a FWP mismanaged unit.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 10:04:36 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 10:05:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:06
IP Address: 174.198.134.58

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Nick Stoker
City	Victor
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase 1500-2000

Q5

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Make changes to the trophy draw system. Break this unit into archery only 10tags, 1/2rifle 10tags, 2/2rifle 5tags. No one wants to wait 20years to get this tag. No one needs more than 14 days in a trophy unit to succeed. Do this same thing in every single trophy unit. Gives people who want to hunt less optimal times the ability to hunt trophy units every couple years. Can't express how much this would improve the trophy potential in both elk and deer. Don't care how you distribute the total draw tags but that would also make less hunting pressure because not every tag holders tags overlap. This would only improve hunter experience short and long term.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Make changes to the trophy draw system. Break this unit into archery only 10tags, 1/2rifle 10tags, 2/2rifle 5tags. No one wants to wait 20years to get this tag. No one needs more than 14 days in a trophy unit to succeed. Do this same thing in every single trophy unit. Gives people who want to hunt less optimal times the ability to hunt trophy units every couple years. Can't express how much this would improve the trophy potential in both elk and deer. Don't care how you distribute the total draw tags but that would also make less hunting pressure because not every tag holders tags overlap. This would only improve hunter experience short and long term.

#4

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 7:18:56 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 7:19:24 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:28
IP Address: 172.58.88.26

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Dakota Crowe
City	Deer Lodge
State	MT
Email (optional)	kota5crowe@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:45:43 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:48:09 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:26
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Steven Stieler
City	Townsend
State	MT
Email (optional)	smstieler@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q4

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q5

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 02, 2022 8:32:06 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 02, 2022 8:41:49 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:43
IP Address: 108.174.126.211

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Mark L Hoselton
City	Victor
State	MT
Email (optional)	mark@linleyscabinets.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

long term 5-10 years

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

yes

Q4

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

800

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

It is obvious that restricting tags has not increased number. By limiting tags, more pressure is placed on other areas, like 270. Open the season for broader access, limit hunting days, use weapons restriction. A 6pt restriction, away from the rut, would allow hunters to go, but limit the take. Allowing more hunting will also increase the predator take as well. The current plan has not worked and will not work.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 29, 2022 8:23:29 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 29, 2022 8:41:57 PM
Time Spent: 00:18:27
IP Address: 174.215.28.21

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Timothy Wiediger
City	Hamilton
State	Mt
Email (optional)	shedhuntin@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

In my opinion what you should do is open all hunting districts to general hunting with no special draws. Open wolf hunting year round. Make wolf's a predator and reduce there numbers. When units such as 250 and 270 among others were made special draw it was only supposed to be for a few yrs. Of course that was just a way to lock people out of areas that we had been hunting and enjoying for many,many yrs. Doing special draw on any deer or elk area just concentrates pressure on other areas. This is why you are loosing the hunting population and why we are loosing the youth hunting population of hunters. You can't find an area to hunt that you don't run into a bunch of people. You should consider doing antler restrictions but keep hunting areas open for all licensed hunters.

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brown-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:21:49 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:25:16 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:27
IP Address: 69.146.140.233

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	cjourdonnais@mpgranch.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

We propose lowering elk population objective from 1400 to 1000 elk. We support current calves/100 cows trigger but propose raising sex ratio to 20 bulls/100 cows.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

We propose allowing up to 30 brow-tined bull permits for archery season only and 20 brow-tined bull permits for general rifle season only

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 06, 2022 2:26:05 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 06, 2022 2:33:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:33
IP Address: 47.37.50.145

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Robert Wood
City	Hamilton
State	Montana
Email (optional)	robertwood57@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Long term averages end up down or up depending on the trends. What I see then are lower objectives over time. Populations should be managed for Cow/calf, cow/Bull, and ratio's within the total population objectives.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Lets stick to yearly counts. You can't manage wildlife without knowing what the populations are.

Q4

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The range is good, we need to get the population there.

Q5

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

No, the Bull/cow ratio should be a min of 20/100 in that district.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

There's a lot of good Elk habitat not being used in HD250

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Make sure the calf/cow ratio's stay at a min of 25 per100 cows.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 07, 2022 8:17:01 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 07, 2022 8:27:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:10:15
IP Address: 66.62.89.101

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jeff Darrah
City	Stevensville
State	MT
Email (optional)	jdarrah21@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 250

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Yes

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Yes, I support a 3-year average to determine objective status

Q4

The current objective for HD 250 is 1,400 elk (range = 1,120-1,680). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

With the recent boundary changes it seems appropriate to lower the population objective to around 800 elk for the HD

Q5

In HD 250, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls including at least 15% ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I support a higher bull ratio in this HD of 20% with 20% > 6 pt. If the HD is growing good bulls continue that effort and limit permits.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Yes

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I am concerned about the predator to prey ratio in this HD. I think it's important to have an adequate mountain lion quota and an adequate wolf removal in this HD.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 12:44:03 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 1:26:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:42:39
IP Address: 69.144.30.138

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Mark Sommer
City	MISSOULA
State	MT
Email (optional)	MSOMMER@APLECO.COM

Page 2: HD 260

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

To me averages make more sense for something that has high variability. Averages tend to balance out the variability.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I think HD 260 is pretty unique compared to every other HD in the state. It is a long, skinny HD, with two four-lane highways running through the middle of it, and lots of residential and commercial development, and very high percentage of private land. It would seem logical that the reasons why there would be population objectives for HD 260 may be different reasons than many other HD's. For example, would the prevalence of road-kill events and the associated damage to vehicles and impacts on human health be an issue. For example, the higher the rate of road-kill, the more it suggests too many elk. Or maybe the number of complaints from farmer and homeowners about elk eating hay, trees, landscaping, such that the more complaints, the more it suggests too many elk. Having said that, I don't believe one should expect zero road-kill or zero complaints, because the only way to achieve that would be zero elk. I guess the main point is that there may be other metrics to consider that you normally don't use, but I don't necessarily pretend to know what those are.

Q4

The current objective for HD 260 is 50 elk (range = 40-60). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I think it should be increase. I own about 100 acres on the river bottom in HD 260. I've had 2 or 3 times that many elk on my property at one time, let alone considering the entire HD where I know other herds gather. 50 elk assumes a single smaller herd, or a scattering of a handful of elk here and there, and even if that was desired, it just is not a realistic objective to achieve. I think FWP also needs to consider the timing of that population. I have elk on my property from spring thru early fall, but about sometime in November they disappear and gone through the winter up into the mountains. Even on a daily basis it can change, as my property is in two HD's, so at 8:00 a.m. I could have 100 elk on my property in one HD, and by 8:05 a.m. they are all in the adjacent HD. As far as how much to increase, I am thinking 300, but realizing that number varies by season and even day to day. So I see that as an early fall number when the herds gather and bulls come out of the mountains.

Maybe instead of number of elk, it should be set by sub-geographic areas. For example, if too may road-kills are occurring, then too many elk close to the road, so is there a way to address that through local management versus a "one size fits all" number for entire HD.

Another example will be elk eating farmer's hay, and are there ways to address that through local management versus number for entire HD. In summary, a lot of elk may not be causing many issues or even appreciated in one area of HD, but not in another.

Q5

For HDs 240 and 260, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Note that most of HD 260 is river bottom private land, with few bulls that reside there. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

The elk I see on my property are mostly cows and calves (and maybe some spikes) during the spring and summer months. Starting in late summer, and for sure in the fall during the rut, is when the bulls start showing up. I assume they are coming down out of the hills from the adjacent HD's. So in some ways, how you manage HD 260 impacts those adjacent HD's. I know there are attempts to increase the harvest in HD 260, which I agree with. I think one way to do that is to allow harvest of spikes and other non-brow tined bulls. For me, and others I know that hunt HD 260, they are not seeking out HD 260 with thoughts or desires to harvest a 6 point bull or better. I and others know that the bulls come and go, and even the elk in general come and go, so a non-brow tined bull or antlerless elk is a more realistic expectation. In summary, allowing harvest of non-brow tined bulls may increase harvest and is also in line with hunter expectations. For private landowners in HD 260 that want a 6 point or better, they can choose to hold out.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Yes I am satisfied. Based on my landownership and from what I hear from others, a number of herds and handfals here and there, and they often come and go on a seasonal basis or daily basis.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

As I noted earlier, I think HD 260 is pretty unique. So I think it needs to be looked at differently in that regard.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 16, 2022 8:37:24 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 16, 2022 9:26:28 AM
Time Spent: 00:49:03
IP Address: 23.167.160.2

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Mark Reiling
City	Florence
State	MT
Email (optional)	mreiling@towle.com

Page 2: HD 260

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I do not think a population objective is applicable in this zone. The elk move in and out. One day I can see 200+ elk in a pasture and the next they are all across the river and there are few or none in my part (most of 3 square miles, including state land) of HD 260. The district is too transitory.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

In my area combining the objective with HD204 makes more sense. A three rolling average preferred.

Q4

The current objective for HD 260 is 50 elk (range = 40-60). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Either eliminate it or combine it with 204.

Q5

For HDs 240 and 260, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season aerial surveys and maintain an annual bull harvest comprised of 100% brow-tined bulls, including at least 15% of harvested bulls are \geq 6pt. Note that most of HD 260 is river bottom private land, with few bulls that reside there. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Who knows if at least 15% of the bulls harvested are 6pt or more? That seems like a high % to me, although I do not have any data to support that statement. What I can tell you from glassing a lot of elk over many years, the percentage of 6pt bulls existing (not harvested) is under 3% of the bulls.

Raise the bull objective to 15 bulls:100 cows.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:25:38 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:27:37 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:58
IP Address: 69.146.140.233

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	cjourdonnais@mpgranch.com

Page 2: HD 261

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

We support current population objective. We propose raising calves/100 cows trigger to 25ca/100 cows and raising sex ratio to 25 bulls/100 cows

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 261 is 700 (range = 560-840). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 261, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls in the total elk observed during post-season aerial surveys, and maintain an annual bull harvest of which no less than 10% are ≥ 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:47:07 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:56:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:25
IP Address: 69.145.22.128

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Donavan L Mason
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	lynnm13@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

10 year long term average makes sense.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year average

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Leave it where it is.

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Bull objective of 10-15% is reasonable. Considering ranchers figure 1 bull/20-25 cows, 10-15% should help maintain numbers and not grow the herd.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No, many elk seek refuge on private land that is closed to the public. Any private landowner who requests reimbursements for damage caused by wildlife needs to be required to allow public access (daily numbers/groups for every day of hunting season).

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

More public access/reservation system on private land.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 16, 2022 1:56:14 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 16, 2022 2:27:40 PM
Time Spent: 00:31:25
IP Address: 72.174.229.218

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Drew Merten
City	Missoula
State	Mt
Email (optional)	drewmerten@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Population objectives should not change unless there is a major impact to the carrying capacity. Instead of a scheduled times to assess tolerance of elk numbers, they should be reassessed based an observed change in the ecosystem.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Maintained

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

This is a biology question, this should not be decided based on hunter survey. This should be decided by biologists recommendation for the health of the heard

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Yes. If elk become higher density on private lands, they have the option to enroll in BMA.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

As with all HD's in the state, I believe the harvest statistics accuracy can be greatly improved with mandatory reporting. I would like for regulations to be based the most accurate data possible. The current system is only reaching a fraction of hunters. There should be a mandatory survey at the end of the season each year that needs to be completed before being eligible to purchase the next years tags.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 18, 2022 10:13:27 AM
Last Modified: Monday, July 18, 2022 10:16:55 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:27
IP Address: 174.197.71.92

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Milan Plachy
City	Stevensville
State	Mt
Email (optional)	arc.milan@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Biggest thing I think is limit access of motorized vehicles during all hunting seasons

That would be a start

Numbers could increase

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 21, 2022 7:20:01 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 21, 2022 7:24:31 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:29
IP Address: 66.62.95.241

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Jackie Weidow
City	Victor
State	Montana
Email (optional)	JackieWeidow92@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I believe they need to use the current managing system.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I believe they need to do individual surveys each year.

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I think it should stay the same.

