



Draft Changes for 2022-2023 Hunting Regulations:

Eliminate the division of HD 314 along Big Creek, which divides the district into north and south portions for elk management. Retain the external boundary of HD 314 unchanged. Brow-tined bull or antlerless elk harvest would be allowed on the general license throughout archery and rifle season; antlerless harvest would be allowed throughout the entire unit instead of only north of Big Creek. The 314-00 antlerless elk B license opportunity would remain, but it would be valid throughout the entire unit instead of only north of Big Creek.

Note: The recent addition of a late shoulder season in HD 314 by the Fish and Wildlife Commission is not addressed here. The addition of an elk shoulder season for subsequent hunting seasons is beyond the scope of this summary for regulation simplifications. Discussion and comments on the structure of an elk shoulder season in HD 314 for seasons after this fall/winter would occur outside the discussion for regulation simplification (i.e. during the normal season setting process for the 2022-2023 biennial season setting).

Biological Implications:

There is no biological justification for eliminating the portion. It is proposed meet the direction to simplify regulations by eliminating portions. Elk numbers in the northern subunits defined in the 2005 Elk Plan are above objective and warrant liberalized antlerless harvest. Subunits immediately south of Big Creek are near objective; farther south elk numbers are substantially below objective, liberalized antlerless harvest is not warranted based on the subunit objectives in the 2005 Elk Plan.

Social Implications:

Some sportspersons and landowners will raise concerns that elk numbers remain below objective in the southern end of HD 314 and object to liberalized antlerless harvest in this area. Some may raise opposition to the elimination of this portion and point to the maintenance of a portion across the Yellowstone River in HD 313 as an inconsistency in FWP's messaging.

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