

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 2:14:51 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 2:22:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:35
IP Address: 184.167.3.26

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Robert Struckman
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	rjstruckman@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 502

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 don't know if this is the right number, but the problem in this area is less about the number of elk right now and more about entryways to the public land there. It would be smart for public land to be marked on the public roads through the big blocks of private land. I chose against shooting a cow last year because I was on land that appeared to be public on my Onyx GPS, but which had a fence line that made it seem private.

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 502 is a maximum of 50 elk. 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 502, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 10 bulls 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

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, July 17, 2022 11:06:47 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, July 17, 2022 11:12:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:11
IP Address: 66.201.140.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jacen Hamilton
City	Red Lodge
State	MT

Page 2: HD 502

Q2

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

Current form.

Q3

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

Individual.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 502 is a maximum of 50 elk. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Certainly increased as 502 stretches from Red Lodge to Billings. I would like to see a 150 objective.

Q5

In HD 502, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 10 bulls 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?

35 bulls max.

Q6

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

Current numbers are good. Would like to see 150 - 200 elk in this HD.

Q7

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

Why the number of elk in this HD went from 18 to 160 between 2016-2017?

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, July 24, 2022 3:22:11 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, July 24, 2022 3:36:29 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:17
IP Address: 51.81.220.47

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Bob Hall
City	Roberts
State	MT
Email (optional)	hoistengineer@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 502

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 survey

Q4

The current population objective for HD 502 is a maximum of 50 elk. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

500 elk, not 50

Q5

In HD 502, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 10 bulls 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?

125 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?

Increase hunter access to private lands. LMK more

Q7

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

More elk

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 02, 2022 8:05:31 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 02, 2022 8:11:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:22
IP Address: 63.153.25.212

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Dean
City	Billings
State	Montana

Page 2: HD 502

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?

Leave things the way they are

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 leave it alone

Q4

The current population objective for HD 502 is a maximum of 50 elk. Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Let mother nature take care of the population

Q5

In HD 502, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 10 bulls 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?

No 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?

Yes leave it to mother nature

Q7

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

Leave it alone there are several reports that we are going to have to choose a weapon this will create more overcrowding

#5

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, October 03, 2022 5:45:02 PM
Last Modified: Monday, October 03, 2022 5:46:06 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:03
IP Address: 71.188.78.25

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Barbara Jones
City	Emigrant
State	MT
Email (optional)	docjones920@msn.com

Page 2: HD 502

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 502 is a maximum of 50 elk. 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 502, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 10 bulls 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?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, July 19, 2022 3:02:38 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, July 19, 2022 3:05:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:05
IP Address: 184.167.115.73

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	HEATH LILLIE
City	billings, mt
State	MT
Email (optional)	hlillie1@icloud.com

Page 2: HD 515

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 515 is 160 (range 128-194). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased, this is already a low number of elk based on the amount of acreage and elk habitat.

Q5

In HD 515, there is a bull objective of maintain no more than 30 bulls 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?

increased to a 40% bull to cow ratio, with an objective of 300 total elk.

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, this elk number is low

Q7

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

Increase our elk numbers!

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 8:42:30 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 8:43:34 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:04
IP Address: 72.255.187.47

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	test
City	helena
State	mt

Page 2: HD 515

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 515 is 160 (range 128-194). 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 515, there is a bull objective of maintain no more than 30 bulls 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, September 14, 2022 2:16:43 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:21:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:49
IP Address: 72.255.186.67

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Sweet Grass Wildlife Working Group
City	Big Timber
State	MT
Email (optional)	sweetgrasscd@macdnet.org

Page 2: HD 515

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?

Group Response: Maintain current form of population objective using a point value with a fixed range of (+ / -) 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?

Group Response: Use a 3-year average, or the average from the three most recent surveys, to evaluate population status. We also recommend evaluating the population trend. For example, Is the population stable, increasing, or decreasing? Is it trending toward the objective range or away from the objective range?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 515 is 160 (range 128-194). 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 population objective to 500 elk
(range 400-600 elk)

Q5

In HD 515, there is a bull objective of maintain no more than 30 bulls 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?

Change bull objective to a bull:cow ratio range. Recommend 10-50 bulls:100 cows observed during aerial surveys.

Q6

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

Group Response: Elk congregate in large herds in districts 515, 525, and 580. These concentrations are most common during hunting season, winter and early spring, but may occur at any time of the year. These concentrations can reduce hunter harvest opportunities across the district overall. They increase the potential for diseases such as brucellosis and CWD to quickly spread through the elk herd. New proactive solutions need to be developed to address these situations.

Q7

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

Group Response: We recommend late shoulder season dates be consistent across groups of adjacent hunting districts to prevent over objective elk from moving across a district/regional boundary and being unavailable for harvest.

Streamline the game damage process by more clearly defining landowner eligibility criteria. The game damage hunt roster, and current damage hunt process, is not effective in dealing with damage situations quickly. Look at other ways to get local hunters on the ground quickly in damage situations.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 7:15:08 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 7:32:17 PM
Time Spent: 00:17:08
IP Address: 98.97.116.255

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daniel Vesbach
City	Columbus
State	MT
Email (optional)	vesbach@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 515

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(5yrs) would be better in my opinion. It would do better to account for variations in counts.

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 515 is 160 (range 128-194). 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 current number of elk in the area seems appropriate.

Q5

In HD 515, there is a bull objective of maintain no more than 30 bulls 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?

Currently a good portion of the elk in this area are bulls due to unlimited cow hunting and until this year limited bull hunting. Setting an objective on bulls in this area by setting a low objective will severely decrease the elk population in this area and the quality of bull elk hunting opportunity. The current objective is much too low. The bull objective if set should be up to 50% of the elk objective for the area.

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 seems good as elk are found in the majority of elk habitat in this area.

Q7

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

Do away with early shoulder season.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:44:17 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:49:56 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:38
IP Address: 69.146.151.212

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Frank w
City	Billings
State	Mt.
Email (optional)	fdwilkin15@outlook.com

Page 2: HD 525

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 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter 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?