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I believe it should stay how it is.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I am satisfied.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

We are at the right ratio and the hunting of elk in HD 270 needs to be an over the counter tag. I believe you should 150 cow tags rye Creek north and 150 rye creek south.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 25, 2022 10:02:10 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 25, 2022 10:05:31 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:21
IP Address: 216.14.236.161

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Michael Tatum
City	Plains
State	MT
Email (optional)	shedhorn_mt@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2**Respondent skipped this question**

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4**Respondent skipped this question**

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Since it looks like the numbers are where they were before limits we placed in 270 how about opening it up to general hunting. At least for archery season. I'm not going to burn my years of preference points just to hunt an elk down there.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 30, 2022 6:46:45 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 30, 2022 6:55:55 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:10
IP Address: 108.174.114.45

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Faron Stevens
City	Stevensville
State	Mt

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Wasn't the permits supposed to be a short term process to get the numbers back

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Not make the district first choice . I've never seen over 4000 permits in this district . Make a number of permits and have permits Not first choice only

#7

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, August 07, 2022 12:28:30 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, August 07, 2022 12:28:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:22
IP Address: 72.250.189.114

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Thomas McGary
City	Columbia Falls
State	MT

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 2:24:33 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 2:29:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:16
IP Address: 69.145.21.77

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Keith mullan
City	Hamilton
State	Mt
Email (optional)	keithcmullan@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

270 should not be a first choice only. Make this a second choice and then make the decision on whether or not you can elk hunt in a separate district. It is pointless that I live in Hamilton and can not hunt this area without missing the opportunity to draw a coveted bull tag.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 10:06:01 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 10:07:20 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:19
IP Address: 174.198.134.58

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Nick Stoker
City	Victor
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Make changes to the trophy draw system. Break this unit into archery only 10tags, 1/2rifle 10tags, 2/2rifle 5tags. No one wants to wait 20years to get this tag. No one needs more than 14 days in a trophy unit to succeed. Do this same thing in every single trophy unit. Gives people who want to hunt less optimal times the ability to hunt trophy units every couple years. Can't express how much this would improve the trophy potential in both elk and deer. Don't care how you distribute the total draw tags but that would also make less hunting pressure because not every tag holders tags overlap. This would only improve hunter experience short and long term.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Make changes to the trophy draw system. Break this unit into archery only 10tags, 1/2rifle 10tags, 2/2rifle 5tags. No one wants to wait 20years to get this tag. No one needs more than 14 days in a trophy unit to succeed. Do this same thing in every single trophy unit. Gives people who want to hunt less optimal times the ability to hunt trophy units every couple years. Can't express how much this would improve the trophy potential in both elk and deer. Don't care how you distribute the total draw tags but that would also make less hunting pressure because not every tag holders tags overlap. This would only improve hunter experience short and long term.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:35:26 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:36:06 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:40
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Steven Stieler
City	Townsend
State	MT
Email (optional)	smstieler@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

#11

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 02, 2022 8:28:38 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 02, 2022 8:28:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:09
IP Address: 108.174.126.211

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Mark L Hoselton
City	Victor, Montana
State	MT
Email (optional)	mark@linleyscabinets.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 9:48:48 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 9:58:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:34
IP Address: 184.166.86.96

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Daren Donnelly
City	Missoula
State	Mt
Email (optional)	darendonnelly@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

current form

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year average

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 4000 plus

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

no bull objectives but limit number of hunters. Way to many people hunting this unit

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Elk distribution is ok but too many hunters are pushing elk into inaccessible areas

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

limit hunter numbers

#13

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:27:47 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 05, 2022 10:32:36 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:49
IP Address: 69.146.140.233

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association
City	Hamilton
State	MT
Email (optional)	cjourdonnais@mpgranch.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

We support present population objective. We propose raising sex ratio to 20 bulls/100 cows and raising the calf trigger to 25 calves/100 cows

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

We strongly support moving the former HD334 into HD 270 or at a minimum, re-establishing HD334 and with regulations, population objectives and triggers that compliment HD270 management goals. Telemetry data and field observations strongly support the relationship of elk between these two HDs. Most of the HD334 elk winter in HD270.

#14

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 07, 2022 7:56:55 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 07, 2022 8:03:47 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:52
IP Address: 98.97.113.218

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Greg Povenski
City	Hamilton
State	MT

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

There needs to be a way to change the elk count data collection. A one day count during the highest elk population of the season is not statistically significant enough to justify the elk plan.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

This EMU either needs to be a general tag or it should be treated like the other special draw areas, if you draw it you cannot hunt bull elk in any other district. The special treatment of this area does not make sense.

#15

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 08, 2022 1:28:02 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 1:39:04 PM
Time Spent: 00:11:01
IP Address: 47.37.50.145

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Robert Wood
City	Hamilton
State	Montana
Email (optional)	robertwood57@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I think we need to use the past 10 years of data for our average objective level in HD 270, and manage for that.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

We need to still do annual surveys, but manage on trends using at least 2 years to prove that trend.

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

There's no doubt that more Elk are being harbored on private lands. If those lands don't allow public hunting of some sort to reduce those elk then they need not be counted in the overall population.

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

We need to increase the ratio to 20:100 in HD 270 and make the harvested bulls at 20%. We need to manage HD 334 the same way as those Elk mostly migrate over to HD 270.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Most of the Elk migrate from other HD. Those need more intense management to bring up Bull:cow ratios.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

We need HD 321 to go back to the HD 334 sub unit and manage it with the same goals in place. Also we need HD 211 managed the same as well.

#16

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 8:15:59 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 8:31:20 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:20
IP Address: 174.198.134.167

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Stephen Kenley
City	Hamilton
State	Mt.
Email (optional)	ibstephen@cybernet1.com

Page 2: HD 270

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Keep objective at 4000. This HD-270 has by far the most hunters, and the 4000 objective Elk # is working great

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

A bad winter could decimate the hog population especially the balls so I think it's very Porten to do surveys every year in HD-270

Q4

The current objective for HD 270 is 3,800 (range = 3,040-4,560). Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Maintained

Q5

In HD 270, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys or at least 10% bulls in the total elk observed, and maintain at least 15% of harvested bulls \geq 4.5 years old and annual bull harvest where at least 15% harvested bulls are \geq 6 pt. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Leave as is, because it works. With all the hunters hunting hunt district 270 we need a little extra protection for the bulls

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I think Montana fish wildlife and Parks should consider leaving HD-270 special draw 1st choice only, but only allow successful hunters to hunt in HD-270. A large number of hunters apply for HD-270, but only hunt it if we get a heavy snow, and it makes it easy to kill elk as they migrate back into 270 from the big hole. Also quite a few outfitters all over all different districts and bring their hunters to 270. It would really help the hunting pressure if successful hunters could only hunt in 270

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 05, 2022 2:23:14 PM
Last Modified: Friday, August 05, 2022 2:23:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:44
IP Address: 72.250.189.114

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Thomas McGary
City	Columbia Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	thomasmcgary888@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 280

Q2 **Respondent skipped this question**

There are no wintering elk in HD 280 and there is no population objective for this HD. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

Q3 **Respondent skipped this question**

In HD 280, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

Q4 **Respondent skipped this question**

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q5
What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

More elk.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:43:55 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:44:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:37
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Steven Stieler
City	Townsend
State	MT
Email (optional)	smstieler@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 280

Q2

There are no wintering elk in HD 280 and there is no population objective for this HD. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q3

In HD 280, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q4

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q5

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 6:12:15 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 6:15:52 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:37
IP Address: 71.15.223.30

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Taylor Caekaert
City	Missoula
State	Montana
Email (optional)	tcaekaert@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 280

Q2 Respondent skipped this question

There are no wintering elk in HD 280 and there is no population objective for this HD. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

Q3 Respondent skipped this question

In HD 280, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

Q4 Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q5
What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

There should be no antlerless elk harvest in this district.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 30, 2022 12:49:25 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 30, 2022 1:02:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:42
IP Address: 72.250.189.114

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Thomas McGary
City	Columbia Falls
State	MT
Email (optional)	thomasmcgary888@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 281

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

This unit has a resident herd and migrating herd. 5-10 year averages would be better due to the fact of the migrating elk to this unit and through this unit.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year. To many elk come and go from this unit. Very small residential herd.

Q4

The current objective for HD 281 is 500-700. Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I believe the number should be increased. I have never herd of any land owner in this area complain about the elk, like they do out east. The land can sustain more elk as well. This area has a ton of predators that Montana FWP does not and cannot manage AKA the wolves.

Q5

Currently there are sub-objectives for Ovando Mountain (200-300), Marcum-Kershaw (150-200), Beaver-Keep Cool (150-200). Should sub-objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current level, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Get rid of the Sub-objectives

Q6

In HD 281, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I think the bull objective should be increased.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

The resident herds are always in the same area's. There are places in this unit that have no elk sign for miles upon miles. There is not a good distribution of the elk in this unit.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

More elk. There is 1.5 million acres the elk have access to and the land can and is able to hold more elk.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 16, 2022 8:08:43 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 16, 2022 8:19:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:11:15
IP Address: 174.231.85.111

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Patrick Day
City	Polson
State	MT
Email (optional)	daymail28@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 281

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Maintain current approach for counting population.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual surveys supplemented with 3 year numbers. So many things can happen year to year you need both to get a better understanding of what's going on.

Q4

The current objective for HD 281 is 500-700. Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 1200-1500.

Q5

Currently there are sub-objectives for Ovando Mountain (200-300), Marcum-Kershaw (150-200), Beaver-Keep Cool (150-200). Should sub-objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current level, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Sub objectives should not be retained. They should be increased. By double the current numbers.

Q6

In HD 281, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

20 bulls per 100 cows. There needs to be 1 bull for every 5 cows for a healthy population.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would suggest enacting measures to help keep elk on public land.

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 6:10:30 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 6:11:54 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:24
IP Address: 71.15.223.30

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Taylor Caekaert
City	Missoula
State	Montana
Email (optional)	tcaekaert@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 281

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current objective for HD 281 is 500-700. Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 1,000

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

Currently there are sub-objectives for Ovando Mountain (200-300), Marcum-Kershaw (150-200), Beaver-Keep Cool (150-200). Should sub-objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current level, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 281, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

No cow harvest for this district, which should include archery

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:26:36 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:28:36 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:00
IP Address: 174.45.73.245

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 281

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

The current objective for HD 281 is 500-700. Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase. The habitat seems to be here. Why so few elk? Count only huntable elk against this objective.

Q5

Currently there are sub-objectives for Ovando Mountain (200-300), Marcum-Kershaw (150-200), Beaver-Keep Cool (150-200). Should sub-objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current level, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Retain. Increase.

Q6

In HD 281, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

This low level of post-season bull to cows is unacceptable. Montana has the habitat and the potential to improve that bull to cow ratio by a significant amount. This post-season adult bull to cow ratio should be above 20:100.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Elk distribution could/should be improved and can be done with more creative season structures and season dates. Adjust season dates and types to move elk that have been conditioned to private lands because of intense pressure over very long seasons. Designing season dates and types to move elk to public lands addresses landowner concerns and increases availability to hunters. Intense hunting pressure over many months, year after year, has conditioned many elk to become private land residents, complicating the distribution of elk and making it hard to use hunting as a tool for management.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Manage this unit for its own specific needs. The one-size fits all of season types, season dates, is unique to Montana. This unit, like all units, need to be managed with a higher level of customization for what is best for the elk resource. Make female elk hunting by permit only, including during archery season.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:44:26 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:08:21 PM
Time Spent: 00:23:54
IP Address: 65.131.204.220

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Larry D Rattray
City	PROCTOR
State	MT
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Page 2: HD 281

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I don't see how you could consider a long range average when the population has dropped by half in the course of a few years. I think you would have to try to find why did the numbers decline and so quickly.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I don't see how you could consider a long range average when the population has dropped by half in the course of a few years. I think you would have to try to find why did the numbers decline and so quickly.

Q4

The current objective for HD 281 is 500-700. Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I cannot see any reason the population couldn't be higher. There is lots of unoccupied land and good browse available.

Q5

Currently there are sub-objectives for Ovando Mountain (200-300), Marcum-Kershaw (150-200), Beaver-Keep Cool (150-200). Should sub-objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current level, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

There is supposed to be a separate objectives for some areas but I cannot find them. I have spent a lot (20 to 35 days each year) in the Keep Cool area and can testify that the number of elk has dramatically dropped in the past 5 or 6 years.

Q6

In HD 281, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

It could be good. I think the challenge is how many of them are mature, breeding age bulls and how many are spikes. What is the current percentage. This type of information should be available on the web page.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I don't know what is in the remainder of the district so can't testify on the distribution but the number in the Keep Cool portion is pretty dismal. There were quite a good population a few years ago and there was a large population of wolves as well. The elk are gone and so are the wolves.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Need to look at the number and type of predators in the area. This area had a lot of wolves but they are not as thick anymore. There is a large population of bears, black and grizzly, in this area.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 5:01:20 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 5:09:36 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:16
IP Address: 69.144.79.73

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	jeff hjelt
City	MISSOULA
State	Montana
Email (optional)	jhjelt@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 281

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Whatever happened to carrying capacity of the land? The means of determining the best population objective should probably be a long-term average as the available/suitable habitat changes, sadly for the worse, over time. But probably leave this up to the statisticians and biologists. I have a degree in anthro, what the heck do i know?

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Three year average.

Q4

The current objective for HD 281 is 500-700. Do you think the population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

If we're above the objective range and hunting tags are based on population objectives, we should decrease the range to increase hunting opportunity which would possibly lower the actual population closer to objectives. As objective is approached, it should be increased to where it was, 500-700, or whatever the longer-term average is/was. Good luck. Probably just leave it well enough alone.

Q5

Currently there are sub-objectives for Ovando Mountain (200-300), Marcum-Kershaw (150-200), Beaver-Keep Cool (150-200). Should sub-objectives be retained? If so, should they be maintained at current level, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Heck if I know, I'm not the biologist out there.

