



# MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

**Meeting Date:** Dec. 14, 2023

**Agenda Item:** 2024 and 2025 Deer and Elk Hunting Regulations, Season Structures, and Hunting District Boundaries

**Action Needed:** Final

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 15 Minutes

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**Background:** Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially by the commission for most game species. The proposed changes to deer and elk seasons are described in the attached deer and elk season summary and presented in detail for commission action within the regulation mockup. The commission is considering all regulations and descriptions of boundaries for the 2024 and 2025 deer and elk seasons, whether a change is proposed or not. All other regulations and descriptions of boundaries will remain unchanged unless addressed by the commission.

**Public Involvement Process and Results:** Public input was solicited through 34 public meetings during June and July where concepts for biennial season setting were discussed. Public comment will be solicited for a four-week period following the Oct. commission meeting, and seven hybrid virtual meetings will be held (one in each region) between Oct. 30 and Nov. 10 to answer questions about proposals. Written public comments received during the comment period will be posted online and provided to commissioners at least two weeks prior to the December commission meeting.

**Alternatives and Analysis:** The department presented concepts for discussion for each species during June and July. Based on public feedback and legal analysis, the department refined the concepts and developed proposals for commission action.

Alternative A: The commission may approve the department's recommendation as presented.

Alternative B: The commission may amend the department's recommendation on any aspect of season structure, quota, or hunting district or on aspects of the regulations that are not proposed for change.

**Agency Recommendation and Rationale:** The department recommends the commission approve the proposed 2024 and 2025 hunting regulations and district boundaries as presented by the department and as detailed in the attached mockup. Any aspect unchanged from 2023 season will remain in effect for 2024 and 2025, except where affected by routine calendar rotations.

**Proposed Motion:** I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission vote to approve: 1) changes identified in the deer and elk regulation mockup to include opportunities, season dates, quotas, and quota ranges as presented by the department; and 2) all other deer and elk regulations contained in the 2023 regulations, except for those affected by regular calendar rotations, unless addressed in some other proposal to be adopted for the 2024 and 2025 deer and elk hunting seasons and districts.

**Alternative Motion:** I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission vote to amend: 1) changes identified in the deer and elk regulation mockup to include opportunities, season dates, quotas, and quota ranges as presented by the department as follows (insert changes here); and 2) all other deer and elk regulations contained in the 2023 regulations, except for those affected by regular calendar rotations, unless addressed in some other proposal to be adopted for the 2024 and 2025 deer and elk hunting seasons and districts.

**Season dates**

<b>Season 2024</b>	<b>Date conventions</b>
Deer/elk/lion archery	9/7 – 10/20 (first Saturday in September to Sunday before general deer/elk opener)
Deer/elk backcountry	9/15 – 12/1 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving)
Deer youth	10/17– 10/18 (MEA days; third Thursday and Friday of October)
Deer/elk general	10/26 – 12/1 (37 days ending Thanksgiving Sunday—Saturday start)
Deer/elk shoulder seasons	8/15 – 2/15 (varying dates before and/or after the archery and general seasons)
Deer/Elk Heritage Muzzleloader	12/14 – 12/22 (9-day season beginning second Saturday following end of general season)

<b>Season 2025</b>	<b>Date conventions</b>
Deer/elk/lion archery	9/6 – 10/19 (first Saturday in September to Sunday before general deer/elk opener)
Deer/elk backcountry	9/15 – 11/30 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving)
Deer youth	10/16 – 10/17 (MEA days; third Thursday and Friday of October)
Deer/elk general	10/25 – 11/30 (37 days ending Thanksgiving Sunday—Saturday start)
Deer/elk shoulder seasons	8/15 – 2/15 (varying dates before and/or after the archery and general seasons)
Deer/Elk Heritage Muzzleloader	12/13 – 12/21 (9-day season beginning second Saturday following end of general season)

**Specific changes**

Amend language for definition of muzzleloader for weapons restriction areas

Page 25 of the 2023 Deer-Elk-Antelope Regulations

Reason for change: Simplifies definition and brings consistent with current enforcement practices.

**Muzzleloader** (this definition is strictly for the use of muzzleloaders in weapons restriction areas. See the Muzzleloader Heritage Season Lawful Weapons section on page 24 for information regarding hunting during the Heritage Muzzleloader Season)

- Must not be capable of being loaded from the breech of the barrel
- May not be loaded with any pre-prepared paper or metallic cartridges
- Must be charged with black powder, pyrodex, or an equivalent
- Must be ignited by a percussion, flintlock, matchlock, 209 primer, or wheellock mechanism
- Must be a minimum of .45 caliber
- May have no more than two barrels
- ~~• Must only use plain lead projectiles;~~
- ~~• Sabots or other similar power and range enhancing manufactured loads that enclose the projectile from the rifling or bore of the firearm are prohibited. “Skirts” or gas checks on the base of a projectile are acceptable.~~

Define first and only choice for all license-permit opportunities that use this designation (elk, antelope)

Does not appear in the 2023 Deer-Elk-Antelope Regulations

Reason for Change: currently there is no explicit definition of "first and only choice" when used in the regulations. This addition should limit confusion and improve clarity.