The current management ideas are not good for Montana Archery hunters. You have killed that for us getting rid of the 900 Archery tags! This give me the opportunity to hunt anywhere in the state! And fill my freezer yet you want to give all these tags to private property owners and say here have 50 tags shoots what you want, anytime or sell them to out of staters! It's all about the money! It's hard enough to fill my tag. I know have any Rich land owner friends!!

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 14, 2022 12:33:53 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 14, 2022 12:46:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:39
IP Address: 192.161.70.62

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mike Quesenberry
City	Livingston
State	MT
Email (optional)	mike@quesenberryagency.com

Page 2: HD 525

Q2

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

Keep current objective

Q3

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

Individual survey

Q4

The current population objective for HD 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 the landowners in this unit play a big role in elk numbers, maybe the objective needs to be raised slightly . I do not think that you will ever reach the current objective with these high numbers.

Q5

In HD 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter 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 needs to be a Bull objective. I have hunted this unit for over 22 years. In the past 5 years the bull numbers are way lower than I have ever seen. Over harvest from Outfitters by allowing spikes to be killed needs to stop.

Winter range where I use to observe 20 to 40 bulls and pickup antlers in the spring now only hold 2 or 3 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?

The long shoulder season has made distribution of elk in this unit even worse. Lands that use to hold elk year around now only hold them as they pass thru . It has totally changed the distrubition for the worse.

Q7

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

Stop allowing Spike Bulls to be killed. Shorten the shoulder season so the cows move off the ranches that they stay on due to no hunting pressure.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:20:13 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:32:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:12:20
IP Address: 184.167.113.231

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Cory Hess
City	Billings
State	Montana
Email (optional)	corybkr@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 525

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 the +/- 20% is a good way to establish the objective numbers, however the actual population objective here should increase.

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 Biennial survey is a good model.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 range should be increased to an even higher number than the current population. With minimal landowner complaints it seems that landowner tolerance has increased. HD525 is a very large unit and can support many more elk than even the current population.

Q5

In HD 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter 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 believe that bull objective numbers should be based on a bull to cow ratio rather than a specific number.

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 more could be done in regards to habitat enhancement in the areas spanning between red lodge creek and the east fork of the boulder to encourage more elk on the national forest.

Q7

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

There are a few large landowners that harbor resident elk in this district. I believe it is important to either increase the population objective or remove a number of the population from the counts that primarily reside exclusively on large inaccessible ranches. Further, I believe that although b tags are an important tool to manage elk on private property, they should not be valid on public land in this district.

#4

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 8:58:39 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 8:59:00 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:21
IP Address: 72.255.187.47

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	test
City	helena
State	mt

Page 2: HD 525

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 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter 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: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:21:55 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:29:19 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:23
IP Address: 72.255.186.67

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Sweet Grass Wildlife Working Group
City	Big Timber
State	MT
Email (optional)	sweetgrasscd@macdnet.org

Page 2: HD 525

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?

Group Response: Maintain current form of population objective using a point value with a fixed range of (+ / -) 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?

Group Response: Use a 3-year average, or the average from the three most recent surveys, to evaluate population status. We also recommend evaluating the population trend. For example, Is the population stable, increasing, or decreasing? Is it trending toward the objective range or away from the objective range?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 population objective to 1,100 elk

(range 880-1,320 elk) Landowner tolerance for elk has increased since 2005 in some cases. However, at current population, extreme elk concentrations occur on some ranches during harsh winters. Some of these ranches allow hunting. Brucellosis has been detected in elk in 525 with high potential for spread to livestock during the late winter/early spring period when elk are concentrated near cattle. Summer/early fall game damage is a concern for several landowners. Current elk numbers are higher than many landowners would prefer.

Q5

In HD 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter 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?

Change bull objective to a minimum bull:cow ratio. Recommend at least 10 bulls:100 cows observed during aerial surveys. The 2005 Elk Plan bull objective is too low and not realistic. Bull:cow ratios lower than 10 may be a biological concern. None or very few game damage conflicts from bulls in this area.

Q6

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

Group Response: Elk congregate in large herds in districts 515, 525, and 580. These concentrations are most common during hunting season, winter and early spring, but may occur at any time of the year. These concentrations can reduce hunter harvest opportunities across the district overall. They increase the potential for diseases such as brucellosis and CWD to quickly spread through the elk herd. New proactive solutions need to be developed to address these situations.

Q7

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

Group Response: We recommend late shoulder season dates be consistent across groups of adjacent hunting districts to prevent over objective elk from moving across a district/regional boundary and being unavailable for harvest.

Streamline the game damage process by more clearly defining landowner eligibility criteria. The game damage hunt roster, and current damage hunt process, is not effective in dealing with damage situations quickly. Look at other ways to get local hunters on the ground quickly in damage situations.

#6

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 07, 2022 10:14:17 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 07, 2022 10:14:21 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:04
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 525

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 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter 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: Saturday, October 08, 2022 8:21:59 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 8:25:33 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:34
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 525

Q2

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

Using a long term 5 year average makes more sense.

Q3

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

A 3 year average of surveys would provide better data

Q4

The current population objective for HD 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 range should be increased to whatever the biological capacity of the habitat

Q5

In HD 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

There should be a bull objective and it should be 20 bulls: 100 cows at the lowest

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

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:39:05 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 9:42:28 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:23
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 525

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 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 numbers show how outdated the current objectives are. This objective should be increased to 2,500+.

Q5

In HD 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Yes, there should be a bull objective, stated as a ratio of post-season ADULT bulls:cows. That ratio should be above 20:100.

Q6

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

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

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.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:19:16 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:22:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:07
IP Address: 98.127.75.22

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mike Mershon
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	mtnkid82@msn.com

Page 2: HD 525

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 on a yearly basis. 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 needs to be left up to the wildlife biologists to decide. We need to fund them to ensure they can make the best decisions.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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 3500

Q5

In HD 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

20:100 bull: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?

No. Elk distribution 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 current plan has frame work to deduct inaccessible elk from objective numbers, similar frame work needs to be adopted into the new plan as well.

Q7

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

No late muzzle loader season in this HD. No shoulder seasons on public lands. Include habitat management, in the form of increasing habitat functionality and controlling noxious weeds, on public and private land as a core component of a revised elk plan.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:51:38 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 3:16:12 PM
Time Spent: 00:24:33
IP Address: 172.221.109.3

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jeff Wesen
City	LIVINGSTON
State	MT
Email (optional)	jwesen14@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 525

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 the current way you count the elk population 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?

A 3 year average would probably work too.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 525 is 1,000 (range 800-1,200). 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. Range 2200 to 2800.

Q5

In HD 525, there is a bull objective to observe 135 bulls during late winter 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 believe there should be a bull objective in this unit. I think 200 during winter surveys.

Q6

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

The elk distribution is fine the first few weeks of archery and rifle season. Then there pushed onto the private we're there unlikely to leave and return to the public ground till after the season is over.

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: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:32:53 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:47:54 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:00
IP Address: 184.167.113.231

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Cory Hess
City	Billings
State	Montana
Email (optional)	corybkr@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 535

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 the +/-20% is a good model.

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 Biennial survey is a good model.

Q4

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?

This range should be increased drastically. It seems that the majority of current landowners in this district are much more tolerant of elk than before. So much so that the objective should be based on biological carrying capacity.

Q5

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?

It is my understanding that the western part of 535 and 411 is under objective. If so then the current objective may be adequate.

Q6

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

If these two districts are being managed as separate districts, then they should have separate objective ranges.

Q7

Should we combine objectives for East 535 and West 535 into a single objective? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

I believe that single districts should be managed by a single objective number. That number should be based on biological carrying capacity.

Q8

In HD 535, 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?

I think that the objective of 120 bulls seems low. If the objective numbers were to increase than the bull objective should also increase based on a bull to cow ratio rather than a specific number.

Q9

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 more could be done for habitat enhancement in this district. I have hunted this district extensively and there is an abundance of weeds, unauthorized ohv use and overgrazing on the national forest. Taking care of some of these items could help with distribution.

Q10

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

I think that if the objective numbers were to not increase drastically, then the large populations of elk that primarily reside on large private ranches not providing access should be omitted from the count. Further, B tags should be used as a tool to control populations that reside on private, and thus should not be valid on public land (National Forest, State AND BLM)

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 2:54:34 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 2:58:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:59
IP Address: 198.162.78.5

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jess Wagner
City	Lewistown
State	MT
Email (optional)	jess_wagner2@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 535

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 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.

Q5

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.

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

Should we combine objectives for East 535 and West 535 into a single objective? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Objectives for 535 east and 535 west should not be combined since most of the elk reside in 535 east where there is less accessible land. If combined, the elk in 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 535 east.

Q8

In HD 535, 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.

Q9

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 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.

Q10

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

The plan for this district 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.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:43:20 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, September 06, 2022 2:51:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:13
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 535

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 stated objective is not remotely close to a reasonable population target. The current actual population is adequate, and could even be increased without approaching carrying capacity

Q3

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

A 3 year average is fine, but you need a caveat to handle a harsh winter.

Q4

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?

Base the objective on at least the current population. 400 is way too low. Better yet determine the carrying capacity of public land and set objective at that number for public land.

Q5

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?

Same as prior answer.

Q6

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

I don't know if they are separate elk herds so I can't make an informed recommendation.

Q7

Should we combine objectives for East 535 and West 535 into a single objective? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Same as prior answer

Q8

In HD 535, 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?

Bull number objectives don't make sense to me. Bull/cow ratios make sense. Set that as a target.

Q9

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 public land and see elk, but clearly they are populating private or inaccessible property. Do not lower targets to make ranchers happy - their problem with elk is self inflicted when they close their property to hunting or only sell trophy hunts. Don't let the tail wag the dog.

Q10

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

Better access to public land

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 07, 2022 10:14:34 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 07, 2022 10:14:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:19
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 535

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 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?

Q5 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?

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

Should we combine objectives for East 535 and West 535 into a single objective? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Q8 Respondent skipped this question

In HD 535, 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?

Q9 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?

Q10

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.
-

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 08, 2022 8:31:00 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 8:33:55 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:54
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 535

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 objective

Q4

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?

They should be increased

Q5

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?

It should be increased

Q6

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

No they should not be combined

Q7

Should we combine objectives for East 535 and West 535 into a single objective? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

No.

Q8

In HD 535, 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 objective should increase to 30 bulls: 100 cows

Q9

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

Quit giving the Nbar ranch free bull elk tags

Q10

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

The fact that elk are the property of all Montanans, not just a couple of brothers from Texas

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:25:56 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:36:09 PM
Time Spent: 00:10:12
IP Address: 174.45.153.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	ERIC BASHORE
City	BILLINGS
State	MT
Email (optional)	ejbpik@msn.com

Page 2: HD 535

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 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.

Q5

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.

Q6

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

No.

Q7

Should we combine objectives for East 535 and West 535 into a single objective? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

No.

Q8

In HD 535, 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.

Q9

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 unharmed on large private farms/ranches should not be counted in the current observed elk population level.

Q10

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.

#7

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:31:53 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:32:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:06
IP Address: 98.127.75.22

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mike Mershon
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	mtnkid82@msn.com

Page 2: HD 535

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 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?

Q5 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?

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

Should we combine objectives for East 535 and West 535 into a single objective? If so, what should the combined objective range be?

Q8 Respondent skipped this question

In HD 535, 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?

Q9 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?

Q10 Respondent skipped this question

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

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, July 14, 2022 7:51:16 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, July 14, 2022 8:06:35 AM
Time Spent: 00:15:19
IP Address: 98.97.33.103

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Stephen Coale
City	Harlowton
State	MT
Email (optional)	scoale@coaleandcompany.com

Page 2: HD 540

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 the long term average. The elk count by survey has been above MFWP objective since 2004. And the elk herd is doing well. I believe your desired objective is too low at 400 +/- . A more realistic number would be 1500.

Q3

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

I think individual survey most accurate for the year done. You can also see trend lines from prior year surveys.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 540 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. The current elk population appears to be dropping off from the high in 2017 of 2000. Most likely from increased cow harvest.

Q5

In HD 540, there is a bull objective that there is a minimum of 5% bulls among the total 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?

Yes, and I think higher at 15%.

Q6

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

Yes.

Q7

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

I think the elk B tag season should end by year end (12/31), and not 2/15.