Q6

In HD 281, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 15 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I only hunt one 2000 acre private parcel in HD281. There's a herd of 200 elk there. Five are bulls. 195 are cows. I'd say my personal experience is there needs to be more cow tags, less bull tags.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would strongly suggest more cow tags which, seeing as cows pop out calves, would help lower the population close to the objective.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

More cow tags, not more cow bell.

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:12:24 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:12:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:22
IP Address: 216.14.235.133

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	test test
City	ovando
State	mt

Page 2: HD 282

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objective for this HD is expressed as a desired number of elk within a fixed range. The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HDs 282 and 285 is 900-1,100. In 2022, the east portion of HD 283 (Gold-Belmont) was incorporated into HD 285 creating a larger district. The objective range for the portion of HD 283 that now lies within 285 was 240-360 total elk observed during annual surveys. Should these objectives be combined into a single HD objective range (1140-1460)?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

If yes, should the combined population objective level be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

If no, should individual sub-objectives be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 282, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 20 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season surveys and to maintain at least 25% of bulls > 3-years-old (indicated by antler size) during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q9

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 6:27:26 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 6:45:17 PM
Time Spent: 00:17:51
IP Address: 216.14.250.55

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Wayne Slaght
City	Ovando
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 282

Q2

Current population objective for this HD is expressed as a desired number of elk within a fixed range. The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

A longer term approach would be better like 5 years so that if the numbers dropped or increased rapidly over a year it would even out.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Looking at it over a three year average seems reasonable.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 282 and 285 is 900-1,100. In 2022, the east portion of HD 283 (Gold-Belmont) was incorporated into HD 285 creating a larger district. The objective range for the portion of HD 283 that now lies within 285 was 240-360 total elk observed during annual surveys. Should these be objectives be combined into a single HD objective range (1140-1460)?

We think you should just combine them.

Q5

If yes, should the combined population objective level be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

We think you should decrease the total number by 100.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

If no, should individual sub-objectives be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Q7

In HD 282, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 20 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season surveys and to maintain at least 25% of bulls > 3-years-old (indicated by antler size) during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

stay the same

Q8

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

the reason we would like to decrease the number of objective elk is because of the damage they are causing on our crops and rangeland.

Q9

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:54:36 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:55:17 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:41
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Steven Stieler
City	Townsend
State	MT
Email (optional)	smstieler@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 285

Q2

Current population objective for this HD is expressed as a desired number of elk within a fixed range. The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 282 and 285 is 900-1,100. In 2022, the east portion of HD283 (Gold-Belmont) was incorporated into HD 285 creating a larger district. The objective range for the portion of HD 283 that now lies within 285 was 240-360 total elk observed during annual surveys. Should these objectives be combined into a single HD objective range (1140-1460)?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q5

If yes, should the combined population objective level be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q6

If no, should individual sub-objectives be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q7

In HD 285, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 20 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season surveys and to maintain at least 25% of bulls > 3-years-old (indicated by antler size) during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q8

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

Q9

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

I would like to see reduced populations of elk in this district. The elk are outcompeting our mule deer. Reduce all bulls and cows to help grow quality mule deer bucks.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:09:29 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:12:17 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:47
IP Address: 174.45.73.245

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 285

Q2

Current population objective for this HD is expressed as a desired number of elk within a fixed range. The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 282 and 285 is 900-1,100. In 2022, the east portion of HD283 (Gold-Belmont) was incorporated into HD 285 creating a larger district. The objective range for the portion of HD 283 that now lies within 285 was 240-360 total elk observed during annual surveys. Should these objectives be combined into a single HD objective range (1140-1460)?

No.

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

If yes, should the combined population objective level be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q6

If no, should individual sub-objectives be maintained at current levels, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new ranges be?

Increased so that objectives include only huntable elk.

Q7

In HD 285, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 20 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season surveys and to maintain at least 25% of bulls > 3-years-old (indicated by antler size) during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

20:100 is a good start. If the habitat will support it make it higher.

Q8

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Elk distribution could/should be improved and can be done with more creative season structures and season dates. Adjust season dates and types to move elk that have been conditioned to private lands because of intense pressure over very long seasons. Designing season dates and types to move elk to public lands addresses landowner concerns and increases availability to hunters. Intense hunting pressure over many months, year after year, has conditioned many elk to become private land residents, complicating the distribution of elk and making it hard to use hunting as a tool for management.

Q9

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Manage this unit for its own specific needs. The one-size fits all of season types, season dates, is unique to Montana. This unit, like all units, need to be managed with a higher level of customization for what is best for the elk resource. Make female elk hunting by permit only, including during archery season.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 09, 2022 9:05:27 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 09, 2022 9:28:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:23:20
IP Address: 69.145.146.237

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Nick Gazzara
City	Lolo
State	MT
Email (optional)	noisycricketadventures@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 291

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Increase population on accessible hunting land. This unit has extremely high predator numbers and the shoulder season has ruined bowhunting on the BMAs.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual, we need to be innovative in creating strategies to help with conservation and improving the public hunting experience.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 291 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 1000.

Q5

In HD 291, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows or at least 7% bulls of the total elk counted during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Bull to cow ratios need improve in this unit. It should be closer to 50/50. The herds that are accessible are mostly cows and very few mature bulls to help healthy long-term genetics and healthy population.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Change the shoulder season to late season to improve archery hunting and limit bull tags to slowly help salvage the elk management in 291.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Aggressive predator management. Wolves, grizzlies and mountains lions are reducing deer and elk numbers while impacting the overall hunting experience

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 25, 2022 10:34:53 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 25, 2022 10:36:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:14
IP Address: 66.109.135.9

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Brandon McMahon
City	Drummond
State	MT

Page 2: HD 292

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 292 is 800 (range 640-960). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase the numbers

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 292, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season surveys, or at least 7% of total elk counted are bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

More elk on the landscape

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 4:49:47 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 4:54:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:23
IP Address: 216.47.55.250

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	steve hallgren
City	Bonner
State	MT

Page 2: HD 292

Q2**Respondent skipped this question**

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3**Respondent skipped this question**

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 292 is 800 (range 640-960). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased, this is a large unit and could support an additional population 800 - 1200

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 292, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season surveys, or at least 7% of total elk counted are bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Predator control, I have lived in the Blackfoot for my entire life, never have I seen so many signs of predators, mountain lion, coyote, bear, and wolves.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:12:28 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:20:49 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:21
IP Address: 174.45.73.245

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 292

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 292 is 800 (range 640-960). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to meet objective counting elk only on huntable land.

Q5

In HD 292, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season surveys, or at least 7% of total elk counted are bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

This low level of post-season bull to cows is unacceptable. Montana has the habitat and the potential to improve that bull to cow ratio by a significant amount. This post-season adult bull to cow ratio should be above 20:100.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Elk distribution could/should be improved and can be done with more creative season structures and season dates. Adjust season dates and types to move elk that have been conditioned to private lands because of intense pressure over very long seasons. Designing season dates and types to move elk to public lands addresses landowner concerns and increases availability to hunters. Intense hunting pressure over many months, year after year, has conditioned many elk to become private land residents, complicating the distribution of elk and making it hard to use hunting as a tool for management.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Manage this unit for its own specific needs. The one-size fits all of season types, season dates, is unique to Montana. This unit, like all units, need to be managed with a higher level of customization for what is best for the elk resource. Make female elk hunting by permit only, including during archery season.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:28:36 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:38:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:10:22
IP Address: 72.175.34.20

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Cameron Law
City	Kalispell
State	MT
Email (optional)	law.cameron@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 293

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

It feels, and seems supported with your chart, that populations are decreasing. Using the current target seems like it was set well, but is over hunted right now.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

I would follow the best recommendation from the biologists. A 3 year average May be a better number from stability but could miss any major disruptions, such as any development of the large private lands that seem to support so many of the elk.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 284 and 293 is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I would defer to the biologists for the target. Again, the trend seems to be decreasing, and over half of the data points are at or below the lower threshold.

Q5

The population objective for the combination of HDs 284, 293, 339 and 343 is 2,150 (range 1,720-2,580). Should individual district-level population objectives be retained, or should FWP manage toward a single objective for the combination of HDs given variability in elk distribution across those HDs during post-season aerial surveys?

Maintain the individual objectives. We aren't even maintaining the 293 numbers, and it seems like this is to back out to a global average instead of an accurate local management.

Q6

In HD 284 and 293, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows in the post-season aerial trend survey. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I would defer to biologists for the healthiest populations.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I would like the numbers to be improved in general, but I know the local ranchers carry a burden for the elk.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

We must stop having open rifle seasons (shoulder season) during archery season. Someone is going to get shot!

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 15, 2022 3:51:15 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 15, 2022 3:51:21 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:06
IP Address: 69.145.53.144

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Cody Mummey
City	Clancy
State	Montana
Email (optional)	FF7MM@YAHOO.COM

Page 2: HD 293

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HDs 284 and 293 is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

The population objective for the combination of HDs 284, 293, 339 and 343 is 2,150 (range 1,720-2,580). Should individual district-level population objectives be retained, or should FWP manage toward a single objective for the combination of HDs given variability in elk distribution across those HDs during post-season aerial surveys?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 284 and 293, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows in the post-season aerial trend survey. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 21, 2022 10:04:39 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 21, 2022 10:09:07 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:27
IP Address: 63.153.92.174

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	John Ribic
City	Helena
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 293

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Long term average 5 year

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Individual

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 284 and 293 is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 900-1300

Q5

The population objective for the combination of HDs 284, 293, 339 and 343 is 2,150 (range 1,720-2,580). Should individual district-level population objectives be retained, or should FWP manage toward a single objective for the combination of HDs given variability in elk distribution across those HDs during post-season aerial surveys?

Manage toward individual units

Q6

In HD 284 and 293, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows in the post-season aerial trend survey. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

10 bulls to 30 cows

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Stop shoulder season

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Stop shoulder season

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, September 11, 2022 7:50:21 AM
Last Modified: Sunday, September 11, 2022 7:57:51 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:30
IP Address: 71.36.63.162

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Patrick Day
City	Polson
State	MT
Email (optional)	Daymail28@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 293

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

I think keep the current system.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Give us both. It seems the more information we have the better.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 284 and 293 is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I think it should be increased. 900-1200.

Q5

The population objective for the combination of HDs 284, 293, 339 and 343 is 2,150 (range 1,720-2,580). Should individual district-level population objectives be retained, or should FWP manage toward a single objective for the combination of HDs given variability in elk distribution across those HDs during post-season aerial surveys?

Manage toward a single objective for the combination. However if possible record what hd the elk were counted in.

Q6

In HD 284 and 293, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows in the post-season aerial trend survey. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

20 bulls for every 100 cows.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 5:12:07 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 5:15:56 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:49
IP Address: 47.44.112.2

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Austin James Wargo
City	East Helena
State	MT
Email (optional)	austinwargo@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 293

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

yes this seems acceptable

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

3 year average seems appropriate

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 284 and 293 is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

i would like to see objectives increased for this area.

Q5

The population objective for the combination of HDs 284, 293, 339 and 343 is 2,150 (range 1,720-2,580). Should individual district-level population objectives be retained, or should FWP manage toward a single objective for the combination of HDs given variability in elk distribution across those HDs during post-season aerial surveys?

yes individual distract objectives should be maintained. 339 is drastically different in habitat.

Q6

In HD 284 and 293, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows in the post-season aerial trend survey. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

yes this is acceptable

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

it would be nice to see a larger population of elk on public land verse ranches

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

how to increase the number of public land elk, and habit improvements needed to complete this.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:21:25 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:23:15 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:50
IP Address: 174.45.73.245

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Ben Lightle
City	Missoula
State	MT

Page 2: HD 293

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Counts need to be done every year. The biologists are best qualified to determine what methodology to use for counts. Whatever methodology is chosen, budget and resources need to be allocated to do the counts every year. Additionally, mandatory harvest reporting is a must if Montana is to ever get a handle on true elk numbers, hunter numbers, harvest, and distribution of harvest between public and private.

Q3

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

This is a decision best left to qualified professionals. They know how to best count animals accurately. Give them the budget and resources to do that.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 284 and 293 is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to top of objective level, counting only elk on huntable land.

Q5

The population objective for the combination of HDs 284, 293, 339 and 343 is 2,150 (range 1,720-2,580). Should individual district-level population objectives be retained, or should FWP manage toward a single objective for the combination of HDs given variability in elk distribution across those HDs during post-season aerial surveys?

District level.

Q6

In HD 284 and 293, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 10 bulls:100 cows in the post-season aerial trend survey. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

This low level of post-season bull to cows is unacceptable. Montana has the habitat and the potential to improve that bull to cow ratio by a significant amount. This post-season adult bull to cow ratio should be above 20:100.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Elk distribution could/should be improved and can be done with more creative season structures and season dates. Adjust season dates and types to move elk that have been conditioned to private lands because of intense pressure over very long seasons. Designing season dates and types to move elk to public lands addresses landowner concerns and increases availability to hunters. Intense hunting pressure over many months, year after year, has conditioned many elk to become private land residents, complicating the distribution of elk and making it hard to use hunting as a tool for management.

