



# BIG GAME REGULATORY PROPOSALS

Presentation to the Fish and Game Commission

December 12, 2024  
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# Presentation Overview

- Black-tailed deer/ Mule deer
  - Late season hunt
  - Chronic Wasting Disease
- Desert bighorn sheep
  - Fundraising tag amendments
  - Zone boundary change proposal
  - Tag quota proposals
- Pronghorn proposal
- Elk tag quota and season proposals and SHARE elk hunt season





Columbian Black-tailed Deer, *Odocoileus hemionus columbianus* - Wild Columbia County



# BLACK-TAILED AND MULE DEER

Regulatory Proposals



# Deer

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- Deer D-7 Late Season Buck Hunt (Pilot)
- Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) – transition emergency regulation into “standard” regulation



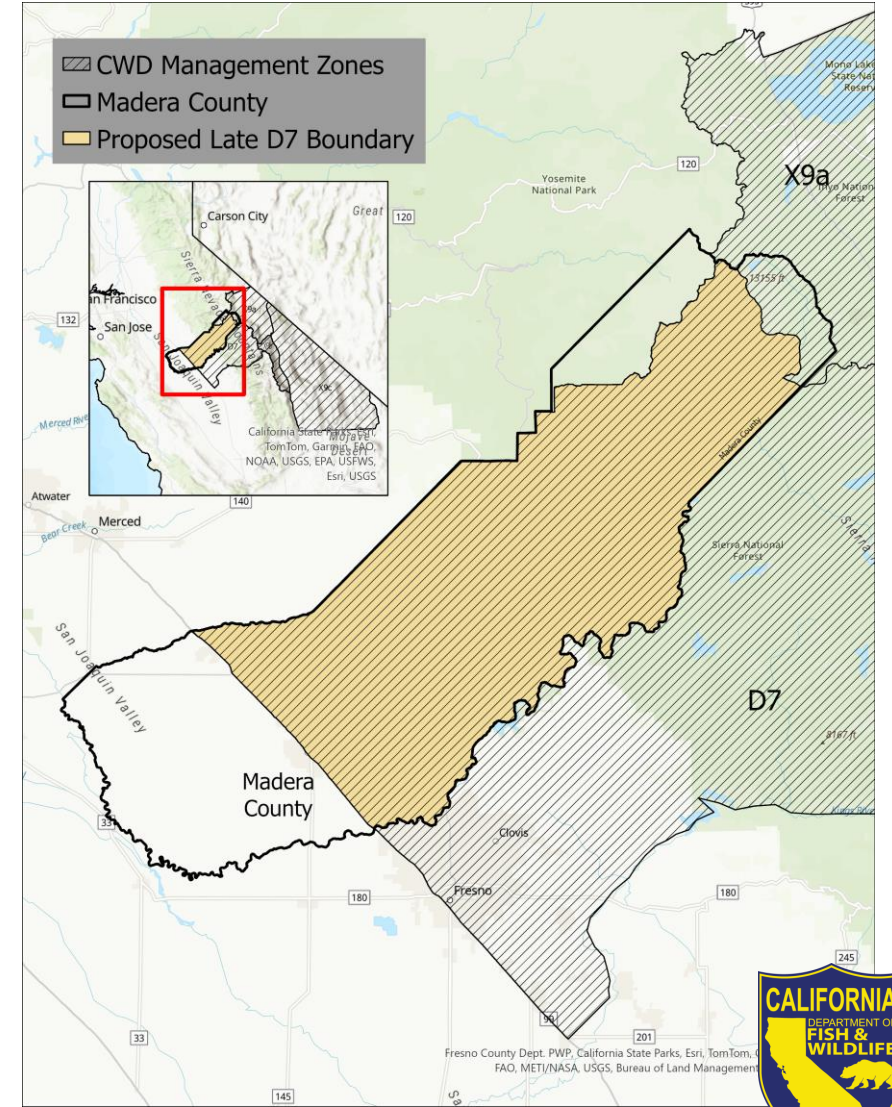
# Deer D7 Late Season Buck Hunt (Pilot)

Summary of existing and proposed hunts in D-7

Season	2025 Hunt Dates	Tags	Hunt Area
Current Archery	Aug. 16 – Sep. 7	9,000	D7
Current General	Sep. 20 – Nov. 2		
<i>Proposed G-40</i> (D-7 Late Season Buck Hunt)	Nov. 22 – 30	0-50	That portion of Madera County within D7