*A person applying for a "first and only choice" license/permit is limited to that specific license/permit only for that species and will not be allowed to select a second and third license/permit opportunity when applying. Licenses and/or permits issued through a drawing identified as a "first and only choice" opportunity will not be offered as a surplus license/permit opportunity if the department receives fewer applications than the number of license/permits available.*

Clarify bag limit for resident deer hunters

Page 15 of the 2023 Deer-Elk-Antelope Regulations

Reason for Change: eliminate confusion regarding the bag limit for resident deer hunters.

A hunter may possess a total of seven deer B licenses in any combination. *A hunter may harvest one deer for each license held, which may total eight (including General Deer License) for residents.* Game damage and management deer B licenses do not count toward ~~this~~ these totals.

Eliminate Single-Region Deer B Licenses

Page 15 of the 2023 Deer-Elk-Antelope Regulations

Reason for change: no need to limit harvest of white-tailed deer and, in some cases, an interest in increasing harvest.

~~Single-Region Deer B Licenses for White-tailed Deer~~

- ~~• A hunter may purchase only one single region deer B license for white-tailed deer per year.~~
- ~~• The single region deer B license for white-tailed deer is in addition to other deer B licenses a person may obtain through a drawing or purchase at license providers. You must designate the region in which you will use the single region deer B license for white-tailed deer at the time of purchase. Check the hunting district in which you will hunt for specific regulations and valid dates for the single region license.~~
- ~~• Licenses are available beginning Aug. 7 from license providers, including FWP Online Licensing.~~

**Summary of proposed changes for deer and elk**

Deer

STATEWIDE:

- Eliminate quota ranges for all deer permit license-permit types.
- Replace the Single-Region Deer B Licenses for white-tailed deer with region-specific B licenses that allow hunters to purchase a regional specific Whitetail B License in more than one region.

REGION 1:

- Limit the number of white-tailed deer 199-20 license-permit type to one per hunter and see mandatory testing for CWD section. Require mandatory reporting and testing of white-tailed deer harvested with the 199-20 license-permit type.

HD 101: Designate the North Tobacco portion of HD 101 for the purpose of white-tailed deer management. Create an Unlimited B License, valid only on **private lands** in the North Tobacco portion of HD 101, limit two per person. General Season starts **Aug. 15** to align with game damage timing. Modify existing antlerless LPT 101-00 to maintain some antlerless WTD opportunity in the rest of HD 101. Remove private land only restriction. Reduce quota to **100**.

HD 103: Require mandatory reporting and check in of mule deer harvested in the HD 103-50 permit area.

HD 130: Eliminate either-sex white-tailed deer harvest opportunity during the first week of the General Season and change to a five-week buck only regulation.

HD 240: Remove the 240-01 Antlerless Mule Deer B License (current quota 25).

HD 261: Reduce the antlered buck mule deer permit quota (261-50) from 15 to 10.

HDs 210, 211, 214 and 216: Modify the either-sex white-tailed deer opportunity that is offered at the beginning of the General Season on the General License in HDs 210, 211, 214, and 216 from nine days to seven days to align with an analogous seven-day opportunity currently offered in other HDs in Regions 1 and 2.

HD 388: Correct season dates for antlerless white-tailed deer: antlerless white-tailed deer harvest within the WRA should be valid until Jan. 31 with a General License (error in regulations) and is valid until Jan. 31 with the 003-00 Antlerless License.

HD 318 and 335: Reinstate Antlerless Mule Deer B Licenses in HDs 318 and 335. Proposed quota would be 50 in HD 335 and 25 in HD 318. This may be adjusted after spring recruitment surveys in 2024 (2024 survey would be done prior to quota deadlines for 2024 seasons).

HDs 410, 411, 412, 417, 419, and 426:

- Change the Mule Deer General License regulation in HDs 410 and 417 from "Antlered Buck Only" (AB) to Limited-entry (LE) permits for both six-week Archery and five-week General Seasons (quota 100 in each HD);
- Change the Mule Deer General License regulation in HD 426 from five-week buck only to: first three weeks AB followed by two weeks LE permits AB (quota 75; six-week Archery Season remains General License AB);
- Change all Mule Deer B Licenses for HDs 410, 411, 412, 417, 419, and 426 to be valid "only on private land;"
- Maintain current Either-Sex General and B License regulations for white-tailed deer in all HDs.

HD 448: Add a 448-00 Deer B License that is valid for antlerless mule deer (quota=100, quota range=5–250). The B License is not valid on national forest lands.

HD 502:

- Change the General Mule Deer Season from either-sex to antlered buck only.
- Add an either-sex mule deer opportunity on the General License valid in the Archery, General, and Muzzleloader seasons for youth ages 10–15.

HD 515: Change the General License mule deer season from either-sex to antlered buck.

HD 535: Remove the General License mule deer antlerless opportunity and change the mule deer buck 535-50 quota from 850 to 500.

HD 555:

- Change the General License mule deer season from either-sex to antlered buck.
- Add an either-sex mule deer opportunity on the General Deer License valid in the Archery, General, and Muzzleloader seasons for youth ages 10–15.

HD 590: Change the General License mule deer season from either-sex to antlered buck.

REGION 6:

- Change the Region 6 Single Region Antlerless Whitetail License (SRAWT) 006-00 to a Region 6 Specific White-tailed Deer License with a per person limit of three. Additionally, this proposal will adjust the per hunter limit of the renamed regional B License from the current limit of four to a limit of three per hunter.
- Establish two CWD Management Zones in Region 6 with corresponding season dates and licenses valid:
  - Location - Portions of HDs 600, 640, and/or 670 were identified through a Hotspot GIS analysis of positive mule deer harvest locations over the last five years. Boundaries of the CWD Management Zones are legally defined and involve portions of multiple HDs.
  - R6 CWD Management Zone- West- 2,090 sq miles in portions of HD 600 and 670.
  - R6 CWD Management Zone- East- 1,743 sq miles in portions of HD 640 and 670.
  - Licenses valid:
    - Establish two separate mule deer either-sex (ES) B license types that are valid within specific CWD Management Zone. These would be issued through the drawing.
      - 699-20 (West R6): Quota of 500 ES B License. Quota range 100-1,000
        - Establish an over the counter Mule Deer Antlerless B License (699-00) available to holders of a CWD ES B License, maximum of two per person.
      - 699-21 (East R6): Quota of 500 ES B License. Quota range 100-1,000
        - Establish an over the counter Mule Deer Antlerless B License (699-01) available to holders of a CWD ES B License, maximum of two per person.
    - During the CWD management season and within the boundaries of the CWD Management Zone, holders of CWD ES B Licenses would also be allowed to use:
      - An unused General License valid for either-sex either-species
      - Any unused Antlerless Mule Deer B License
  - CWD Management Season Dates:
    - Archery Only - Valid with archery equipment only
    - General Season
    - Late season - From the end of general season to Jan. 1
  - Sample submission will remain voluntary but highly encouraged.

HDs 600 and 640: Adjust Mule Deer B License quota ranges for 600-01 and 640-00. 600-01 would change from 100–1,000 to 500–1,500 and 640-00 would change from 100–1,500 to 500–2,000.

Elk

STATEWIDE: Eliminate quota ranges for all elk permit license-permit types.

HD 170: Establish an Elk B License 170-00 (quota range 5–100) – Limit one per hunter; only valid on private land north of Lake Blaine Road and west of Hwy 35. Secure access before applying. Recommendation is to start at 25 licenses. Valid Archery through late season (Feb. 15).

HD 120 and 130: Remove either-sex harvest opportunity on a General License for people holding a PTHFV.

HD 201: Remove restriction for Elk B License 201-01 that makes it "Not valid east of HWY 93."

HD 204: Add a general license antlerless opportunity to the north portion (Eight Mile-North) of HD 204, private land only, valid from the start of rifle season to Jan. 8 AND adjust late season opportunity on the 262-01 license to be valid only in north portion of HD 204.

HD 210:

- Make changes to B License 210-03: 1) Add restriction "Valid on private lands in HDs 210 South (Rattling Gulch-Henderson Creek), 211, 212, and 216." 2). Add late season from end of general rifle to Jan. 8.
- Add new B License 210-04: quota = 50; quota range = 5–200. "Valid on private lands in HD 210 North (Rattling Gulch-Henderson Creek)."

HD 217: Remove early season opportunity on general license for youth-PTHFV and ArchEquip only. Remove early season for B License 217-02. Add Archery Only Season to this license-permit type.

HD 261: Remove the late season on the 262-01 OTC B-License.

HD 262: Remove the late season in HD 262 (on the 262-01 OTC B License) so that it ends on the last day of General Rifle Season. Add a limited brow-tined bull elk permit to HD 262 (quota = 20).

HD 270:

- Expand the 262-01 B License to be valid on private land in entirety of HD 270, not just the "north of Rye Creek" portion.
- Increase the 270-01 (north of Rye Creek) quota from 200 to 300 and change quota range from 10–200 to 10–400.

HD 281: New opportunity – B License 281-01. Restore limited antlerless B License in HD 281 (quota = 10; quota range 5–200).