Q8

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Manage this unit for its own specific needs. The one-size fits all of season types, season dates, is unique to Montana. This unit, like all units, need to be managed with a higher level of customization for what is best for the elk resource. Make female elk hunting by permit only, including during archery season.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 30, 2022 1:02:20 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 30, 2022 1:04:31 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:11
IP Address: 72.250.189.114

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Thomas McGary
City	Columbia Falls
State	MT
Email (optional)	thomasmcgary888@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 298

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 290 and 298 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased

Q5

In HD 298, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season surveys, or at least 7% of total elk counted are bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

More bulls, no its not appropriate. The land can hold more.

Q6

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Sure, they hole up on private at times.

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Decent elk population here but can hold more, especially more bulls.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 05, 2022 2:14:20 PM
Last Modified: Friday, August 05, 2022 2:15:32 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:11
IP Address: 72.250.189.114

Page 1

Q1

Contact Info

Name	Thomas McGary
City	Columbia Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	thomasmcgary888@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 298

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-20%). The range accounts for anticipated variability in elk counts among years. In this HD, should FWP maintain the current form of objective (point value with fixed range) or should FWP consider alternative population objective forms, like using the long-term average (5 years, 10 years) +/- 20%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

Elk populations are classified into objective status using annual or biennial survey data. Because there is often variation among surveys, would it be more appropriate to use individual surveys or a 3-year average of surveys to determine objective status for this HD or would you recommend some other approach?

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 290 and 298 is 600 (range 480-720). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increase the objective. We have managed this unit pretty well as hunters.

Q5

In HD 298, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 10 bulls:100 cows during post-season surveys, or at least 7% of total elk counted are bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

30 bulls per 100 cows.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Q7

What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

More elk.

From: [Dalen Longfield](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Plan Public Scoping, Thoughts and comments
Date: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 12:09:16 PM

To whom it may concern,

I was excited when FWP created a public advisory team to give additional input and a voice for the little people (locals) concerning our elk "problem" (even though it should be an absolute boon for everyone). That being said I was thoroughly disappointed with their thoughts and suggestions.

They want to punish locals just like all the other interest groups involved in this. Seriously, the best they could come up with is making locals choose between bow hunting or rifle hunting?? what a new and exciting idea (sarcasm). Why is it that the locals are treated as the problem?

Here's a novel idea, instead of attacking locals first lets focus on the less important class. Out of state hunters; try new ideas on them, dissect their seasons, restrict their tags, their access, what weapon to use, etc. Fracture their seasons into Bow 1, Bow 2, Rifle 1, 2, 3. It's a privilege for out of state hunters to come here and exploit our resources, we seem to forget that and punish locals who pay taxes.

All this being said let's move on to the cause of everyone's frustration, the poor elk management.

Pretty easy to see the cause and I think we can all agree. Over hunting public lands has forced elk herds on to private landowners property's and in turn they are overly exploiting the situation for trophy hunting and then bitching about the damage cow/calves are causing. This results in huge elk populations in a small area and in-turn makes us "over objective" yet low numbers on public land.

Simple problem to understand and some how FWP thinks it's an awesome idea make pretty much the whole state general season with no special draw, one doesn't have to look very hard to see how this would exasperate the problem. A solution I know that would work is compete with the private land owners, create carved out trophy districts in all of the hunting regions.

HD 380 is considered arguably the most trophy district in the state yet you can hunt cows and spikes it's a terribly managed trophy district, if you're going to do a trophy district do it right. Now lets look at HD 250 in the Bitterroot; the heard was "wiped" out and strict "trophy" regulations were applied to the area. you know what happened? trophy elk and hunting returned to the area, shocking!! Then, FWP wanted to make it general season again and the people (rightfully so, lost their shit), FWP wanted to throw away what was just built up and that makes me suspicious that they're catering to land owners.

If small niched areas were created for elk to run and hide on with only a select few people able to draw you'd have elk running to the trophy districts to hide instead of private land. Lets go back to HD 380, it's a massive hunting district surrounded by private, if you cut out all general season hunting and made it draw only for bulls that would create a true trophy district. And it doesn't have to be a huge district like 380 either, studies could be done to determine where the best locations for these trophy districts to be located, they could be quite small honestly and wouldn't have to be a full district. In summary we need areas where the elk can run and hide on public lands without pressure, otherwise we'll never be able to compete with private land owners and our hunting will become privatized (which I think is what some of you want).

Now To counter my thought's about carving out trophy districts all across the state; how do you manage the cow elk? similar to shoulder season once the trophy season has ended allow hunters to go into these trophy districts and harvest cows for a short period of time.

Now obviously there needs to be some fine tuning to my thoughts but if you applied this logic strategically all across Montana the state would become a trophy destination yet still maintain it's reputation as quality

general season hunting with incredible public access . have your cake and eat it too.

I have to get back to work but in my closing statement, DO BETTER! the agencies, politicians, advisory team, everyone; this is a joke it doesn't take much to come up with actual solutions and to have only come up with the garbage you have so far is pathetic, it diminishes credibility and trust which turns into distain and hatred quickly.

Dalen Longfield
Lifetime Montana
Environmental Engineer
406-270-6201

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible. From Deer Lodge Meeting
Several Comments

- 1) Thank-you to all the committee or advisory members, whether paid or unpaid.
- 2) Acomment from looking at these committies seems to show an extreme imbalance of ranchers, guides and outfitters who are supposed to represent the Montana Sportsman.
- 3) Comment on the elk mamagement:
If by FWP's numbers, there is an over objective of elk. (80-90% cows) in a certain district with very limited or no access, Giving a minimal amount of cow tags for up to 11 bull tags will do NOTHING to meet objectives. Just make these districts COWS ONLY with NO exemptions..
- 4) If FWP goes along with the recommendation from guides and outfitters to close certain fishing places (Even for one day) so their clients can pay big money, this is not right. Montana residents, kids and grand-kids should come first. Get out your ticket book and see x you in court.

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email address or phone number.

Ed Scharf 1117 O'Neil (406-846-9800) RECEIVED
Deer Lodge, Mt. 59722

OCT 7 2022

Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
Wildlife Bureau

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible. From Deer Lodge Meeting
Several Comments

- 1) Thank-you to all the committee or advisory members, whether paid or unpaid.
- 2) Acomment from looking at these committies seems to show an extreme imbalance of ranchers, guides and outfitters who are supposed to represent the Montana Sportsman.
- 3) Comment on the elk mamagement:
If by FWP's numbers, there is an over objective of elk. (80-90% cows) in a certain district with very limited or no access, Giving a minimal amount of cow tags for up to 11 bull tags will do NOTHING to meet objectives. Just make these districts COWS ONLY with NO exemptions..
- 4) If FWP goes along with the recommendation from guides and outfitters to close certain fishing places (Even for one day) so their clients can pay big money, this is not right. Montana residents, kids and grand-kids should come first. Get out your ticket book and see x you in court.

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email address or phone number.

Ed Scharf 1117 O'Neil (406-846-9800) RECEIVED
Deer Lodge, Mt. 59722

OCT 7 2022

Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
Wildlife Bureau

From: [Scott Schulz](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Management Thoughts
Date: Thursday, October 13, 2022 9:36:51 AM

My name is Scott Schulz, I have been a Montana resident for 18 years. I live in Billings, but have lived in Missoula and Bozeman as well. I have hunted elk and deer in 54 hunting districts across the state and until recently have spent 30 plus days in the field each year, and the last few years spend 10-15 days. A high majority of these days have been public lands or block management except for the 2022 season so far. I believe our current elk management system is flawed and I have yet to speak with another hunter that doesn't believe so as well. Ultimately, we (hunters) all want more elk. I think something that is frequently overlooked is that from what I can find Montana has 25,000-30,000 ranches and over 100,000 resident elk hunters and of those ranches I would think many fewer have significant financial losses due to elk damage. It seems our system really promotes the desires of a minority. However, I acknowledge that agriculture is incredibly important to Montana's economy and heritage and there needs to be support given where needed to maintain this legacy. Also, of note is that every year more ranches and farms are being sold to parties that likely desire higher elk numbers and have less concern for agricultural income. It has become an unfortunate reality that with increased land prices we are likely to see a steady decrease in family run ranches and an increase in recreational ranches or investment properties. So our system that landowner tolerance guiding wildlife objectives is quickly becoming more and more outdated and should be changed to how many elk can biologically live on the land. Personally, I believe Montana can biologically support higher numbers of elk. Many of the current objectives, especially those in the eastern portion of the state are objectives in which only 1 or 2 large ranches within a district can and do support the current objective number, let alone the whole district. If we were to reduce herds to current objectives, we would nearly eliminate elk from every portion of a hunting district except a few of those larger private havens.

A few areas of note that I am very familiar with are hunting districts 417, 590, 535, & 411. In these districts a vast majority of elk live on a small handful out of state landowner ranches. The numbers of elk dramatically decrease as you get further away from these havens. I have found this to be consistent in many other parts of the state as well. This year I had the privilege to hunt further west on private land in the far north side of HD 210, another district over objective. However, in a large area with lush forests, creeks, mountains, and irrigated meadows there is only a small herd of elk with only 9 cows, 1 calf and 10 older class bulls fighting for those 10 cows. This area in my opinion could and should have an elk herd 20-40 times this size given the large area and that other landowners are pro-elk. (I submitted full details on this area in the HD210 comments). I also know of a landowner who has 1500 acres just west of Billings, he loves elk and was excited to see a steady growth of elk numbers from nothing to about a herd of 30 cows. Then shoulder seasons were implemented, even though he doesn't hunt cows or allow other hunters on his land, the herd is no longer there, but obviously can support elk.

Below are some ideas and hopefully solutions to help the state better manage elk herds.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Alaska has had a hunt survey system that asks districts hunted, drainages hunted, what was seen, what was killed, dates hunted. Etc. that was

required to be submitted before you could get a hunting license the following year. I think a system like this would be better than the random phone survey Montana performs now. A system like this gives exact details of what is happening in the field from every hunter. It could be easily implemented with the new my FWP app or have people fill out at license dealers or by mail and would give us a much clearer picture of how to manage elk herds.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think we need to study how many of the rancher/farmers are actually having significant financial lose to elk damage and try to develop the true numbers lost for these farms, without that, the ranchers feelings and the hunters feelings towards the issue are somewhat impossible to solve. Knowing how much a rancher needs to be compensated for their loss I think makes everything easier and could lead to more creative solutions to be developed.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I know of a rancher east of Billings that was having significant elk damage to his alfalfa fields. They completely solved the situation by installing a 6' electric fence. They said this was cheaper and easier to install than a typical barbed wire fence and it paid for itself quickly since they had large yields and their alfalfa only needed to be reseeded every 4-5 years instead of every 2 when elk where able to graze it all year. I think a program could be developed with money from licenses or additional fees to the licenses or donations to provide low interest short term loans to ranchers and farmers to put up such fences, with the tradeoff being a dramatic increase in elk population objectives. It may be wise to partner with a non-profit like RMEF to assist with the loans as some ranchers would rather go in debt with a non-profit than the government. I think this is one of the easiest ways to protect our important ag industry, while being able to increase elk numbers on public land and the property owners who wish to have them.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think districts should be re-evaluated and re-drawn with potentially more created. I think right now they capture a wintering herds area, but do not properly evaluate where elk are during the hunting season. Some districts have heavy elk numbers in some portions and almost no elk in other portions that could sustain a herd.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Eliminate shoulder seasons. I understand why these were implemented, however if we move to higher elk population objectives, I think they should be eliminated. Even if objectives stay the same, the hunts have notoriously caused rancher burn out, hunter misconduct, extremely pressured herds during the challenging winter months, and we do not know where these elk have migrated from. It's possible we could be wiping out herds from another district with low elk numbers that happen to winter in a higher population dense hunting district.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think archery season should be limited to bull elk only. I have come across a significant number of general license holders hunting cows in special

permit areas during archery season. The harvest numbers are already extremely low during archery season. This puts additional pressure on mating elk herds and congestion in the woods when most hunters enjoy hunting bugling bulls. The success rate is so small during archery season anyways, that many of these hunters will still be in the field during rifle season so eliminating cow hunts during archery will have minimal impact on hunting pressure during the rifle season but make a significant difference during the archery season. This should especially be the case if the state decides to make hunters pick their season.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think all resident landowners above 640 acres should be given a landowner tag only to use on their deeded ground. It just seems wrong to me that a person who pays property taxes and has property is not allowed to shoot a bull elk on their own land, but it should be limited to their land only. I think taxing paying non-residents should be able to get this perk as well, but I think the first one may be easy to convince the public of.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think a controlled transferrable landowner tag for residents and non-residents would benefit ranchers and public land hunters alike. Landowners could sell these tags for use only on their deeded land only based on the size of the elk herd on their land. However, they would be able to give them out for free or give to family members, they could only be sold through the FWP in which half the proceeds go to the landowner and half go to the FWP. These proceeds to the FWP should then be earmarked only to be used in the purchase of public access easements to public land, block management expansion, or the purchase of deeded property to add to our wildlife refuge system. I think it would benefit all parties as the rancher could benefit from game damage losses and this less concerned with elk numbers allowing us to increase our population objectives that would then put more elk on public land and increase hunting pressure on private land, all while opening more access to the public on top of that.

Thank you for your work and all you do to help manage our precious wildlife resources. Have a great day!

Scott Schulz

From: [Austin Wargo](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] EMP Comments
Date: Thursday, October 13, 2022 8:30:28 AM

I have commented on specific districts that I hunt, but want to give an overall comment for the elk management plan. Lately it seems that the elk distribution has drastically changed from public land to private, and when elk are over objective FWP opens up more tags for the unit, but the elk killed are the accessible ones which just make less elk available on public and more on private not solving the overall issue. In the end it seems like instead of studying elk distribution in a district and fixing the issue where it occurs, a broad blanket approach is taken, which sadly degrades hunting for the majority of hunters that do not have access to private. this issue needs to be addressed in the new EMP.

My other comment is elk being over objective seems to take all the focus of FWP and districts that are under objective are not studied and no plans are put in place to increase populations in these districts. This is especially true in regions one and two. The bob marshall should be an elk hunting paradise for Montana, but sadly there are hardly any elk left in that area. FWP should be putting as much or more effort into increasing elk population in under objective areas. It seems to me that fwp should be putting a large effort into studying the elk in these areas, and doing habit improvements or look at other options to increase the elk population.

Sincerely,
Austin Wargo
East Helena, MT



2763 Grizzly Gulch Helena, MT 59601

October 13th, 2022

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Attn: Wildlife
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

RE: 2023 Elk Management Plan

Helena Hunters and Anglers (HHAA) is an all-volunteer group dedicated to protecting and restoring fish and wildlife to all suitable habitats, and to conserving all natural resources as a public trust, vital to our general welfare. HHAA promotes the highest standards of ethical conduct and sportsmanship, and promotes outdoor recreation opportunity for all citizens to share equally.

The 2005 Elk Management Plan was a good, science-based plan. One of our members made significant contributions to it. We applaud the 2005 Plan and see no reason to reinvent the wheel with the current effort. Although elk biology has not changed since 2005, many other factors crucial to elk management HAVE changed and the new plan must recognize and account for these new conditions. This new plan is deeply important to us.

Management Goals

HHAA believes that Montana FWP (FWP) should clearly define the elk management problem and articulate broad management goals before the agency dives into specifics of the plan.

HHAA's vision for the new elk plan goals include the importance of public trust wildlife, professional science-based wildlife management, importance of maintaining landowner relations, importance of public lands and how they are managed from a wildlife habitat perspective, acknowledgement of future challenges including land uses, and climate change, and a pledge to work against privatization of our wildlife. This vision should set the stage for the plan and provide a guiding rationale.

Elk Population Objectives

Elk population objectives for individual Hunting Districts are outdated and need revision to reflect current limiting factors, new habitat, changing land uses, diseases considerations, etc. For example, acquisition of several Wildlife Management Areas (e.g. Spotted Dog WMA), additions to the National Forest system (e.g. Falls Creek additions to HLCNF), and many conservation easements have occurred since the last elk plan was written. These potentially expand the available habitat, winter range and overall carrying capacity for elk and should be reflected in the new plan. Elk objectives should distinguish between public lands – and private lands with public access – versus private lands where public access is not permitted.

A longer-term averaging period should be used for evaluating compliance with elk population objectives. We recommend a 4-year cycle, which will accommodate short-term inter-Hunting District (HD) movements that result from weather, hunting pressure and other variables skewing longer-term trends.

Elk population objectives for most HDs should reflect a desire for more bulls and older bulls in the population. This is important biologically and ethically. This can be accomplished with shorter seasons, more limited-draw hunting seasons, more restrictive archery seasons, and other measures suggested below.

Don't make major decisions to change seasons in a particular unit until the adjacent EMU population levels are evaluated – i.e., elk move around. Elkhorns elk (HD 380) come into HD 335, and elk in HD 293 move into HD 343 and HD 339, for example.

Elk Harvest Regulations

We support more limited draw hunting opportunities like HD 339 and HD 380. HDs 293 and 343 may be good candidates for this because of high habitat quality and revised National Forest land management prescriptions (e.g. Nevada Mountain Recommended Wilderness). We support a reduction in cow harvest opportunities on public lands in the Helena area until sex ratios and age structures improve and the population status can be gauged against revised population objectives. We also support differing harvest regulations on public versus private lands where elk distribution warrants it. Active management to encourage elk to move to, and stay on, public lands should be a statewide goal.

Elk Hunting Season Length and Timing

Interest and participation in hunting in Montana is increasing at an alarming rate due to statewide population growth and the influence of social media. We believe it is time for all user groups (resident, nonresident, guided, unguided) to consider giving up something in order to restore wildlife populations, sex ratios, and age structures. We need to think about shortening seasons, and requiring hunters to pick a weapon, a season, a hunting district, etc. The Department seems bent on selling “opportunity” at all costs, while the quality of our elk populations – and the hunting experience itself– continues to decline.

Overcrowding is an increasing problem during archery and rifle seasons on public lands and needs to be addressed in the new elk plan. Additionally, there has been a notable shift in pressure from rifle to archery season (i.e. numbers of archers has risen greatly while rifle hunter numbers remain more or less static). Archery equipment is no longer remotely “primitive.” We have lost the quality of the hunting experience due to high hunter densities afield, and declining numbers of mature elk. ***The current 5-week rifle season and 6-week archery season structure is not sustainable.***

Below are some suggestions:

- Pick a season, weapon, or Hunting District;
- Reduce archery season length, curtail general bull hunting during archery season and/or limit archery hunting for bulls to two weeks of the season;
- Create more limited draw areas (see our HD specific comments.) If enough limited draw areas are scattered across the State, some “spillover” of mature bulls may help with herd health in adjacent hunting districts;
- Emphasize biological needs of herds;
- Mandatory reporting can help test assumptions and hypotheses; and
- Eliminate elk from the special December muzzleloader season.

There must be a reasonable expectation for hunters to find a mature animal. At the end of the hunting season FWP biologists should not be seeing less than 10 bulls per 100 cows (in some cases they see far less).

FWP must address archery season. We now have approximately 50,000 archery hunters in Montana, pursuing elk for 6 weeks that includes the rut. Bull elk are extremely vulnerable at this time and modern compound bows are capable of lethal shots out to 80 yards and more. Archery is simply no longer a “primitive weapons” season and general hunting of bulls during this time may no longer be appropriate. It is becoming apparent that a majority of bulls are being taken before rifle season even starts. We believe there should be an equitable distribution of bull harvest across hunting seasons (choose your weapon may or may not work).

Bull Elk Management

A truly biologically based management approach for elk needs to emphasize harvest of cows in areas exceeding desired population levels, not bulls. Expanding either-sex hunting opportunities in many districts, as proposed, will not address this issue and generates public suspicions of favoring commercial interests. Other new management tools must be identified for reducing cow elk populations on private lands where landowners are willing to allow public access. But we should not reward landowners that harbor game while allowing no access. Increasing elk harvest on adjacent public lands is not warranted, and elk population objectives should not include inaccessible private lands herds.

Public land travel plans are not geared to the archery season – roads that have long closed on October 15th need to close September 1st. FWP must work with public land agencies to address this issue. The popularity of archery hunting has increased tremendously since the 2005 Elk Plan, as has the efficiency of modern compound archery equipment. A 6-week archery season, open for harvest of bull elk on a general license for the length of the rut is no longer sustainable. We suggest limiting bull harvest to a portion of that season (two weeks?) while allowing cow harvest the rest of the archery season. Another approach might allow cow harvest on a general license but make archery bull hunting by permit only.

HHAA wants to see an increase in mature bulls on public lands. The old Plan called for no more than 40% of the bull harvest by the end of the first week of the general rifle season, and we believe this is still an important goal. We believe more than 40% of bull harvest now occurs before rifle season even starts.

Elk Distribution and Habitat Management

The Department needs to engage more effectively with the public land management agencies to better address the habitat component of wildlife management. Travel management and associated restrictions, maintenance and enhancement of security cover, increasing access to landlocked public lands, and wildlife oriented vegetation management (e.g. prescribed fire) should all receive greater attention from FWP staff.

The new elk plan needs to create every incentive for elk to stay on public lands. This can be accomplished by working with the federal and state land management agencies on travel management plans and land use prescriptions. Better communication and coordination is needed in this regard. Big game security standards need to be retained and applied on National Forest lands to provide adequate hiding cover.

A well-distributed harvest of elk across all hunting seasons should be used as the measure of habitat quality effectiveness in providing security. Better tools and incentives may need to be considered to increase opportunities for public hunting access on private lands. Reward landowners allowing access, not those who choose to harbor and privatize.

Public land habitat must be protected, rehabilitated, and legally enforced according to federal codes (citizens can't arbitrarily build trails on public land). Increasing human presence on public lands at all times of the year is having a negative impact on Montana elk herds.

Specific Comments by Hunting District

HD 215

HD 215 is a district that is hugely "over objective" based on the 2005 Elk Plan. The vast majority of the large elk population in this district lives year-round on private lands that are inaccessible to hunters. The State now owns 37,000 acres of ground in the form of the Spotted Dog WMA that was in private hands in 2005. To encourage elk to stay on public land, we suggest permit-only elk hunting on Spotted Dog WMA, much like is done at other WMAs like Sun River and the Blackfoot Clearwater Game Range. Also, the population range for HD215 must be revised significantly upward from its low current objective. The many elk living full-time on private lands should not be included in the population objective.

HD 280

HD 280 is in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex EMU (pg.104 of the 2005 Elk Plan.) Currently, the district has a low cow/calf ratio and a low bull/cow ratio at the end of the hunting seasons. We believe the population objective range for this district is fine. We propose that FWP aim for a minimum of 15 bulls/100 cows post-hunting season, as a means of bringing the elk herds in this district back into balance.

HD 281 and HD 422

Since 2005 there have been large-scale habitat changes in the form of fire as well as significant land management changes in the unit. Large acreages in this unit have passed from Plum Creek Timber to the Nature Conservancy and some of those lands have passed further to the BLM and USFS. There is new public access in Falls Creek. In 2017 the Alice Creek fire burned through the area where many elk migrate from HD 281 into HD 422 seeking winter range on the east side of the divide.

From Copper Creek East to HD 422, we suggest 30 cow permits. From Copper Creek west to Lone Point, we suggest 20 cow permits. From Lone Point to Monture Creek, we suggest 30 cow permits.

We suggest that FWP manage for a minimum of 15 bulls/100 cows at the end of hunting season.

HD 284

HD 284 is a small, archery only hunting district. Locals feel that that this district is overrun by archery hunters. Almost every legal bull in this hunting district is dead by the end of hunting season. One HHAA member manages a portion of this hunting district and reports that the ranch commonly has 150 head of elk year around on this land. The elk have left the public land and come down to the private land for security from hunters. Another local issue is elk in the archery area due north of Lincoln. A damage hunt here may reduce conflict between the rancher and FWP. However, there are lots of houses in this portion of HD 284.

HD 293

Since the 2005 Plan, this hunting district has had major changes, i.e.: thousands of acres of lodgepole pine mortality, homes have sprung up throughout the private land, ATV use has exploded, and archery hunting has also increased dramatically. There is a new wildlife management area, Nevada Lake WMA in the unit and a significant number of ranches are now under conservation easements.

This hunting district has several year round small elk herds between Rogers Pass and Trapper Mountain that do not migrate into HD 343. There are wintering herds in Poorman Creek, Hogum Creek, Moose Creek, and Trapper Mountain that do not migrate into HD 343. The elk that winter along the foothills between Clear Creek and Avon sometimes migrate to HD 343. The local issue here is to avoid large herds on private lands. Elk and cattle coexist throughout most of the hunting district. The public land grazing allotments are very important to the ranchers that have them.

A local issue is the desire to have some antlerless elk permits valid in the entire hunting district. It seems not unreasonable to provide a small amount of antlerless elk hunting in HD 293.

The Granite Butte elk management unit is time tested and successful. The overall population objective should provide for an older age class of bull elk post hunting season. We suggest a minimum of 15 bulls/100 cows post-hunting season.

HD 318 and 335

We support increasing the population objective range for HD 335 to reflect the average observed survey number. This range might be in the neighborhood of 800-1,000 elk since there is little private landowner objection. While elk numbers in 318 remain low, we believe the district could support significantly more elk. Motorized users have seriously affected this area, however, the Forest Service is promising to rectify that situation. Therefore, this district should strive for 500-700 elk, particularly if the Deerlodge National Forest begins to enforce travel management. Likewise, we believe that FWP should manage for a post hunting season bull to cow ratio of 15 bulls/100 cows in both HD 335 and HD 318.

