

# Deer & Elk – HD 310



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

Small boundary change in the Big Sky area. New hunting district legal description could read:

310 Upper Gallatin: Those portions of Gallatin and Madison Counties lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at the intersection of the West Fork of the Gallatin River with Highway 191 at Big Sky, then in an easterly direction along Levinski Ridge and the Portal Creek-Porcupine Creek divide to Eaglehead Mountain, then south along the Gallatin and Yellowstone River divide to the Yellowstone National Park Boundary, then south along the Yellowstone National Park Boundary to the Madison/Gallatin Rivers divide, then west and then north along the Madison/Gallatin Rivers divide to the headwaters of Buck Creek, then north and east along the First Yellow Mule Creek, then north and east along the South Fork to the West Fork of the Gallatin River, then east along the West Fork of the Gallatin River to the point of the beginning.

## **Biological Implications:**

Hunting District 310 has a wintering elk population well below objective which uses public land. The redraw of the district will better encompass areas used by this herd for its protection. It could not sustain regulation liberalization with its neighbors, or this herd would risk extinction.

The redraw was also done to use boundary guidance provided by the regulation simplification working group, to find clearly identifiable boundaries.

## **Social Implications:**

This proposal are expected to be relatively acceptable. The limited comments received so far are positive. The boundary change could result in some perceived loss to hunters no longer able to hunt antlerless elk in certain portions of the Big Sky area. It could cause some concern by some homeowners in Big Sky which may get landscaping damage from elk, but hunting is also limited in Big Sky. There is little to no agriculture is in the area, no crop game damage problems are expected to result.

## **District biologist:**

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