

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:16:59 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:25:37 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:38
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	William C Shumaker
City	GreatFalls
State	MONTANA
Email (optional)	mtshus@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 400

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 400. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

it makes NO DIFFERENCE most the Elk are on PRIVATE ground.....and you've done a terrible job

Q3

In HD 400, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

Yes it is fine to have no Bull objective.....but you've made it a "Brow Tine" limit the new limit when in years past it been an any Elk is legal. THAT is a no Bull objective!!!

Q4

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

NO.....they're mostly on private ground

Q5

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

Limit the NonResident" hunters!!!!!

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:37:00 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:37:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:50
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 400

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 400. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana’s 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 400, 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

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: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:38:27 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:41:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:54
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 401

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 to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Current elk herd sizes Must Be, by Definition, the current objective: current herd sizes represent hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

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?

6 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 401 is 350 (range 280-420). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Current elk herd sizes Must Be, by Definition, the current objective: current herd sizes represent hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 401, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 15 bulls:100 cows during late winter surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 19, 2022 9:46:36 PM
Last Modified: Friday, August 19, 2022 9:47:28 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:52
IP Address: 71.15.199.18

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Rollie Gibson
City	Winnett
State	MT
Email (optional)	rjgteamaj@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 401

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 401 is 350 (range 280-420). 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 401, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 15 bulls:100 cows during late winter 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?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:41:33 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:43:04 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:31
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 403

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 403. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana’s 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Q3

In HD 403, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

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?

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Current elk herd sizes Must Be, by Definition, the current objective: current herd sizes represent hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:43:17 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:44:49 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:32
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 404

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 404. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana’s 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Q3

In HD 404, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q4

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

Current elk herd sizes Must Be, by Definition, the current objective: current herd sizes represent hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

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

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:46:21 PM
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IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 405

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 405. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana’s 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

Q3

In HD 405, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q4

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

Current elk herd sizes Must Be, by Definition, the current objective: current herd sizes represent hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

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

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 5:13:28 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:03
IP Address: 69.146.110.146

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Ian Wargo
City	Kalispell
State	MT
Email (optional)	elkaholichunter@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 405

Q2 Respondent skipped this question

There is currently no population objective in HD 405. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

Q3 Respondent skipped this question

In HD 405, 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 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: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:53:36 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:54:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:08
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 406

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 406. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q3

In HD 406, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q4

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution in this HD? If not, please explain.

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 1:30:58 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 1:37:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:00
IP Address: 174.247.148.116

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	James Arneson
City	Miles City
State	MT
Email (optional)	James.arneson58@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

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 would be better than 5 year averages. Weather, drought and other factors can vary too much in a 5 variation.

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

Drawing needs to be dealt with in all districts. There are so many people who get bull permit over some who have never be drawn for a bull permit in a lifetime. I don't have the answer to correcting it, but bonus points simply don't help, they really don't seem to matter. There are people who may get a 1-2 bull permits in a 5 year period and some never get one in 30-40 years. Retaining hunters should be FWP priority, equality and fairness in the application process needs to improve.

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 4:14:57 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 4:15:09 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:12
IP Address: 97.121.219.218

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	George Graham
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	georgeagraham@live.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 4:26:29 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 4:26:38 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:09
IP Address: 97.121.219.218

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	George Graham
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	georgeagraham@live.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 14, 2022 8:31:40 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 14, 2022 8:40:13 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:32
IP Address: 216.14.251.156

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	steve hallgren
City	Bonner
State	MT
Email (optional)	countryboy@blackfoot.net

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

Main concern is how the new regs are related to drawing an elk bull tag in unit 410 and not being allowed to hunt elk anywhere else in the state. I live 400 miles from that unit and that would severely limit my elk hunting opportunity in the state, there is no way of knowing the amount of time or money I would have to go to that unit in hopes of hunting a bull elk. My work may no offer time off, finances may not allow, or unforeseen circumstances may limit my trips to that area. I feel I should not be penalized to not be able to hunt elk close to home. I also feel I have every right to apply for those special opportunities to hunt those special units for Bull elk, without losing my opportunities around home.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 20, 2022 1:48:13 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 20, 2022 1:51:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:49
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Russell Cordum
City	Bozeman

Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 this population grow. If feed allows, I would like to see about 4000 elk

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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 enjoy seeing the number of bulls that I do in 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?

yes, love the opportunity to see elk on public land

Q7

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

I would like to see the archery permits reduced (like you did this year, thanks!!). I have found a lot of dead bulls the past few years and feel like a lot of animals are wounded during the archery blitz in this area

#6

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 21, 2022 7:00:39 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 21, 2022 7:00:46 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:06
IP Address: 69.144.250.128

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Rick Pentland
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	snowcrestchemicals@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 27, 2022 4:13:28 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 27, 2022 4:41:36 PM
Time Spent: 00:28:08
IP Address: 174.215.22.22

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Nick trott
City	Glasgow
State	Mt
Email (optional)	trott_n@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 410

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?

Keep it the same

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 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 the current population objective should be increased to 2500 to 2700 plenty of habitats to sustain higher numbers without damaging other resources

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Seems fitting I wouldn't decrease it or the bulls won't get to maturity after a couple years managing it that way

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 the number of archery hunters to be less of what it has been in the past and use rifle as more of a management tool instead of archery. Sometimes more is less. Over pressure = unmanageable elk

Q7

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

If the elk are harbored on lands inaccessible to hunters (management tools) then the number of elk observed during the season either be not counted toward the objective or hazed off of land by the Fwp

#8

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 01, 2022 7:26:25 AM
Last Modified: Monday, August 01, 2022 7:26:34 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:08
IP Address: 69.144.250.128

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Rick Pentland
City	Billings
State	MT
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Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 2:45:40 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 2:55:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:10:02
IP Address: 150.131.79.160

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Orion Berryman
City	Missoula
State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 410

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?

Given the variability in surveys, it makes some sense to use a longer term average like 5 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?

Again a longer-term average makes sense. 3-years would be appropriate.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The current population should be maintained.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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 is nice to have this bull objective in this HD especially given the semi-regular opportunity to bow hunt antlered elk in this HD.

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 have major concerns with the new regulation to limit permitted antlered elk hunting to only a single hunting district. I have in the past enjoyed hunting a few days in HD 410 during bow season. However, with these new regulations I was reluctant to apply for the bow specific permit in HD 410 as it would prevent me from hunting antlered elk closer to home. This regulation seems like it is pandering to out of state hunters who are less concerned with committing to a single hunting district. I would love to hear the reasoning behind this regulation change--especially given the low success rate with bow hunting, the large number of permits in that HD and the lack of a new elk management plan?

Q7

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

Please remove the requirement to bow hunt antlered elk only in a single HD if you have a permit. Allow bow hunters to hunt antlered elk in another HD with their general tag if that HD does not require a permit.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 3:54:54 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 4:07:29 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:35
IP Address: 72.250.159.153

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Eric Edwardson
City	Lewistown
State	Mt
Email (optional)	eric-edwardson@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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?

Keep using the range +/-20%. Use a five year average of the 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?

3 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Should be matched to Carrying Capacity

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

50% of the 30 Bulls need to be branched bulls

Q6

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

Need to improve habitat in the refuge to reduce conflict with private ranchers and increase hunting opportunities for the public

Q7

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

You need to determine Carrying Capacity for the HD. You need to have a better understanding of elk movements throughout the year

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 12, 2022 2:47:41 PM
Last Modified: Friday, August 12, 2022 3:09:11 PM
Time Spent: 00:21:30
IP Address: 174.198.137.165

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Brent Smith
City	Winnett
State	Mt

Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

If the science supports this objective than it should be adequate. Does the number take into account the impact on our cattle operations?

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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 would say this objective is adequate.

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 in areas varies. Typically I see smaller groups of 20-30 head. But there are some areas where the herds can exceed 500 easily. This amount of elk concentrated on private land pasture is a detriment to a cattle producers operation.

Q7

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

The elk management plan should some how take into account the impact of hunter impact on local infrastructure, i.e. county roads. Petroleum county roads budget is depleted by road Maintenance needs caused by the increased usage during hunting season. Weather timing also has a impact on this. If we have wet roads due to precipitation or frost coming out of the ground, a few hunters traveling on these roads during these condition can cause damage that either will be fixed by the county, if budget allows or will cause these roads to be damaged through the entire winter due to temperatures not allowing the county to maintain the road. Therefor causing the local traffic to have to deal with these roads and have increased vehicle Maintenance costs and reduced safe road conditions.

This is also true during the shed hunting season and the cause and effect of increased non local traffic has on our county roads.

If there could be additional funds at the legislature level or with a "roads" fee added to permits for each hunting district that might help with the fiscal challenges the county roads department deal with. Anything could help. There are other fees tacked onto our permits so this could be an additional one. I don't want to pay more for my permits, but if everyone had to pay a small fee, I would be willing to pay my part in addition to my local county land taxes.

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 15, 2022 6:33:06 AM
Last Modified: Monday, August 15, 2022 6:35:22 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:15
IP Address: 70.33.29.13

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Gary Bryson
City	Fort Peck
State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 the increase to be about 2300 to 2800

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

30 to 100 I believe is very good

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?

#13

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:46:29 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:52:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:06
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 410

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?

Current elk herd sizes Must Be, by Definition, the current objective: current herd sizes represent hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

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?

6 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Current elk herd sizes Must Be, by Definition, the current objective: current herd sizes represent hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialists been involved in the Process?

#14

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 19, 2022 9:48:08 PM
Last Modified: Friday, August 19, 2022 9:51:49 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:40
IP Address: 71.15.199.18

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Rollie Gibson
City	Winnett
State	Mt
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Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 2500-3000

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Yes

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?

Nothing

#15

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 22, 2022 8:04:35 PM
Last Modified: Monday, August 22, 2022 8:24:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:19:28
IP Address: 174.212.211.127

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Joshua Hobbs
City	Winnett
State	Montana
Email (optional)	joshuahobbs1776@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 410

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?

5 year average +20%. There is plenty of carrying capacity but you need to work with overrun producers to increase deprivation tags.

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 would be sufficient

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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, as a biologist in the region the carrying capacity is there for the elk. An objective in the 3,500 with +20%. Just work with producers to increase depredation tags. Require hunters who sign up for the deprivation hunts with producers to pay \$100 up front to ensure they show up and hunt. Once the hunter kills or hunts he can apply to get his money back. Producers in my area complain that hunters who sign up do Not show up to hunt.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

30 bulls per 100 cows is sufficient.

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 in 410 has changed with more elk on private land destroying crops. Work harder with the CMR to get them into a grazing plan. Livestock grazing improves elk forage.

Q7

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

First, residents of 410 should have a much higher percentage of the tags. Residents will hunt and take elk.

For hunters who sign up for the depredation hunts should be required to pay up front \$100 or more when they register for the hunt list. They should be given 2 or 3 tags. Once they kill or hunt on the producers property they must have a signed form from the producer. Then they can take that form to an FWP office for 80% of their money back. The extra 20% can go directly to help administer the program. This will help ensure the hunter shows up to the producers land to hunt the elk that damage property. I will be the first to pay my money up front.

Producers who have depredation hunts should also be required to allow walk in BMA access. The depredation hunts can be rifle hunts at anytime elk are destroying crops.

I feel for producers but also have little sympathy for producers who do not allow walk in access. (I do not agree with the BMA's that require calling producer for permission....

Please have more contact with CMR to encourage livestock grazing. This will help.

Thank you
Josh Hobbs

#16

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 25, 2022 5:21:24 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 25, 2022 5:29:57 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:33
IP Address: 153.90.151.49

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Samuel T Koeshal
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 410

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?

continue using the same method

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 the better method to try and eliminate variability across survey counts

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

If the upper limit for a point objective does not exceed the carrying capacity for HD 410, I will support increasing the population objective so that more hunter opportunities, especially cow harvest, can take place, given that between the CMR, BLM, and Block Management there is plenty of public access in HD 410.

Also, given that the elk population has been well above the current objective the last 10 years, it would make sense to raise the objective to follow the herd health.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Please maintain the 30:100 bull to cow ratio. Given that this HD is a popular draw unit for archery, and a special tag during rifle season, at least maintaining the current ratio will help to keep this a "trophy" unit for the people lucky enough to draw those 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?

I would suggest possible habitat restoration or improvement projects on the CMR that might expand annual distribution. RMEF and others might be willing to fund these projects

Q7

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

NA

#17

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:02:09 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:14:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:12:22
IP Address: 96.31.23.65

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Scott Heidebrink
City	Malta
State	MT
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Page 2: HD 410

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?

Long-term averages would allow for more flexibility and more realistic objectives to be set.

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 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 3,000-4,000. Land ownership has changed in the region and tolerance has increased.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

50 bulls to 100 cows would provide a more quality experience. 1:1 ratio would provide high hunter satisfaction and for easier management since there would be significantly less calves born each year.

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?

Higher objectives and higher bull to cow ratios.

#18

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:14:15 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:14:27 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:12
IP Address: 174.45.122.240

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Kristopher Killorn
City	Belgrade
State	MT
Email (optional)	kkillorn@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#19

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 15, 2022 1:48:57 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 15, 2022 1:53:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:25
IP Address: 161.7.109.252

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Barry Bugelman
City	Roy
State	MT

Page 2: HD 410

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?

Plus or minus 20 % of objective is fine.

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?

Use average of 3 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Current objective is ok

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

30:100 bull objective is good. Keep it

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 ok but could be better - too many tags are given out in this unit for archery and it displaces elk during the season. Reduce the number of archery tags.

Q7

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

Hunting pressure has increased several fold in this district over the last several years. Account for the pressure by limiting tags and / or reducing season. There should be a goal for 'hunting quality' - right now, its reduced because of too many people on public lands. Experience is not enjoyable. Reduce the number of archery elk tags given out by half.

#20

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 06, 2022 6:59:22 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 06, 2022 7:16:11 PM
Time Spent: 00:16:48
IP Address: 72.250.135.173

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Craig Iverson
City	Winnett

Page 2: HD 410

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?

Fixed count

If a range is used the number of elk would increase faster

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 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current 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

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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 shoulder seasons should be more constructed with the aim of direct population reduction without consideration of a hunters equal access to a tag. There needs to be a focus on population management after regular season ends. Known marksmen could be recruited so there is a minimum of wounding. Others could gain points for putting up the animals or donating money for processing. Meat could be given to food banks. The population needs to spend as much time under objective as over

#21

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 08, 2022 7:57:46 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 8:06:07 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:21
IP Address: 73.169.161.11

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Steve Jones
City	Spokane
State	WA
Email (optional)	stephenjones045@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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?

The population objectives need to be raised. A 5yr average would be more 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?

Often surveys are unable to be done. The average should be of surveys, not of years.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

The bull/cow objective is appropriate, but better harvest reporting needs to be done as well.

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 tend to group on private land earlier. This is partially due to better feed on ranches cattle calving grounds. It is also due to hunter pressure. Reducing tags might have a impact on elk distribution and improve hunting.

Q7

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

Better harvest data-bull (size),cow,public, private, etc.

#22

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 08, 2022 9:10:12 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 9:11:29 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:16
IP Address: 174.234.2.87

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jacob Amerman
City	Park City
State	MT
Email (optional)	Jacob.amerman@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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?

5 year 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?

3 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objective should be increased to 4000

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

The bull objective should be increased to 40 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?

