

# Deer/Elk/Lion/Antelope – HD 370



## **Draft Changes for 2022-2023 Hunting Regulations:**

Combine Hunting Districts 350 and 370 into one hunting district, HD 370. This would apply to white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, mountain lion and antelope. The regulations for each species would be as follows:

- White-tailed deer: Either-sex on the general license for archery and general season. This would not be a change from how it is now in both HDs.
- Mule deer: Antlered buck on the general license and 50 Deer B licenses for archery and general season. This would reflect a change from the current season structure in both HDs away from either-sex mule deer on the general license during archery season.
- Elk: Manage new HD 370 as two portions (east and west) that correspond to the current HDs 370 and 350, respectively. Regulations for each portion will remain as they currently are, i.e. brow-tined bull (BTB)/antlerless on the general license for archery and general season in the east portion (current HD 370) and BTB/antlerless on the general license during archery and BTB on the general license during general season in the west portion (current HD 350). Offer 50 Elk B licenses valid in both portions of the district. Allow either-sex on the general license for youth and hunters with permission to hunt from a vehicle in both portions of the district.
- Mountain lion: Lion management would continue to be managed as it is now, with both hunting districts combined. The total quota would be set at three with a female subquota of one.
- Antelope: Either-sex licenses offered through the drawing. Doe/fawn licenses offered as a second opportunity to holders of the HD 370 either-sex license. This would not be a change from how it is currently in both HDs.

## **Biological Implications:**

The justification to restrict mule deer antlerless harvest to just B licenses is to comply with the directive of not offering fewer than 50 licenses, and to maintain doe harvest at a sustainable level. Currently HDs 350 and 370 have a combined quota of 20 Deer B licenses. Average mule deer harvest since 2016 on those licenses is 17 percent, with an additional three to 15 antlerless mule deer harvested on the general license during archery season. From 2002 to 2009, harvest when 50 Deer B licenses were offered in each HD averaged 19 percent, with an additional average of 19 antlerless mule deer harvested on the general license during the archery season in each HD.

The justification to manage elk in new HD 370 as east and west portions is to best manage the resident and migratory elk herds within this area in a sustainable manner given the disparate

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access between the current HDs. HD 350 has significantly more public access than HD 370. From 2014-2018 when both HDs were managed under a liberal regulation, harvest in HD 350 averaged 38 percent more than in HD 370. This resulted in a sharp decline in HD 350 that has yet to turn around. Therefore, this HD needs to remain in a standard regulation while HD 370, with elk security coming from the minimal amount of public access to elk habitat, can sustain a liberal season.

The justification for maintaining doe/fawn licenses for antelope as a second opportunity in the new HD 370 is that access is limited throughout this area and most antelope are on private land. Landowners prefer less hunters with multiple antelope licenses rather than more hunters with one license each. If harvest objectives are to be met, offering doe/fawn licenses as a second opportunity is the more effective management tool.

### **Social Implications:**

The justification for combining these HDs is based on the regulation simplification directive.

### **District biologist:**

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