HD 339 and HD 343

These districts are in the Granite Butte Elk Management Unit. These units can be a challenge to manage thanks to remote security cover on the west side of the continental divide in HD 293, and the fact that many elk that hide from hunters on the west side subsequently move to winter range on the east side in HD 339 and HD 343.

HHAA is generally satisfied with the management of HD 339. This area is permit only for bull elk, with a general license opportunity for spike bulls.

HD 343 now contains USFS recommended wilderness for the Nevada Mountain Roadless Area. There have been new additions to the Canyon Creek WMA. We suggest increasing the population range for this unit by 100 animals. We ask FWP to manage for a post hunting season minimum of 15 bulls/100 cows. This unit is a good candidate for a season structure similar to HD 339 where there is a limited opportunity for mature bulls but a general license opportunity for spike bulls.

Antlerless licenses are available and may be used in either HD 339 or HD 343. We support this recent change.

HD 380

HHAA generally likes the way FWP manages HD 380, although the number and age of mature bulls in the unit appears to be in decline. We suggest cutting back either sex permits to 50-75 elk until the number of mature bulls found at the end of hunting season trends upward again. We also suggest significantly cutting back the antlerless elk harvest. More cow elk on the landscape will result in more bulls.

HD 392

This once excellent hunting district in the Big Belts now suffers from a substantial loss of elk on public land during the general season. This change began about 2015. The Cave Gulch fire in 2000 did not seem to affect the elk much, but regardless of the cause, very few elk can now be found on public land during the general season, where they were once plentiful. Any management measures that FWP could take to help keep elk on public land in HD 392 should be implemented. We suggest taking pressure off of antlerless elk in this district until the population recovers. FWP should manage for 15 bulls/100 cows in HD 392.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

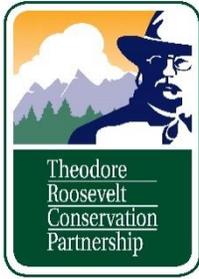
Sincerely,



Helena Hunters and Anglers Board of Directors:

Steve Platt
Gary Ingman
Gayle Joslin
Rod Bullis
Charlie McCarthy
James Chrichton
Doug Powell
Steve McEvoy
Bill Orsello

Cc: FWP Commissioners and CAC members for Region 2, 3, and 4



October 13, 2022

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks
Attn: Wildlife
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

RE: TRCP Comments Regarding Scoping for the Elk Management Plan Revision

Dear Elk Management Plan Revision Team:

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) is a conservation organization working to guarantee all Americans quality places to hunt and fish. The TRCP works with sixty-two formal partners and represents over 130,000 individual members nationally, including more than 3,500 throughout Montana. The conservation of fish and wildlife habitat and public access for outdoor recreation on our public lands are of great interest to us and our members. We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments for scoping for the Montana Elk Management Plan (EMP) revision.

Elk as a Public Resource

In support of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, elk and other wildlife are a public trust and are to be scientifically managed by the State for the long-term benefit of the resource and this resource belongs to everyone not just the privileged. Public policy, excise taxes and federal and state laws have supported conservation efforts since the early 1900s and have combined money with management philosophy to create one of the most successful wildlife recovery and management systems in the world. We ask that management directives aimed at resolving conflict between varying groups support and maintain elk as a public resource.

Population Objectives

Estimating big game population numbers is one of the most challenging and expensive aspects of wildlife management. Except for specific and local research projects, most big game counts are estimates. For key areas and populations, trend counts are conducted that attempt to determine change in population numbers from year to year. Estimating elk populations in NW Montana is much different than estimating populations in other parts of the state.

Conditions on the ground across Montana have changed since the last Elk Management Plan was updated in 2005. Montana has experienced significant increases in human population, exploding recreation demands, increasing habitat fragmentation, and amenity ranches. When these are changes combined with challenges to habitat and forage conditions, longer warmer growing seasons, lower snowpack averages and expanding large predator populations it points to a need to reset objectives both biologically and socially. New objectives for selected HDs should be established using the best available data, proven methodologies and educating the public and landowners as to how these objectives are reached.

Hunting District 250

Montana FWP should consider lowering objectives in this HD from its current level. This would give more flexibility in management decisions. Since 2012 the unit has had no cow harvest and brow-tine bull hunting is by limited permit only and numbers are still well below objectives. Consideration should be given to lowering the objectives, retain limited entry for archery and consider incremental loosening of rifle restrictions. This district could also benefit from habitat disturbance and other restoration projects to improve forage conditions for big game.

Hunting District 201

Montana FWP should consider developing sub-objectives for this HD. Since the HD was redrawn, it holds several smaller, distinct herds that interface, at least part of the year, with urban and developed areas that have varying habitat conditions, opportunities for access, hunting pressure, and social tolerances.

Migration Habitat Conservation

Over the course of the past five years, significant new state and federal policies, research and mapping have been completed on ungulate migrations and winter range that are not presently fully considered in the current EMP. First, in 2020, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks adopted a Terrestrial Wildlife Movement and Migration Strategy to focus on migration corridor conservation. The purpose of this Strategy Document is to clarify how wildlife movement and migration conservation is incorporated into the existing habitat and big game conservation efforts of FWP. The FWP Strategy Document includes Action 4, which directs the agency to “Incorporate wildlife movement and migration areas more explicitly in FWP habitat programs and **plan updates** to make resources available for conserving habitat and improving landscape permeability specific to wildlife movement and migration.” The Department’s involvement in science-based land use planning is important. It is considerably cheaper to protect wildlife corridors before development pressure arrives. Montana FWP has further identified multiple migration corridors and other crucial seasonal habitats in their most recent State Action Plan that was updated to include eastern portions of the state (Figure 1). These migration routes were derived from FWP’s GPS collar data which delineates low, medium, and high-use corridors to elucidate specific habitat types. For example, this research has confirmed or identified important elk migration routes in HD 270, 319, 300, 302, 441, 442, and 704.

Second, in 2018, The Secretary of Interior signed SO 3362, which Directs DOI to work with western states, including Montana to enhance and improve big game winter range and migration corridors. This policy directive was further reinforced by the May 2021 Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful Report, where the current federal administration committed to “Expand Collaborative Conservation of Fish and Wildlife Habitats and Corridors,” and continuing with the implementation of SO 3362.

According to polling information conducted by New Bridge Strategy, 88% of Montanan's that were surveyed said that efforts to conserve migration routes in Montana was important (Figure 2). One of the most effective ways to protect these habitats is *Habitat Montana*. This popular program needs robust funding to permanently protect important wildlife and migration habitats by working with willing landowners on conservation easements and targeted fee title acquisitions. This program also provides for public hunting opportunities and keeps working lands intact. We recommend that FWP ensures that the new Habitat Leasing Program is additive to conservation outcomes and doesn't get used to replace other Habitat Montana opportunities.

FWP Should Consider Expanded Partnerships with NRCS and Local Stakeholders

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently [announced an expanded partnership with the State of Wyoming](#) that uses diverse Farm Bill investments to support voluntary conservation of private working lands and migratory big game habitat. The program utilizes existing NRCS programs that owners of working lands are already familiar with such as Grassland CRP, EQIP, and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). This expanded work with NRCS could complement existing state programs such as Habitat Montana and the new Habitat Leasing Program.

Landowner Incentives and increased elk tolerance on private lands

We recommend that FWP consider the creation of a new program or modification of existing programs to achieve the following outcomes:

- Help reduce and mitigate conflicts on agricultural working lands and facilitate wildlife movement, primarily by providing assistance to landowners for depredation, habitat improvement, disease prevention, fencing improvement, carnivore conflict reduction, and local collaboration capacity. Public access would not necessarily be a requirement.
- Further FWP's mission for the stewardship of the fish and wildlife resources of Montana.

How it could be organized:

Local working groups or committees are formed where conflict areas have been identified. The groups are comprised of landowners, agencies, sportsmen, and other local stakeholders.

Where it could be applied:

Both private and public lands. Financial resources must be significant, predictable, and provided for by statute, and which could be matched with other public and private funding sources. Applicants submit proposals for funding to the local committee for review.

Likely benefits:

- landowners, agencies, sportsmen, and stakeholders work together to solve conflict issues;
- landowners have a place to go to be heard and to resolve conflicts locally;
- committees and financial partners provide direct funding for awarded projects;
- seasonal wildlife movement is sustained on the landscape and supported by landowners; and
- FWP has the political and social support to manage wildlife as determined through the statewide elk and mule deer management plans, and the statewide Terrestrial Wildlife Movement and Migration Strategy.

Types of projects that could apply:

Habitat improvement; fence improvement and/or repair; game damage; quarantine costs; information and education; measures to reduce conflict with carnivores; transaction costs for conservation easements on working lands; and capacity for local collaboratives.

Similar existing programs:

Montana presently has the Game Damage Program, the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program, and the Livestock Loss Board. These provide value, but they are either restrictive in what they will fund, or funding is inadequate, or both. FWP could consider the Habitat Partnership Program in Colorado, which is popular with landowners and sportsmen, to identify expanded opportunities in Montana.

This program, if designed successfully, could address the following common needs identified at the PLPW December 2020 landowner panel:

- improved communications and relationships between landowners and agencies;
- engagement with locally led collaboratives;
- conservation finance;
- state-wide venue to work towards solutions; and
- moving beyond access to resolve issues

Montana FWP could also consider expanding the regional hunter coordinator position that has been piloted in Region 2. These coordinators develop relationships with landowners and work to connect vetted hunters with landowners that could allow limited access for public hunters to elk populations that would otherwise be inaccessible. This helps develop lasting relationships between landowners and agency personnel, moves the burden of managing access away from the landowner to the agency and select hunters, and improves the likelihood of a positive experience for both the hunter and the landowner.

Recreation Impacts

Montana outdoor recreation activities appear to be at an all-time high. Especially camping, boating, hunting, hiking, mountain biking, and OHV use. Below specifics pulled from recent reports and articles that help demonstrate this trend:

- According to the Dillon Tribune, “Hunting districts in the Tendoy Elk Management Unit have received increasing amounts of hunting pressure, reaching record highs in the 2020 hunting season.”
- A 2020 poll conducted by the University of Montana on public land use, asked Residents if they had “visited any new public lands in Montana that they had not previously visited in the past 12 months,” and 40 percent of respondents from southwest Montana said yes. “Over half (59%) of all residents surveyed indicated that they had camped in Montana in the last year (trailer/RV camping included)” and “roughly a quarter of respondents (23%) claimed they tried to go camping but couldn't find availability at their preferred location.”
- A new report shows that outdoor recreation in counties such as Beaverhead County is a massive economic driver, generating more than \$167 million each year for Montana’s economy while creating over 1,400 jobs.
- Yellowstone national park visitation set a record in 2021, up 28% from 2020. Montana State Park visitation set a record in 2020 that was followed by another big year in 2021. Further, TRCP understands state and federal agencies are receiving increased requests for mountain bike trail expansion, demonstrating the continued increase of recreational demands in many areas of the state. There is a

growing body of scientific research on the impacts of trail-based recreation activities on big game, particularly elk populations.^{1 2 3 4} Wildlife researchers in Colorado have documented that unrestrained trail-based recreation during the summer calving season disturbs elk and can negatively impact elk calf survival, resulting in negative impacts to elk populations.⁵ There is also evidence that removal of recreation disturbance during summer calving can increase survival rates and bolster elk populations.⁶ To be proactive in planning recreation settings, recreation interactions, and to mitigate wildlife impacts from recreation, the state should reevaluate OHV designations in selected areas to consider if additional area closures—including seasonal closures—are necessary to protect sensitive habitats, or if it is necessary for the state to establish recreational trail density limits in popular recreation areas to maintain habitat function for big game. Based on current research, these trail densities and area closures should include restrictions on nonmotorized recreation.

Habitat Restoration on State, Federal and Private Lands

Montana FWP should continue to pursue partnerships and funding opportunities for habitat improvement such as rangeland restoration, and improved forage conditions on WMAs and other state, federal and private lands. Game ranges that anchor big game migrations such as Sun River, Judith River, Wall Creek, Blackfoot-Clearwater, Mount Haggin, etc. remain essential for elk winter survival and reducing depredation on adjacent private lands. The Blackfoot-Clearwater Forest thinning and encroachment project, Mount Haggin Uplands project and the Three-mile WMA thinning project are excellent examples of habitat restoration, fuel reduction projects on federal and state lands. The FWP should continue to pursue partnerships and leverage funding programs such as the USFS's Good Neighbor Authority to accelerate habitat improvement projects in and around these important wildlife areas.

Sincerely,



Scott Laird
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
725 W. Alder, Ste 1
Missoula, MT 598902
slaird@trcp.org

¹ Wisdom, M. J., H. K. Preisler, L.M. Naylor, R.G. Anthony, B.K. Johnson, M.M. Rowland. 2018. Elk response to trail based recreation on public forests. *Forest Ecology and Management* 411 (2018) 223-233.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foreco.2018.01.032>

² Naylor, L. M., M. J. Wisdom, and R. G. Anthony. 2009. Behavioral responses of North America elk to recreational activity. *The Journal of Wildlife Management* 73:328-338.