Yes

Q7

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

Na

#23

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 9:58:27 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 10:35:48 AM
Time Spent: 00:37:20
IP Address: 174.215.23.31

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Justin Doll
City	Great Falls
State	MT

Page 2: HD 410

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

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 3 year average would be an appropriate way to determine where the population is at compared objective for the district. This way varying conditions can be accounted for. If the conditions are less than ideal one year you can still use other years to get a more accurate count to help identify where the population is at in regards to objective number.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 the objective in this district should be increased. In the years 2012-2018 elk numbers were above 3000. I believe this unit could handle more elk. I think an objective of 3300-3700 elk is not unrealistic given the amount of public land in the district. It is evident in the field that in the most recent count that population of elk has started to decline.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

The bull objective could be slightly increased in this district. I think 35-40bulls: 100 cows would be better. If that means reducing the permit numbers to get to the increased bull to cow ratio, I feel not only would it increase number of bulls in the district but also increase the quality of the hunt for those in the field.

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 the distribution of elk could be better in this district. Having elk utilize the entire district would be ideal, yes there are some elk distributed from north to south, but having more uniform numbers throughout district would be ideal.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

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

#24

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:52:39 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:57:55 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:16
IP Address: 35.131.34.18

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randy Newberg
City	Bozeman
State	MT
Email (optional)	randy@onyourownadventures.com

Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Given the current populations, it appears this HD could sustain a higher objective that is closer to 3,000. I would suggest increasing that objective to 3,000.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Yes, there should be an objective and the current post-season objective of 30:100 should be based on branch antlered bulls counted.

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.

The liberal cow elk seasons in this unit push many of the elk to private lands. Be more precise in how to achieve the cow elk harvest. Consider changing cow elk hunting on public lands to be by permit only. Allow as much cow elk hunting on private lands as is necessary to move elk off from those private lands.

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.

#25

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:24:48 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:34:33 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:44
IP Address: 192.230.166.182

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	BRAD LENCIONI
City	Sand Coulee
State	MT
Email (optional)	tricityinc@aol.com

Page 2: HD 410

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 feel we should use a 3 year average, along with analyzing the landowner complaints and sportsmen comments. I also feel we should use some sort of data collection that will tell the number of elk harvested each year...accurately

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 410 is a very important unit because of all the public land and should be surveyed every year and use a 3 year average along with comments to recommend the population objective

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

this should definitely be increased. the count this year is 2700 app. and hunting was pathetic and i believe landowner complaints were very low i believe a realistic number should be between 2800-3500

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

yes this is good

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 im npot fwp should be actively working with the federal boys at the CMR to enhance elk use by using cattle to graze first then create good habitat for elk to want to use in the winter months

Q7

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

Get some boots on the ground...talk with landowners and sportsmen to find a median range we can all be happy with

#26

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:35:01 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:35:06 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:05
IP Address: 192.230.166.182

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	BRAD LENCIONI
City	Sand Coulee
State	MT
Email (optional)	tricityinc@aol.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#27

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:41:51 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:41:57 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:05
IP Address: 192.230.166.182

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	BRAD LENCIONI
City	Sand Coulee
State	MT
Email (optional)	tricityinc@aol.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#28

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:29:36 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:29:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:08
IP Address: 165.234.248.161

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Brock Wahl
City	BISMARCK
State	ND
Email (optional)	brockwahl@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#29

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:59:06 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:04:19 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:13
IP Address: 165.234.248.161

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Brock Wahl
City	Bismarck
State	ND
Email (optional)	brockwahl@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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, as long as the biological carrying capacity allows. This unit, along with other neighboring breaks units, have huge potential for carrying many more elk and offering diverse hunting experiences. Access is good in the eastern, northern, and northeastern parts of the units, thanks to the American Prairie and other landowners who enroll in Block management.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Let the biologists decide

Q6

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

So so. This unit seems to strike an ok balance of distribution. Depends which part of the unit you are in. Drought seems to be the biggest influence on distribution in the NE portion of the unit. There could be more elk, A lot more elk. As with all breaks units.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

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

#30

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:24:34 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:32:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:51
IP Address: 174.231.84.164

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Kenzie Lencioni
City	Great falls
State	Mt
Email (optional)	mckenzielencioni@icloud.com

Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

2,500-3,500

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

45 bulls

Q6

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

Keep the elk population up and drop the number of tags in the drought years

Q7

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

Just a bigger population of elk

#31

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:33:28 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:35:24 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:55
IP Address: 174.215.21.94

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Blake wilcoz
City	Great falls
State	Mt
Email (optional)	duck.wilcox@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 410

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?

NA

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

2,500-3,500

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

45

Q6

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

Could be better. More elk

Q7

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

I think there should be less tags in this unit. Make it harder to draw, including archery. Especially on a drought years

#32

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 3:14:35 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:52:36 PM
Time Spent: 01:38:01
IP Address: 72.250.159.99

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daniel Kinka
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State	Montana
Email (optional)	daniel@americanprairie.org

Page 2: HD 410

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?

American Prairie questions the utility of "objectives" for elk and any other wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance made decades ago. If FWP and its constituents decide that managing populations solely based upon social carrying capacity is still desirable, the state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans to determine what the true tolerance for elk abundance is amongst its trust beneficiaries under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Under these circumstances, FWP could maintain the current form of objective (+/-20%) but should strive to generate accurate calculations of elk abundance on an annual basis, and not rely on long-term averages. However, we feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

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?

No, it would not be appropriate to use a 3-5 year average of surveys to determine objective status for this hunting district. Such averaging can only reduce the data available by which to make management decisions and reduce the speed with which the agency can and should respond to undesirable trends in wildlife populations (up or down). More and more frequent data should always be the goal, so we recommend using annual survey data to make management decisions.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

American Prairie believes the current population objective is too low and should be increased. It does not reflect current tolerance or demand in the region, let alone anything close to the ecological carrying capacity of the region. We question the utility of "objectives" for wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance. The state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans in this hunting district to determine what the true tolerance for elk abundance is. Barring such a survey, we conservatively suggest that resetting the objective in this hunting district to the recent population high of > 3,500 is appropriate and would benefit the largest number of trust beneficiaries.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

American Prairie favors "natural" sex ratios in wildlife populations, but do not feel strongly one way or the other about the bull ratio in this hunting 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?

No, we at American Prairie are not satisfied with the current elk distribution in this hunting district. It does not reflect current tolerance or demand in the region, let alone anything close to the ecological carrying capacity of the public lands in the district, nor those private lands (e.g., American Prairie) with high tolerance for elk. We feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

Q7

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

As a general comment, and particularly in the area that American Prairie operates (throughout the Greater Upper Missouri River Breaks region), we question the utility of “objectives” for elk and any other wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance made decades ago. If FWP and its constituents decide that managing populations solely based upon social carrying capacity is still desirable, the state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans to determine what the true tolerance for wildlife (i.e., elk) abundance is amongst its trust beneficiaries under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. However, we feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

#33

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 6:00:37 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 15, 2022 7:58:17 AM
Time Spent: Over a day
IP Address: 47.37.48.185

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Quentin Porter
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Page 2: HD 410

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?

The fixed range does not take into account drastic fluctuations that we have seen in this region the last 4+yrs. A running average (5-4yrs) at +/-20% with a minimum fixed range (>2300) would be a better 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?

Depending on the accuracy and method of the survey, reducing the time to annual would be better. 2 year data is too long and doesn't reflect fluctuations that occur. Extra data could be utilized to make more informed decisions for setting rolling avg objectives.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

410 needs increase in elk objectives. The steady decline last 4yrs is alarming and if not adjusted, a historically low (16yrs) could be observed soon. Last 4yr rolling avg is 3,160 and new objective could be 3,000-3,400.

Q5

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Definitely there should be a bull objective in this unit as it has seemed to be abnormally high. No, I think that the objective should be lower, consistent with other units. 20bulls :100 cows should be used in my opinion.

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. The distribution over last 3 years has seen dramatic decline from public to private lands. Also, due to size of the district the concentrations at river bottom and privatized farmlands have seen a drastic shift in 410.

Q7

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

Hunter pressure continues to grow, particularly in public land for this unit. Increased opportunities for landowners to submit for BMA access should be encouraged.

#34

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 15, 2022 3:36:54 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 15, 2022 3:38:32 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:37
IP Address: 72.250.159.159

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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City	Lewistown
State	MT
Email (optional)	SEAN_STROHM@HOTMAIL.COM

Page 2: HD 410

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 population objective for HD 410 is 2,000-2,300. 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 4,000

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 410, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Q6

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

Control public land hunting pressure

Q7

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

Should consider public land hunting pressure and set goals to favorable public land hunting experience

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:40:15 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:59:13 AM
Time Spent: 00:18:57
IP Address: 98.97.32.57

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Stephen LePage
City	Lewistown
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 411

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 the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Q7 **Respondent skipped this question**

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it 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, July 13, 2022 11:19:28 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 11:29:58 AM
Time Spent: 00:10:30
IP Address: 67.183.102.161

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 411

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 the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Q7 **Respondent skipped this question**

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it 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
What else does the Elk Management Plan need to include for this HD?

Here is the issue with 411. The vast majority of elk live on private land during the hunting season. If I had to guess it's likely 80% or higher, but this is only based on a couple years of hunting and spending time in this unit. I have watched and hunted herds of 300-500 elk on private both in October and January in this unit. The only way to increase pressure on private land and to change the behavior of some elk is to incentivize that pressure. Asking landowners to share their land with those from the public has been a mostly unsuccessful solution. In my opinion the state of Montana needs to create a private land only tag for this unit (pending some land size requirements) and do the same in units with similar elk population dynamics. The elk population is growing at an unsustainable rate in 411 and without increasing pressure on private lands, there will be zero impact on keeping elk populations balanced. Private land only hunters should not be part of the yearly quota on tags. There should be a new category created so that they do not pull from the general pool since they cannot hunt on public land. I will continue to take 2 elk per year from 411 either in October or January, but taking 100 cows or less in the unit each year is not enough.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 5:24:48 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 8:38:06 PM
Time Spent: 03:13:17
IP Address: 72.250.157.19

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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State	MT
Email (optional)	JACOOPER@MIDRIVERS.COM

Page 2: HD 411

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?

If the population objective of 400 +/- 20% was established using range carrying capacity and private land conflicts data, then keeping it would be the best. If it was a "seat-of-pants" (no criticism intended) guesstimate, then changing it would make sense given that current population in the 9000 range. As a retired university professor who taught wildlife population ecology and management, I know you have tough challenge. The climate is warming thus lowering winter mortality, the warming is increasing the growing season and in wet years such as 2022 there is better summer and winter range, and drought years like 2021, drier conditions than in the past reduces forage and restricts range to around water sources. Projections have these conditions being more common in the future. And in our Red Hill Road area where an out-of-state billionaire purchased 10,000 acres of ranch land, less access. In addition, his managers have converted hay land to wildlife food plots.

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?

All depends on the use of the data. Averages tend to smooth variable measurement but most often a plot of the yearly or biannual estimates is more useful.

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Cannot answer this question without additional data such as the impacts on private ranches, the conditions of the herd (were there signs of animals in poor condition at the end of winter 2021?).

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Cannot answer this question without additional information such as why were the districts established?

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Without knowing why the 120 and 50% figure were used, I cannot comment.

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 hunt on private land where elk are typical available up the first or sometime the second week of the firearm season and have always found animals. So the current distribution is ok for me. But if the harvest is to be increased, more animals must be on public land or access to private land provided.

Q9

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

Pre-bow season firearms Shoulder Seasons. While handling the meat is hard in the warm weather, in falls with heavy snow at the beginning of the regular firearms season push the elk out of areas at or above 5,000 ft.

#4

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 15, 2022 9:14:59 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 15, 2022 9:15:31 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:32
IP Address: 98.97.34.38

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 411

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 the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Q7 **Respondent skipped this question**

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it 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?

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 15, 2022 11:13:06 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 15, 2022 11:52:54 AM
Time Spent: 00:39:48
IP Address: 98.97.34.38

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Stephen LePage
City	Lewistown
State	MT
Email (optional)	stephenandamylepage@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 411

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 point value with fixed range.

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?

Annual/biennial survey data is the only way to monitor population. An average over longer time would not be able to account for dramatic population changes due to disease or a bad winter.

Q4

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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, with a range of 800-1000.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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, with a range of 8000-9000.

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

No, you should not combine East and West. The landowners on either side of Red Hill Road have completely different land use goals.

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. 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. The current bull objective is not appropriate. It should be 1500.

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 am somewhat satisfied with elk distribution, although the majority of this herd is inaccessible.

Q9

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

I am a landowner and elk hunter here in 411.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 23, 2022 9:04:09 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 23, 2022 9:33:04 AM
Time Spent: 00:28:54
IP Address: 98.97.33.39

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 411

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?

As I'm sure you are aware, there are several very large ranches that either don't allow access or very limited access. So, I don't think the elk that predominantly reside on these ranches should be "counted" in the 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?

No comment

Q4

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objective should be two categories. Accessible population and non accessible population.
Non accessible population should be reported but not included in the hunting population objective level.
Accessible population should be increased to the optimal level.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 range where hunter access is granted.

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Yes combine these two HD. My opinion is the current level of the two HD's are optimal.

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

No change needed.

Q8

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

Unfortunately there are large landowners that either don't allow access or severely limit access. Without some reasonable access the elk distribution problem will not change. Under the current circumstances, I think the FWP are doing the best they can to address the distribution.

Q9

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

Please don't make this HD or any other HD an either/or situation. The quality time spent pursuing elk in archery AND firearm seasons are important to many of us.

Yes, I primarily hunt with my bow, but spending days in the outdoors after archery season is just as satisfying to me. In firearm season I am only allowed to shoot cows or spike bulls. And that's OK! It's the experience of being in the great outdoors that is most important.
Thank You

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 25, 2022 9:27:22 AM
Last Modified: Monday, July 25, 2022 9:33:56 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:34
IP Address: 72.250.128.13

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Stephanie Prater
City	Lewistown
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 411

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?

Should use habitat and carrying capacity of the land not social 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?

should be annual.

Q4

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 1500.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 8000

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

yes, 9000

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q8

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

Most elk in this unit reside on large private ranches, so no, distribution is not accurate. The objectives should not count these elk in the counts or increase the objectives to what is actually sustainable in the unit. No one would be happy with 800 elk in the entire area.

Q9

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

not count inaccessible elk or drastically increase objectives to carrying capacity.

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 7:47:51 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 8:07:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:19:16
IP Address: 98.97.38.152

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 411

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 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 population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 to 700-800

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 to 6000-8000

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

no

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

no

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 have a lot of elk on my ranch, but FWP offers many tools to help manage them.

Q9

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

keep permits in place to keep outfitters from leasing up more land

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:52:47 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:56:20 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:33
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 411

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q8

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

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana’s 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Q9

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialists been involved in the Process?

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, August 21, 2022 9:08:18 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, August 21, 2022 9:12:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:05
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Brian Ash
City	Lewistown
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 411

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 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?

Annual looks best.

Q4**Respondent skipped this question**

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q6 Respondent skipped this question

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Q7 Respondent skipped this question

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it 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?

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 2:47:29 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 2:54:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:39
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 411

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 look at how other states determine objectives and see if there is a way that makes more sense than 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?

Objective status should be based on a 3 year average so the status isn't as likely to be affected by poor flying/counting conditions which can vary from year to year.

