

**MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
HUNTING SEASON / QUOTA CHANGE SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Species: Deer/Elk
Region: 4
Hunting District: 426
Year: 2025**

1. Describe the proposed season / quotas changes and provide a summary of prior history (i.e., prior history of permits, season types, etc.).

The proposed boundary change for hunting district (HD) 426 is intended to clarify inconsistencies in the current legal description of the western boundary of this HD by adding Choteau County to the list of counties where this district occurs at the beginning of the description.

The current legal description states:

“Those portions of Fergus and Judith Basin Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at Suffolk... to the mouth of Arrow Creek, then up said creek to State Route 80...”.

This stretch of Arrow Creek meanders across the Fergus and Choteau County lines. The legal description is clear that the western boundary of HD 426 is intended to follow Arrow Creek, but the fact that Choteau County is not included in the list of counties is confusing and erroneously suggests that the HD boundary stops at the Fergus County line rather than Arrow Creek.

This boundary separates a permit only elk and deer hunting district in HD 426 from a General opportunity elk and deer hunting district in HD 471; a clear and accurate description of this boundary is important for both management and enforcement. Arrow Creek is a far more clear and visible boundary than the county line.

2. What is the objective of this proposed change? This could be a specific harvest amount or resulting population level or number of game damage complaints, etc.

This change is intended to clarify the legal boundary of HD 426 and address inconsistencies in the current legal description.

3. How will the success of this proposal be measured? This could be annual game or harvest surveys, game damage complaints.

This language change will clarify the western boundary description of HD 426 for sportsmen, landowners, and enforcement.

4. What is the current population's status in relation to the management objectives? (i.e., state management objectives from management plan if applicable; provide current and prior years of population survey, harvest, or other pertinent information).

NA

5. Provide information related to any weather/habitat factors, public or private land use or resident and nonresident hunting opportunity that have relevance to this change (i.e., habitat security, hunter access, vegetation surveys, weather index, snow conditions, and temperature / precipitation information).

NA

6. Briefly describe the contacts you have made with individual sportsmen or landowners, public groups or organizations regarding this proposal and indicate their comments (both pro and con).

This inconsistency was brought to the attention of an FWP warden by a landowner along this boundary line. No other contacts have been made.

Submitted by: Shane Petch; Stanford Area Biologist

Date: 10/01/2024

Approved: _____

Regional Supervisor / Date

Disapproved / Modified by: _____

Name / Date

Reason for Modification:

Game – BFW October 23, 2024