³ Wisdom, M. J., A. A. Ager, H. K. Preisler, N. J. Cimon, and B. K. Johnson. 2004. Effects of off-road recreation on mule deer and elk. *Transactions of the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference* 69:67-80.

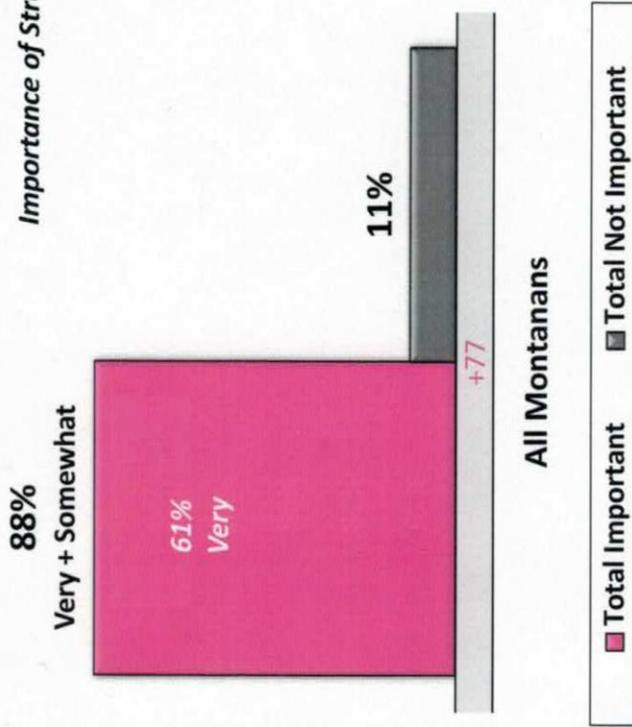
⁴ Taylor A. R., and R. L Knight. 2003. Wildlife response to recreational and associated visitor perceptions. *Ecological Applications* 13:951-963.

⁵ <https://www.hcn.org/articles/wildlife-hiking-trails-are-a-path-to-destruction-for-colorado-elk-vail>

⁶ Phillips, G.E and Alldredge, A.W. 2000. Reproductive success of elk following disturbance by humans during calving season. *Journal of Wildlife Management*. 64(2):520-530

Strategies to conserve migration routes are important to all Montanans irrespective of type of community or connection to land or wildlife.

Importance of Strategies to Conserve Wildlife Migration Routes



Community Type	% Total Important
Sportsmen	84%
Non-Sportsmen	95%
Landowner	82%
Non-Landowner	91%
City/Suburb	93%
Small Town	91%
Rural	80%

In general, how important do you think it is for the state of Montana to adopt strategies and actions that conserve wildlife migration routes in Montana?
Is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?

Figure 2.

From: jonlang06@gmail.com
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk management
Date: Saturday, October 15, 2022 10:07:01 PM

Hello,

This is Jon Lang. Landowner in Ravalli county and future full time resident. I want to thank you all for taking the time to hear out the public and take seriously the feedback we provide.

#1. Please and always keep MT resident in mind with the allocation of tags. I am coming from Colorado where the hunter experience has been greatly diminished by the amount of hunters in any given area and residents are pretty bummed out to say the least.

#2. Unless you have an area that is way off the charts for population density I favor objectives being raised across the board.

#3. Please do not consider giving landowners bulk tags and or prioritizing landowners in tag allocation.

#4. Please do not make hunter choose to either have to hunt rifle or bow. Or just one of the seasons. Let them hunt multiple seasons if tags would allow

#5

Mandatory reporting would truly give us all a better idea of what's happening and give you all better data to make decisions.

#6 please do not consider taking hunting districts back and if anything we could benefits from adding more.

#7. Manage certain units for bigger bulls and let other units take spikes all depending on the management goals for that unit.

Sent from my iPhone

From: tim.schwenk
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on region 2 quarterly HD 282 & HD 285
Date: Friday, October 7, 2022 3:34:51 PM

I feel HD 283 objective range should fall into HD 285 population objective range.
I would say that the objective range in HD 282 and HD 285 should stay the same.
How come HD 282 and HD 285 do have separate population objective range.

I would like to see cows tags given out in HD 285 to hunt the public lands. The private land or BLM areas you need to be drawn for or it is limited to the number of hunters that can hunt and when you can hunt.

I am losing interest in hunting elk now with the way it is set up if drawn for a cow tag in HD 285.

Thank you
Tim Schwenk
406-531-1443
waterman1160@gmail.com

--

The Waterman LLC
Tim Schwenk
ph# (406) 531-1443

From: [Travis Stroot](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Comment (Superior, MT)
Date: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 1:43:10 PM

Hi,

I'm not going to write a big elaborate letter to you guys telling you how to do your job like most people do. I'm just going to give you my observations from what I have experienced in the last 19 years of hunting in Montana. Also, my family owns Superior Meats in Superior, MT, so we see the numbers of harvested animals change from year to year.

The elk numbers in Superior are very very depleted. It isn't uncommon now for the majority of hunters to never even have a chance at harvesting an elk year after year. The elk stay down low towards private land, which makes it seem like there is an abundance, because the public can see them. In all reality the woods are dead. We have too many predators, and are having trouble controlling them. With now the presence of wolves it is just too much for the elk to handle along with the high population of black bear and mountain lions. We are trying our best to manage the wolf population, but lion hunting dogs are being killed and the terrain around Superior is very difficult for hunting or even trapping of wolves.

I personally had an encounter with a young pack 4 years ago. The sun was barely coming up in archery season and I accidentally stumbled upon a fresh calf elk wolf kill from that night. The wolves started running around growling and barking. I drew my bow back and tried to find one that would stop for a split second. Little did I know this was all a distraction for the alpha wolf to circle me. Without me knowing I hear my friend fling an arrow behind me. The wolf was about 10 yards away and he said it was sneaking in on me. He ended up wounding it and we never found it. At the time I had so much adrenaline going I didn't feel phased. Now everytime I tell the story I get a little freaked out. I know that is just a part of the forest now, but it was something that I never had to deal with growing up in Superior until now.

I'm not sure what the answer is for wolf and predator control. What I do know is the elk numbers that are printed every year for 201 and 202 are way over estimated and the wolf numbers are way underestimated. The consensus of the community is that we are lied to every year, and we will never be heard. The local meeting that you guys put on is pointless for most anymore.

What I ask of you is to help us figure out a solution for controlling the number of wolves and other predators. We have to start there first before we can do anything with the elk.

Thanks for spending your time to read this,

Travis Stroot

From: [Matt Arno](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Management Comment
Date: Saturday, October 15, 2022 10:20:08 AM

Thank you for the informational videos and the opportunity to comment.

Gold/Belmont area; Keep population sub-objective. This area has a lot of public access and hunting pressure. Because of the access and pressure the current population sub-objective seems low to me and the population is on the low end of the current sub-objective.

HD 210/216; Keep bull objectives

HD 216; Maintain population sub-objective. It seems like the bull objective should be more than 10%

From: [Chris & Kim Dahl](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Population Objectives Units 210 and 217
Date: Monday, August 1, 2022 12:31:46 PM

8-1-22

Dear FWP (Especially Region 2 Administrators!!)

My comment for elk population objectives focus on units 210 and 217 in Region 2, but can also apply to units 298, 290, 292, 291, and others. As I have previously written, FWP has managed a catastrophic decline in huntable elk populations in these two units over the past 5 years. At the January public meeting ALL attendees- as in THE UNANIMOUS VOICES OF ALL ATTENDEES- voiced the same concern which is that THERE ARE HARDLY ANY ELK HERE TO HUNT ANY MORE!! Review your own population counts- which nobody that hunts here believes by the way- and you will see with your own eyes a catastrophic downward spiral of elk numbers from 2017.

The main culprit for this is the ill-advised Shoulder Season that wipes out the cows (and nursing calves) with rifles beginning on August 15. Right from the mouths of the FWP representatives that I spoke to, this was supposed to be an emergency use tool for a very limited time. This is now the 5th consecutive year and these destructive shoulder seasons have essentially wiped out the once huntable and robust populations of elk in units 210 and 217. No doubt your 2021 cow tag success rates for these units will also verify this. Here are the basic problems with the shoulder seasons in these two units.

1. Wipes out cows and nursing calves in the heat of summer.
2. Displaces elk onto harbor ranches and non-huntable private land in August instead of late October.
3. Runs over the top of archery season in these two units, creating conflict between rifle hunters and archers- essentially stealing our archery season from us.
4. Punts YOUR ELK MANAGEMENT responsibilities to the whims of private landowners.

Due to these factors, as well as the changes we are seeing of more harbor ranches and less hunter accessible land in the area, changing land use dynamics, a permanent wolf and a growing bear predator problem, it is VITAL TO THE LONG TERM VIABILITY OF THE LOCAL ELK POPULATIONS TO **DRASTICALLY INCREASE THE POPULATION OBJECTIVE IN THESE TWO UNITS.**

The other immediate and necessary management change is to **IMMEDIATELY GET RID OF THE SHOULDER SEASONS!!**

There is growing unrest and anger at the poor elk numbers and management locally, and many hunters feel like these public comments are a waste of time since you are going to do what you want anyway. Please take this comment very seriously as it is the absolute truth about the elk numbers here. Please feel free to contact me if you have any other questions or would like to discuss further.

Chris Dahl
Drummond, MT

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:Mail[go.microsoft.com]) for Windows

From: mreiling@towle.com
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment-Region 2 Elk
Date: Thursday, September 22, 2022 10:40:08 PM

Liz and Rebecca: Thanks again for having the public meeting on Region 2 – Bitterroot Valley Elk Hunting tonight. A few comments:

- I recommend the HD 204 elk objective be raised because the actual elk counts have been above the 600 objective for the past 25 years according to the data you presented. While forage is not a consideration in determining the objective, there is not a lack of forage. To my knowledge, Scott Richardson and the MPG Ranch are the only ones in the North Sapphires complaining about the elk eating their plantings. MPG could do much more to move elk off their property and/or planted areas.
- Block Management is a good tool. To get more owners participating in the program and/or retain participants, the incentives could be enhanced. One enhancement idea is to provide block management participants one or two preference A tags for non-resident hunters **to buy**. Presumably these would be friends of the participants. The benefits to the state are tourism dollars, a reduction in the elk count by the block management hunters and guest hunter(s), and potentially pushing elk off that private land. This enhancement could be limited to certain regions.
- A HD 260 question you asked: Do I want elk in the river bottom. Answer: Yes. That is where my block management program is located. It is easier for disabled hunters to hunt elk here than in the mountains. I like seeing elk and the river bottom is a place I can more readily see them. Lastly, the river bottom provides good forage and water in a shaded environment for the elk.

Thanks for listening. Mark

Mark Reiling
Sapphire Ranch
mreiling@towle.com
612-670-7294

From: [Shanks](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] ElkPlanPublicScoping
Date: Monday, June 27, 2022 7:51:55 PM

HD270

I'm from the flathead, I have had to start hunting elk in the southern part of the state the past 15 years. No elk left to speak of at home like there was when I was a kid. I actually hunted at home 5 years longer than my friends. They asked me why I still chased tracks when I could go somewhere else and kill elk, like the old days.

That said I have spent a lot of time in 270, I really enjoy the area. So do a ton of local people and other people. The one thing I have to say is it gets hit HARD! Elk come from Idaho and first big snow they flood from about 5 different districts around. Because 270 is somewhat of a banana belt.

That being said, if your there on a year with no snow and hunting local elk it's not easy. That's hunting! I think it would be safe to say that the bull numbers are definitely low. I see an occasional bull, always a young rag horn. I don't know if I have ever seen a nice mature bull over 300. My buddy shot a rag 5 opening day a few years ago and a guy we met got a rag 6 that day. But I've not seen a 6 down there myself. Lots of 5's.

All this said I would love to see more bull to cow ratio, and a few bigger bull's. With the unlimited bull permit guy's are on the hunt for anything with horns.

Thank you! I hope you read it all!
I hope this is helpful

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Matt Arno](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Management
Date: Saturday, October 15, 2022 10:00:38 AM

Thank you for the informational videos by region and for the opportunity to comment.

The Gold/Belmont population sub-objective should be maintained. This area is quite different than the rest of the newly created hunting district. The Gold/ Belmont areas have a lot of public access and a lot of hunting pressure. Because of the access and pressure the population objective seems low to me and the population is already on the low side of the current objective.

HD 210 and 216; Keep the bull objectives, maintain population sub- objectives. It seems to me that the bull objective should be higher than 10% in 216.

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible.

HD 200 - do more wildlife Burning
raise the Elk population up. Then
offer more cow tags. the objective
should be higher

HD 201 - do more wildlife Burning
and raise the Elk population ~~up~~
then offer ~~more~~ cow tags.