Q4

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objectives should be increased. Based on current elk populations, it is clear that the habitat can sustain a much bigger population than the current objectives. It is also that clear that the tolerance of elk by some landowners is much higher than it was when the current objectives were set. I would like to see new objectives established that are based more on carrying capacity of the habitat. It is not my place to say what these numbers should be, they should be determined by our professional biologists.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objectives should be increased. Based on current elk populations, it is clear that the habitat can sustain a much bigger population than the current objectives. It is also that clear that the tolerance of elk by some landowners is much higher than it was when the current objectives were set. I would like to see new objectives established that are based more on carrying capacity of the habitat. It is not my place to say what these numbers should be, they should be determined by our professional biologists.

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Objectives for 411/535 east and 411/535 west should not be combined since most of the elk reside in 411/535 east where there is less accessible land. If combined, the elk in 411/535 west would likely take the brunt of the pressure since there is more public land. Public land hunting should not have to suffer as a result of efforts to get districts to objective when it is not even feasible due to the nature of the land ownership, particularly in 411/535 east.

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

A minimum brow-tined bull objective should be maintained in 411. Harvest needs to be focused on cow elk. I would also include a target bull to cow ratio of 30 to 100.

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 is poor in 411/535. I would like to see more efforts to increase hunting pressure on private lands while simultaneously reducing pressure on public lands. This could mean less opportunity for the average member of the public, but it would help to better distribute elk while also improving the hunting experience.

Q9

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

The plan for these districts should call for not counting inaccessible elk. I know elk move around and it is difficult to determine what elk are leaving sanctuary properties, but FWP could come up with a percentage to subtract from the final count to account for elk that are inaccessible to hunters. Anything would be better than counting every single elk because a huge percentage of them are inaccessible. The current management plan of overharvesting elk on accessible areas to compensate for growing populations of elk on inaccessible areas is not working.

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Friday, September 02, 2022 2:09:40 PM
Time Spent: 00:38:13
IP Address: 209.182.244.30

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 411

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?

Use 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?

Use individual survey if survey done that year. If not done or not fully completed that year then use 3 year average.

Q4

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Population objective for HD 411 should be increased significantly. HD has excellent habitat and it does not seem private landowners are complaining about elk numbers being too high currently.....any game damage complaints? So both the habitat quality and social tolerance support a much higher elk population objective than what is currently in place. In my opinion that would be around 6k or 7k elk for HD411.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Population objective for HD 411 should be increased significantly. HD has excellent habitat (albeit mainly on private) and it does not seem private landowners are complaining about elk numbers being too high currently.....any game damage complaints? So both the habitat quality and social tolerance support a much higher elk population objective than what is currently in place. In my opinion that would be around 6k or 7k elk for HD411.

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

I would keep objectives separate for these HDs. In other words, HD 411 has its own objective and likewise for HD 535.

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Yes keep bull objective. But drop the 120 bulls observed requirement. Instead use percentage such as 30% of elk observed must be bulls. And 50% of these should be brow tined bulls.

Q8

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 no secret that vast majority of elk in HD 411 are on private land. For good reason and you can't blame the elk. Better habitat and less hunting pressure on private. You need to take initiatives such as forest thinning, invasive weed control, controlled burns, etc. on public land to improve habitat. And reduce hunting pressure on public land by instituting a limited public land elk permit requirement.....need permit to hunt elk on public in HD 411.

Q9

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

BMA properties in HD 411 are almost nonexistent. Work with landowners on why that is. Try to get more acreage enrolled.

#13

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 411

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 the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Q7 **Respondent skipped this question**

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it 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

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

- I hunt in this unit and believe the elk habitat would support a higher elk population. I believe the current state objectives are not consistent with the state's fiduciary duty with respect to elk. The FWP fiduciary duty is toward elk – not ranchers or hunters. I believe the current management philosophy results in the elk not being managed in the best interest of long-term elk stability, and instead are artificially low in the best interest of ranchers. Elk should not be managed for hunters, or ranchers - but for elk.
 - Artificially low objectives like the present objectives create high risk of a significant die-off crippling the herd. A few harsh winters, or the spread of cwd, could be devastating to an artificially low herd population.
 - Rather, I believe the elk objective for a given unit should be the carrying capacity of the habitat. That would raise the objective in nearly all units and moot the current lawsuit.
 - Clearly, this will not make ranchers happy. However, ranchers are not the focus of elk management - elk are.
 - Three points regarding ranchers. 1. Cattlemen had the political power to make fencing out cattle the responsibility of the landowner, not the cattlemen. This shifts the cost of fencing on the landowner rather than on the cattlemen. To be consistent, the same rule should apply to the public resource of game animals - a rancher or farmer who wants to keep game out should bear the responsibility of fencing out the elk. 2. Ranchers can't simultaneously preclude hunting and then complain about crop or range damage. 3. Additional programs can be developed to get landowners to open their land to some form of hunting.
 - While the objective should be carrying capacity, local game wardens can adjust license numbers in a given unit to respond to unusual crop or rangeland damage.
 - I have heard some say that 6 weeks for general season is too long. I disagree. I hunt from Sept. until the end of shoulder season and don't want any reduction – unless the elk population in a unit is declining
 - I have heard some say FWP should move to "Pick your weapon/pick your season" to limit hunting opportunities. I disagree – hunting opportunities should be expanded not reduced.
 - I have heard some say FWP should have Shorter seasons. I disagree
 - I have heard some say FWP should have Fewer tags to reduce the number of hunters in the field. I disagree. I have hunted in a number of other states – on public land – and Montana is the least crowded hunting in the country. We have several limited tag units for those who want fewer hunters
 - I have heard some say FWP should Select a specific hunt zone, and a particular week, and be limited to hunt in that area during that week. I strongly disagree. First, we should have more hunting opportunities, not fewer. Second, if the hunter becomes ill that week, or the weather turns south, the hunter's whole season is ruined.
 - I have heard some say FWP should Eliminate the combination license – apparently critical of someone who goes into the field to hunt, focuses on elk for a few days, doesn't find an elk, and then shoots a buck deer to bring something home. This makes no sense to me. During some times of the hunting season, I carry my bow or rifle and am equally looking for elk, deer, or bear.
-

#14

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:37:03 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:44:26 PM
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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City	BILLINGS
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Page 2: HD 411

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 current approach seems fine.

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?

Annual surveys.

Q4

The current population objective for the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The current elk population objective is set artificially low based on the available habitat in the region, and consequently the elk population objective should be dramatically increased to the current observed elk population level in the next Elk Management Plan.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The current elk population objective is set artificially low based on the available habitat in the region, and consequently the elk population objective should be dramatically increased to the current observed elk population level in the next Elk Management Plan.

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

No.

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

The bull to cow ratio should be around 50/100 for the dramatically increased overall elk population objectives discussed above.

Q8

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 that are harbored and relatively un hunted on large private farms/ranches should not be counted in the current observed elk population level.

Q9

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

The current elk population objective is set artificially low based on the available habitat in the region, and consequently the elk population objective should be dramatically increased to the current observed elk population level in the next Elk Management Plan.

#15

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:52:32 AM
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randy Newberg
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Page 2: HD 411

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 the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Given the current population numbers, it is apparent that the current objective is way too low. This objective should be increased to 800+ elk.

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The current population objective is way, way too low. This objective should be increased to 6,000+ elk, given the habitat productivity. Having such low objectives relative to the actual population does not allow for adequate management strategies and season types to address hunter access to elk and landowner impacts from elk.

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Yes, combine them all.

Q7

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. 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 post-season objective stated in terms of bulls:100 cows. There should be a bull objective, stated as a ratio of post-season ADULT bulls:cows. That ratio should be above 20:100.

Q8

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 wish I knew the answer, as elk are accumulating on a few ranches that do not provide access. That is not an issue FWP can solve very well. I would focus on the smaller landowners and pay them the maximum allowed under the Block Management rules. Access to some of those lands could serve to move elk around more and provide access to some of the elk that are currently off limits.

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.

#16

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 411

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?

Range should be established considering refuges and their tolerance for elk. In little snowies large landowners

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 the western part of HD 535 and the western part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 12,000

Q5

The current population objective for the eastern part of HD 535 and eastern part of HD 411 is 400 (range 320-480). 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 12,000

Q6

Should we combine objectives for all of HD 535 and HD 411? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

combine

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 411, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 120 bulls observed in HD 411 and 535 during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q8

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 spend most of their time on refuge areas. Objective should be to control hunting pressure on public land to provide quality experience and high success.

Q9

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

Needs to include plans to limit public land hunting pressure.

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 28, 2022 8:20:19 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 28, 2022 8:25:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:28
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Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Ryan Greenside
City	Missoula
State	Mt

Page 2: HD 412

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 412 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 412, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 45 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-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

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: Tuesday, August 02, 2022 8:12:28 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 02, 2022 8:15:54 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:26
IP Address: 63.153.25.212

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 412

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?

You are over managing leave it alone

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?

Your over managing leave it alone

Q4

The current population objective for HD 412 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?

Your over managing leave it alone

Q5

In HD 412, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 45 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Your over managing leave it alone

Q6

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

Your over managing leave it alone

Q7

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

Your over managing leave it alone

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:56:26 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:58:41 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:15
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 412

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 412 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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 412, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 45 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialists been involved in the Process?

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 3:00:43 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 3:15:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:27
IP Address: 198.162.78.5

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jess Wagner
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 412

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 look at how other states determine objectives and see if there is a way that makes more sense than 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?

Objective status should be based on a 3 year average so the status isn't as likely to be affected by poor flying/counting conditions which can vary from year to year.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 412 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?

The objectives should be increased. Based on current elk populations, it is clear that the habitat can sustain a much bigger population than the current objectives. It is also clear that the tolerance of elk by some landowners is much higher than it was when the current objectives were set. I would like to see new objectives established that are based more on carrying capacity of the habitat. It is not my place to say what these numbers should be, they should be determined by our professional biologists.

Q5

In HD 412, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 45 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

A bull objective should be maintained. I would increase the number while also increasing the overall objective for the unit, and set the new bull objective to be the same percentage of overall objective as it is currently.

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 somewhat satisfied with elk distribution in 412. I think distribution would be better if more efforts were made to increase hunting pressure on private lands while simultaneously reducing pressure on the limited amount of public land in the HD.

Q7

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

Population counts for this HD are often times flawed in my opinion, because many of the bulls that winter in the district come from 417. If possible, maybe FWP should look at flying the unit during a different time of the year to avoid counting elk that spend the hunting season in 417. I think this movement of bulls during the winter should be taken into account to avoid over issuing bull permits for the district.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:58:36 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 10:03:35 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:59
IP Address: 35.131.34.18

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randy Newberg
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State	MT
Email (optional)	randy@onyourownadventures.com

Page 2: HD 412

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 412 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?

Current population counts show the current objective to be far too low. This objective should be raised to 800+.

Q5

In HD 412, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 45 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. 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, stated as a ratio of post-season ADULT bulls:cows. That ratio should be above 20:100, with that ratio focused on brow-tined-bulls.

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.

There are some amazing landowners in this HD that allow some form of public access. Reward those landowners with the maximum Block Management payment. There are some other landowners with smaller tracts that could provide access to huge portions of public land. Prioritize these smaller landowners in the Block Management program to maximize effectiveness of the dollars spent.

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.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 15, 2022 3:31:42 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 15, 2022 3:33:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:39
IP Address: 72.250.159.159

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	sean strohm
City	Lewistown
State	MT
Email (optional)	SEAN_STROHM@HOTMAIL.COM

Page 2: HD 412

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 412 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?

Increased to 1500

Q5

In HD 412, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 45 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys and at least 50% of observed bulls should be brow-tined-bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Should be increased

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, elk spend most of the time on refuge areas once the season starts. Should be objectives to limit hunting pressure on public land to improve success rates.

Q7

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

Plan needs to limit hunting pressure on public land.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:58:49 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:03:14 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:25
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 413

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 413 is 825 (range 660-990). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents public hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 413, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

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 current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents public hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialists been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 1:40:16 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 2:11:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:31:41
IP Address: 98.97.36.66

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 413

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 413 is 825 (range 660-990). 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 413, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season 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

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

I would like to see a Choose Your Weapon/Season for all of MT. Our ranch is in the Little Belts and it backs up to the National Forest. I can't imagine an area that gets more pressure but I'm sure there probably is. Last year on opening day of rifle season we counted 29 orange vests (thats all we could physically see). At daylight there were shots going off in every direction.

We didn't leave the ranch for the 1st week. After the 1st week it was almost end of season before we saw any elk again. The road past our ranch that goes into the Natl Forest is like a freeway during hunting season. It is non stop and at every place to park or camp there are multiple vehicles constantly for miles.

I'm not writing this to complain because we haven't been able to kill an elk. I've let my son kill an elk the previous two seasons and I've not simply because I chose not to.

The amount of pressure these elk face from the start of archery season until the end of rifle season is outstanding. I would think in the overall scheme of things, for the health of the MT elk population and safety for hunters this would be beneficial . (Last season guy shot Elk on our prop. not 50 yds from where my son and I had been sitting not 15 min. before he shot at past legal hr.)

This season so far the archery traffic has been non-stop and I know of a min. of 10 guys that have been hunting the same drainage since season opened. Trucks line the forest service rd and camping spots. By the time rifle season arrives the elk will be so pressured I would be surprised if anyone sees an elk.

I believe everyone has the right to hunt and I am not trying to get hunters reduced in our area because it is an advantage to us at sometimes because some elk push to our ranch. But, I would rather see less pressure on the elk and see them behaving naturally vs non-stop pressure for months.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:03:28 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:05:36 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:08
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 415

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 415 is 200 (range 160-240). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 415, there is a bull objective to maintain 15 bulls: 100 cows observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialists been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 22, 2022 12:12:57 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 22, 2022 12:17:09 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:12
IP Address: 72.255.184.234

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Steve griffin
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State	Mt
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Page 2: HD 416

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?

5 yr

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 416 is 475 (range 380-570). 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 416, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season 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?

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:05:42 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:07:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:00
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 416

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

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Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 416 is 475 (range 380-570). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 416, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialists been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:34:09 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:38:06 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:56
IP Address: 209.180.189.212

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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

Page 2: HD 416

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 population objective for HD 416 is 475 (range 380-570). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objective should be raised significantly, there's probably 475 elk sitting on some of the private ranches alone here. I'd like to see 3,500 elk in this unit.

Q5

In HD 416, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season 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 at least a 20:100 bull/cow ratio 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, because most of the elk in this unit sit on private year round. I'd suggest no cow hunting on public and unlimited on private to push elk back onto public. Maybe still allow cow hunting on public for youth and disabled.

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.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 7:37:55 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 7:41:02 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:06
IP Address: 107.77.221.18

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Sean Hoernke
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State	tx
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Page 2: HD 416

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?

Do not change its 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?

do not change its working

Q4

The current population objective for HD 416 is 475 (range 380-570). 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 416, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

30:100

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 most elk are on private. There needs to be a solution of more public access to private. If elk are truly a problem for private ranchers then they should have no problem allowing access to their lands for management purposes. DO NOT just hand them some tags for them to sell. That's bullshit. The public paid for those elk now its the publics to harvest.

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: Saturday, October 15, 2022 3:29:41 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 15, 2022 3:45:08 AM
Time Spent: 00:15:26
IP Address: 174.199.103.223

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jeff Schritz
City	Townsend
State	Montana
Email (optional)	336in07@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 416

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?

