

Deer and Elk – HD 270



Draft Changes for 2022-2023 Hunting Regulations (boundary types, LPT changes, species, etc.):

Boundary Change: Create a larger Hunting District 270 by combining former 270 and the south half of former 261.

White-tailed Deer: General license opportunity for antlered buck white-tailed deer across new HD 270 proposed for the whole season. New season-long either-sex opportunity with general license on private land only. Eliminate 299-00 Deer B Licenses. Retain either-sex opportunity for white-tailed deer for youth season-long. Retain Deer B Licenses for antlerless white-tailed deer across new HD 270, using archery equipment only, running through Jan 15 (up to 5 per hunter, purchased over the counter).

Mule Deer: Special Management Area 270 would expand across the new district, including and merging with the south half of former Special Management Area 261. Limited permit numbers for the larger district would be conservative. Retain limited buck permit 270-51 for bucks with antlers having 3 points or fewer on one side (not including eye guard). Retain limited Deer B Licenses for antlerless mule deer.

Elk: Eliminate unlimited permit for brow-tined bull elk. Add brow-tined bull elk opportunity on the general license. For youth ages 12-15 and hunters with a PTHFV, retain brow-tined bull and antlerless opportunity on the general license, season-long (only valid north of Rye Creek). Retain unlimited Elk B License valid on private lands only during the general season. Retain limited Elk B Licenses valid north or south of Rye Creek.

Biological Implications:

Boundary Change: There is similar habitat across these districts and deer and elk regularly cross existing boundaries. This proposed boundary also matches an elk survey unit.

White-tailed Deer: Population can support season-long buck harvest. With the proposal to add either-sex opportunity with the general license on private land only, 299-00 is no longer necessary to get adequate harvest where needed. White-tailed deer population can support youth hunter extra opportunity.

Mule Deer: This limits mule deer buck harvest to maintain and recruit older-aged bucks, while managing CWD risk, as in the past. Allowing limited antlerless harvest is a strategy to improve fawn recruitment.

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Elk: Check station and harvest data suggest that the unlimited brow-tined bull or antlerless permit is not effective in managing elk harvest. Elk numbers have remained high and within objective under the strategies of antlerless harvest that would be retained.

Social Implications:

The consolidation with the south half of former HD 261 will result in the loss of a former mule deer special management area which is a concern to some, however the resulting larger district will continue to be managed under limited permits as before.

A move from unlimited permits to a general license opportunity for brow-tined or antlerless elk will be controversial. Unlimited permits have helped reduce apparent hunting pressure, although it has not reduced harvest. Unlimited permits have been part of the strategy for managing hunting pressure that can reach intolerable levels in the occasional years when elk migrate in large numbers to the winter range during the open hunting season.

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