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 25, 2022 4:41:45 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 25, 2022 4:42:49 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:04
IP Address: 72.255.167.177

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Lance Schuchard
City	Harlowton
State	Mt
Email (optional)	jerniegrace17@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 540

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 540 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

In HD 540, there is a bull objective that there is a minimum of 5% bulls among the total 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?

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: Monday, August 01, 2022 8:47:27 AM
Last Modified: Monday, August 01, 2022 8:48:05 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:37
IP Address: 172.221.105.211

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	John Salazar
City	Livingston
State	Montana
Email (optional)	nohj2009@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 540

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 540 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

In HD 540, there is a bull objective that there is a minimum of 5% bulls among the total 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?

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, September 01, 2022 11:27:51 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:37:58 AM
Time Spent: 00:10:07
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 540

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 the long term average would be better.

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?

Perhaps a 3 yoeaar average would be better. This is how I have been answering this; however, what would happen if you had a die off for some reason. Would a long term average tie yoyr hands?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 540 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 of 400 is way too low given the habitat and the elks desire to populate it. A good shere of the elk stay on private lands closed to the general public elk hunter so thse landowners must like the current population.

Q5

In HD 540, there is a bull objective that there is a minimum of 5% bulls among the total 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?

Seems like 5% post season is too low. It has always been low because it is a general area with good access to the National Forest. Unfortunately, most the elk have been driven off public land and spend very little time on National Forest during the year, not just hunting season.

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 the elk are on private lands I can not access.

Q7

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

Whatever you decide on the objective number, you need to be able to close the branch antlered bull season and just hunt antlerless and spikes to reduce numbers.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:38:34 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:41:19 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:44
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 540

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 540 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?

I'd like to see a new objective of 2,000 elk at least.

Q5

In HD 540, there is a bull objective that there is a minimum of 5% bulls among the total 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'd like to see a minimum bull/cow ratio of 20:100 here.

Q6

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

No, there's too many elk that sit on private, inaccessible ranches. Perhaps we remove cow hunting on public and unlimited cow hunting on private to move the elk back to public?

Q7

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

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

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, October 13, 2022 9:55:00 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:04:38 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:38
IP Address: 184.166.58.107

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Paul Johnson
City	Whitefish
State	MT
Email (optional)	hunterpaul08@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 540

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 540 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?

To leave the objective at 400 would be a shame. There is certainly the summer and winter habitat here to support the current herd levels. The new range should be roughly 1600. This would put us within objective and end the shoulder season.

Q5

In HD 540, there is a bull objective that there is a minimum of 5% bulls among the total 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 needs to be raised. 5% total bulls is obviously too low even to a casual observer. This is not meant to be a trophy unit, but even still at least 20% of our elk should be bulls with 10% of those being mature 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?

I see some landowners crying about high elk numbers and also their outfitters herding the elk off the public onto their ranches for hunting season. The distribution would be fine if not for this.

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: Monday, August 15, 2022 7:07:34 PM
Last Modified: Monday, August 15, 2022 7:27:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:20:01
IP Address: 216.228.40.33

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jason Hill
City	Cody
State	Wy
Email (optional)	trail_duster@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 555

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 objective with consideration to mature 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?

Current approach, not long term averages. Long term averages will make slow to reduce tags when there is a dip in population.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 555 is a maximum of 200 elk. 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 this objective should be increase. 400 elk would not be too many elk. Use antler less tags to maintain elk numbers. Keep the bull tag numbers low to increase the age class of bulls.

Q5

In HD 555, there is a bull objective to observe 50 bulls during late winter 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 needs to be a bull objective. I would really like to see an older age class objective for bulls. Not just elk with antlers. Reduce the bull tags to make this happen.

Q6

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

Allow enough of a number objective for elk to establish an elk herd in the Pryor Mt Range.

Q7

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

Get rid of the general tag draw first before you can apply for limited quota units. Make the general elk tag a choice just like the limited quota units. In the application either apply for a General elk, or one of the limited quota units.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, October 08, 2022 8:27:09 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, October 08, 2022 8:28:35 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:26
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 555

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 555 is a maximum of 200 elk. 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

Q5

In HD 555, there is a bull objective to observe 50 bulls during late winter 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?

If the population objective is increased, the bull objective 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?

Yes

Q7

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

Na

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:22:53 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:25:04 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:10
IP Address: 98.127.75.22

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mike Mershon
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	mtnkid82@msn.com

Page 2: HD 555

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 on a yearly basis. 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 needs to be left up to the wildlife biologists to decide. We need to fund them to ensure they can make the best decisions.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 555 is a maximum of 200 elk. 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 300

Q5

In HD 555, there is a bull objective to observe 50 bulls during late winter aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

20:100 bull: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?

No. Elk distribution 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 current plan has frame work to deduct inaccessible elk from objective numbers, similar frame work needs to be adopted into the new plan as well.

Q7

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

No late muzzle loader season in this HD. No shoulder seasons on public lands. Include habitat management, in the form of increasing habitat functionality and controlling noxious weeds, on public and private land as a core component of a revised elk plan.

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 11, 2022 9:04:18 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 9:04:40 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:21
IP Address: 72.255.187.47

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	test
City	helena
State	mt

Page 2: HD 565

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?

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 565 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

Because HD 565 is a new HD, there is no current bull objective. Formerly, this HD was a part of HD 560 which did have an overall bull count objective of 55 bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, 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: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:29:35 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:34:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:17
IP Address: 72.255.186.67

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Sweet Grass Wildlife Working Group
City	Big Timber
State	MT
Email (optional)	sweetgrasscd@macdnet.org

Page 2: HD 565

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?

Group Response: Maintain current form of population objective using a point value with a fixed range of (+ / -) 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?

Group Response: Use a 3-year average, or the average from the three most recent surveys, to evaluate population status. We also recommend evaluating the population trend. For example, Is the population stable, increasing, or decreasing? Is it trending toward the objective range or away from the objective range?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 565 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?

No change proposed. Maintain 300 elk objective. This area is primarily National Forest land. Hunter access is good. There are no game damage conflicts from this herd.

Q5

Because HD 565 is a new HD, there is no current bull objective. Formerly, this HD was a part of HD 560 which did have an overall bull count objective of 55 bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, what should it be?

