

**MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS**  
**HUNTING SEASON / QUOTA CHANGE SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Species:** Antelope  
**Region:** 3  
**Hunting District:** 360  
**Year:** 2019

**1. Describe the proposed season / quotas changes and provide a summary of prior history (i.e., prior history of permits, season types, etc.).**

The current quota allows 150 doe/fawn pronghorn on the 360-30 second opportunity B license. These licenses are only available to holders of the 360-20 either-sex license. This quota structure has been in place since 2005, and annual quotas have fluctuated from 100 to 200. MFWP proposes to reduce the 360-30 second opportunity B license to 25 for the 2019 hunting season.

**2. What is the objective of this proposed change? This could be a specific harvest amount or resulting population level or number of game damage complaints, etc.**

The proximate objective of this proposed change is to reduce doe/fawn pronghorn harvest. The ultimate objective is to see at least stability, if not population increase, in the overall herd.

**3. How will the success of this proposal be measured? This could be annual game or harvest surveys, game damage complaints, etc.**

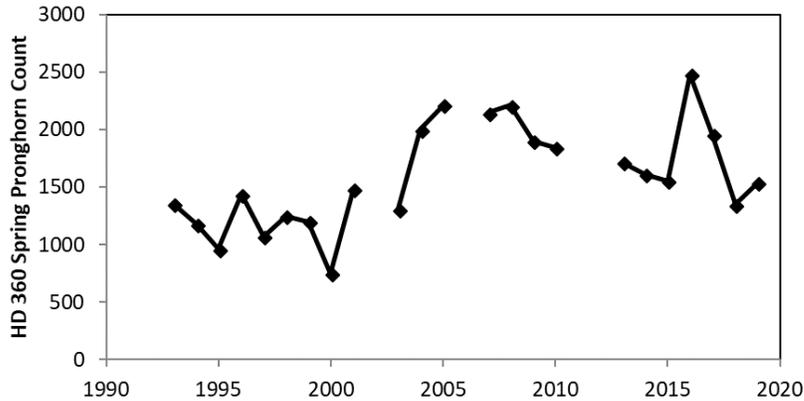
The proximate objective will be inherently successful as fewer B licenses will result in a lower doe/fawn harvest. The large decrease (150 to 25) in remaining B licenses will compensate for the possibility of higher effort on the part of the 25 B license holders and for the possibility of decreased selectivity by hunters holding an either-sex license.

The ultimate objective will be measured through the 2020 spring antelope count. If the count increases or stays the same, success of this change will be implied. If the count does not increase, further quota changes would be considered.

**4. What is the current population's status in relation to the management objectives? (i.e., state management objectives from management plan if applicable; provide current and prior years of population survey, harvest, or other pertinent information).**

The management objective for pronghorn in the Madison Valley is to maximize hunter opportunity while minimizing game damage complaints. Occasional landowner complaints occur when pronghorn concentrate on agricultural fields, but these complaints are often able to be mitigated through focused hunting during the general season and game damage hunts as needed. Count data from 1993 through 2019 generally suggest that winter counts are between 1,500 and 1,750 meet this balance while affording generous and enjoyable hunting opportunity.

Current population counts show two years in a row of the lowest counts since 2003. The slight uptick from 2018 to 2019 may be in part explained by better survey conditions. Reducing this B license is most likely to be a temporary measure until productivity regains.



**5. Provide information related to any weather/habitat factors, public or private land use or resident and nonresident hunting opportunity that have relevance to this change (i.e., habitat security, hunter access, vegetation surveys, weather index, snow conditions, and temperature / precipitation information).**

The 2019 winter has been severe on pronghorn in the Madison Valley, with starvation losses noted. There are at least three landowners who will continue to encourage local pronghorn harvest to defray damage, and they will encourage doe hunting. These landowners should be generally unaffected by this season change, as many of the hunters in this Valley are equally as likely to harvest a doe as a buck on their general license, often hunting with the objective of obtaining meat. With the B licenses only being available to hunters already holding an A license, this proposal should not change the overall sportsman baseline opportunity in HD 360.

**6. Briefly describe the contacts you have made with individual sportsmen or landowners, public groups or organizations regarding this proposal and indicate their comments (both pro and con).**

I have met with one of the landowners who may be affected, biologist Dean Waltee has met with another. We will encourage all landowners to continue to utilize hunters holding the either-sex license to defray damage, and we can help match landowners with licensed hunters as needed. Game damage hunts will remain available to handle localized, problematic concentrations. The need to reduce B licenses was discussed in the pronghorn flight report sent to more than 150 landowners, sportsmen, and other interested parties. However, as an outside quota-range adjustment, this proposal was due before the summer production counts could be run.

Submitted by:

Date:

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Supervisor / Date

Disapproved / Modified by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name / Date

Reason for Modification: