

## STAFF SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 8-9, 2023

**13. ELK HUNTING****Today's Item****Information** **Action** 

Discuss proposed amendments to elk hunting regulations.

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

- Wildlife Resources Committee vetting Sep 15, 2022
- Notice hearing Dec 14-15, 2022
- **Today's discussion hearing Feb 8-9, 2023**
- Adoption hearing Apr 19-20, 2023

**Background**

At its December 2022 meeting, the Commission authorized publication of a notice of intent to amend sections 364 and 364.1 related to elk hunting in California. The proposed amendments increase elk hunting opportunities by modifying existing and creating new hunt zones, and increasing tag quotas where feasible.

Details of the proposed changes are listed in Exhibit 1. Today's meeting is an opportunity for public discussion of the proposed regulations.

**Significant Public Comments**

1. A commenter suggests that mountain ranges should be used to designate hunting zones, rather than roads.
2. A commenter favors expanding elk hunting opportunities in the state.

**Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. [Staff summary from December 14-15, 2022 Commission meeting \(for background purposes only\)](#)
2. [Email from Howard Strohn, received January 24, 2023](#)
3. [Email from Lance Bauer, received January 2, 2023](#)

**Motion (N/A)**

**STAFF SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 14-15, 2022***For background purposes only***17. ELK HUNTING****Today's Item**Information Action 

Consider authorizing publication of notice of intent to amend elk hunting regulations.

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • WRC vetting                   | Sep 15, 2022; WRC, Arcadia               |
| • <b>Today's notice hearing</b> | <b>Dec 14-15, 2022; San Diego</b>        |
| • Discussion hearing            | Feb 8-9, 2023; Sacramento                |
| • Adoption hearing              | Apr 19-20, 2023; Fresno/Bakersfield area |

**Background**

Current regulations in Section 364 provide definitions, hunting zone descriptions, season opening and closing dates, methods of take (e.g., general methods, archery only, muzzleloader only), tag designations (e.g., bull, spike bull, antlerless, and either-sex), tag quotas (total number of hunting tags to be made available), and bag and possession limits for elk hunting. Section 364.1 provides season opening and closing dates, methods of take, tag designations, tag quotas, and bag and possession limits for elk hunting administered through the Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) hunt program. Individuals are awarded an elk hunting tag through DFW's big game drawing or SHARE Program drawing.

Harvest of an elk is authorized for an individual awarded a tag for a respective hunt zone or SHARE property and season. Tag quotas are established based on a variety of factors including population density and abundance, age and sex composition, elk distribution, and human-elk conflict levels, among other population objectives, factors, and considerations. DFW has identified areas where increased public elk hunting opportunities are feasible and support population objectives; it recommends regulation changes as described in the draft initial statement of reasons (ISOR; Exhibit 2) and proposed regulatory text (Exhibit 3).

***Tejon Rocky Mountain Elk Management Unit***

- *Current (2022) regulations:* No hunt zone established which authorizes public elk harvest in the Tejon Rocky Mountain Elk Management Unit.
- *Proposed changes:* Create a Tehachapi Rocky Mountain Elk Hunt Zone and General Methods Hunt, with tag allowances set at 5 bull and 10 antlerless.

***Bear Valley and Cache Creek Tule Elk Hunt Zones***

- *Current regulations:* Public tag quota for these zones are 1 antlerless tag and 2 bull tags (Bear Valley), and 1 apprentice bull tag, 2 antlerless tags, and 2 bull tags (Cache Creek).
- *Proposed changes:* Modify adjacent hunt zone boundaries to bound demographically and genetically interacting populations.

**STAFF SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 14-15, 2022***For background purposes only****Siskiyou Roosevelt Elk Hunt Zone***

- *Current regulations:* Public tag quota is 20 antlerless tags and 20 bull tags. The bull and antlerless hunt periods are concurrent.
- *Proposed changes:* Set public tag quota to 20 bull tags and 30 antlerless tags and shift the bull season from September to October.

***Northwestern Roosevelt Elk Hunt Zone***

- *Current regulations:* Public tag quota is 15 antlerless tags, 3 bull tags, and 3 either-sex tags.
- *Proposed changes:* Set public tag quota to 25 bull tags, 15 antlerless tags, and 3 either-sex tags.

***La Panza Tule Elk Hunt Zone and Central Coast Tule Elk Management Unit***

- *Current regulations:* Public tag quotas for the La Panza Hunt Zone is 1 apprentice antlerless tag, 11 antlerless tags across two hunt periods (5 and 6 tags, respectively), and 12 bull tags across two hunt periods (6 and 6, respectively). There is currently no authorized public elk harvest in the Central Coast Tule Elk Management Unit.
- *Proposed changes:* Decrease the size of the La Panza Hunt Zone, create a new Gabilan Tule Elk Hunt Zone, and create a new Central Coast Tule Elk Zone, which incorporates the existing Camp Roberts Tule Elk Management Unit. For each of the new hunt zones, create a general methods hunt, with tag allowances set at 6 bull and 5 antlerless (La Panza Period 1), 6 bull and 5 antlerless (La Panza Period 2), 10 bull and 10 antlerless (Central Coast), and 4 bull and 6 antlerless (Gabilan).

***Additional Non-Substantive Proposed Changes***

The proposal also makes several non-substantive changes to provide consistency among Title 14 sections, such as corrections to spelling, grammar, and reference terminology.

***Significant Public Comments***

A commenter requests that the notice hearing for this rulemaking be postponed to the Feb 2023 meeting because DFW materials were not available prior to the public comment deadline (Exhibit 6).

***Recommendation***

***FGC staff:*** Authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend regulations related to elk hunting, as recommended by DFW and supported by WRC.

***WRC:*** Support the proposed regulation changes related to elk hunting.

***DFW:*** Authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend regulations as detailed in the draft ISOR.

***Exhibits***

1. DFW memo, received Nov 21, 2022
2. Draft ISOR

**STAFF SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 14-15, 2022**

*For background purposes only*

3. Proposed regulatory text
4. Draft economic and fiscal impact statement (STD. 399)
5. DFW presentation
6. Email from Phoebe Lenhart, received Dec 1, 2022.

**Motion**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ that the Commission authorizes publication of a notice of its intent to amend sections 364 and 364.1 related to elk hunting.

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**From:** Howard Strohn <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 24, 2023 11:01 PM  
**To:** FGC <[FGC@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:FGC@fgc.ca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: New Elk Regulations

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Howard Strohn <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Fri, 20 Jan 2023 20:58:32 -0800  
**Subject:** New Elk Regulations  
**To:** [REDACTED]

Tom

In the past I have e-mailed a Mr. Hobbs.  
I have always suggested seperating the northern part of La Panza and create a new zone.

As I use to live and own property in Priest Valley, Monterey County, which has no connection to the La Panza area.  
Your dept. likes to use roads as boundary lines. To me that does not make a good cut-off. The elk crosses the road and is in a different zone.

I have always pushed for mountain ranges, as more elk are likely to cross a road than a mountain range.  
The last time this was attempted Hobbs took my suggestion into consideration and moved the lines from roads to mountain ranges.

Looking forward to your reply.

Howard P. Strohn

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**From:** Lance Bauer <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 01:05 PM

**To:** FGC <[FGC@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:FGC@fgc.ca.gov)>

**Subject:** Open more elk opportunities

**WARNING:** This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Fish & games Commision,

I would like to see The Commision fully supporting opening up the three new expanded Elk hunting zone here in California. Based on the Biologist & Science report from the CDFW recommendation. I am hopeful the Commision implements and gives more hunting opportunity in California.

Thank you  
Lance J Bauer