Create a minimum bull:cow ratio. Recommend at least 10 bulls:100 cows observed during aerial surveys. Bull:cow ratios lower than 10 may be a biological concern. This area is primarily National Forest land. Hunter access is good. There is potential to overharvest bulls during rifle season under certain weather conditions.

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?

Predation on elk calves is a concern for 565. We recommend increasing lion and black bear harvest to reduce calf predation and increase elk numbers.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:56:10 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 1:58:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:40
IP Address: 98.127.75.22

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mike Mershon
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	mtnkid82@msn.com

Page 2: HD 565

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 on a yearly basis. 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?

This needs to be left up to the wildlife biologists to decide. We need to fund them to ensure they can make the best decisions.

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for HD 565 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

Because HD 565 is a new HD, there is no current bull objective. Formerly, this HD was a part of HD 560 which did have an overall bull count objective of 55 bulls. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, 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?

Yes, there is very little private land sanctuaries and thus elk distribution is great.

Q7

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

No late muzzle loader season in this HD. No shoulder seasons on public lands.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, July 18, 2022 7:43:07 PM
Last Modified: Monday, July 18, 2022 7:57:30 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:23
IP Address: 173.174.145.124

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Guy Schoenborn
City	Columbus
State	Montana
Email (optional)	guy@fishingwithlarry.com

Page 2: HD 575

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 the PO should be reevaluated every 5-10 years. Landowners and peoples attitudes towards elk are constantly changing. Many people want more elk statewide.

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 use a 3-4 year average.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 575 is 225 (range 180-270). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

There are very few landowner complaints in all the 500 units. I think that all the 500 units should be at double the current 2022 population. There is no biological reason to keep elk numbers low. Many landowners and the general public want more elk around.

Q5

In HD 575, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 25 bulls observed during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

I think the current bull to cow ratios in the 500 units are reasonable.

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 is not much public land in the 500 units. Therefore it is tough to manage distribution.

Q7

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

Use damage control hunts for landowner complaints.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:55:15 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:58:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:29
IP Address: 184.167.113.231

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Cory Hess
City	Billings
State	Montana
Email (optional)	corybkr@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 575

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 that the +/-20% is adequate

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 biennial surveys are adequate.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 575 is 225 (range 180-270). 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 lack of landowner complaints in this district indicates that the landowner tolerance is not an issue here. The objective number should be increased to match the current population or more.

Q5

In HD 575, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 25 bulls 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 that bulls should be managed based on a bull to cow ratio rather than a specific number.

Q6

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

I am satisfied with the current 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: Thursday, October 13, 2022 7:34:51 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 7:53:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:18:15
IP Address: 98.97.116.255

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daniel Vesbach
City	Columbus
State	MT
Email (optional)	vesbach@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 575

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?

3-year average

Q4

The current population objective for HD 575 is 225 (range 180-270). 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 objective is much too low and should be increased. The current elk population should be the minimum number in this area.

Q5

In HD 575, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 25 bulls 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 current bull objective is much too low. If a bull objective is set it should be up to 50% of the elk population. In this area currently a good portion of the elk are bulls and if bulls were reduced to the current bull objective or another ridiculously low number the elk population in this area would be severely affected and the quality of the bull elk hunting opportunity would decrease.

Q6

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

As a landowner in this area, I would like to see more elk- both bulls and cows on my property. Currently I see bull elk, but very very rarely if ever see cows. If bull elk numbers are reduced (as they will be this year with new regulations) the distribution of elk in this area will be greatly reduced as cow elk are mainly found on private sanctuaries in this area.

Q7

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

Increased elk objectives for all elk bulls and cows. Managment for a higher age class of bulls through limited number of special rifle bull permits. Open hunting for archery- or bundle area for archery with 515 and 580 etc.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:25:22 PM
Last Modified: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:31:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:00
IP Address: 98.127.75.22

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Mike Mershon
City	Billings
State	MT
Email (optional)	mtnkid82@msn.com

Page 2: HD 575

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 on a yearly basis. 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 needs to be left up to the wildlife biologists to decide. We need to fund them to ensure they can make the best decisions.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 575 is 225 (range 180-270). 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 1000

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 575, there is a bull objective to maintain no more than 25 bulls 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?

No. Elk distribution 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 current plan has frame work to deduct inaccessible elk from objective numbers, similar frame work needs to be adopted into the new plan as well. Concentrate on helping landowners enroll in access programs who need help with elk numbers.

Q7

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

No late muzzle loader season in this HD. No shoulder seasons on public lands. Include habitat management, in the form of increasing habitat functionality and controlling noxious weeds, on public and private land as a core component of the revised elk plan.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, August 04, 2022 2:30:55 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 04, 2022 2:36:02 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:07
IP Address: 107.77.200.174

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Kirk
City	Columbus
State	Mt

Page 2: HD 580

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 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls 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?

Tax rich out of state land owners that don't allow hunting. Ranchers that do, pay no taxes

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 9:07:19 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, August 11, 2022 9:07:42 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:22
IP Address: 72.255.187.47

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	test
City	helena
State	mt

Page 2: HD 580

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 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls 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, August 17, 2022 1:03:21 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 1:03:56 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:34
IP Address: 184.166.160.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

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

Page 2: HD 580

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 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls 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 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.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:09:15 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, September 01, 2022 11:22:42 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:27
IP Address: 174.198.136.88

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	John Earl Daggett
City	Glasgow
State	MT
Email (optional)	jdaggett435@gmail.com

Page 2: HD 580

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 a long term average may be better. Since I grew up in Harlowton, I have hunted this HD for over 50 years. It is way over objectived becuse most of the private land is closedto the general hunter. Elk have learned to stay on low pressure private lands that are primarily outfitted.

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 may be better.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 objective is way too low. I know last years count was over 4,000 which imay be too high but is closer to what the habitat will support. Evidently the private landowners like this number becuase finding permission to hunt unless you pay is almost impossible.

Q5

In HD 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls 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?

There should be a pst-season bull objective and 145 is grossly too low. Seems like a ratio of 30 post seaso would be more in line with other districts like the breaks.

