

# Deer/elk – HD 322



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

Combine Hunting Districts 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327 and 330 into one district, HD 322. The portion of HD 323 known as the Wall Creek Special Hunt Area would be maintained.

Proposed regulations:

- General Elk License: Brow-tine bull or antlerless elk. Not valid within the Wall Creek Special Hunt Area
- Elk B License: 399-00: Valid across HDs 302, 303 and 322. Antlerless elk; quota 500; quota range 100 – 1,000
- General Deer License: Either-sex mule deer; either-sex white-tailed deer
- Deer B License: 003-00 — Antlerless white-tailed deer. One per hunter and valid across all Region 3 HDs
- Deer B License: 399-00 — Antlerless white-tailed deer. One to five per hunter per year based on harvest need, and valid across HDs 302, 320, 322, 329, 340 and 360

## **Biological Implications:**

The primary justification for the recommendation is the statewide regulations simplification effort. From a biological perspective, the HD combination expands the HD to the Gravelly Elk Management Unit scale, which is the scale that elk and mule deer use the landscape. Elk regulations have been common across the seven HDs since 2004. Three mule deer regulations currently exist across the seven existing HDs. Those are limited permit buck only (HD 324), general license buck only (HD 323 and 327), and general license either sex (HDs 322, 325, 326 and 330). Because chronic wasting disease is present in HDs 322, 324, 326 and 330, and will soon be present in HDs 323, 325 and 327, general license either sex is the most biologically-appropriate harvest regulation for the long-term health of mule deer, elk, and moose across the landscape.

## **Social Implications:**

Feedback to date has been minimal but focused on the future mule deer regulation. Several hunters have expressed a desire to maintain or expand the limited buck permit. Setting the new mule deer regulation is expected to be the most debated aspect of this recommendation. Those hunters that desire management focused on producing higher composition of large-antlered bucks will advocate for expansion of the limited buck permit regulation. Those hunters that desire the opportunity to harvest any deer annually and members of the public who are concerned about future impacts of chronic wasting disease will advocate for a general deer license harvest opportunity. For elk and white-tailed deer, the recommendation is expected to be acceptable to most hunters and landowners.

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