HD 301:

- Extend shoulder season hunting (not valid on national forest lands) into HD 301. The proposal would not change antlerless elk hunting on national forest lands. The proposed regulation would introduce a B license opportunity. Make Elk B License 397-00 valid for HD 301 with season dates Aug. 15 through the day before the first day of Archery Season (only valid on private land), Antlerless Elk Archery Season; General Rifle Season; and from the last day of General Season through Feb. 15 (not valid on national forest lands). B License 397-00 is also valid in other Region 3 HDs.

HD 313:

- Add 313-01 B License. This proposal is to add a 313-01 B License, which will be available to both youth and adults. A quota adjustment proposal to 313-00 B License (the youth-only opportunity) accompanies this proposal. Additionally, a quota proposal for the 313-01 B License accompanies this proposal. See next.
- B License Quota Adjustments. This proposal is to adjust the quotas for Elk B Licenses 313-00 (youth only) from 60 to 50 and establish an Elk B License 313-01 with a quota of 50. Change quota range for both B Licenses should be 10-100, 313-00 was 15-50. Net increase of 40 licenses from last year.
- Adjust Gardiner Closure Area. This proposal is to change the Restricted Area Description for the Gardiner Closure Area to address an area of confusion near the Gardiner Airport and McConnell Fishing Access Area (a USFS access site).

HD 314: Add 397-00 B License. This proposal is to replace the limited quota 314-00 Elk B License with the OTC 397-00 Elk B License. The 397-00 B License will be valid during Archery, General, and Muzzleloader seasons.

HD 315: Add 397-00 B License. This proposal is to remove the 315-01 Limited Quota Elk B License and replace it with the OTC 397-00 B License. The 397-00 B License will be valid during Archery, General, and Muzzleloader seasons (no shoulder seasons).

HDs 339 and 343:

- Add a two-week antlerless opportunity during the last two weeks of the General Season with the General Elk License in both hunting districts.
- Remove the restriction that holders of Elk B Licenses 394-00 and 396-00 may only harvest one elk within the area where the license is valid. These antlerless licenses are currently valid in both HD 318 and HD 335 (394-00) and in both HD 339 and HD 343 (396-00).

HD 340: Liberalize the General Season by allowing brow-tined bull and antlerless elk harvest on the General License from the first Saturday of the General Season through the third Sunday of the General Season (16 total days). For the remainder of the season, brow-tined bull only will be allowed on the General License.

HD 380: Reduce the general rifle antlerless elk opportunity for youth and PTHFV hunters from five weeks to the first three weeks of the general rifle season. By default, the muzzleloader general antlerless elk opportunity for youth and PTHFV would also be eliminated.

HD 391: Add HD 391 (south of Duck Creek) to the list of HDs where the 397-00 Antlerless Elk B License would be valid with restrictions on where and when valid. In the HD 391 portion (south of Duck Creek) the license would only be valid during the General Archery and rifle seasons and the late shoulder season.

HD 388: Expand the Elk Season dates within the Weapons Restriction Area (WRA) of HD 388 to Aug. 15–Jan. 31.

HD 360: Change quota from 1,000 Antlerless Elk B Licenses in HD 360 to unlimited over the counter Antlerless Elk B Licenses in HD 360. Not valid on national forest lands.

HD 410: For the 410-02 Antlerless Elk License, remove the shoulder season that extends from the day after General Season through Feb. 15, and remove the second antlerless elk opportunity on General License to 410-02 License holders.

HD 415: Change elk regulations in HD 415 from brow-tined bull or antlerless elk to antlered bull elk for both the Archery Season and General Season.

HD 413:

- Add a late shoulder season from Jan. 1–Feb. 15 in the portion of HD 413 East of Highway 89. The General License and Elk B License 004-00 will be valid for harvest of antlerless elk. General License for these dates is not valid on national forest lands.
- B License 004-00 add language “Not valid on national forest lands, FWP WMAs, or CMR Refuge. Valid in all Region 4 HDs except HDs 410 and 455 as listed under each HD.”

HD 417: Clarify language for General and 004-00 Elk B Licenses: "Only valid south of D-Y Trail to intersection of Knox Ridge Road, then south of Knox Ridge Road thereafter. Not valid west of Stafford Ferry Road." For 004-00, keep language "Not valid on national forest lands, FWP WMAs, or CMR Refuge. Valid in all Region 4 HDs except HDs 410 and 455 as listed under each HD."

HDs 620, 621, 622: Eliminate the elk shoulder season in HDs 620, 621, and 622, by eliminating the 699-00 Antlerless Elk B License.

## **Deer-elk boundary changes**

### HD 101–Eureka

Page 18 of the 22022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: delineate a new portion for management.