Q6

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

No, I am not satisfied. Alot of the elk spend most of their time off the public lands where they used to spen almost all their time.

Q7

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

Please consider going to antlerless seasons untill you rech the population objective you determine is right for this HD. Issuing tags to private landowners to sale or give to their buddies is not the answer. This will just further privatize a public resource.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, September 09, 2022 10:59:36 AM
Last Modified: Friday, September 09, 2022 11:01:44 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:08
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 580

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 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 objective is way too low. I'd like to see 5,000 as an objective.

Q5

In HD 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

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

No, there's too many elk on private. I'd suggest we go no cow hunting on public and unlimited cow hunting on private to move these elk back onto public land.

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.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:35:04 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:38:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:38
IP Address: 72.255.186.67

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Sweet Grass Wildlife Working Group
City	Big Timber
State	MT
Email (optional)	sweetgrasscd@macdnet.org

Page 2: HD 580

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?

Group Response: Maintain current form of population objective using a point value with a fixed range of (+ / -) 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?

Group Response: Use a 3-year average, or the average from the three most recent surveys, to evaluate population status. We also recommend evaluating the population trend. For example, Is the population stable, increasing, or decreasing? Is it trending toward the objective range or away from the objective range?

Q4

The current population objective for HD 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 population objective to 2,000 elk

(range 1,600-2,400 elk)The 2005 Elk Plan objective is too low and not realistic. Landowner tolerance for elk has increased since 2005. However, current elk numbers are higher than many landowners would prefer.

Q5

In HD 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls 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?

Change bull objective to a bull:cow ratio range. Recommend 10-50 bulls:100 cows observed during aerial surveys. The 2005 Elk Plan bull objective is too low and not realistic. Bull:cow ratios lower than 10 may be a biological concern. However, bulls are causing game damage so there is a desire to keep bull numbers within landowner tolerance, therefore an upper limit of 50 bulls:100 cows is recommended. Bull:cow ratios higher than 50 bulls:100 cows represent a biological surplus. These situations could provide additional opportunity for hunter harvest of 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?

Group Response: Elk congregate in large herds in districts 515, 525, and 580. These concentrations are most common during hunting season, winter and early spring, but may occur at any time of the year. These concentrations can reduce hunter harvest opportunities across the district overall. They increase the potential for diseases such as brucellosis and CWD to quickly spread through the elk herd. New proactive solutions need to be developed to address these situations.

Q7

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

Group Response: We recommend late shoulder season dates be consistent across groups of adjacent hunting districts to prevent over objective elk from moving across a district/regional boundary and being unavailable for harvest.

Streamline the game damage process by more clearly defining landowner eligibility criteria. The game damage hunt roster, and current damage hunt process, is not effective in dealing with damage situations quickly. Look at other ways to get local hunters on the ground quickly in damage situations.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 07, 2022 11:10:43 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 07, 2022 11:24:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:33
IP Address: 208.94.86.232

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jake Peters
City	Coeur d'Alene
State	Idaho
Email (optional)	steelheadiron@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 580

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 unit should have accurate count rate with how it is done now but the change with allowing it be general season will dramatically change this count.

Q3

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

Individual survey is a must for ranches that allows hunting.

Q4

The current population objective for HD 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Maintain current population

Q5

In HD 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be a bull objective in this HD? If so, is the current bull objective appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Maintain.

Q6

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

Low access means low distribution in public access due to high pressure.

Q7

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

This is very important. The bull and cow numbers need to be closely watched this year because of the change. You could potentially kill off all the mature bulls in one to two seasons with this new regulation. Changing it to a general tag for elk and deer. It could go from a quality hunt to decimate quickly. Mature bulls and cows teach the herds to survive and makes for a quality heard. I believe you should gather accurate data for rifle vs archery kills and modify from there. Model it after the 700-20 unit with better odds to archery and limited rifle so we don't hurt what has taken so long to establish.

#8

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 07, 2022 11:10:43 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 07, 2022 11:24:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:49
IP Address: 208.94.86.232

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Jake Peters
City	Coeur d'Alene
State	Idaho
Email (optional)	steelheadiron@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 580

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 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls 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: Thursday, October 13, 2022 7:59:31 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, October 13, 2022 8:05:27 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:56
IP Address: 98.97.116.255

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daniel Vesbach
City	Columbus
State	MT
Email (optional)	vesbach@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 580

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 580 is 975 (range 780-1,170). 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 should be increased. The current elk numbers in this area are appropriate.

Q5

In HD 580, there is a bull objective to observe 145 bulls 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 needs to be increased. It could be increased to be up to 50% of the population if a bull objective is set.

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?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:29:16 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:36:57 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:41
IP Address: 75.80.243.134

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Ron DePauw
City	Crows landing
State	California
Email (optional)	rdepauw@live.com

Page 2: HD 590

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 the Bull Mountains (northern) part of HD 590 Bull Mountain portion is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

I believe a small increase would be a benefit. I am a nonresident land owner. Need to give guaranteed land owner tags to have an equal take of game accros the region. Lot of bigger land owners don't draw any tags and there may be no bulls taken in those areas

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

The current population objective for the Pine Ridge (southern) part of HD 590 Pine Ridge portion is 300 (range 260-340). 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

Should multiple population objectives (Bull Mountain and Pine Ridge) in this HD be retained? Or should population objectives be combined to a single objective for HD 590?

Separate

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

In HD 590, there is a bull objective to observe 60 bulls in the Pine Ridge Hills area of the HD and 150 in the Bull Mountains area of the HD during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Q8

Should the separate bull objectives in this HD be combined into a single bull objective?

No

Q9

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?

Q10

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

Guaranteed land owner tags by amount of acres

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:44:23 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 11:29:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:45:24
IP Address: 24.120.168.66

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Anthony Marnell III
City	Las Vegas
State	Nevada
Email (optional)	amarnell3@marnellcompanies.com

Page 2: HD 590

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. Elk populations go up and down over long periods of time. They take a decade to recover from bad policy and management. Take it slow and look at it over the long run

Q3

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

Individual Survey's semi-annually.

Q4

The current population objective for the Bull Mountains (northern) part of HD 590 Bull Mountain portion is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased. 1250.