## Chronic Wasting Disease in D-7

- Detection first confirmed in May 2024
- Mature bucks are more likely to be CWD positive, where CWD has been detected
- Additional harvest will aid with detection and understanding prevalence



# Chronic Wasting Disease

- Emergency regulations expiring, proposing a standard regulation to maintain reporting
- Will allow for the inclusion of additional CMZs with new detections:
  - Any deer hunt zones in which a CWD-positive animal has been taken, excluding Zone A
  - Any deer hunt zone, excluding Zone A, within 5 miles of the location where a CWD-positive animal was taken
  - Any county within Zone A where a CWD-positive animal has been taken or is within 5 miles of where a CWD-positive animal was taken
- CMZs will not automatically require testing, Director will designate Testing CMZs by July 1
- This discretion by the Director to name Testing CMZs is meant to benefit hunters and the Department in removing the burden of testing when it does not contribute any novel information to inform management decisions

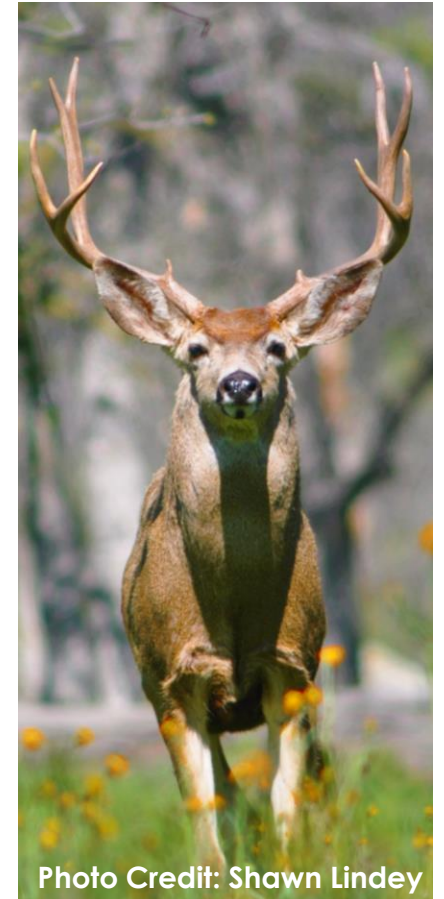






Photo by Pat Woods



# BIGHORN SHEEP

Regulatory Proposals

# Section 362 Bighorn Sheep

- Modify fundraising tag designations
- Modify a zone boundary
- Split seasons into two periods for two hunt zones
- Modify tag quotas



Photo credit: Pat Woods



# Section 362 Bighorn Sheep

## Open Zone Tag

### **Section 362(b)(1):**

- Clarify that the OZ tag can only hunt in zones that are issued a general tag
- Add Zone 10