This is huge area with alot of elk and alot of outfitted private ground. Long term data needs to be used with consideration given to the fact many of these elk do not get hunting pressure except from outfitters.

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?

Long term data is alwas best when trying to determine averages to bas objectives from

Q4

The current population objective for HD 416 is 475 (range 380-570). 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 should be doubled at least. The area can support far more animals than the objective. Ranchers want small herds with big bulls. Bulls sell hunts cows not so much. Given the fact this area has so much private elk habitat, the objective numbers should be set higher. If the ranches want numbers down they should provide access.

Q5

In HD 416, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

A 5% bull objective is abysmal. Minimum 15% objective should be the goal state wide.

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've seen a lot of elk throughout this district. I think distribution is fine. It's just a matter of access.

Q7

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

As I've commented on each district, I feel a pick your region or pick your unit "A" tag would help with hunt quality on public ground. Along with that, I feel more incentives need to be given to landowners to increase pressure to more evenly distribute elk during the season. Late cow hunts are kinda meh, nobody wants to feel like the janitor for these outfitters.

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 12, 2022 5:52:01 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 12, 2022 5:52:37 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:35
IP Address: 72.250.140.158

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Joe
City	Blow
State	Montaba

Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 12, 2022 6:04:01 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 12, 2022 6:04:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:21
IP Address: 154.6.93.3

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Charles Denowh
City	Helena
State	MT

Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:38:37 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:42:45 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:08
IP Address: 154.27.110.81

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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City	Townsend
State	MT
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Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 15, 2022 11:11:54 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 15, 2022 11:19:12 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:18
IP Address: 174.199.41.104

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Scott Hauer
City	Shakopee
State	MN
Email (optional)	scotthauer12@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 417

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

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?

5 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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. 1500-2000 minimum.

Q5

In HD 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

300 bulls

Q6

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

Open up the land owner tags. Let the land owner pick 2 addition cow hunters and 2 bull hunters of there choice. It will move elk around and make the land owners push some elk onto more public land.

Q7

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

Bring back an landowner tags. Land owners 640 or more get 1 tag.

2000 acres or more get 2 tags

3000 acres or more 3 tags

And so on.

Will move more elk around and give the landowner a chance to take a bull or cow every year.

Out of state landowners are getting screwed.

As much as the state and public hate private land ownership, if there was none there would be no critters left. Public land is hit way to hard. Far to few of animals on public land because there is to many tags. Look at what other states do, New Mexico, Colorado. Utah.

#5

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 27, 2022 10:34:14 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 27, 2022 10:34:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:38
IP Address: 161.7.39.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Lindsey Parsons TEST
City	HLN

Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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: Tuesday, August 09, 2022 8:36:27 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 09, 2022 9:21:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:44:36
IP Address: 172.226.137.36

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Matt Salvi
City	Shepherd
State	MT
Email (optional)	salvi7@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 417

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. 3, 5 and 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?

3 year averages.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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. 375 elk in the entire district? I don't understand the reason for such a low number? That means decreasing the current number of elk by around 90%!?

It's never going to happen, the majority of the elk in 417 are on or around the Horse Ranch north of Roy. You'll never convince the owner to cull the elk herd by such a large percentage. If the 375 objective is ever met than that means 374 elk will be on the Horse Ranch and none anywhere else in the district. Manage the district and the Horse Ranch separately. There should only be 375 elk on the Horse Ranch, and around 1,000 everywhere else in the district.

Q5

In HD 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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 30 to 100 is 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?

The wealthy private landowners and leased out properties will continue to be the biggest problem for elk management and the FWP. Unfortunately, I don't know what the solution is. When the majority of elk are continually on large private tracts of land the FWP will continue to struggle to manage elk and will never be able to help all the multiple entities equally and fairly.

Q7

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

The only idea that I can think of to help manage elk better and more fairly for everyone, including the animal is to find a two part method. One part being the areas that are accessible to hunting, landowners that do allow hunting and landowners that do want to participate in managing elk. The second part would be the wealthy and/or leased out private land. Ie: Wilks Brothers, Paul Tudor Jones, the Horse Ranch, etc etc. Manage them separately. How? That's the million dollar question! But continuing year after year to come up with all the ideas for elk management and no one really talking about the elephant in the room (private, no access land) is getting pretty hard for the average Montanan to keep faith that anything hopeful or beneficial is ever going to come out of these elk management plans.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:09:20 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:11:06 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:46
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 417

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 417 is 375 (range 350-400). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents public hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:02:02 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:15:02 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:00
IP Address: 96.31.23.65

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Scott Heidebrink
City	Malta
State	MT
Email (optional)	scott.heidebrink@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 417

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 would allow for more flexibility and more realistic objectives to be set.

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 3,000-4,000. Land ownership has changed in the region and tolerance has increased.

Q5

In HD 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

50 bulls to 100 cows would provide a more quality experience. 1:1 ratio would provide high hunter satisfaction and for easier management since there would be significantly less calves born each year.

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?

Higher objectives and higher bull to cow ratios.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:28:41 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:38:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:10:11
IP Address: 73.29.117.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	David kembel
City	Bozeman
State	Mt
Email (optional)	kembledus@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 417

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?

Elk management should be related to carrying capacity of the unit and not an arbitrary number. It seems the unit is handling the current population well. Ranchers who are complaining about too many elk on their property should make their land accessible to hunters. Much of this unit is closed to hunting and is a trophy bull unit. The population can be managed by increased cow hunting.

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?

There should not be a set one, two or three year average. A 3 year average would not be nimble enough to respond to a single harsh winter.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 417 is 375 (range 350-400). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objective should be reset. The prior numbers are woefully outdated and do not reflect the carrying capacity.

Q5

In HD 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

While there should be a bull/cow ratio objective, a specific number of bulls seems unconnected to any science relating to how many elk a unit can handle.

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 are bunched on large parcels not open to the public. Owners who don't want elk damage can open their property to selected hunters.

Large parcels of public land are landlocked. Access should be increased - perhaps through RMEF purchased access corridors.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

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

#10

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:28:41 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:39:36 PM
Time Spent: 00:10:54
IP Address: 73.29.117.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	David kembel
City	Bozeman
State	Mt
Email (optional)	kembledus@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#11

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:39:41 PM
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Time Spent: 00:00:07
IP Address: 73.29.117.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	David kembel
City	Bozeman
State	Mt
Email (optional)	kembledus@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:39:53 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:41:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:57
IP Address: 73.29.117.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	David kembel
City	Bozeman
State	Mt
Email (optional)	kembledus@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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?

#13

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 07, 2022 10:12:50 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 07, 2022 10:13:06 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:15
IP Address: 216.166.175.4

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	David Kembel
City	Bozeman
State	MT
Email (optional)	kembledus@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 417

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 417 is 375 (range 350-400). 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 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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 hunt in this unit and believe the elk habitat would support a higher elk population. I believe the current state objectives are not consistent with the state's fiduciary duty with respect to elk. The FWP fiduciary duty is toward elk – not ranchers or hunters. I believe the current management philosophy results in the elk not being managed in the best interest of long-term elk stability, and instead are artificially low in the best interest of ranchers. Elk should not be managed for hunters, or ranchers - but for elk.
 - Artificially low objectives like the present objectives create high risk of a significant die-off crippling the herd. A few harsh winters, or the spread of cwd, could be devastating to an artificially low herd population.
 - Rather, I believe the elk objective for a given unit should be the carrying capacity of the habitat. That would raise the objective in nearly all units and moot the current lawsuit.
 - Clearly, this will not make ranchers happy. However, ranchers are not the focus of elk management - elk are.
 - Three points regarding ranchers. 1. Cattlemen had the political power to make fencing out cattle the responsibility of the landowner, not the cattleman. This shifts the cost of fencing on the landowner rather than on the cattleman. To be consistent, the same rule should apply to the public resource of game animals - a rancher or farmer who wants to keep game out should bear the responsibility of fencing out the elk. 2. Ranchers can't simultaneously preclude hunting and then complain about crop or range damage. 3. Additional programs can be developed to get landowners to open their land to some form of hunting.
 - While the objective should be carrying capacity, local game wardens can adjust license numbers in a given unit to respond to unusual crop or rangeland damage.
 - I have heard some say that 6 weeks for general season is too long. I disagree. I hunt from Sept. until the end of shoulder season and don't want any reduction – unless the elk population in a unit is declining
 - I have heard some say FWP should move to "Pick your weapon/pick your season" to limit hunting opportunities. I disagree – hunting opportunities should be expanded not reduced.
 - I have heard some say FWP should have Shorter seasons. I disagree
 - I have heard some say FWP should have Fewer tags to reduce the number of hunters in the field. I disagree. I have hunted in a number of other states – on public land – and Montana is the least crowded hunting in the country. We have several limited tag units for those who want fewer hunters
 - I have heard some say FWP should Select a specific hunt zone, and a particular week, and be limited to hunt in that area during that week. I strongly disagree. First, we should have more hunting opportunities, not fewer. Second, if the hunter becomes ill that week, or the weather turns south, the hunter's whole season is ruined.
 - I have heard some say FWP should Eliminate the combination license – apparently critical of someone who goes into the field to hunt, focuses on elk for a few days, doesn't find an elk, and then shoots a buck deer to bring something home. This makes no sense to me. During some times of the hunting season, I carry my bow or rifle and am equally looking for elk, deer, or bear.
-

#14

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 08, 2022 9:12:27 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 9:13:42 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:15
IP Address: 174.234.2.87

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 417

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?

5 year 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?

3 year rolling average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 417 is 375 (range 350-400). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objective should be increased to 3000

Q5

In HD 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

The objective should be 40 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 we need more block management in 417

Q7

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

Na

#15

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:52:53 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:54:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:33
IP Address: 72.250.159.99

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 417

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?

American Prairie questions the utility of "objectives" for elk and any other wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance made decades ago. If FWP and its constituents decide that managing populations solely based upon social carrying capacity is still desirable, the state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans to determine what the true tolerance for elk abundance is amongst its trust beneficiaries under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Under these circumstances, FWP could maintain the current form of objective (+/-20%) but should strive to generate accurate calculations of elk abundance on an annual basis, and not rely on long-term averages. However, we feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

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?

No, it would not be appropriate to use a 3-5 year average of surveys to determine objective status for this hunting district. Such averaging can only reduce the data available by which to make management decisions and reduce the speed with which the agency can and should respond to undesirable trends in wildlife populations (up or down). More and more frequent data should always be the goal, so we recommend using annual survey data to make management decisions.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 417 is 375 (range 350-400). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

American Prairie believes the current population objective is too low and should be increased. It does not reflect current tolerance or demand in the region, let alone anything close to the ecological carrying capacity of the region. We question the utility of "objectives" for wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance. The state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans in this hunting district to determine what the true tolerance for elk abundance is. Barring such a survey, we conservatively suggest that resetting the objective in this hunting district to the recent population high of > 2,500 is appropriate and would benefit the largest number of trust beneficiaries.

Q5

In HD 417, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

American Prairie favors "natural" sex ratios in wildlife populations, but do not feel strongly one way or the other about the bull ratio in this hunting 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?

No, we at American Prairie are not satisfied with the current elk distribution in this hunting district. It does not reflect current tolerance or demand in the region, let alone anything close to the ecological carrying capacity of the public lands in the district, nor those private lands (e.g., American Prairie) with high tolerance for elk. We feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

Q7

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

As a general comment, and particularly in the area that American Prairie operates (throughout the Greater Upper Missouri River Breaks region), we question the utility of “objectives” for elk and any other wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance made decades ago. If FWP and its constituents decide that managing populations solely based upon social carrying capacity is still desirable, the state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans to determine what the true tolerance for wildlife (i.e., elk) abundance is amongst its trust beneficiaries under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. However, we feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:11:14 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:14:13 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:59
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 418

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 418 is 150 (range 120-180). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 418, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:14:19 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:15:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:15
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 419

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 419. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents public hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q3

In HD 419, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q4

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

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Q5

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

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:15:43 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:17:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:59
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 420

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 420 and 448 is 1,200 (range 960-1,440). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 420, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 19, 2022 6:38:22 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, August 20, 2022 7:47:41 AM
Time Spent: 13:09:18
IP Address: 72.255.136.186

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Scott and Stacey Hughes
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Page 2: HD 420

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 current method has worked.

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 would be fine. Use whatever method works the best to accurately survey and allows FWP to take immediate action should population objectives exceed available resources.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 420 and 448 is 1,200 (range 960-1,440). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Decreased. 900 head with a 1100 head threshold.

Q5

In HD 420, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

5% is fine. Use whatever is needed to service the cows and maintain a healthy herd. It should not be turned into a trophy bull hunting 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?

No. Improve Habitat on the US Forest Service in HD 420 & HD 448. Restrict travel on Judith River WMA HD 420. Increase either-sex licenses on private lands in HD 420. Work with landowners during the growing season to help them meet their management objectives.

Q7

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

Drought contingency. Under exceptional drought conditions cow and bull licenses should be liberalized. Give away cow licenses to resident and non-resident alike. Increase either-sex licenses in HD 420 to 120 licenses. Work with landowners during the growing season(April-August) despite their access policies to push elk to the public's property or help mitigate damages to crops.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, August 27, 2022 6:41:10 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, August 27, 2022 6:58:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:17:49
IP Address: 72.255.135.219

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Ronald Sherer
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Page 2: HD 420

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?

A 3 year average to establish a population objective 5 years is to long to get ahead of drops or increases

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 is good

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 420 and 448 is 1,200 (range 960-1,440). 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 should be 1200 antlerless and 240 antlered bull

Q5

In HD 420, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season 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 should be 20 percent with 240 as an objective

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 are too many hunters on the game range and other public lands, so elk stay on private. There needs to be a 420 B tag that is also good in 448 and a separate 448 B tag good only in 448. The 004 B tag needs to be good only on private land in 420 that really drags a lot of hunters into 420 and keeps elk stacked up on private land.

Q7

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

A change in the the hunting of mule deer bucks, the first 9 days are general tag then permit only for antlered MD and a 16 either-sex quota for lions in 418/448/420

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 14, 2022 1:59:06 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 14, 2022 2:01:54 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:47
IP Address: 69.144.177.23

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	bryan w thies
City	CASCADE
State	MT
Email (optional)	montbryan@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 421

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?

elk populations in 421 are to high because access is limited. (like most areas). multiple access is key to moving elk from lands where they receive little or no hunting pressure. More bulls should be harvested.

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 421 is 500 (range 400-600). 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 421, there is a bull objective to maintain more than 5 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season 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?

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:17:48 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:19:19 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:31
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 421

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 421 is 500 (range 400-600). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana’s 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Q5

In HD 421, there is a bull objective to maintain more than 5 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:19:26 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:21:02 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:35
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 422

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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

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Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 422 is 500 (range 450-550). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 422, there is a bull objective to maintain more than 5 bulls:100 cows observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:21:08 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:23:04 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:56
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 424

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-10%). 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) +/- 10%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

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Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 424, 425 and 442 is 2,500 (range 2,250-2,750). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 424, 425 and 442, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 200 brow-tined bulls observed during post-season surveys and maintain 15% of harvested bulls at least 6-years old. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents public hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:23:37 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:25:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:39
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 425

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-10%). 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) +/- 10%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

First we must review the basics:

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Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 424, 425 and 442 is 2,500 (range 2,250-2,750). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 424, 425 and 442, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 200 brow-tined bulls observed during post-season surveys and maintain 15% of harvested bulls at least 6-years old. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:49:30 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:52:16 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:46
IP Address: 205.207.148.62

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Joe Schmechel
City	HELENA
State	Montana
Email (optional)	joe.schmechel@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 426

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 426 is 75. 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 am a landowner in this district. 75 elk is far to low for an objective. This is great habitat capable of sustaining a much larger heard.