Q5

The current population objective for the Pine Ridge (southern) part of HD 590 Pine Ridge portion is 300 (range 260-340). 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. 450.

Q6

Should multiple population objectives (Bull Mountain and Pine Ridge) in this HD be retained? Or should population objectives be combined to a single objective for HD 590?

They should be kept separate.

Q7

In HD 590, there is a bull objective to observe 60 bulls in the Pine Ridge Hills area of the HD and 150 in the Bull Mountains area of the HD during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

There should not be objectives. This should be a trophy bull zone and minimum antler size should be established to preserve one of Montanas last great trophy elk herds. It should be grown and take good care of.

Q8

Should the separate bull objectives in this HD be combined into a single bull objective?

NO. They are very separate herds.

Q9

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

I do not have enough preview into the entire unit.

Q10

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

I think this unit should be preserved and protected to be a trophy elk zone. Minimum horn size for bulls should be established and cow herds should be managed appropriately and as needed.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:48:09 PM
Last Modified: Friday, July 22, 2022 4:55:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:50
IP Address: 184.167.113.231

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Cory Hess
City	Billings
State	Montana
Email (optional)	corybkr@hotmail.com

Page 2: HD 590

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 that the +/-20% model is good.

Q3

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

I believe that the Biennial counts are adequate.

Q4

The current population objective for the Bull Mountains (northern) part of HD 590 Bull Mountain portion is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The population objective for this region should be much higher. A lack of landowner complains indicates that landowner tolerance is not a problem. Population objective for this district should be more like 2500-3000.

Q5

The current population objective for the Pine Ridge (southern) part of HD 590 Pine Ridge portion is 300 (range 260-340). 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 lack of landowner complaints indicates that landowner tolerance is not a problem and the current population is not an issue. The population objective should be increased to at least the current population.

Q6

Should multiple population objectives (Bull Mountain and Pine Ridge) in this HD be retained? Or should population objectives be combined to a single objective for HD 590?

I think that single hunting districts should have a single population objective.

Q7

In HD 590, there is a bull objective to observe 60 bulls in the Pine Ridge Hills area of the HD and 150 in the Bull Mountains area of the HD during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

There should be bull objectives based on a bull to cow ratio rather than a specific number.

Q8

Should the separate bull objectives in this HD be combined into a single bull objective?

I think single hunting districts should have a single population objective

Q9

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

I am satisfied with the current distribution in 590

Q10

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

I think this district should be split up into two districts to allow for the management of the two separate population objectives individually.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, July 23, 2022 2:28:13 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 23, 2022 3:04:12 PM
Time Spent: 00:35:58
IP Address: 71.15.211.10

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	Daryl E Bertelsen
City	Bozeman
State	MT
Email (optional)	dantelope12@yahoo.com

Page 2: HD 590

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 objective of number of elk is based on "how many are presently there?"

Shouldn't the objective be based on how many the unit can support? This would include feed, public/private land, public access.

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?

If your using "count" then use three year average.

Q4

The current population objective for the Bull Mountains (northern) part of HD 590 Bull Mountain portion is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

Increased to 1,500-2,000. And at the least, double the number of bull rifle permits for bull mountains part.

Q5

The current population objective for the Pine Ridge (southern) part of HD 590 Pine Ridge portion is 300 (range 260-340). 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

Q6

Should multiple population objectives (Bull Mountain and Pine Ridge) in this HD be retained? Or should population objectives be combined to a single objective for HD 590?

Maintain multiple objectives.

Q7

In HD 590, there is a bull objective to observe 60 bulls in the Pine Ridge Hills area of the HD and 150 in the Bull Mountains area of the HD during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

Yes, maintain the current bull objectives.

Q8

Should the separate bull objectives in this HD be combined into a single bull objective?

No

Q9

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

Satisfied, with current distribution.

Q10

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

Comment not specific to this district. I heard suggestion that archery hunters not be allowed to rifle hunt! (hunter could only hunt one season)

Dumb thought in state with over population of elk.

Idaho has that rule, Idaho has shortage of elk, larger population, low success rate.

Many archery hunters hunt hard for a bull, if not successful with bull will take a cow during rifle season.(population control)

Thank You for listening.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 8:58:17 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:22:47 PM
Time Spent: 00:24:29
IP Address: 174.45.153.32

Page 1

Q1

Contact Information

Name	ERIC BASHORE
City	BILLINGS
State	MT
Email (optional)	ejbpike@msn.com

Page 2: HD 590

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 Bull Mountains (northern) part of HD 590 Bull Mountain portion is 750 (range 600-900). Do you think the current population objective level should be maintained, increased, or decreased? If increased or decreased, what should the new range be?

The current elk population objective for the Bull Mountains area in Elk HD 590 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 Pine Ridge (southern) part of HD 590 Pine Ridge portion is 300 (range 260-340). 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 for the Pine Ridge area in Elk HD 590 is set artificially low based on the available habitat in the region, and consequently the elk population objective should be increased to the current observed elk population level in the next Elk Management Plan.

Q6

Should multiple population objectives (Bull Mountain and Pine Ridge) in this HD be retained? Or should population objectives be combined to a single objective for HD 590?

For Elk HD 590 the Bull Mountains area and the Pine Ridge area should be managed separately in the next Elk Management Plan.

Q7

In HD 590, there is a bull objective to observe 60 bulls in the Pine Ridge Hills area of the HD and 150 in the Bull Mountains area of the HD during post-season aerial surveys. Should there be bull objectives in this HD? If so, are the current bull objectives appropriate? If not, what should it be?

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

Q8

Should the separate bull objectives in this HD be combined into a single bull objective?

No. For Elk HD 590 the Bull Mountains area and the Pine Ridge area should be managed separately in the next Elk Management Plan.

Q9

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

I am satisfied with the elk distribution.

Q10

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

The current elk population objective for the Bull Mountains area in Elk HD 590 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.