## Marble/Clipper/S. Bristol and Cady Fundraising Tags

### **Section 362(b)(2 & 3):**

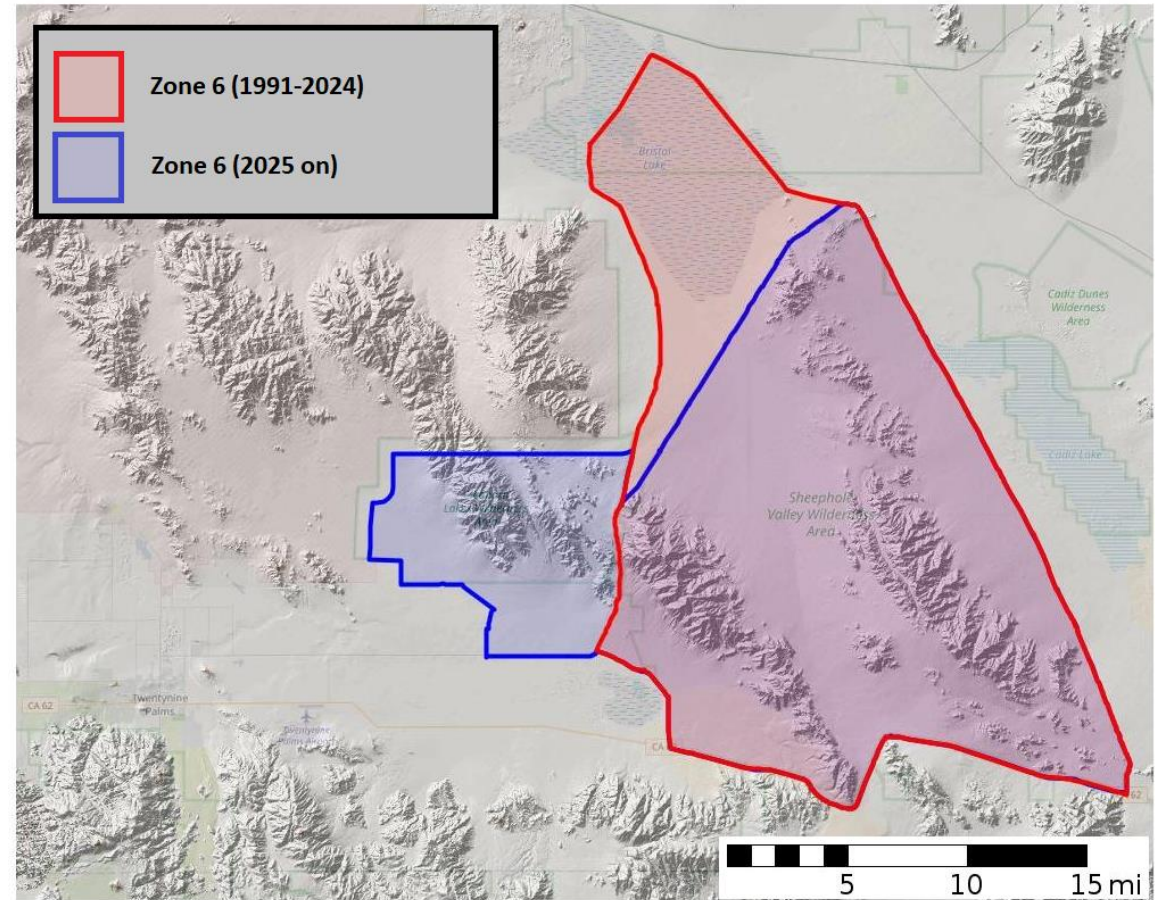
- Change to “Single Zone Tag” and adjust wording to allow CDFW to choose the zone each year, if needed.



# Section 362 Bighorn Sheep

## Sheep Hole (Zone 6): Boundary Adjustment *Section 362(6)(A)*

- Adjust the boundary (from red to blue) to better reflect habitat use of rams in this area.
- Adjustment is based on GPS data and home range analyses.
- Zone adjustment will likely increase hunter opportunity.



# Section 362 Bighorn Sheep

## White Mountains (Zone 7):

- Maintain summer season and pilot a winter season
  - Period 1: August 16 – September 28, 2025
  - Period 2: January 3 – February 1, 2026
- Increase tag allocation between both periods
  - Current season [0-6]
  - Period 1 [0-4]
  - Period 2 [0-4]



Photo: O. Brown



# Section 362 Bighorn Sheep

## Newberry/Rodman/Ord (Zone 10):

- Split the winter season into two periods
  - Period 1 December 6 – January 3, 2025
  - Period 2 January 4 – February 1, 2026
- Increase the tag allocation
  - Current [0-6]
  - Period 1 [0-7]
  - Period 2 [0-7]



Photo: E. Lindo

# Section 362 Bighorn Sheep

## Section 362(d) Bighorn sheep general tag quota adjustments based on population data

Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones	24/25 Tag Allocation	Former Tag Quota Ranges	Proposed Tag Quota Range
Zone 1 – Marble/Clipper Mountains	1	0-5	0-5
Zone 2 – Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains*	2	0-2	0-4
Zone 3 – Clark/Kingston Mountain Ranges	3	0-4	0-4
Zone 4 – Orocopia Mountains	1	0-2	0-2
Zone 5 – San Geronio Wilderness	0	0-3	0-3
Zone 6 – Sheep Hole Mountains	1	0-2	0-2
Zone 7 – White Mountains*	4	0-6	-
Zone 7 – White Mountains Period 1*	-	-	0-4
Zone 7 – White Mountains Period 2*	-	-	0-4
Zone 8 – South Bristol Mountains	1	0-3	0-3
Zone 9 – Cady Mountains	2	0-4	0-4
Zone 10 – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains*	6	0-6	-
Zone 10 – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains Period 1*	-	-	0-7
Zone 10 – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains Period 2*	-	-	0-7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0-37</b>	<b>0-49</b>