### **North Tobacco Portion**

Those portions of Lincoln County lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the British Columbia-Montana international border along the east shore of Lake Kocanusa, then southerly along said shore to the mouth of the Tobacco River, then east and southerly along the north shore of said river to the Tobacco Siding Road bridge, then northerly along Tobacco Siding Road to the intersection with US-HWY-93 and Whitetail Lane, then northerly on Whitetail Lane until the intersection with Glen Lake Road, then northeasterly along Glen Lake Road, then northerly along Therriault Pass Road until the USFS property boundary located in the south 1/2 of Section 14, T36N, R26W, then northerly along the USFS property boundary until it corners with the Woods Ranch Wildlife Management Area in the south 1/2 of Section 08, T37N, R26W, then west and south along the WMA boundary until WMA corner in Section 13, T37N, R27W, then northerly along WMA boundary until its intersection with the British Columbia-Montana international border, then westerly along said border until the east shore of lake Kocanusa, the point of beginning.

### HD 140—Lower South Fork

Page 19 of the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: clarify the junction between HD 140 and HD 170 at the Flathead River. The existing legal description references a Badrock Canyon Fishing Access Site. No site exists with this name.

That portion of Flathead County lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at Inspiration Point on the Swan Divide and the Middle Fork Creek-Inspiration Creek Divide, then northeasterly along said creek divide to USFS Trail 218, then southerly along said trail to USFS Trail 226 (Picture Peak Trail), then easterly along said trail to USFS Trail 107 near Picture Peak, then northerly along said trail to the south side of Sarah Peak, then easterly along the main creek starting southeast of Sarah Peak to the South Fork Flathead River and the mouth of Mid Creek-USFS Trail 103, then northeasterly along said trail to USFS Trail 89 at Mid Mtn., then easterly and northerly along said trail to USFS Trail 83 (near Silvertip Cabin), then northwesterly along said trail to USFS Trail 43, then northwesterly along said trail to USFS Trail 327 east of Whitcomb Peak, then northwesterly along said trail to USFS 81 and the South Fork Flathead River-Middle Fork Flathead River Divide, then northwesterly along said divide (Twin Mtn., Prospector Mtn., Great Northern Mtn.) to USFS Trail 331, then northwesterly along said trail to US Highway 2, then westerly on said highway to Ousel Creek, then northerly along said creek to the Middle Fork Flathead River, then westerly along said river to the Flathead River at the confluence of the North Fork Flathead River, then southerly along said river to the South Fork Flathead River, then westerly along the Flathead River to ~~Badrock Canyon Fishing Access Site, then southerly to Highway 2 and the USFS Boundary in T30, R20, Section 11~~ the point due-north of the intersection of Berne Road and US Highway 2, then due south to the junction of US Highway 2 and Berne Road, then south along Berne Road to the Forest Service boundary's northernmost intersection with Berne Road, then follow the USFS boundary southerly to the confluence of Groom Creek and Swan Lake, then follow Groom Creek northeasterly along said creek to USFS Trail 61, then northerly along said trail to the Swan Divide, then southerly along said divide to Inspiration Point, the point of the beginning.

### HD 170—Flathead River

Page 20 of the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.



Reason for Change: correct omission of Bad Rock Canyon WMA from HD 170 and reduce confusion over boundary lines. Existing legal descriptions creates a donut hole in which Bad Rock Canyon lies outside any hunting district.

That portion of Flathead County lying within the following-described boundary: ~~Beginning where State Route 35 bridge crosses the Swan River, then southerly along the lakeshore of Flathead Lake to the confluence of Hunger Creek and then northeasterly along said creek to USFS boundary, then northerly along said boundary to T26N, R19W, Section 8, then west long USFS Boundary and then southeasterly along said boundary to the lakeshore of Swan Lake. Cross the lake shore to the east to opposite shoreline, then follow shoreline southerly to USFS boundary south of the confluence of How Creek, then follow USFS Boundary northerly to near Bigfork, then southerly along the lakeshore of Flathead Lake to the confluence of Hunger Creek and then northeasterly along said creek to USFS boundary, then northerly along said boundary to T26N, R19W, Section 8, then west along USFS boundary and then southeasterly along said boundary to the lakeshore of Swan Lake. Cross the lake shore to the east to opposite shoreline, then follow shoreline southerly to USFS boundary south of the confluence of How Creek, then follow USFS boundary northerly to its northernmost intersection with Berne Road, then north along Berne Road to its junction with US Highway 2, then due north to the Flathead River, then westerly along said river to US Highway 2, then westerly along said highway to 12th Avenue West, Columbia Falls, then northerly to Tamarack Lane, then westerly to East Edgewood Drive and continue westerly to East 2nd Street, Whitefish, then south and westerly to US Highway 93, then west and northerly along said highway to Farm-to-Market Road, then southerly along said road to West Spring Creek Road across US Highway 2 on to Dern Road then east on Whalebone Drive to Foy's Lake Road, then southerly onto Foy's Canyon Road to Rocky Cliff Road, then easterly to US Highway 93, then southerly along said highway to the Somers Fishing Access Site and the north shore of Flathead Lake, then easterly along said shore to the Swan River, then easterly along the north shore of said river to State Route 35 Bridge, the point of beginning.~~

#### Portion of 204 Eight Mile-Turah

Page 20 of the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: expand antlerless opportunities on private land in north portion only.