Q5

In HD 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

too low

Q6

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

cut bull tags for landowners

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

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

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 3:57:44 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 3:57:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:14
IP Address: 205.207.148.62

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Joseph Schmechel
City	Denton
State	MT
Email (optional)	joe.schmechel@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 426

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 426 is 75. 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 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:25:23 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:27:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:39
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 426

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?

First we must review the basics:

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Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 426 is 75. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#4

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:02:46 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:03:10 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:23
IP Address: 96.31.23.65

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Scott Heidebrink
City	Malta
State	MT
Email (optional)	scott.heidebrink@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 426

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 426 is 75. 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 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

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: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:08:07 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:14:20 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:12
IP Address: 96.31.23.65

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Scott Heidebrink
City	Malta
State	MT
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Page 2: HD 426

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 would allow for more flexibility and more realistic objectives to be set.

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 426 is 75. 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 800-1000. Land ownership has changed in the region and tolerance has increased.

Q5

In HD 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

50 bulls to 100 cows would provide a more quality experience. 1:1 ratio would provide high hunter satisfaction and for easier management since there would be significantly less calves born each year.

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?

Higher objectives and higher bull to cow ratios.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 3:15:38 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 3:56:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:40:56
IP Address: 198.162.78.5

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jess Wagner
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 426

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 look at how other states determine objectives and see if there is a method that makes more sense than 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?

Objective status should be based on a 3 year average so the status isn't as likely to be affected by poor flying/counting conditions which can vary from year to year.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 426 is 75. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The objectives should be increased. There is a lot of farm ground in the HD, but there is also plenty of elk habitat to sustain more than 75 elk. It is clear that the tolerance of elk by some landowners is much higher than it was when the current objectives were set. I would like to see new objectives established that are based more on carrying capacity of the habitat. It is not my place to say what these numbers should be, they should be determined by our professional biologists.

Q5

In HD 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

Yes, I believe the current objective of 30 bulls: 100 cows is 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

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)
Started: Saturday, October 08, 2022 9:14:12 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 9:15:35 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:22
IP Address: 174.234.2.87

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jacob Amerman
City	Park City
State	MT
Email (optional)	Jacob.amerman@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 426

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?

5 year 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?

3 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 426 is 75. 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 should be increased to 500

Q5

In HD 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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 should be increased to 40 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?

We need more block management in this unit

Q7

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

Na

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:54:53 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:56:27 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:34
IP Address: 72.250.159.99

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daniel Kinka on behalf of American Prairie
City	Malta
State	Montana
Email (optional)	daniel@americanprairie.org

Page 2: HD 426

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?

American Prairie questions the utility of "objectives" for elk and any other wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance made decades ago. If FWP and its constituents decide that managing populations solely based upon social carrying capacity is still desirable, the state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans to determine what the true tolerance for elk abundance is amongst its trust beneficiaries under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Under these circumstances, FWP could maintain the current form of objective (+/-20%) but should strive to generate accurate calculations of elk abundance on an annual basis, and not rely on long-term averages. However, we feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

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?

No, it would not be appropriate to use a 3-5 year average of surveys to determine objective status for this hunting district. Such averaging can only reduce the data available by which to make management decisions and reduce the speed with which the agency can and should respond to undesirable trends in wildlife populations (up or down). More and more frequent data should always be the goal, so we recommend using annual survey data to make management decisions.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 426 is 75. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

American Prairie believes the current population objective is too low and should be increased. It does not reflect current tolerance or demand in the region, let alone anything close to the ecological carrying capacity of the region. We question the utility of "objectives" for wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance. The state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans in this hunting district to determine what the true tolerance for elk abundance is. Barring such a survey, we conservatively suggest that resetting the objective in this hunting district to the recent population high of > 350 is appropriate and would benefit the largest number of trust beneficiaries.

Q5

In HD 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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?

American Prairie favors "natural" sex ratios in wildlife populations, but do not feel strongly one way or the other about the bull ratio in this hunting 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?

No, we at American Prairie are not satisfied with the current elk distribution in this hunting district. It does not reflect current tolerance or demand in the region, let alone anything close to the ecological carrying capacity of the public lands in the district, nor those private lands (e.g., American Prairie) with high tolerance for elk. We feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

Q7

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

As a general comment, and particularly in the area that American Prairie operates (throughout the Greater Upper Missouri River Breaks region), we question the utility of “objectives” for elk and any other wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance made decades ago. If FWP and its constituents decide that managing populations solely based upon social carrying capacity is still desirable, the state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans to determine what the true tolerance for wildlife (i.e., elk) abundance is amongst its trust beneficiaries under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. However, we feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 15, 2022 8:30:56 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 15, 2022 8:34:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:42
IP Address: 216.228.49.164

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Justin Schaaf
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State	Montana
Email (optional)	jschaaf71@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 426

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 FWP maintain a fixed number as a population objective with the built in 20%+/- acceptable range.

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 FWP move forward with the prior 3 year average of the biennial surveys used.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 426 is 75. 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 believe the population objective for HD 426 should be increased to 400 elk. Landowner acceptance of elk is far greater now in this HD than it was in 2005. 400 is an acceptable number based on the average over the last few years.

Q5

In HD 426, there is a bull objective to maintain at least 30 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 would like to see the 30:100 bull cow ratio maintained.

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?

Nothing specific comes to mind for this HD.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, July 31, 2022 12:56:22 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, July 31, 2022 1:01:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:45
IP Address: 184.167.51.155

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Tyler Wells
City	Kalispell
State	MT
Email (optional)	tylerrwells@outlook.com

Page 2: HD 441

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 441 is 500 (range 400-600). 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 441, there is a bull objective to maintain 15 bulls: 100 cows observed during post-season 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

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

I would like to see more continuity in management philosophy with district 450. Seems like conversion to general in 450 undermines the long standing limited entry status of 441 given the interchange of animals between the two districts.

I would like to see further LE protection of 441 elk while seasonally inhabiting 450.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:27:09 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:28:45 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:35
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 441

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 441 is 500 (range 400-600). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 441, there is a bull objective to maintain 15 bulls: 100 cows observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#3

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 18, 2022 7:15:07 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 18, 2022 7:15:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:37
IP Address: 216.129.232.141

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Brent Lonner
City	Test

Page 2: HD 441

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 441 is 500 (range 400-600). 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 441, there is a bull objective to maintain 15 bulls: 100 cows observed during post-season 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?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:28:51 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:30:19 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:27
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 442

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-10%). 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) +/- 10%, or some other approach to establish a population objective?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 424, 425 and 442 is 2,500 (range 2,250-2,750). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 424, 425 and 442, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 200 brow-tined bulls observed during post-season surveys and maintain 15% of harvested bulls at least 6-years old. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:48:48 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 12:49:28 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:39
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Steven Stieler
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 442

Q2

Current population objectives are expressed as a desired number of elk counted, and typically include a range around that value (+/-10%). 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) +/- 10%, 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 424, 425 and 442 is 2,500 (range 2,250-2,750). 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 424, 425 and 442, there are bull objectives to maintain at least 200 brow-tined bulls observed during post-season surveys and maintain 15% of harvested bulls at least 6-years old. 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.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:30:54 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:32:57 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:03
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 444

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 444. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q3

In HD 444, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q4

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q5

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 14, 2022 2:03:04 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 14, 2022 2:03:11 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:06
IP Address: 69.144.177.23

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	bryan W thies
City	CASCADE
State	Montana
Email (optional)	montbryan@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 445

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 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 445, there are bull objectives to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 75% brow-tined bulls, while maintaining a diverse age structure. 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

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? 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?

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:33:25 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:35:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:00
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 445

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 445, there are bull objectives to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 75% brow-tined bulls, while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q8

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#3

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 8:13:49 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 8:34:51 AM
Time Spent: 00:21:01
IP Address: 205.169.67.74

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Cole J Dallaserra
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State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 445

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 prefer using the long-term approach understanding that this has been a growing herd and objectives should be adjusted to match averages over the last 5-10 years (~4,000 range)

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 would be more appropriate given the variability. Could also increase the number of surveys conducted on annual basis especially with counts indicate variability and/or #s significantly out of range. More data is appropriate to ensure accuracy/precision.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 the objective should be increased. Based on the graph above, it appears population growth seems to stabilize/slow around the 4,000 mark. Based on the limited information I have, I believe the 4,000 objective is sustainable.

Q5

In HD 445, there are bull objectives to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 75% brow-tined bulls, while maintaining a diverse age structure. 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 is appropriate to maintain the current objective of managing for older age class bulls in the 445/455 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?

Generally speaking, I think the distribution is good. However, I think it may be beneficial if there was a mechanism to increase antlerless harvest in HD 445. Which is mostly an access issue

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? 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?

I think EMP needs to take careful consideration on How

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, September 26, 2022 11:19:26 AM
Last Modified: Monday, September 26, 2022 11:20:51 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:25
IP Address: 69.144.177.23

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	B W T.
City	cascade
State	MT

Page 2: HD 445

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 current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

the elk population should be decreased substantially (in half). Access is key. More permits should be issued for the bear-tooth where access is available. The large ranches that originally agreed to allow public access during the last weeks of the season should be held accountable. Changes in ownership and non-compliance should result in changes in the regulations. Elk are displacing the mule deer to the point that their numbers have declined for the past 30+ years. When do we get a comprehensive Mule deer management plan? Dana ranch and Sieben have not allowed mule deer hunting for years trying to bolster the deer numbers on the ranches, but as long as the elk population is taking over mule deer will suffer. Not hunting mule deer and going to the new bucks only for mule deer is not enough. Perhaps a more liberal elk season for all of the season is in order until elk numbers come back into check. Perhaps 2-3 years of either sex hunting for all 5 weeks. Then the big ranches may be willing to agree to another "Deal" like when the area went to the split season with Bull hunting only by permit the last part of the season. Yes the quality of Big Bulls for the few permit holders has increased but perhaps at the expense of mule deer and those willing to shoot cows?

In HD 445, there are bull objectives to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 75% brow-tined bulls, while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should they be? I think and have seen that there are lots of bulls in district 445. I believe so much so that every available cow is bred each year. Hundreds of Bulls compete for the available cows with little disturbance during September on a number of large ranches. I believe more bull harvest is needed. I know that if someone receives one of the bull permits for the 2nd half of the season in 445 that some of the large ranches have agreed to allow a certain number of those permit holders on their property [(like Sieben, Sterling, Lane, Dana? and a few others} I don't believe that Dana ranch is participating anymore with the current owners}. Could FW&P issue additional bull permits (lets call them b tag Bull permits) for all the other ranches and public lands within 445 that are not part of "the agreement"? Perhaps this would create one of 2 things? 1. Better compliance and/or renewed participation within "the old agreement" or foster new relationships and access to the other remaining landowners for bull elk hunting. We need to allow more bulls to be killed and at least let an elk hunter willing to apply for a B bull permit the opportunity to hunt bull elk within 445 on any access terms he can negotiate himself! Perhaps the bear-tooth WMA could be included in the B bull elk permit area for the last part of the season? This would disperse elk out of the bear-tooth and allow for more public access to the huge herds that often end up on the bear-tooth during the last part of the season.

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

Distribution comes with access for hunters to move available elk!!! This is why I am against putting the whitetail prairie area as part of the bear-tooth WMA. General public Hunters now have access to another elk corridor within the district. The devil kitchen group should be an extension of the policy setting process not 80% anymore as some of the original ranches have retreated from the original agreement. If for some reason the whitetail prairie area is included in 455 the number of bull and cow permits for the WMA should be increased/doubled as the WMA is then larger and should account for the harvest taking place there already.

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

See answer above. More cow permits should be issued for 455 during the last part of the season. By doing the b Bull permits plus additional cow permits for 455 the elk will be better distributed during the later part of the season allowing for more harvest within the BMA and on adjacent lands.

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

The elk management plan needs to include huge consideration for the declining mule deer population being displaced by an over population of elk! We have managed 445 and 455 for elk to long and are over objective. Mule deer populations have declined for 30 years and nothing substantial has been done, other then slight changes to the regulations regarding either sex vs. bucks only. District 455 should be managed for both quality deer and elk hunting! There are too many elk and the mule deer hunting is suffering from it. Since the WMA has for years focused and been managed for elk hunting... let's switch gears and manage for Mule deer the next 5 years and see what changes.???

- FROM elk GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. Maximize general season as primary management tool, reducing the need for additional hunts.
2. Disagreement about population objectives and how they are set and implemented. Maximize public input in setting objectives and maximize local grassroots input.

Mule deer and my contact with new Montana residents.... They want to hunt mule deer over whitetails. And residents are worried and missing the mule deer numbers of the past.

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 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 445, there are bull objectives to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 75% brow-tined bulls, while maintaining a diverse age structure. 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

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? 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?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 4:36:00 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 4:39:13 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:12
IP Address: 198.37.139.236

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Marc Ruyak
City	Remer
State	Minnesota
Email (optional)	Changemyland@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 446

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 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?

I think the same approach should be kept, annual or biennial survey data.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 446 is 950 (range 760-1,140). 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 the population objective should be increased by 1000 to 1950 to provide hunters with the optimal chance for a positive experience and to encourage young hunters to take up hunting.

Q5

In HD 446, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 67 bulls counted 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?

I think the current 7% objective is adequate.

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 the distribution is fine with the increased population target mentioned in the previous questions.

Q7

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

Nothing else.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 15, 2022 7:19:57 AM
Last Modified: Friday, July 15, 2022 7:33:16 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:18
IP Address: 206.127.124.152

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Peter George
City	Helena
State	Mt
Email (optional)	turbo1967@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 446

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**

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Q4

The current population objective for HD 446 is 950 (range 760-1,140). 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

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 446, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 67 bulls counted 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

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

Almost no elk are in the big belt (west side)portion of the district where the public land is

Q7

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

No harvesting cow tags on public land , a better aproch to getting more block management in this district where it needs to be. There is almost no block management here. Maybe a cooperation of smaller private land owners like many other districts have.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:35:31 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:36:54 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:23
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 446

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?

First we must review the basics:

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Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 446 is 950 (range 760-1,140). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 446, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 67 bulls counted 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?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 1:04:14 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 1:04:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:33
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Steven Stieler
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 446

Q2

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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 HD 446 is 950 (range 760-1,140). 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 446, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 67 bulls counted 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?

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.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:37:11 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:38:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:47
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 447

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?

First we must review the basics:

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Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 447 is 700 (range 560-840). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 447, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 75% brow-tined bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:17:50 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:26:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:00
IP Address: 209.180.189.212

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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

Page 2: HD 447

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 population objective for HD 447 is 700 (range 560-840). 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 should be increased, there's 700 elk on some of the private ranches alone and I highly doubt there's anywhere near 700 elk using public land during hunting season in this unit. I'd suggest 2,500-3,000 elk.

Q5

In HD 447, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 75% brow-tined bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I feel the current objective is 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?

