

PROPOSED AMENDMENT by Commissioner Lane (Region 7)

Proposed Motion:

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt rules that split the current HD 007-20 into two separate (North and South) districts using the Yellowstone River as the boundary between the two.

DEPARTMENT RESPONSE

The department does not anticipate any biological effects by eliminating the Region-wide license structure and dividing the Region into two distinct antelope hunting districts split along the Yellowstone River. Quota levels will be recommended conservatively to evaluate the effect of changes in hunter distribution and number on antelope population numbers and harvest. Effects of the change are likely to be primarily social. Currently, hunters may choose to distribute themselves throughout the region according to perceived antelope abundance, which may at times result in concentrations of hunters in local areas where antelope are abundant. Dividing the region may limit options on where to hunt for some hunters that are unable to locate concentrations of antelope on public land. When antelope affect private landowners, landowners are currently able to solicit game damage assistance from a greater number of hunters than what they would be if the region were split.

If adopted, the department would recommend a quota of 3,000 for either-sex antelope with a quota range of 1,000–4,000 and a quota of 60 for doe-fawn licenses with a quota range of 25–3,000 in the northern portion and a quota of 4,250 either-sex antelope with a quota range of 2,000–8,000 and a quota of 80 for doe-fawn licenses with a quota range of 25–5000 in the southern portion. Successful applicants for the either-sex license in the southern portion may be offered the opportunity to purchase one Doe/Fawn 799-30 (Quota: 1,500, Range 50–4,000 in the southern portion) license valid in HD 705 during the same time periods.