Those portions of Ravalli, Granite, and Missoula counties lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at Missoula, then east along Interstate 90 to a point immediately east of the Schwartz Creek Road terminus south of Clinton, then west to Schwartz Creek Road, then west and southwest along said road to the Bitterroot-Rock Creek Divide at Holloman Saddle, then southerly along said divide to the headwaters of Sluice Creek in T11NR18WS35, then west along Sluice Creek to its junction with Eight Mile Creek, then west along Eight Mile Creek to the Miller Creek Number 4 to Hamilton Heights double H-frame power line, then northwest along said power line to its junction with North Woodchuck Creek, then west along said creek to its end at the easternmost bank of the Bitterroot River, then north on said bank to a point directly west of the intersection of Oral Zumwalt Way and Trails End Road, then easterly and northerly along Trails End Road to the Miller Creek Road, then northerly along said road to US Highway 93, then north along said highway through Missoula to Interstate 90, the point of beginning.

#### HD 210–John Long Range North

Page 21 of the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: hunt district split is proposed to address differing management needs between the northern and southern ends of the unit.

Beginning at Drummond at the junction of Interstate Highway 90 and Highway 1, then southerly along Highway 1 to the Henderson Creek Road 448, then westerly on the Henderson Creek Road to the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest boundary, then west and north on the USFS boundary to the South Fork of Copper Creek, then westerly on the South Fork of Copper Creek and down Rattling Gulch to the Upper Willow Creek Road 88, then northwesterly along said road to FS 4308, then northwesterly along FS 4308 following Brewster Creek to the Rock Creek Road (County Road 102), then northerly on the Rock Creek Road to Interstate 90, then easterly along said highway to Highway 1 at Drummond, the point of beginning.

#### HD 210—John Long Range South

Page 21 of the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: hunt district split is proposed to address differing management needs between the northern and southern ends of the unit.

Beginning at the junction of Highway 1 and Henderson Creek Road 448, then westerly on the Henderson Creek Road to the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest boundary, then west and north on the USFS boundary to the South Fork of Copper Creek, then westerly on the South Fork of Copper Creek and down Rattling Gulch to the Upper Willow Creek Road 88, then southerly along said road to County Road 348, then southerly along Road 348 to State Route 38, then easterly along Route 38 to Highway 1, then northerly along Highway 1 to the Henderson Creek Road, the point of beginning.

#### HD 309—Gallatin Valley Weapons Restriction Area

Page 24 of the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: Elk and elk-related agricultural damage has increased in this area. Large private landowners have requested the ability to use rifles to more effectively harvest elk. On larger parcels, hunting elk with rifles should be safe if hunters follow ethical hunting practices. This change applies to black bear and mountain lion as well.

#### Blackwood Exclusion Zone

Hunters may use rifles on parcels of land 160 acres or larger that fall completely within the following described boundary: Beginning at Highway 191 and Blackwood Road, then east to Cottonwood Road, then south following Cottonwood Road (state route 345) west to Highway 191 then north along Highway 191 to Blackwood Road, the point of the beginning.

#### Gardiner Closed Area

Page 27 of the 2023 Deer-Elk-Antelope Regulations.

Reason for Change: to provide a less confusing and enforceable closure boundary.

Closed to all hunting: Beginning at the Junction of U.S. Hwy 89 and Little Trail Creek, then up Little Trail Creek to the posted line (a11pprox. ½ mile above U.S. Hwy 89), then southeasterly along said line to the Travertine-Trail Creek Road, then easterly along said road to its intersection with the Gardiner-Jardine Road, then northeasterly along said road to Eagle Creek, then southerly down said creek to the YNP boundary, then westerly along said boundary to the intersection with Stevens Creek, ~~then northeasterly in a straight~~ at the Stevens Creek/Yellowstone River confluence, then downstream (northwesterly) to the marked line at the USFS boundary on the east bank of the Yellowstone River (the boundary between T9S R8E S17 and T9S R8E S16), then northerly along said section line to Riverview drive, then easterly along Riverview Drive line to the intersection with U.S. Hwy 89, then northwesterly along said highway to the junction of Little Trail Creek, the point of beginning.

HD 322–Ruby-Red Rock

Page 26 of the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description

Reason for Change: align the hunting district with known elk distribution.