\* Denotes changes that are being proposed for 25/26

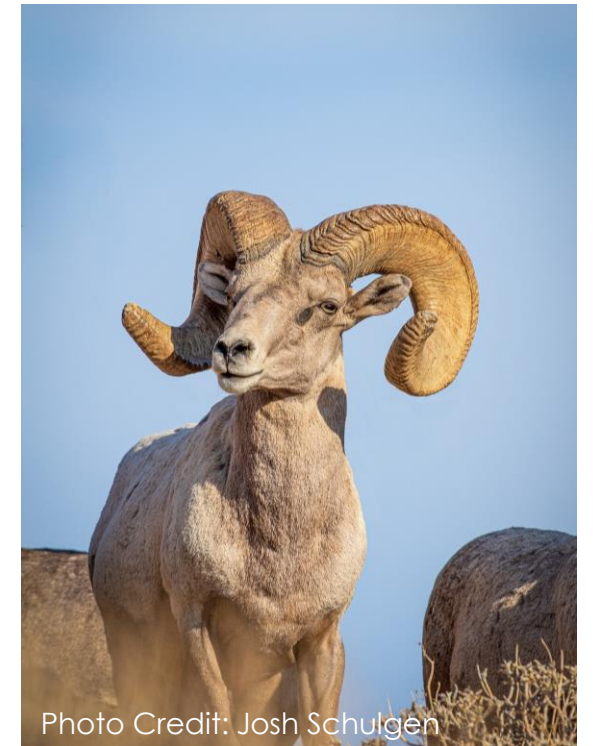


# Section 362 Bighorn Sheep

## Section 362(d) Bighorn sheep fundraising tag quota adjustments based on population data

Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones	24/25 Tag Allocation	Former Tag Quota Ranges	Proposed Tag Quota Range
Open Zone Fundraising Tag	1	0-1	1
Marble/Clipper/S. Bristol Fundraising Tag*	0	0-1	-
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 1*	-	-	0-1
Cady Mountains Fundraising Tag*	1	0-1	-
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 2*	-	-	0-1
Total:	2	0-3	0-3

\* Denotes changes that are being proposed for 25/26







# PRONGHORN

Update

# Pronghorn

- Prioritize annual population surveys in northeastern California due to population declines in northeastern California.
  - Scheduled for January – February 2025
  - Decreasing population estimate may require reduction of tags







