



MEMORADUM

TO: Jason Kool, Landowner Sportsmen Coordinator
FROM: Ashley Taylor, Roundup Wildlife Biologist
DATE: May 11, 2021
SUBJECT: Swanz Ranch Hunting Access Agreement Assessment 2002-2020

John Swanz has had a hunting access agreement with FWP for the last nineteen years under the auspices of HB 454. In return for allowing access to elk hunters, John or a family member receives one 411-21 either-sex elk permit. Prior to 2019, FWP issued four additional 411-21 either-sex elk permits by random drawing from among unsuccessful applicants for 411-20 either-sex elk permits; the permits were valid only on the Swanz property. Following a change in statute from the 2019 Legislature FWP now issues one 411-20 either-sex elk permit to John or a family member that is only valid on the Swanz property. Then FWP contacts four 411-20 either-sex elk permit holders randomly drawn from the successful applicants for 411-20 either-sex elk permits. These selected permit holders are informed they can use their permits on the Swanz property in addition to everywhere else the permit is valid in HDs 411, 511 and 530. In 2020 Mr. Swanz's family members received one either-sex elk permit in exchange for four either-sex permits for the public. Mr. Swanz allows holders of these permits to hunt either-sex elk throughout the general rifle season. Mr. Swanz also allows holders of 411-20 either-sex elk permits, general elk licenses, or any valid antlerless elk licenses to hunt antlerless elk on his property. There are usually cow elk present and Mr. Swanz allows public access for cows.

Since this hunting access agreement began in 2002, eighty 411-21 either-sex elk permits, and eight 411-20 either-sex elk permits have been issued to 85 residents and 3 nonresidents. Fifty-three hunters used those permits in the last nineteen years, 31 hunters did not use the permits and 4 hunters were unable to be contacted. Table 1 summarizes the Swanz Ranch elk access agreement permit recipient survey completed every spring. In 2020 none of the four hunters used their permits because they had access elsewhere the permits were valid. In 2019 two of the four hunters used their permits and harvested two bulls. In 2018 six of the eight hunters used their permits and two harvested bulls and one harvested a cow. In the nineteen years this permit has been in place two people stated they did not receive the permit despite licensing records that the permits were mailed.

Table 1. Summary of the Swanz Ranch Elk Access Agreement Survey, 2002-2020.

Survey Summary of Permit Recipients	Number of Permits
Successfully harvested elk	23
Hunted and did not harvest an elk	30
Not available when elk were on the property	3
Unable to use permit due to personal reasons	7
Harvested elk during archery season, unable to use permit	3
Hunted other areas, did not use permit	7
Elk did not come on to Swanz's property	9
Did not get elk permit	2
No data available - unable to contact permit recipients	4
Total Permits	88

Twenty-two bull elk have been harvested on the Swanz's property using these permits including: 1-1x1, 9-5x5 bulls, 1-5x6, 1-6x4, 6-6x6 bulls, 2-6x7 bull and 2-7x7 bull. The survey of permit recipients indicates that 70 hunters would participate in this hunt again, 7 hunters would not participate again, and 11 hunters did not provide information on future participation. Two hunters would not participate again because they did not think this property was a good elk hunting location, one hunter is not much of an elk hunter, and the other two did not give a reason.

The John Swanz family's 411-21 either-sex elk permit use is summarized in Table 2. To date the Swanz family has harvested twelve bull elk using their 411-21 either-sex elk permits.

Table 2. Summary of Mr. Swanz family's 411-21 either-sex elk permit use, 2002-2020.

Year	Permit Holder	Permit Use	Year	Permit Holder	Permit Use
2002	Jason Swanz (son)	Bull elk	2013	John Swanz	Bull elk
2003	John Swanz	None	2014	Jason Swanz	Bull elk
2004	Jason Swanz (son)	Bull elk	2015	Cody Gilbert	Bull elk
2005	John Swanz	None	2016	Jason Swanz (son)	Bull elk
2006	John Swanz	None	2016	Jamie Gilbert (son-in-law)	None
2007	John Swanz	Bull elk	2017	Trace Gilbert (grandson)	Bull elk
2008	Jason Swanz (son)	None	2017	Jack Swanz (grandson)	Bull elk
2009	John Swanz	None	2018	Jason Swanz (son)	Bull elk
2010	Jason Swanz (son)	Bull elk	2018	Jamie Gilbert (son-in-law)	None
2011	Jamie Gilbert (son-in-law)	None	2019	Jason Swanz (son)	Bull elk
2012	Jamie Gilbert (son-in-law)	None	2020	Trace Gilbert (grandson)	None

John Swanz also has a hunting access corridor agreement with FWP that allows hunters to cross his property to access USFS land in the Snowies. Hunter use of this access corridor is summarized in Table 3. The access corridor agreement with FWP was discontinued in 2020 due to a landownership change for one of the five landowners who used to participate in this corridor agreement.

Table 3. Hunter use summary of John Swanz's hunting access corridor agreement, 2002-2020.

Year	Hunter Days	Year	Hunter Days
2002	235	2012	217
2003	71*	2013	249
2004	160	2014	211
2005	141	2015	196
2006	146*	2016	294
2007	193	2017	109*
2008	246	2018	191
2009	150	2019	172
2010	126**	2020	0***
2011	180	Total	3,287

*Access was limited for a time due to fire danger

**Deep snow prevented hunters from using this corridor for most of the season

I recommend renewal of this agreement for the 2021 hunting season.