~~Those portions of Madison and Beaverhead Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at Twin Bridges, southeasterly along Montana Highway 287 to the intersection with U. S. Highway 287 at Ennis, then southerly along the east bank of the Missouri River to the intersection with Route 87, then southerly along Route 87 to the Montana-Idaho border, then westerly along the Montana-Idaho border to the intersections with Interstate 15 at the Monida Pass, then northerly along Interstate 15 to the intersection with Route 41 at Dillon, then northerly along Route 41 to Twin Bridges.~~  
Beaverhead and Madison counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the Junction of Route 41 and Overland Road north of Dillon, then southwesterly along Overland Road to Oliver Lane, then southerly along Oliver Lane to the Sweetwater Road, then easterly along the Sweetwater Road to the Ruby River Road, then northerly along the Ruby River Road to Montana Highway 287 at Alder, then northwesterly along Montana Highway 287 to Route 41 at Twin Bridges, then southwesterly along Route 41 to Overland Road, the point of beginning.

HD 323–Gravelly-Centennial

Not currently in the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description

Reason for Change: align hunting district with elk distribution.

Add: Those portions of Madison and Beaverhead Counties lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at Alder, easterly along Montana Highway 287 to the intersection with U. S. Highway 287 at Ennis, then southerly along U. S. Highway 287 to the intersection with Route 87, then southerly along Route 87 to the Montana-Idaho border, then westerly along the Montana-Idaho border to the intersections with Interstate 15 at the Monida Pass, then northerly along Interstate 15 to the Sage Creek Road, then northeasterly along the Sage Creek Road to Long Creek, then northerly along Long Creek to the West Fork of Long Creek, then northerly along the West Fork of Long Creek to Beech Creek, then northeasterly along Beech Creek to its west-most origin on its divide with Jake Canyon Creek, then northeasterly along Jake Canyon Creek to Blacktail Deer Creek, then northwesterly along Blacktail Deer Creek to Wagner Creek, then northeasterly along Wagner Creek to its origin on its divide with Virginia Springs Creek, then northeasterly along Virginia Springs Creek to the Sweetwater Road, then easterly along

the Sweetwater Road to the Ruby River Road, then northerly along the Ruby River Road to Montana Highway 287 at Alder, the point of beginning.

Portion of HD 323 Wall Creek WMA and adjacent land as posted

Not currently in the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description

Reason for Change: simplify the boundary for hunter clarity and enforcement.

~~Beginning at the junction of Ruby Creek and the Madison River, then southerly along east bank of said river to its intersection with Wall Creek, then westerly along Wall Creek to a posted boundary in the southwest 1/4 of Section 23, T10S, R1W, then northerly for approximately 4.5 miles along posted boundary on USFS lands (through Sections 23,14,11, 2, T10S, R1W and Sections 34 and 35 T9S, R1W) to Hyde Creek, then along Hyde Creek to the Wall Creek Wildlife Management Area boundary, then northerly and westerly along the Wildlife Management Area boundary to Ruby Creek, then easterly along Ruby Creek to the Madison River, the point of beginning.~~ its intersection with the USFS boundary. Then northerly along said boundary to its intersection with USFS 933. Then northerly along said road a marked boundary beginning in the southeast ¼ of Section 11, T10S, R1W. Then northerly along said marked boundary to its intersection with USFS Road 933. Then northwesterly along said road to its intersection with the USFS/Wall Creek Wildlife Management Area boundary in the northeast ¼ Section 27 T9S, R1W. Then northerly along said boundary to its intersection with Ruby Creek. Then easterly along said creek to its intersection the Madison River, the point of beginning.

HD 324–Blacktail Mountains

Not currently in the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description

Reason for Change: align hunting district with elk distribution.

That portion of Beaverhead County lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the intersection of Route 41 and Interstate 15, then southwesterly along Interstate 15 to the Sage Creek Road, then northeasterly along the Sage Creek Road to Long Creek, then northerly along Long Creek to the West Fork of Long Creek, then northerly along the West Fork of Long Creek to Beech Creek, then northeasterly along Beech Creek to its west-most origin on its divide with Jake Canyon Creek, then northeasterly along Jake Canyon Creek to Blacktail Deer Creek, then northwesterly along Blacktail Deer Creek to Wagner Creek, then northeasterly along Wagner Creek to its origin on its divide with Virginia Springs Creek, then northeasterly along Virginia Springs Creek to the Sweetwater Road, then northwesterly along the Sweetwater Road to Oliver Lane, then north along the Oliver Lane to Overland Road, then northeasterly along Overland Road to Route 41, then westerly along Route 41 to Interstate 15, the point of beginning.

HD 339–Sieben-Sleeping Giant

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Reason for Change: use watershed boundary for simplicity and compliance.