# ELK

## Regulatory Proposals



# Section 364 Elk and 364.1 SHARE Elk

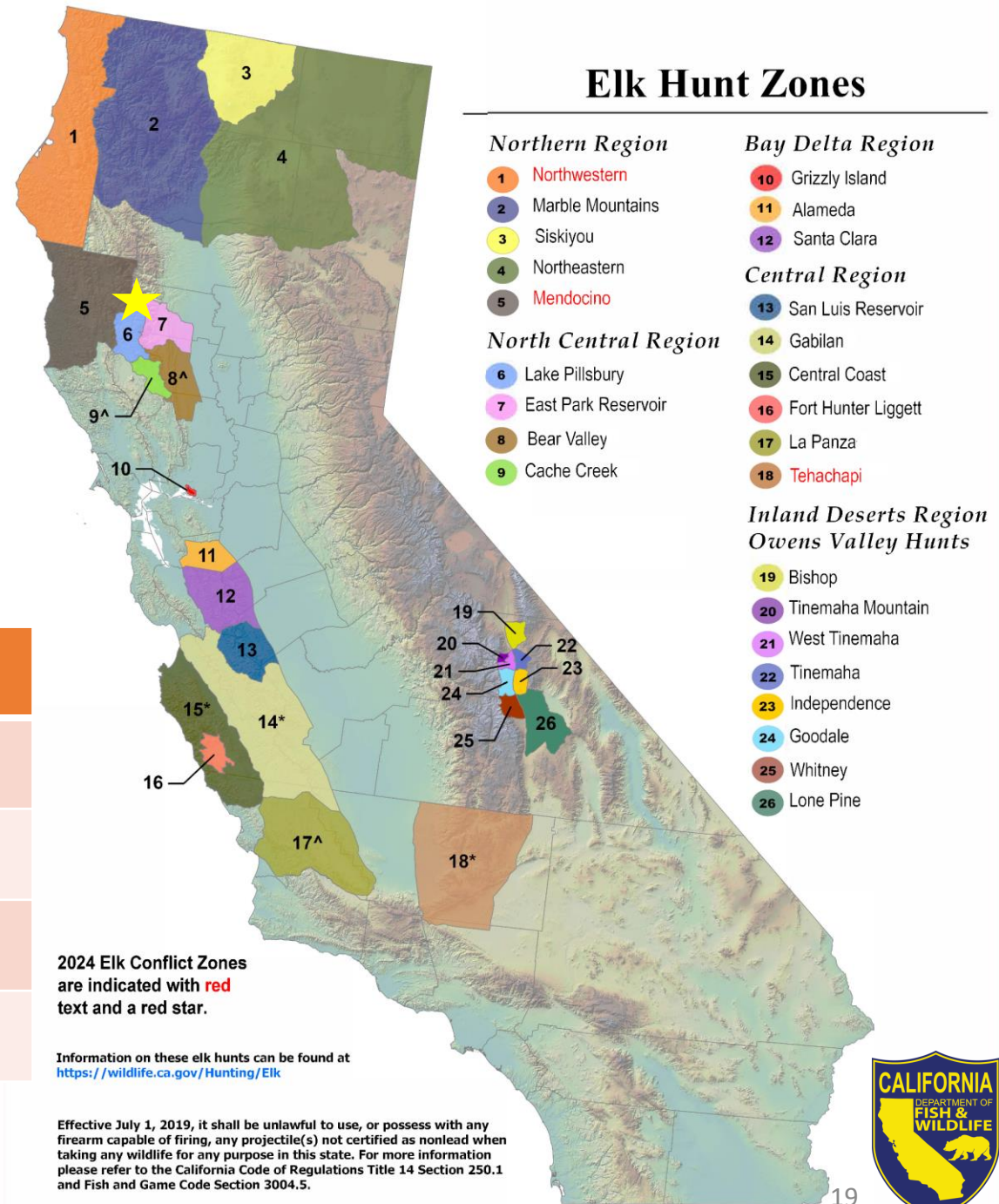
- General & SHARE Hunt Opportunities
  - Lake Pillsbury EMU
  - Bear Valley EMU
  - Gabilan EMU
  - Tehachapi EMU
- Archery Only Opportunities
  - Siskiyou EMU
  - Central Coast EMU
  - La Panza EMU
- Expand SHARE hunt season for coastal conflict zones



# Lake Pillsbury Hunt Zone

- Scott Dam removal, potential significant loss of carrying capacity
- Consider increasing tags to 25% last minimum count, no more than 10% bulls
- Potential translocation source

Unit	Number
Population Objective	100 - 250
2024 Minimum Count	160
Bull:Cow Ratio Objective	1:4 (25%)
2024 Bull:Cow Ratio	3:20 (15%)
	Below goal



# Lake Pillsbury Hunt Zone

- Stagger seven-day hunt periods before and after bull hunt with no more than 4 tags issued per period

Tag Type	2024 Bull	2024 Cow	2025 Bull	2025 Cow
General	2	4	[2-4]	[4-12]
PLM	0	0	0	0
SHARE*	-	-	-	-
Total	2	4	<b>2-4</b>	<b>4-12</b>