HD 202 - do more wildlife
Burning - raise the elk population
then offer cow tags after the
elk herd has ~~reached~~ hit a
certain objective - the objective
should at least 450 to 475.

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email

address or phone number. Mike Gullette P.O. Box
1038 Superior MT 406-274-4253

mgullette@blackfoot.net

From: [Walker Conyngham](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Scoping comments
Date: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:14:51 PM
Attachments: [HHA Elk Scoping Comments 22 Final.pdf](#)

Hello,

Please find attached comments for Region 2 objectives and management, written on behalf of Hellgate Hunters & Anglers.

Thank you,

Walker Conyngham
President
Hellgate Hunters & Anglers



P.O. BOX 7792 MISSOULA, MT 59807 (406) 529-5754
www.hellgatehuntersandanglers.org

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Attn: Wildlife
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

To Whom It May Concern:

Hellgate Hunters & Anglers is an all-volunteer rod and gun club based in Western Montana, representing over 500 members. Our members are elk hunters, and as a result we are deeply committed to ensuring that Montana's elk herds are managed equitably, for the benefit of all Montanans. We appreciate this valuable opportunity to comment on individual unit objectives in advance of the new Elk Plan. First, Montana hunters wish to see elk populations increase statewide to bolster opportunity and hunt quality for residents. Many elk objectives statewide do not reflect unit carrying capacity and are founded primarily on social tolerance. Elk objectives should be founded first and foremost on the biological carrying capacity of the habitat.

Likewise, the Department should reiterate one key precept of the 2005 Elk Management Plan in the new plan: elk on private lands should not be counted towards the objective. Counting elk on private lands does not reflect the characteristics of the unit because the general public has no ability to access these animals. Counting these elk towards objectives does little to inform FWP's management goals and does a great disservice to public land hunters. That is why that qualifier was included in the 2005 plan, and that is why it must be included in the new plan as well. Additionally, the Department should move towards mandatory harvest reporting to bolster its aerial count data and evaluate hunter pressure in given units.

HHA 2022 Elk Scoping Comments by Region 2 Hunt District

HD 200

HHA would like to see a higher population objective in this district.

HD 201

This is a newly formed mega-unit that includes the Rattlesnake Wilderness to the East and reaches all the way to St. Regis. Elk populations and tolerance vary significantly across the district, and it is very difficult to know whether the objective that was assigned to this new district makes sense as hunters haven't even had an entire season with the new boundaries. In general, the objective of 2,000 elk is too few in this district.

HHA would support the concept of a sub-objective for Jumbo/ Rattlesnake elk as well as the North Hills population as these local herds are highly coveted and could easily be over-harvested if not more carefully managed. The plan should better describe where more elk would be tolerated in this district. FWP should coordinate closely with CSKT to determine how elk are moving between tribal and public lands.

HD 202

Population objective: FWP should strive for a higher objective in this HD. The vast majority of this HD is public land, including Fish Cr. WMA. While there are several troublesome areas of elk harboring, block management has served as a successful tool in Quartz Flats to relocate elk. FWP should focus on habitat improvement projects to increase forage and decrease weeds. Higher bull ratios would work well in this HD as harvest is not very high. Sub objectives should be maintained, but objectives should be raised as there is adequate habitat to support higher elk populations.

HD 204

The unit objective should be increased to reflect the number of elk that reside on private land and are thus largely inaccessible. While the largest private landowner in the district, MPG, is wildlife friendly and does allow some hunting access, they do not provide full opportunities for hunters. The objective should be raised to better public land elk hunting opportunities and hunt quality.

Additionally, FWP should keep a close eye on the Mount Dean Stone elk and whether increased recreation will move elk off public lands and reduce availability. Lastly, this district should NOT become a trophy unit due to the concern that MPG would like to see mature elk on their property and not allow public harvest. This concern has been addressed in the past.

HD 210

Populations have swung wildly in this HD. Conservatively, we support an objective that is more reflective of the population dynamics over the last decade, which would include increasing the objective to 1,500 elk. We likewise advocate that FWP work to maintain a bull:cow ratio over 20.

HD 211

Elk hunting opportunity is a challenge in 211, with harboring issues largely responsible for over-objective population. The population objective should be increased to reflect the high carrying capacity of the habitat in this district.

HD 213

The objective should be increased substantially. Many elk are unavailable on Rock Creek Cattle Co. lands and fantastic habitat exists on the Prison Ranch and USFS uplands. Additionally, very few large bulls exist in this district. FWP should manage for a more mature bull population.

Also, herd distribution for this unit is abysmal. There are plenty of elk on private land such as the Rock Creek Cattle Co., and in areas with limited or no hunting

opportunity. These elk **should not** be counted towards the objective. Lastly, FWP should prohibit rifle hunting on the Montana State Prison property and it is dangerous, creates un-sportsmen-like shoot-outs and diminishes quality opportunity for archers.

HD 214

The elk population in this unit is abysmally low. FWP should reduce opportunity until the herd is in better condition and more able to sustain OTC hunting opportunity. Likewise, FWP should work towards ensuring a higher bull:cow ratio.

HD 215

This HD thankfully remained unchanged in the district re-draw. We would like to see this objective significantly increased due to the increase in public land (Spotted Dog WMA) since the original objectives were set. Additionally, grazing exchanges are increasing tolerance on private land for wintering elk. Every year since the WMA was acquired, HD 215 has been over objective indicating that the previous objective is unrealistic and unattainable due to the secure and quality habitat. HHA recommends an objective of at least 2,000 elk in HD 215. Additionally, mature bulls are few and far between. FWP should maintain high bull objectives and create opportunity for bulls to mature.

Lastly, we question why more elk aren't wintering on Spotted Dog, and if that is a consequence of habitat or pressure. Likewise, what will be the effect of more access to elk with the opening of Jake Cr. Rd.? FWP should do what they can to protect wintering elk on the WMA.

HD 216

The current population objective is low. An increase in objective would be ideal as this unit has a lot of public access and sees resulting pressure. We would recommend increasing bull objectives as well.

A majority of elk are on private land. Periodically, the elk go onto public land only to be pushed back to private land by all the hunting pressure. There is some good habitat in this unit and a more even elk distribution on public land would be beneficial to all hunters.

Finally, we would support a previous recommendation to end cow hunting on public land in this unit to boost populations and help keep elk on public land. This is a great idea.

HD 217

HD 217 is another difficult district because the majority of elk reside exclusively on private land. The shoulder seasons have taken a significant number of elk out of this unit, but elk are rarely on public land during hunting season (one landowner in particular holds the vast majority of elk on their property and makes property management decisions to ensure the elk do not leave).

There is no bull-cow ratio in this district. Our assumption would be the bull to cow ratio is pretty high considering many cows are killed during the shoulder seasons. A better herd distribution on public land would be desirable in this district.

Finally, HHA encourages FWP to work with private landowner(s) to ensure adequate and usable wildlife corridors are maintained as elk frequently cross I-90 while moving back and forth between areas of private-land harboring in HDs 217 and 291.

HD 250

The West Fork population has sat below objective for well over a decade. The objective is adequate, primarily because most of these elk are not wintering in the unit, instead migrating to Idaho where they cannot be counted in FWP's spring flights. This migration must be considered when determining unit objective. HHA would like to see this unit maintained as a high quality, limited opportunity district.

HD 281

This is a valued hunting district with great, quality opportunity. Care should be given to maintain a strong elk population. The objective should be raised to better reflect historic counts, ideally to somewhere between 700-900. We'd ask that the objective be raised due to the abundance of wilderness habitat, the inaccessibility of wilderness elk during the archery season, and the migratory nature of some of these elk herds. Additionally, we'd prefer to see a bull:cow ratio exceeding 20:100. The seven bulls per 100 cows counted this year is not an acceptable ratio, and while this may represent an anomaly, the five-year average of 14 is also low.

HD 282

The Game Range provides high quality winter range to the elk population. The current objective is sufficient and should be combined with estimated objective from the portion of 285 that was combined. However, given the high quality of winter range in this district, we're concerned that counts are consistently falling below or at the lower range of the objective level.

HD 285

The population objective should be increased to reflect the addition of 283 into 285. Additionally, we're concerned that the unit has not been at objective for four years and ask that FWP consider implementing measures to increase the population to match the high-quality habitat. Finally, we ask that FWP seek to maintain a bull:cow ratio over 20 given the addition of 283, which had an extremely low bull:cow ratio.

HD 292

The HD 292 population objective should be raised to reflect the diversity and high quality of the habitat in the unit. Additionally, FWP should refrain from considering those elk that winter on private land in determining the objective,

given that those elk cannot be counted towards the objective. Finally, we ask that FWP seek to maintain a bull:cow ratio over 20 in order to maintain quality hunting opportunities.

HD 293

The HD 293 objective should be raised to match the clear carrying capacity of this unit and its habitat, as shown by recent counts. Optimally, this objective would range between 1000-1200 elk in order to reflect the size of the unit and adjacent habitat within the Granite Butte EMU. Additionally, we ask that FWP seek to maintain a bull:cow ratio over 20 in order to maintain quality hunting opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Walker Conyngham
President
Hellgate Hunters & Anglers

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible.

Generally - Make sure that elk ~~count~~ ^{on private land}
~~count~~ are not included in counts ~~for~~ ^{for}
objectives per current elk mgmt plan

We would also like to see a Bull:cow ratio
of 20 across all of ~~the~~ Region 2

Hellgate Hunters & Anglers will submit
unit-specific comments online

Thank you - DeAnna W. Hellgate H+A
Bublitz

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email
address or phone number.

From: [Ray Rugg](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment on Montana's Elk Management Plan
Date: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 3:11:30 PM

Comments on 201 & 202

I believe that the objectives are way low in these 2 districts. These used to be prime hunting areas for Elk in western Montana. Now to find a legal bull is about like finding a gold nugget. Most of the residents in western Montana have to go to eastern Montana to hunt. I would suggest going to a 6-point or better for a few years to allow the bulls to mature. Since I'm an outfitter in this area, I know that it will finish killing my business but something needs to be done. This 8 bulls ratio might work for cattle herds where they are protected but not for Elk in this area. The Burdett winter area used to be great for the Elk from the stateline and south fork of Fish Creek, now it is non-existent. The Elk from the North Fork and Straight Creek areas used to come out to Meadow creek but now the few that are left do not even go to the high country. A lot of comments will be that this is just more Elk for the wolves but I think that wolf season should be year round. I'm a dreamer and would love to see the old days.

Ray Rugg

ray@ruggsoutfitting.com

--

Ray Rugg

ray@ruggsoutfitting.com

406-822-2062

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible.

For Region 2 HDS 210-216-211
212-213-217-214-215

As long as the Hunting Public is
denied Access to Harbored Elk
in these HD's leave the current
Elk Management Plan in place in
other words "Leave as is"

RECEIVED

OCT 11 2022

Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
Wildlife Bureau

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email
address or phone number.

BILLINGS MT 591
08 OCT 2012 PM 2 L



MONTANA FWP
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701



Tape or staple

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible.

HD-214 - Aggressive mgmt opportunity

- 1) Reduce Predation, increase cat/bear harvest
- 2) Limit Licence opportunity / Reduce hunting pressure
- 3) Increase Bull/Cow ratio
- 4) Increase Population Goal

Its a small area that could be managed for trophy animals w/out effecting overall hunting opportunity w/in the region.

Hunting pressure is a problem during bow season deer population is non existant due to predation. I saw whitetails in the pinter for the first time ever w/ mule deer lacking.

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email address or phone number.

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible.

- ① 215 objective needs to be higher to consider acquisition of Spotted Dry + other State properties such as Clarid Fork River Ranch (NRDP) + conservation easement regarding Dry Cottonwood Ranch in Block management in perpetuity. Heavy harvest over past 5 years has resulted in low elk distribution on public land. Cow permits on public land need reduced.
 - ② 215 bull harvest is too aggressive. Need to manage for less harvest. Special draw for bulls in 215 should be considered. Too much harvest pressure, especially on public land.
 - ③ 215 should seasons need to be shortened. They are hurting archery opportunities + resulting in fewer elk on public land. Many private landowners are restricting access opportunities.
 - ④ Special rifle access in 213 in Mt State Prison archery area needs to stop. Unethical harvest that results in wounding elk + hurts archery opportunity.
- Other additional archery only tags in 213 on MSP ground? (Cow only)

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email address or phone number.

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Comment Card



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- Eliminate the ability of 270 unlimited elk permit holders to hunt multiple districts. This exception is total hypocrisy.
- Quit utilizing elk B licenses in districts that do not support an individual harvesting 2 elk. This drives ever more hunters to SW Montana, which already has too many hunters.
- Apply youth & handicap regulations evenly statewide.
- Consider restricting general elk license holders to a district or 2 MU.
- Raise the Tendency 2 MU elk objective to ~1500
- Raise the Lyna Peak 2 MU to 1000
- Maintain the Pioneer 2 MU objective ~~to~~ ²⁴⁰⁰⁻ 2500

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