That portion of Lewis and Clark County lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at the bridge over Rock Creek on Interstate 15, (approximately three miles northeast of Wolf Creek), then

southeasterly along Rock Creek approximately one mile to its confluence with the Missouri River, then southerly up the west bank of the Missouri River to Hauser Dam, then southerly along Hauser Dam Road to its junction with Country Side Road, then westerly along said road to its junction with Mountain Meadows Road, then westerly along said road to where it becomes Snowdrift Road, then west along said road to its junction with Collins Drive, then north along Collins Drive to the north boundary of Section 4, T11N, R3W, then west along the north boundary of Section 4 and Section 5 to Interstate 15, then northerly along said Interstate approximately two miles to the north boundary of Section 31, T12N, R3W, at the north of the split median of Interstate 15, then following the north boundary of Section 31 westerly to the northeast corner of Section 36, T12N, R4W, then southerly along the east boundary of Section 36, then west along the south boundary of Section 36 to Green Meadow Drive, then south along Green Meadow Drive to its junction with Woodland Hills Road, then west on Woodland Hills Road to its junction with Lone Mountain Road, then south along Lone Mountain Road to Highway 279 (Lincoln Road West), then westerly and northerly along said route to Flesher Pass, then northwesterly along the Continental Divide to the North Fork Lyons Creek, then southeasterly down ~~said creek~~ the Lyons Creek/Wolf Creek Hydrological Divide to Interstate 15, then north along said interstate to Rock Creek Bridge, the point of beginning.

#### HD 370–Bull Mountains

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Reason for Change: To accurately describe the current boundary.

370 Bull Mountains: That portion of Jefferson County lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning on Interstate 90 at Whitehall, then easterly along said interstate to ~~the~~ Route 69 ~~bridge~~, then northerly along said Route 69 to the Whitetail-Boulder Road, then southerly along said road to Interstate 90 at Whitehall, the point of beginning.

#### HD 421–Birdtail Hills-South Dearborn

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Reason for Change: Combining HDs 421 and 423

Those portions of Cascade and Lewis and Clark counties lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at Cascade, then west along Interstate-15 to the ~~bridge over Lyons Creek, then up said creek and the North Fork of Lyons Creek~~ intersection of the Lyons Creek/Wolf Creek Hydrological Divide, then up said divide to the Continental Divide, then northwest along said divide to Highway 200 at Rogers Pass, then northeasterly along said route to its intersection with Interstate 15 at Vaughn, then south and west along said Interstate to Cascade, the point of beginning.

#### Region 6 CWD Management Zone West

Not in the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: CWD management.

Those portions of Hill, Blaine, and Phillips counties lying within the following described boundary: Starting at the junction of Lodge Creek and US Highway 2, head northwest along said creek to the Montana-

Canadian border, then east long this boundary to the intersection with Highway 191, then south along said highway to the intersection with Turner Cutacross Road near Loring, then north and west along said road to the intersection with the with Black Coulee Road, then south along this road to the intersection with Highway 2, then west along said highway to the intersection with the Milk River at the end of the Fort Belknap Reservation, then west along the Milk River to the intersection with US Highway 2, then north and west along said highway to the point where the highway intersects Lodge Creek, the point of beginning.

#### Region 6 CWD Management Zone East

Not in the 2022–2023 Hunting District Legal Description.

Reason for Change: CWD management.

Those portions of Daniels and Valley counties lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at a point where State Route 13 crosses the Canadian border, then southerly along said route to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation boundary, then westerly along said boundary to State Route 24, then northerly along said route to Kerr Road, then westerly along said route to Pipeline Road, then westerly along said route to Jensen Road, then northerly along said route to Rock Creek Road, then northerly along said route to Mceachron Road, then northerly along said route to the Canadian border, then easterly along said border to State Route 13, the point of beginning.

#### Portion of HD 701 south of Hwy 12 and west of Sumatra-Hysham roads

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Reason for Change: there has been confusion regarding the portion boundary. The current southern boundary of the portion is the north shore of the Yellowstone River. The Yellowstone River has altered course over the years with flood events and erosion. The portion boundary has been confused with channel migration, mapping programs, and cadastral mapping conventions. The proposed change would create a static, definable portion boundary.

Those portions of Yellowstone, Musselshell, Rosebud and Treasure Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the north shore of the Yellowstone River at its junction with County Road 310, the Musselshell Trail Road, north of Custer, then north along said road to its junction with Melstone-Custer Road, then north along said road to its junction with US Highway 12 at Melstone, then east along said highway to its junction with ~~County Road 1 (Sumatra-Hysham Road) at Sumatra, then south along said road to the north shore of the Yellowstone River at Meyers Bridge, then westerly along the north shore of the Yellowstone River to its junction with County Road 310, the Musselshell Trail Road, north of Custer, the point of beginning.~~ the Sumatra-Hysham at Sumatra, then south along said road to the junction of County Rd 311 (Meyers Rd/Pease Bottom Rd), then west along said road to its junction with County Road 310, the Musselshell Trail Road, north of Custer, the point of beginning.