**Net Change: 0-2 additional bull tags,  
0-8 additional cow tags**

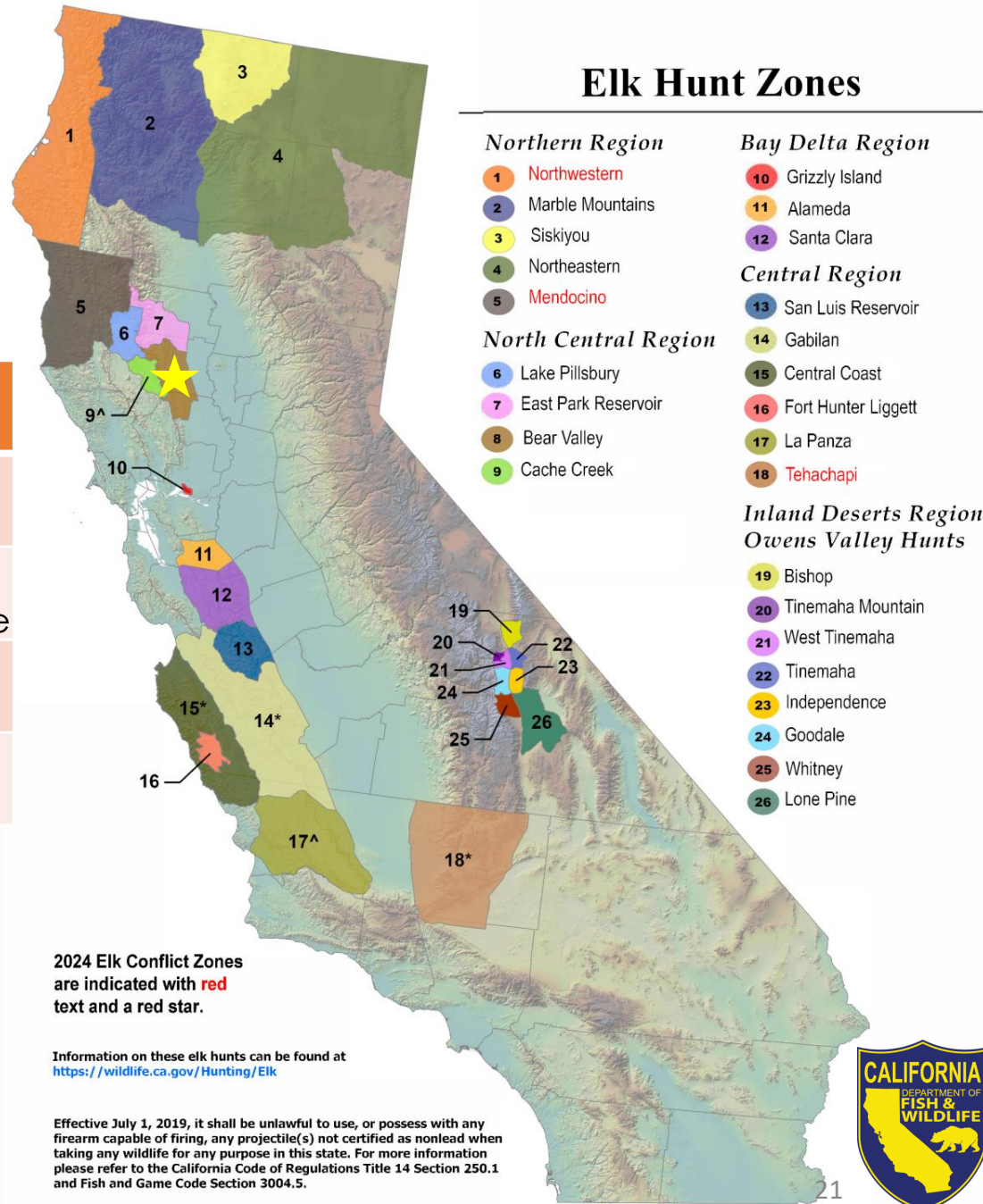
\*No SHARE elk tags in Lake Pillsbury Hunt Zone





# Bear Valley Hunt Zone

Unit	Number
Population Objective	150-450 Includes Cache Creek
2024 Minimum Count	400 215 in Bear Valley alone
Bull:Cow Ratio Objective	1:4 (25%)
2024 Bull:Cow Ratio	21:100 (21%)



# Bear Valley Hunt Zone

- Propose additional SHARE properties
  - Unit almost entirely private
  - Allow landowner to offset cost of damage caused by elk

Tag Type	2024 Bull	2024 Cow	2025 Bull	2025 Cow
General	2	1	2	1
PLM	0	0	0	0
SHARE	2	1	2	[1-6]
Total	4	2	4	<b>2-7</b>

**Net Change: 0-5 additional cow tags**



# Gabilan Hunt Zone

- Populations increasing
- Access is limited due to private property

Unit	Number
Population Objective	150 - 250
2024 Minimum Count	> 250
Bull:Cow Ratio Objective	1:4 (25%)
2024 Bull:Cow Ratio	> 25%





# Gabilan Hunt Zone

- Proposes to increase current tag allocation by adding 0-6 general bull tags
- Tag increase will be based on upcoming surveys (January – February 2025)

Tag Type	2024 Bull	2024 Cow	2025 Bull	2025 Cow
General	4	6	4-10	6
PLM	0	0	0	0
SHARE	-	-	-	-
Total	4	0	<b>4-10</b>	6