From: [Scott Schulz](#)
To: [FWP Wildlife](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk Management Thoughts
Date: Thursday, October 13, 2022 9:36:51 AM

My name is Scott Schulz, I have been a Montana resident for 18 years. I live in Billings, but have lived in Missoula and Bozeman as well. I have hunted elk and deer in 54 hunting districts across the state and until recently have spent 30 plus days in the field each year, and the last few years spend 10-15 days. A high majority of these days have been public lands or block management except for the 2022 season so far. I believe our current elk management system is flawed and I have yet to speak with another hunter that doesn't believe so as well. Ultimately, we (hunters) all want more elk. I think something that is frequently overlooked is that from what I can find Montana has 25,000-30,000 ranches and over 100,000 resident elk hunters and of those ranches I would think many fewer have significant financial losses due to elk damage. It seems our system really promotes the desires of a minority. However, I acknowledge that agriculture is incredibly important to Montana's economy and heritage and there needs to be support given where needed to maintain this legacy. Also, of note is that every year more ranches and farms are being sold to parties that likely desire higher elk numbers and have less concern for agricultural income. It has become an unfortunate reality that with increased land prices we are likely to see a steady decrease in family run ranches and an increase in recreational ranches or investment properties. So our system that landowner tolerance guiding wildlife objectives is quickly becoming more and more outdated and should be changed to how many elk can biologically live on the land. Personally, I believe Montana can biologically support higher numbers of elk. Many of the current objectives, especially those in the eastern portion of the state are objectives in which only 1 or 2 large ranches within a district can and do support the current objective number, let alone the whole district. If we were to reduce herds to current objectives, we would nearly eliminate elk from every portion of a hunting district except a few of those larger private havens.

A few areas of note that I am very familiar with are hunting districts 417, 590, 535, & 411. In these districts a vast majority of elk live on a small handful out of state landowner ranches. The numbers of elk dramatically decrease as you get further away from these havens. I have found this to be consistent in many other parts of the state as well. This year I had the privilege to hunt further west on private land in the far north side of HD 210, another district over objective. However, in a large area with lush forests, creeks, mountains, and irrigated meadows there is only a small herd of elk with only 9 cows, 1 calf and 10 older class bulls fighting for those 10 cows. This area in my opinion could and should have an elk herd 20-40 times this size given the large area and that other landowners are pro-elk. (I submitted full details on this area in the HD210 comments). I also know of a landowner who has 1500 acres just west of Billings, he loves elk and was excited to see a steady growth of elk numbers from nothing to about a herd of 30 cows. Then shoulder seasons were implemented, even though he doesn't hunt cows or allow other hunters on his land, the herd is no longer there, but obviously can support elk.

Below are some ideas and hopefully solutions to help the state better manage elk herds.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Alaska has had a hunt survey system that asks districts hunted, drainages hunted, what was seen, what was killed, dates hunted. Etc. that was

required to be submitted before you could get a hunting license the following year. I think a system like this would be better than the random phone survey Montana performs now. A system like this gives exact details of what is happening in the field from every hunter. It could be easily implemented with the new my FWP app or have people fill out at license dealers or by mail and would give us a much clearer picture of how to manage elk herds.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think we need to study how many of the rancher/farmers are actually having significant financial lose to elk damage and try to develop the true numbers lost for these farms, without that, the ranchers feelings and the hunters feelings towards the issue are somewhat impossible to solve. Knowing how much a rancher needs to be compensated for their loss I think makes everything easier and could lead to more creative solutions to be developed.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I know of a rancher east of Billings that was having significant elk damage to his alfalfa fields. They completely solved the situation by installing a 6' electric fence. They said this was cheaper and easier to install than a typical barbed wire fence and it paid for itself quickly since they had large yields and their alfalfa only needed to be reseeded every 4-5 years instead of every 2 when elk where able to graze it all year. I think a program could be developed with money from licenses or additional fees to the licenses or donations to provide low interest short term loans to ranchers and farmers to put up such fences, with the tradeoff being a dramatic increase in elk population objectives. It may be wise to partner with a non-profit like RMEF to assist with the loans as some ranchers would rather go in debt with a non-profit than the government. I think this is one of the easiest ways to protect our important ag industry, while being able to increase elk numbers on public land and the property owners who wish to have them.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think districts should be re-evaluated and re-drawn with potentially more created. I think right now they capture a wintering herds area, but do not properly evaluate where elk are during the hunting season. Some districts have heavy elk numbers in some portions and almost no elk in other portions that could sustain a herd.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->Eliminate shoulder seasons. I understand why these were implemented, however if we move to higher elk population objectives, I think they should be eliminated. Even if objectives stay the same, the hunts have notoriously caused rancher burn out, hunter misconduct, extremely pressured herds during the challenging winter months, and we do not know where these elk have migrated from. It's possible we could be wiping out herds from another district with low elk numbers that happen to winter in a higher population dense hunting district.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think archery season should be limited to bull elk only. I have come across a significant number of general license holders hunting cows in special

permit areas during archery season. The harvest numbers are already extremely low during archery season. This puts additional pressure on mating elk herds and congestion in the woods when most hunters enjoy hunting bugling bulls. The success rate is so small during archery season anyways, that many of these hunters will still be in the field during rifle season so eliminating cow hunts during archery will have minimal impact on hunting pressure during the rifle season but make a significant difference during the archery season. This should especially be the case if the state decides to make hunters pick their season.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think all resident landowners above 640 acres should be given a landowner tag only to use on their deeded ground. It just seems wrong to me that a person who pays property taxes and has property is not allowed to shoot a bull elk on their own land, but it should be limited to their land only. I think taxing paying non-residents should be able to get this perk as well, but I think the first one may be easy to convince the public of.

--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->I think a controlled transferrable landowner tag for residents and non-residents would benefit ranchers and public land hunters alike. Landowners could sell these tags for use only on their deeded land only based on the size of the elk herd on their land. However, they would be able to give them out for free or give to family members, they could only be sold through the FWP in which half the proceeds go to the landowner and half go to the FWP. These proceeds to the FWP should then be earmarked only to be used in the purchase of public access easements to public land, block management expansion, or the purchase of deeded property to add to our wildlife refuge system. I think it would benefit all parties as the rancher could benefit from game damage losses and this less concerned with elk numbers allowing us to increase our population objectives that would then put more elk on public land and increase hunting pressure on private land, all while opening more access to the public on top of that.

Thank you for your work and all you do to help manage our precious wildlife resources. Have a great day!

Scott Schulz

From: [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		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%										