No, not at all. About 98% of the elk sit on private ranches and use the public very sparingly. I'd suggest cutting public land hunting pressure immensely. I love this unit and wanted to apply for the archery permit, but the quotas are way too high. Having 400 hunters using 3-4 public access points is ridiculous. I understand that quota was increased by the wildlife commission from what was proposed, but if there's any way to lower it back down to around 200 or less, I'd be very happy with that. I think there also should be much more pressure applied to private. Perhaps no cow hunting on public and unlimited cow hunting on private?

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.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:39:05 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:42:30 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:25
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 448

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 420 and 448 is 1,200 (range 960-1,440). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 448, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, August 27, 2022 7:00:32 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, August 27, 2022 7:05:29 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:57
IP Address: 72.255.135.219

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 448

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?

3 year 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?

3 is good

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 420 and 448 is 1,200 (range 960-1,440). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

1200 antlerless and 240 antlered bull

Q5

In HD 448, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season 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 antlered bull objective should be 20 percent

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 448 B tag needs to be good for 448 and a separate 420 B tag also valid in 448 to control hunter numbers in 420

Q7

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

The lion quota needs to be 16 either-sex in this lion district

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:27:50 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:33:58 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:07
IP Address: 209.180.189.212

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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

Page 2: HD 448

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 population objective for HDs 420 and 448 is 1,200 (range 960-1,440). 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'd like to see the objective increased to 2,500.

Q5

In HD 448, there is a bull objective that at least 5% of the total elk counted are bulls during post-season 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 at least a 20:100 bull to cow ratio.

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 in this unit seems adequate due to the high percentage of public land.

Q7

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

I think the questions above have covered my concerns for this unit.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:42:36 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:44:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:32
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 450

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 450 is 75-100. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 450, there is a bull objective to maintain 25-35 bulls observed during post-season surveys and that at least 15 are brow-tined bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, September 19, 2022 9:34:44 AM
Last Modified: Monday, September 19, 2022 9:40:26 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:42
IP Address: 161.7.39.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daniel L Frazer
City	CHOTEAU
State	Montana
Email (optional)	dfraz88@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 450

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?

Use whatever the wildlife biologist recommends.

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?

Use whatever the wildlife biologist recommends.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 450 is 75-100. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The population objective is way too low and should be raised to what what the biologist recommends or to current trends since the landscape can clearly handle the elk. An objective of 500 -1000 seems more appropriate.

Q5

In HD 450, there is a bull objective to maintain 25-35 bulls observed during post-season surveys and that at least 15 are brow-tined bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Use whatever the wildlife biologist recommends.

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 elk live on large ranches off limits to the public so the more elk the higher the chance they move off the private.

Q7

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

Use whatever the wildlife biologist recommends since they are trained to come up with objectives instead of what the public or landowners want. All decisions should be based in science not opinion.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 02, 2022 12:07:14 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 02, 2022 12:40:30 AM
Time Spent: 00:33:15
IP Address: 174.199.44.34

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jeff Schritz
City	Townsend
State	Montana
Email (optional)	336in07@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 451

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?

Area objectives are trivial in this HD. Elk numbers will only be affected by the hunt management of the Catlin Ranch and a few other large ranches.

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 experience (9 years) observing elk in this HD. The population number is directly related to available irrigated farm ground. If there isnt any green alfalfa the elk just head over the hill to Willsaw.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Again, I've only been watching elk in this HD for 9 years. It seems the either sex rule really put a damper on the herd numbers. Once those cows figured out they were fair game too they just taught the herd to stay over the hill on the CA where they don't get mowed down by the retards shooting from the road.

Q5

In HD 451, 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 personally do not see any benefit for public hunters if a bull objective is implemented in this HD. There simply is not sufficient public access for those who draw to reap the benefit. It will only result in boosting the hunt quality for outfitter clients and friends/family of landowners. As it stands, the current group of landowners could easily implement their own "unofficial" bull objective with much better results. Managing this area for bulls with public funds would be a waste of resources.

Q6

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

This HD basically revolves around the hunting management practices of the Catlin Ranch. Very little huntable public ground opportunities exist for the public. The Token BMA on the south eastern edge of the HD serves as a defacto game fence to keep the local elk herd on Black Butte. Any management objective will only be successful if the Catlin Ranch buys in. I say leave it how it is, and put more focus on areas with better public access.

Q7

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

Leave it alone. Gault runs the show anyway...

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:44:15 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:45:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:35
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 451

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

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Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

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

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, August 07, 2022 10:25:10 AM
Last Modified: Sunday, August 07, 2022 10:39:21 AM
Time Spent: 00:14:10
IP Address: 73.178.34.139

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Todd Timbrook
City	Linwood
State	NJ
Email (optional)	TimbrookTodd@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 451

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?

5 year average +/- 20%

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 is best. Weather conditions can negatively affect aerial counts some years

Q4

The current population objective for HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

For HD 452 the objective number of elk should be increased. The opportunities for mature bulls is not a great as other areas and the shoulder season, especially in August, is nothing more than a slaughter that reflects poorly on sportsmen

Q5

In HD 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

Moving to brow tine bulls in 452 is a start. No other restrictions needed

Q6

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

If you want to find elk you have to put in the effort. Distribution is fine

Q7

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

I would like to understand why in 452 the objective is so low at 600. Should be double that amount. The Plan should clearly spell out the science behind the objectives!

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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?

Same as 451 comments

Q9

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?

Same as 451 comments

Q10

The current population objective for HD 452 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?

The population should be increased to double current objective from 2005. The National forest is huge and can support many more elk. What's the science behind the 2005 low numbers. Out of state hunters pay high fees for an opportunity to get a license. The opportunity to harvest a mature bull is not as great as in other regions with more of a herd. Increase the objective to at least 1000 head. Should season has screwed up archery in August and is can be slaughter in February.

Q11

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Increase the number of mature bulls consistent with increasing overall population increase

Q12

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

Yes

Q13

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

Spell out the science behind the "objective" in the region and make sure it's updated at minimum every 10 years

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 08, 2022 1:28:12 PM
Last Modified: Monday, August 08, 2022 1:39:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:11:13
IP Address: 104.129.205.100

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 451

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 use long term averages, only true predictor. The population objective needs to increase though, 600 is way too LOW a count. This region easily supports over 1,000 and way more than 30 bulls.

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 population objective for HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 area should have 500 plus animals.

Q5

In HD 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

Bull objective of 20 to 1 with a 6x6 minimum. Great genetics in this area, just too many young bulls killed.

Q6

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

just need more head, then the distribution will take care of itself.

Q7

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

Get rid of the shoulder seasons.

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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?

Longer average.

Q9

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

Q10

The current population objective for HD 452 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 1,200. This was the population a few years ago and the terrain can easily handle this many elk or more. Stop letting the cattle farmers dictate wildlife numbers.

Q11

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season 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 area should have 50 bulls

Q12

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

Currently yes, but not if only 600. That number is way too low.

Q13

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

Stop the shoulder season and go to a 6x6 rule for harvesting bulls. Great genetics, way too many young bulls killed though. Also need to do a better job of stopping the 4 wheelers that sneak in through private ground and ride into the forest service land.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:45:57 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:49:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:01
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
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Page 2: HD 451

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 year

Q4

The current population objective for HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including "the air, running water, the sea and its shore." The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. "When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A "trophy" fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Q5

In HD 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q7

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana’s 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

Q9

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?

6 years

Q10

The current population objective for HD 452 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?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q11

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q12

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q13

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

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 1:04:55 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 1:05:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:52
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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Page 2: HD 451

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 HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 451, 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.

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.

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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.

Q9

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.

Q10

The current population objective for HD 452 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?

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.

Q11

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season 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 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.

Q12

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.

Q13

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.

#5

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, August 20, 2022 8:36:42 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, August 20, 2022 8:42:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:17
IP Address: 72.255.182.16

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Joanne Cummins
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State	MT
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Page 2: HD 451

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 the objective raised to 800-1200. The 5% bull ratio would be okay with the higher objective. I would like to see the increase because so many hold up on private land that is untouchable to hunters that do not pay for a guide.

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 would be more appropriate

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, 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?

Page 3: HD 452

Q8 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?

Q9 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?

Q10 Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 452 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?

Q11

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q12

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?

Q13

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: Saturday, August 20, 2022 8:42:14 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, August 20, 2022 8:50:17 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:02
IP Address: 72.255.182.16

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Joanne Cummins
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State	MT
Email (optional)	willjocummins@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 451

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 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, 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?

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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 the desired number increased to 900-1200 due to the number of elk on private land that are not available to hunters who can not pay for guide service

Q9

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 three year average would give a better determination of the count

Q10

The current population objective for HD 452 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 800-1200

Q11

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

5% with a higher count would be okay. Cows are okay and need more harvesting

Q12

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?

Q13

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

Allow two cow tags or 1 bull tag but not both.

#7

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:38:43 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:46:01 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:18
IP Address: 174.198.136.88

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	John Daggett
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State	MT
Email (optional)	jdaggett435@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 451

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?

Here again, it seems like a longer term would be better but maybe it would not let FWP respond fast enough to population dips.

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 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 the objective should be increased but I'm not sure how much. Seems like 400-500 may improve the hunting on public land.

Q5

In HD 451, 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 think there should be a bull objective. 10 percent might be ok.

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 have not hunted this HD for awhile but when I did, elk were be harbored on leased hunting operations.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

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

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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?

Q9

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?

Q10

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 452 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?

Q11

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q12

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?

Q13

Respondent skipped this question

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

#8

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:46:34 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:46:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:16
IP Address: 174.198.136.88

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	John E Daggett
City	Glasgow
State	MT
Email (optional)	jdaggett435@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 451

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 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, 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?

Page 3: HD 452

Q8 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?

Q9 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?

Q10 Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 452 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?

Q11

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q12

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?

Q13

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: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:47:14 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:55:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:24
IP Address: 174.198.136.88

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	John E Daggett
City	Glasgow
State	MT
Email (optional)	jdaggett435@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 451

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 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, 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?

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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 seems like a long term average might be better but would it not tie your hands if the population dipped.

Q9

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 more I think about this, I'm not sure?

Q10

The current population objective for HD 452 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?

I thinkd 600 is too low. Again, most to the elk have been driven off of public land. Perhaps 1000-1100 would be closer to the habitat just basing it off of what is there now. The landowners seem to like it because alot of the elk are on them and it is very difficult to find access unless you pay.

Q11

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season surveys. 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 for the current population of 5% is way too low.

Q12

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 the elk are on private outfitted lands.

Q13

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

Option of going to an antlerless and spike season to reach population goals if the population exceeds the objective like it does now.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 7:32:20 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 7:37:26 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:06
IP Address: 107.77.221.18

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Sean Hoernke
City	Montgomery
State	Tx
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Page 2: HD 451

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?

Do not Change

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?

Do not Change

Q4

The current population objective for HD 451 is 275 (range 220-330). 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 451, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

30:100

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. The elk are all on private. There needs to be more public access available to private lands. There is a way to accomplish this. If private land owners are so concerned about elk then they can give more public access through programs. If not then we can conclude they are looking for more money if only selling tags to highest bidders. Work together to find a solution but that solution includes public access. You can't have your cake and eat it too.

Q7

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

More public access to private. Increase herd objectives

Page 3: HD 452

Q8

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?

Do not change

Q9

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?

do not change

Q10

The current population objective for HD 452 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

Q11

In HD 452, there is a bull objective to maintain a minimum of 30 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys, or a minimum of 5% bulls among the total number of elk observed during post-season 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 problem is elk on private. More public access to private is the solutions. If private ranchers have a problem with elk then they should be willing to allow some public access to solve the problem. The reality is they want more tags to sell to make more money. There should be a joint solutions to this issue.

Q12

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

To much elk on private. more public access

Q13

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 2:38:15 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 2:46:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:18
IP Address: 174.204.2.113

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Will
City	Bozeman
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 455

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 population objectives in this area will never be reached directly because of accessibility. The beartooth (455) is the only public are in the two areas that is even hunt able. Increase cow tags and that area and it will just push the elk back onto private where no one can hunt.....

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. Increase tags and see if it cuts the herd down. Doubt it will be effective at all because of access.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 herd is out of control and will remain that way until the big three ranches (Dana, Seiben, and Lanes) provide more access.

Q5

In HD 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Appropriate. Don't fix what's not broken... shoot more 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?

Access. Hunters need access....

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Yes. Let the herd eat every ounce of grass in 445 and then watch the ranchers bitch because they won't let people get access to hunt...

Q8

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

The slim access to the public.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 20, 2022 10:09:38 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 20, 2022 10:24:05 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:27
IP Address: 174.204.0.182

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Brandon Gould
City	Ulm
State	MT
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Page 2: HD 455

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 scientifically speaking a long term average would provide a better basis for statistics to reduce the chance for outliers in a smaller sample that might be the result of weather, fire, pressure on surrounding districts or other factors.

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?

As above, populations should also be based on a larger sample set of several years rather than possible outliers.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 believe the population objective should be maintained, in the interest of keeping enough elk to hunt, while also not over stocking in the event of a bad winter as winter range seems to be a limiting factor in ecological as well as social carrying capacity.

Q5

In HD 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I believe the current objective is appropriate, there are many brow-tined bulls in this area, even if they are admittedly lower quality 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

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

I am satisfied with the elk distribution in 455, the current level of hunting pressure does not seem to limit distribution in this area. 445 does seem to suffer greatly from poor distribution of legal elk (likely access related) that leads to hunter frustration. Many hunters, myself included know how difficult access to legal elk (cows) becomes in the second half of the season, while seeing brow-tined bulls yarded up together that know they are safe while the cows concentrate in inaccessible areas due to terrain (open country) or legal access.

Q8

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

The key factor in 455 is maintaining LIMITED elk hunting pressure, around the level it is currently. The HD is small enough that a large increase over current levels will likely lead to degradation of hunt quality right now. A 35,000 acre parcel can only host so many hunters at one time before everyone suffers from a poor experience and low harvest rates or poor elk distribution. Keep 455 a quality experience by keeping hunter numbers around where they are currently and rely on the addition of a 2nd cow elk on a general tag to up harvest rates without harming distribution.

#3

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 8:31:45 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 8:32:27 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:41
IP Address: 69.145.117.121

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mike Mann
City	Great falls
State	Mt
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Page 2: HD 455

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 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. 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

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? 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?

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, August 08, 2022 4:10:33 PM
Last Modified: Monday, August 08, 2022 4:20:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:26
IP Address: 174.215.18.140

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Marvin Drake
City	HELENA
State	Montana
Email (optional)	mdrake108@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 455

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 fine

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?

Current methodology is fine

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Current methodology is fine

Q5

In HD 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Current methodology is fine

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. Pressure in cottonwood creek from people hunting 445 in the whitetail acquisition pushes elk off the game range. The entire game range needs to be part of 455. Its ridiculous this has not been changed. Try camping on that tiny L shaped piece of BLM in cottonwood. Its a cluster.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

No. Pressure in cottonwood creek from people hunting 445 in the whitetail acquisition pushes elk off the game range. The entire game range needs to be part of 455. Its ridiculous this has not been changed. Try camping on that tiny L shaped piece of BLM in cottonwood. Its a cluster.

Q8

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

Make the entire game range part of 455. Keeping the whitetail acquisition in 445 when the majority disagree is malpractice. This obvious pander to a connected few people has made me lose faith in the entire process and FWP.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 12, 2022 10:13:48 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 12, 2022 10:22:23 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:34
IP Address: 161.7.84.19

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mathew Deaton
City	Helena
State	MT

Page 2: HD 455

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?

3 year average

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 should be increased. the ranches in 445 profit immensely off this herd during the hunting season and the spring from shed antler collection. there is no reason this objective shouldnt be increased. how much is hard to say without knowing more details about the distribution of the herd from the game range and private outside of hunting season. looking at 2013-2020 it seems the herd was relatively steady so maybe 3300-4200 would be an appropriate objective with tight constraints if the population falls above or below.

Q5

In HD 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

yes. i think the current objective maintains excellent opportunity in the 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?

yes

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

yes

Q8

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

do whatever it can to maintain public opportunity to harvest bulls in 445 on "whitetail prairie". do not allow this to be added to 455. if it is i would support a 445 bull permit with no general harvest allowed just to spite the hells kitchen working group.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:50:05 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:51:57 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:51
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 455

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?

First we must review the basics:

Rooted in Roman law, the public trust doctrine recognizes the public right to many natural resources including “the air, running water, the sea and its shore.” The public trust doctrine requires the sovereign, or state, to hold in trust designated resources for the benefit of the people.

AND Montana's 1972 Constitution: Article IX, Section 4, Cultural Resources: The legislature shall provide for the identification, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, preservation, and administration of scenic, historic, archeologic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas, sites, records and objects, and for their use and enjoyment by the people.

Article IX Section 7. Preservation of harvest heritage. The opportunity to harvest wild fish and wild game animals is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state and does not create a right to trespass on private property or diminution of other private rights.

Economics often solves problems, in America. “When Private Property is used in the business of charging sportsmen for the harvest of wildlife under the Public Trust Doctrine, THEN the private property will be taxed as recreation property and not Agricultural property.

OR, A “trophy” fee [for the FWP budget] will be charged for any wildlife harvested on Private Property [or public property without public access] generates income for a private property owner. e.g. elk \$5000 per head, deer & antelope \$1000 per head, etc.

The Objective should be to manage wildlife in relationship to the habitat.

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?

6 year

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q5

In HD 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefore reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q6

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q8

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, October 04, 2022 5:45:14 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, October 04, 2022 5:52:29 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:14
IP Address: 107.127.39.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Anthony Graber
City	Fairfield
State	Montana
Email (optional)	grabertony2000@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 455

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 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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

In HD 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Yes. For a special draw tag I think objective should be a little higher maybe 70%

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 really. It seems a lot of the elk spend most of there time on private because of hunters camping in there travel corridors

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? 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?

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 15, 2022 8:35:56 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 15, 2022 8:39:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:51
IP Address: 216.228.49.164

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Justin Schaaf
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State	Montana
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Page 2: HD 455

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 FWP maintain the fixed number as a population objective with the built in 20%+/- range.

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 FWP use a 3 year average of the biennial surveys to establish the population when determining objective status.

Q4

The current population objective for HDs 445 and 455 is 2,200 (range 1,760-2,640). 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 believe the population objective should be increased to 4500.

Q5

In HD 455, there is a bull objective to provide a bull harvest comprised of at least 60% brow-tined bulls while maintaining a diverse age structure. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I believe the bull objective should be maintained in this HD.

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.

Q7

Are you satisfied with the current elk distribution across both HDs 445 and 455? If not, would you suggest any specific objectives to address the distribution?

Nothing comes to mind.

Q8

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

Nothing comes to mind.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:52:08 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 2:53:17 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:09
IP Address: 69.145.223.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Randall Knowles
City	Great Falls
State	Montana
Email (optional)	KnowlesMontana@Juno.com

Page 2: HD 471

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 471. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

By Definition, the current elk herd objective is represented by the current size: IT represents hunter access, private property tolerance, and habitat support.

Q3

In HD 471, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

From the Region 4 data; the bull to cow ratio seems to determine herd size; 5 per 100 vs. 15 / 100 vs. 30 / 100 cows; therefor reducing the bulls should reduce the over all herd size.

Q4

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

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

Q5

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

Arizona found that poly wire, coated with molasses, is effective in keeping elk out of a field.

Why hasn't the MSU extension Service Wildlife Specialist, Dr. Jared Beaver, been involved in the Process?

It is hard to make comments on a hunting district without knowing what management tools are currently being used, which includes damage hunts, damage complaints, hay stack fencing etc.

Areas where FWP has Wildlife Management Areas – seems to have fewer management problems.

Areas with a large percentage of public land seem to have fewer management problems.

If elk herd size MUST be reduced, then the bull ratio should be reduced to 5/100 cows until objective is met.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:02:52 AM
Last Modified: Friday, August 26, 2022 10:18:24 AM
Time Spent: 00:15:32
IP Address: 96.31.23.65

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Scott Heidebrink
City	Malta
State	MT
Email (optional)	scott.heidebrink@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 471

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 471. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

No. surveys should be conducted and elk populations should be increased. The objective should be 200-300. A small elk population could reduce some of the pressure in high pressure areas by giving hunters more options.

Q3

In HD 471, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

The Bull to cow ratio should be 1:1. This unit could provide a high quality, highly desirable hunt for hunters.

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?

An objective and a high bull to cow ratio.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:56:33 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 4:59:55 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:21
IP Address: 72.250.159.99

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daniel Kinka on behalf of American Prairie
City	Malta
State	Montana
Email (optional)	daniel@americanprairie.org

Page 2: HD 471

Q2

There is currently no population objective in HD 471. Is this acceptable? If not, what should it be?

No, it is unacceptable. We question the utility of “objectives” for wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance. The state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans in this hunting district to determine what the true tolerance for elk abundance is. Barring such a survey, we conservatively suggest that resetting the objective in this hunting district to the recent population high is appropriate and would benefit the largest number of trust beneficiaries.

Q3

In HD 471, there is no bull objective. Is this appropriate in this HD? If you would like to have a bull objective, what should it be?

American Prairie favors “natural” sex ratios in wildlife populations, but do not feel strongly one way or the other about the bull ratio in this hunting district.

Q4

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 at American Prairie are not satisfied with the current elk distribution in this hunting district. It does not reflect current tolerance or demand in the region, let alone anything close to the ecological carrying capacity of the public lands in the district, nor those private lands (e.g., American Prairie) with high tolerance for elk. We feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

Q5

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

As a general comment, and particularly in the area that American Prairie operates (throughout the Greater Upper Missouri River Breaks region), we question the utility of “objectives” for elk and any other wildlife that are based solely on subjective and unscientific assumptions about tolerance made decades ago. If FWP and its constituents decide that managing populations solely based upon social carrying capacity is still desirable, the state should commission a scientific survey representative of all Montanans to determine what the true tolerance for wildlife (i.e., elk) abundance is amongst its trust beneficiaries under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. However, we feel that (re)focusing elk management on distribution over abundance would be a fruitful and mutually beneficial course of action for FWP. On public lands and wherever tolerance for elk is high, FWP should manage towards ecological carrying capacity. On private lands where tolerance is low and/or crop depredation/property damage is measurable and verifiable, appropriate and sufficient actions should be taken to redistribute elk to areas of higher tolerance.

From: [Dan G](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] comments for elk management plan revision
Date: Friday, June 24, 2022 11:22:03 AM

Hello,

I'm writing to provide comments regarding the upcoming elk management plan. In general, there are a couple issues, I believe, that are causing our management headaches.

First are the objectives; they're outdated and not reflective of the carrying capacity nor social tolerance. We need hunters, landowners, and outfitters to all come together and determine new, realistic objectives. Take a unit like 700 or 704, when those objectives were created, those elk herds were just starting to develop. There's hundreds of thousands of acres of public land, but the objectives are so low that hitting those numbers would make even finding an elk a difficult task at best.

Second, we need to ease hunting pressure on public land to get the elk to come off private property. Our tradition of an 11 week hunting season may be too much with today's trends of people hunting longer and harder than ever before, with tons of new age technology. This has trained the elk to head for the ranch as soon as hunting season hits.

I think we need to take a lesson from Wyoming, where their approach is less is more. Their seasons are shorter to encourage elk to stay on public land and the result is double or triple the success rates of Montana.

What drives me crazy is how we allocate tags and hunting pressure unit wide when, in some units, nearly all the elk sit on private land. Take unit 411 for example, we set tag quotas based off the 6,000+ elk in the unit. However, 99% of those elk sit on private land and 95% of the hunting pressure is on public land, killing or chasing off the last few remaining public land elk. Doing this season in and season out has all but guaranteed the elk stay on private year round. I'd much rather see us drastically cut tags on public and make private land-only unlimited cow tags to disperse the elk back onto public land.

Another way to better disperse hunting pressure would be to follow what Idaho did by capping their non-residents by unit. Right now, the vast majority of the 17,000+ NR hunters head to central and SW MT, where in the past many would also head to NW MT. This causes crowding issues and contributes to elk being pushed off public land in these popular units. If we make NR choose their units and cap them, like Idaho did recently, it'd be a positive step in getting the elk back onto public land.

I also think it'd be wise to coordinate the deer and elk seasons so they're not running simultaneously and pressuring animals onto private land.

These are my main points of contention that I'd like to see addressed in the upcoming elk management plan revision.

Dan Gagner
Helena, MT

From: [Ralph Willmore](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk management
Date: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 4:03:42 PM

As I sat in the elk management meeting in lewistown just listening to what had to be said, I am not much of a talker but more of a do person, so while I am sitting in a tractor I have plenty of time to do thinking, my name is Ralph Willmore and I live North of Roy Montana, in hunting district 417, my dad was born in a homestead shack here in the breaks and live a good 98 years, and I am probably older than most of you people that work for fwp, I own land in 410 and 417 and have some in enrolled in block management, so here I go, your elk management plan is bullshit, cause you will never address the problem, oh what's the problems?? People, so when you start to manage the people that are causing the problems than nothing will ever be change, I no you can't stop big money from buying, but you can stop a lot of this land locking, And do you really think when your board of commissions are mostly Outfitters that they are going to look out for the good old sportman, Your full of shit, #1 Outfitters need to be a employee of the state of Montana and draw a wage just like you, that would open up a lot of this public ground that's behind lock gates, the game belongs to the state and the people of the state not a Outfitter that's making a big profit from it, that the rest of the people can't Outfitters are not there for the people they are there for the money and that it, Outfitters need to go knock on the door just like everyone else, #2 big rich land owners, how in the hell do they just up and get tags just given to them. Must be some big ass kissing going on that the public don't no about, and why wasn't I just given tags for letting people hunt, what's that word discrimination ' And when when Sonja Andersen sets there and tell the people that the elk population was almost wipe out in the breaks, I am still trying to figure when that was, ?? So may blow all the smoke you want but Nothing will change until tell you deal with problems. And everything thing I said here, I want you to come tell me that I am wrong. Cause I bet you can't, Thank you. Ralph willmore. 2350 Birdwell Lane Roy mt 59471. 406-366-1556
Sent from my iPad

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

Allen Schallenberger
53 Elser Lane
Sheridan, MT 59749-9604
Oct. 1, 2022

RECEIVED

OCT 6 2022

Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
Wildlife Bureau

Elk Plan Comments 2022
MT FWP Wildlife Management Div.
P. O. 200701
Helena, MT 59601-0701

There are many problems with elk in Montana which could be better addressed, and hopefully this new plan will get the job done. House Bill 42 passed by the 2003 Montana Legislature requires FWP "to manage elk, deer and antelope populations at a number that does not adversely affect Montana land. Calculations of "sustainable numbers shall consider the specific concerns of private landowners" and "average carrying capacity and use generally accepted animal unit factors for each species in each commission region". Information quoted is from the 2005 FWP elk management plan page 46.

History shows MT FWP has unfortunately moved away from habitat-based management. I make that statement based on growing up on Montana ranches, getting a BS in wildlife management from SDSC, Brookings, SD, 1963 and a M.S. in wildlife management from Montana State University, Bozeman 1965 with many graduate and senior level range management courses as electives, work with wildlife research beginning in 1961 in the Black Hills of South Dakota and in 1963 in Montana. In 1964-65 I did the second bighorn sheep research in Montana. In 1965, I became the first wildlife management biologist stationed on the Rocky Mountain Front, Helena to Canada and was a management biologist for 10 years. Then I did five years of intensive grizzly bear research in the same area. In late 1979, my wife and I started from scratch a successful cattle ranching operation in foothills and mountains of Sweet Grass and Park Counties and did that for 10 years. I was a general outfitter for 20 years beginning in Park County 1988 and from a Sheridan, MT area base starting in spring 1990 till the business was sold in 2009. I have also done a lot of reading on wildlife management and research in paper reports and on computers over the years and keep up on issues.

In the 1940's 1950's and 1960's most of the wildlife management biologists had a farming or ranching background which helped them understand wildlife range and forage competition. That is no longer true for most wildlife professors in Montana, for wildlife management biologists, game wardens, wildlife research biologists and wildlife administrators who often have town and city backgrounds. It seems that elk and deer management began to decline when computer modeling with poor inputs on available forage, food habits, competition among wildlife species and with livestock were not considered as well as accurate winter range locations for the competing ungulates. Instead, bureaucrats choose your deer or elk season plug-in lists and lack of analytical report writing by biologists on the ground provided bad decisions for FWP and the public. History reporting is important as is the ability to respond in a timely manner to problems. We are getting neither. In 2005 the plan stated it would be updated every six years. It looks likely the update may be done in 18 years.

The basis for scientific wildlife management begins with a university education generally including a master's degree for most biologist jobs in Montana. In areas with considerable grasslands, range management courses are important, but most biologists don't get that in the standard wildlife curriculum. In areas with lots of conifer forests some forestry knowledge is needed, along with fire history, Indian management of forests with fires and prescribed fire benefits are all necessary for understanding how to better improve wildlife forage and habitat. Again, that is often lacking in standard wildlife curriculums. The best reference I have ever read on wildlife vegetation management by Indians is America's Ancient Forests, From the Ice Age to the Age of Discovery by Thomas M. Bonnicksen Ph.D. 2000, 594 pp. The Montana Shooting Sports Association asked me to analyze the Montana wildlife curriculums about 15 years ago and I have done it again this year. In looking at wildlife management curriculums, I noted many trendy professors often included some information on the climate change religion in their courses. They probably like the federal grants attached to that subject.

Recently I read a report on how wildlife biologists were reporting and storing wildlife location data. Most are now using accurate GPS location data and storing that in computer files. Some are only recording their aerial observations and not their ground observations. Both are important for history of land use by wild ungulates over time. That is especially true if the locations involve thousands of elk. Biologists who accurately record and analyze locations have valuable records for

habitat and vegetation use. Satellite collars on elk are nice but expensive for most elk management decisions. Also, the location data must be analyzed and reported frequently to the Dept. and the public, so they are aware of changes in land use occurring by the big game animals. Some of the land use changes may be caused by hunting season disturbance, by animals finding irrigated hay lands, by landowner land closures to hunters, and by wolves moving elk from former wildlife management areas and other public land habitat in several areas of Montana. Low elk populations in FWP Region 1 have been well documented. Habitat and predation problems need work there.

An elk is a very tough range competitor and probably only a wild horse or a wild bison are comparable in that ability. Bighorn sheep are like domestic sheep in that both can easily die when they are stressed in winter. Keeping elk and bighorn numbers at a sustainable level for the range is very important for areas such as the Sun River. Bighorn die-offs occurred there in 1925 with severe cattle competition on Sun River Canyon winter ranges for bighorn sheep. Cattle grazing the upper Sun River area were removed when Gibson Dam was completed in 1929. Elk numbers increased on the National Forest and more bighorn sheep die-offs occurred in the 1930's and then not again until 1984. During the 1960's and 1970's the elk numbers were kept low on bighorn winter ranges which were often old burns with bunchgrass and browse. Bighorn populations were generally less than 600 for the several wintering locations. They were kept that low with hunting for mostly rams and transplanting bighorns to other areas. All bighorn wintering areas had forage utilization transects and use level of bunchgrass species and common browse species was known. Also, competition with horses and cattle was recorded and horses were removed from one important forest service winter range.

Starting in the mid 1970's elk populations were allowed to build on bighorn winter ranges. The bighorn population was allowed to build also and 900 head were counted before the die-off in 1984. The same thing occurred again in 2010 and 933 bighorns were counted that year before the die-off. Current elk populations are at least 2,000 more in the Teton River to Highway 200 in the Dearborn than they were in the 1960's and 1970's when there were lots of mule deer. The current biologist cannot understand why mule deer winter populations are so low in the Teton River to Sun River area. Historically there were about 50 elk in that area of the Rocky Mountain Front in winter. Now 589 elk are counted there. The old burns

and aspen patches which were very important for wild ungulates are mostly being converted to conifers through succession.

Elk population plans in Montana have never considered what several years of drought in a row do to forage production and utilization. Ranchers balance their livestock numbers with the forage to avoid harming the land and vegetation. FWP does not do that. If low calf production is occurring due to poor forage conditions the Dept. often cuts back on the elk harvest so they can count more animals to please sportsmen. That is a practice which will cause long-term range deterioration. Having one plant ecologist in FWP Region 3, who checks the many wildlife management areas for range deterioration with permanent Daubenmire plots every 10 years, is not good enough for optimum forage management and wildlife land management. In 2006 a capable retired wildlife manager had to be brought in from Billings to the Sun River Wildlife Management Area to tell the local managers what was wrong with the deteriorated elk range and elk populations using it. The persons in charge did not have the necessary vegetation management background.

History has shown that the most worthwhile improvements to elk management often occur at the field biologist level and at the highest FWP Dept. levels in Helena. Management could be improved at the biologist level if they analyzed their work every couple of years and picked the top five priorities to improve elk habitat and management. That should be backed with careful data analysis and reporting. All the region biologists should then meet with the regional game manager and come up with the top 5 priorities for funding and action in the region. From experience, I know that discussing FWP has problems will not be popular in administration offices. The public should be kept informed of the problems as they will probably have important suggestions also. Since the Dept. is in the elk management business reviewing and taking necessary action on the problems should be helpful. Sometimes there is a tendency in government offices to coast along and avoid controversy.

Allen Schallenberger



cc: Lesley Robinson, FW Commission Chair, Quentin Kujala, FWP Chief of Staff, Warren Hansen, Game Manager FWP Region 3, Dean Waltee wildlife management biologist Sheridan, Gary Marbut, Montana Shooting Sports Association



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

From: tricityinc@aol.com
To: [FWP Wildlife](#); tricityinc@aol.com; vinceluparell@hotmail.com; 406rpoceing@gmail.com; terryehardt48@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] elk management 410
Date: Friday, October 14, 2022 11:15:25 AM

To whom it may concern

My name is Brad Lencioni. I'm a fourth-generation sportsman of this great State. I have been involved in hunting and fishing my whole life and have made a living as a taxidermist and meat processor and landowner. I currently own a ranch in 410 and have been taking care of another ranch there also since 2018. when first seeing this area for hunting elk in 18 it was absolutely incredible. Since 18, the hunting has gotten worse every year. I realize with the drought and water shortage this has been a major issue since last year's elk calf to cow ratio that I observed in our area was less than 20%. In 18, the elk number was close to 3800 animals, that means there were approximately 3000 cows having calves under the best of conditions. This year's count was roughly 2700 with 1800 cows having calves under some of the worst conditions in the history of the unit. my counted calf numbers are right at 30 calves per 100 cows.... that is a historically very low number. I realized that there are many landowners out there that are having tough times with the grasshoppers and the drought.

There are 2 major economic factors that keep the communities of Roy, Winnett, Lewistown, and Grass range alive...these are agriculture and hunting. I understand from a landowner perspective that elk are the competition, but most landowners that are for lower elk numbers are in the block management program and receive a nice check because of it. Lower elk numbers mean less hunters which in turn means less money for all.

I would like to suggest keeping the elk objective number between 2700-3500 elk. Let's use a means of handling small landowner concerns on a case-by-case basis and not hurt the whole unit because of a couple small problems,,,,,fencing, using sportsmen volunteers to haze, crop compensation, damage hunts, etc. Please look at 2018 when the elk numbers were at an all-time high, and i think you'll find that there weren't many landowner issues back then. Thank you so more for your time in this matter.

From: tricityinc@aol.com
To: [FWP Wildlife](#); tricityinc@aol.com; vinceluparell@hotmail.com; 406rpoceing@gmail.com; terryehardt48@gmail.com
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From: [Trevor Larson](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk season proposals
Date: Sunday, August 21, 2022 7:25:46 AM

Overall I find the areas I hunt 413/448 and big hole areas the elk numbers have been consistent and decent numbers. Obviously as a hunter we want more elk, but we also want the opportunity to hunt every year and be able to hunt both archery and rifle season.

If a district is below objectives, then limit tags or weapon type until populations stabilize. Otherwise I like the set up currently in place.

Thank you,

Trevor Larson

Sent from my phone

From: [Buck Thompson](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk numbers
Date: Monday, October 17, 2022 7:05:17 AM

As a landowner in the great state of Montana I have witnessed the last 3 years of drought and grasshoppers destroying our crops, which have dropped our elk numbers significantly.

The communities of Winnett, Roy and Lewistown rely heavily on agriculture and hunting. As hunters we spend a lot of money at the stores restaurants seed companies and equipment companies.

The elk numbers in 410 have dropped significantly since 2018 and now you are wanting to lower them even more. Your objective number of 2100 is not based on anything except a number that someone apparently just made up. We certainly have not seen anything close to that in 2 years.

I understand that certain members of the community have issues with the elk destroying their crops. These same people also benefit from the hunting that they get paid for from the state for use of their land. I say we address any problems as they happen and we all work together to solve the problems as they arise.

We need our elk numbers higher so that when we have such bad conditions as we have for the last 3 years we can keep our numbers in check.

Thank you for your consideration,

William Buck Thompson
8311 Dovetail Road
Winnett, MT 59087

501-944-0961

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kevin M. Kepler](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#); [KC Walsh](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Management Public Scoping Comments - Suspense 15 Oct - Specific to 411/535
Date: Monday, September 26, 2022 3:30:56 PM
Attachments: [elk_management Public Comment KK 9.26.22.pdf](#)

I respectfully submit the attached Document and respectfully request you take time to look at your scientific data and statistics derived from your MT FWP site

The statistics clearly show an increase in elk hunters and hunter days - a GREATER Proportion of Hunter success to the ratio of hunters (NOT DECREASE if we had over crowding as "perceived") and an even Greater increase in Elk Population Growth exponential to both hunters and success.

For hunter heritage legacy to the "typical" DYI and traditional hunter (father/son/daughter/grandson/granddaughter) please let us hunt elk with ease and simplicity and opportunity !

Again - I respectfully request you to take time to read the attached document and statistics. I stand by to answer any questions via email or phone (Traveling 29 Sept - 5 Nov)

Respectfully
Kevin Kepler
COL USA (RET)
406-535-8283
kmkepler@gmail.com

Elk Plan Public Scoping – Comments – Specific to 411/535
Kevin M Kepler
kmkepler@gmail.com
406-366-3268

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Attn: Wildlife
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Introduction: - I have hunted the Snowy Mountains (North and South / 411/511/530) for the last 30 years – and extensively since 2005. I have packed in to the Big Snowy mountains on foot and with horses and last 10 years have hunted public lands near big the little snowy mountains.

Elk numbers have increased, Elk hunters have increased, and harvest numbers have increased in greater proportion. (See Attached Sheet - Green Highlighted – Elk Hunters 242 % increase Total Harvest 287% Increase)

I have developed great relationships with private ranch owners over the years and hunted those ranches intermittently until they were leased out (either large single users or weekly outfitters). I now am primarily a public land hunter.

I have heard the “Overcrowded” comment and “quality of hunt” issues – but disagree with these assessments. I have been successful on these lands by hunting beyond the range of the rifle off the roads and not afraid to pack animals out on backs and carts. I have attached a spreadsheet that does show that with the increase of the elk population – has come an increase in hunter population. With that has also come a greater increase and success in elk harvest which is needed to control and Manage elk numbers.

I do not agree with reduction of elk hunter opportunities by restricting either single choice weapons or numbers of elk hunters on public lands would equate to increase elk harvest. The statistics over the last 15 years speak for themselves – we only need to continue to allow hunters to hunt. (see attached spreadsheet)

I DO NOT and AM NOT of the opinion than we should open for general hunting the 411/535 either sex and do believe a realistic quota – based on science and objective numbers be in place. The last biannual meeting – the biologists and public opinion supported a 450 quota – the harvest data for mature bulls put the minimum number at 475 – yet a 300 quota was established. This was decided by the commissioners at the very last moment. I have listened to the testimony and decision making and believe this decision was made by influencers at the commissioner level that have a perception of over hunting on limited public lands in this area. I am a public lands hunter – with limited public lands – by restricting me even more – in stead of allowing me to hunt where others may not want to venture is an injustice and takes my opportunity away and that of my family.

I have listened into many commission meetings and public meetings in the Lewistown area – what I am most concerned about is our continued restrictions on hunters, lost opportunities and choices that will significantly affect the next generation of our hunters. I have two brand new grand sons and very much look forward to walking and mentoring them in the woods like my father and grandfather did with me – however, at the current rate of lost opportunity and possible single choice requirements – I have grave concerns. As a Commission and a FWP Division – I see things like resources going to raising pheasants to “gain young hunter success” yet we stifle and stagnate other opportunity to these magnificent public resources and heritage by artificially limiting hunter opportunity.

Elk Plan Public Scoping – Comments – Specific to 411/535

Kevin M Kepler

kmkepler@gmail.com

406-366-3268

Recommendations:

#1- Publish common themes and differentiated opinions that come out of public meetings. From these themes and opinions develop a statistical / and quantifiable survey that questions the hunters on their specific thoughts on restrictions, public land overcrowding, single weapon choice, objective numbers – Publish these results so that the commission and FWP can utilize statistical and empirical data derived to quantify the majority opinion that can not be swayed or politicized.

#2 – Objective Numbers – ALLOW the Regional Biologists possibly in conjunction with Forest service, BLM, and Extension Officers determine actual healthy carrying capacity for the elk in the area.

#3 – Manage and Regulate the 411/535 as a single EMU

#4 – Unlike the past 15 years – if a plan is in place – adjust to the plan as time goes on to meet objectives (How can limiting elk hunters in an area = increase harvest rate) (See Attached Sheet – from 2017 56% required harvest to 2021 38% required Harvest)

#5- Restricting numbers of hunters because of perceived limited public land accessibility really does not work. There will always be other hunters – whether they be blue grouse hunters 6 miles in the back country (I have seen them), bear hunters, grouse hunters, deer hunters, or recreationalists – there will always be vehicles at trail heads and parking areas. Unless you – the Commission and FWP take the drastic measure to limit each state section access similar to streams like the Madison or Smith – the rationale behind limiting elk hunter quotas does not match up with need to harvest elk to meet objective. As for quality of hunt – I say – walk past those vehicles and get beyond the 1st ¼ mile and God has great things in store for all of us!

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the information that I have submitted.

V/R

Kevin Kepler

406-366-3268

kmkepler@gmail.com

* - Hunter / Harvest Data - Snowies EMU (411/530/511)

Hic Yr	Hunt District	R + NR Hunters	Days	Days		Hunter Harvest	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Bow	Rifle	Spike	< 6pts	> 6pts
				Per	Total									
2005	411	896	5953	7	239	100	129	8	28	209	1	18	80	
2010		1235	9518	8	339	186	124	28	86	253	16	42	128	
2015		1436	10461	7	336	166	147	23	66	267	11	24	131	
2020		1976	13502	7	700	345	338	18	183	518	28	85	231	
% Increase		221%	227%		293%	345%	262%					289%		
2005	511	165	746	5	18	8	8	1	4	12	3	0	6	
2010		234	1171	5	50	17	31	3	3	47	6	2	9	
2015		189	1303	7	21	13	4	3	11	10	3	6	4	
2020		281	1479	5	47	23	25	0	16	31	4	3	16	
% Increase		170%	198%		261%	288%	313%					267%		
2005	530	252	1477	6	62	19	43	0	15	47	1	2	15	
2011		441	2443	6	60	10	51	0	6	55	3	0	7	
2015		528	3413	7	78	34	44	0	15	63	18	5	11	
2020		917	5827	6	170	66	97	7	41	129	21	10	35	
% Increase		364%	395%		274%	347%	226%					233%		
2005 all		1313	8176	319	127	180	9	47	268	5	20	101		
2011		1910	13132	449	213	206	31	95	355	25	44	144		
2015		2153	15177	435	213	195	26	92	340	32	35	146		
2020		3174	20808	917	434	460	25	240	678	53	98	282		
% Increase		242%	255%		287%	342%	256%					279%		

Data from FWP Harvest Data found on website

Elk	Management Plan	Objective	Estimated Population	% Over
	Objective	800	1500	188%
	Objective	800	3400	425%
	Objective	800	5475	684%
	Objective	800	7750	969%
	Objective	800	9800	1225%

Harvest Required Versus Harvest Actual - Snowies EMU (411/530/511)

*Page 104 Elk Just DocFig 2 - Table 2 - Elk Recruitment

Year	Harvest Required*			Harvest Actual snowies Combined 411/511/530			Harvest Actual 411			harvest actual 530			harvest actual 511		
	cows	bulls	total	cows	bulls	Total	cows	bulls	Total	cows	bulls	Total	cows	bulls	Total
2017	912	608	1520	563	290	853	425	205	630	98	63	161	40	22	62
2018	1295	863	2158	564	277	841	368	192	560	169	72	241	27	13	40
2019	1273	848	2121	593	239	832	428	188	616	125	41	166	40	10	50
2020	1375	917	2292	484	434	918	355	345	700	104	66	170	25	23	48
2021	1286	857	2143	532	281	813	309	191	500	167	63	230	56	27	83
Harvest Actual as % Required															
Snowies															
Year	Cows		Bulls		Total										
2017	62%		48%		56%										
2018	44%		32%		39%										
2019	47%		28%		39%										
2020	35%		47%		40%										
2021	41%		33%		38%										

Comment Card



Your opinion matters to us. Please let us know what you think.

Be as detailed as possible. Limit hunting Season & Shoulder
Season to Jan 01. The extension until March
is not killing more elk. It is a huge burden
on the counties though. Another factor to
health ELK herds is reduction of Male ELK.
In the last 15 years the quality of bulls has
declined but Bull #'s have increased. A
simple solution would be a spike & cow tag
or limits on archery & rifle tags of 5 points
minimum.

If you would like to hear back from us, please print your email address or phone number. brassell@petroleumcountymt.org