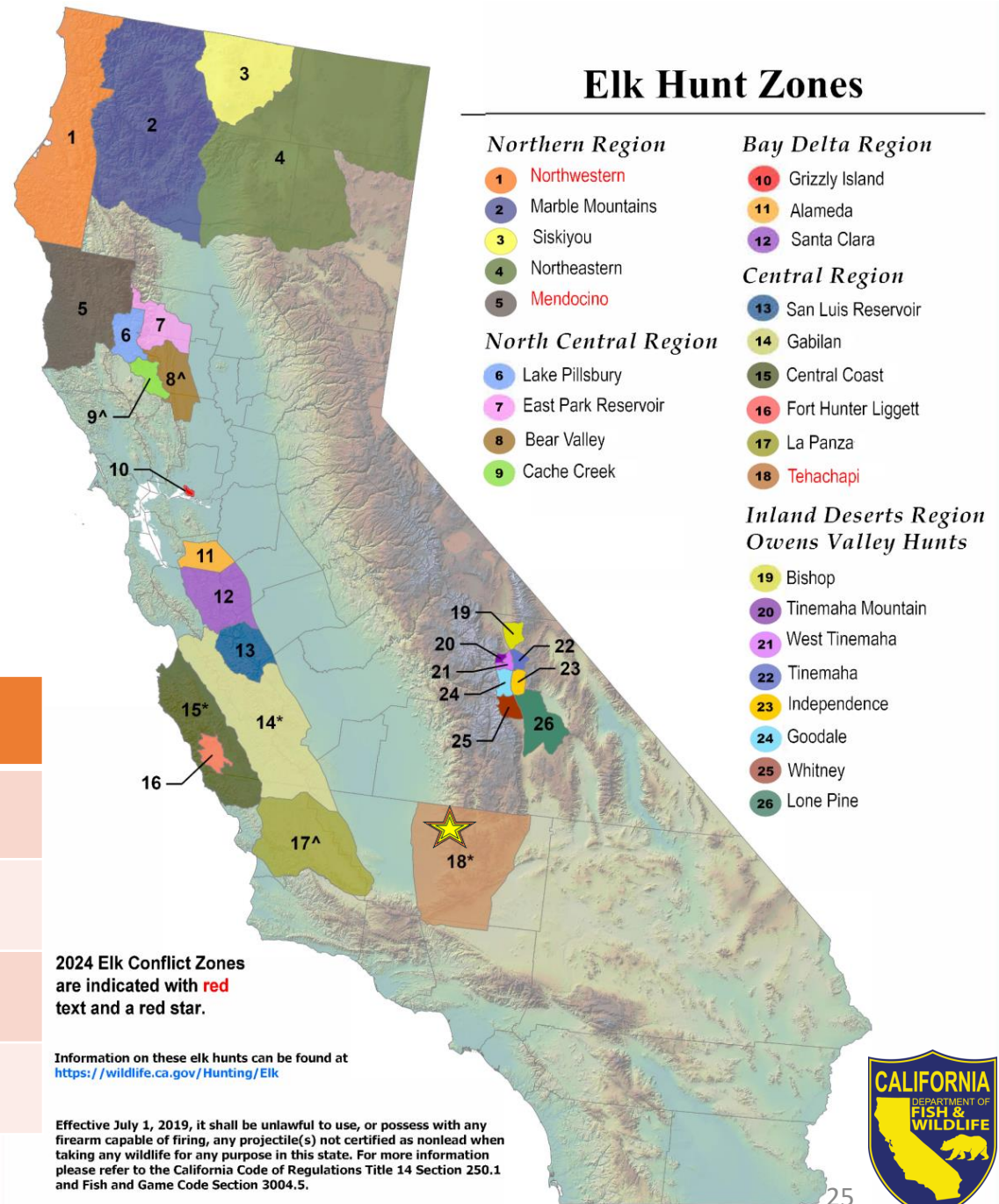


**Net Change: 0 - 6 additional bull tags**

# Tehachapi Hunt Zone

- Population increasing
- Potential genetic incursion into neighboring tule elk herds
- Private access fees have discouraged full utilization of cow tags (7/10 used)

Unit	Number
Population Objective	150 - 350
2024 Minimum Count	> 350
Bull:Cow Ratio Objective	1:4 (25%)
2024 Bull:Cow Ratio	47%

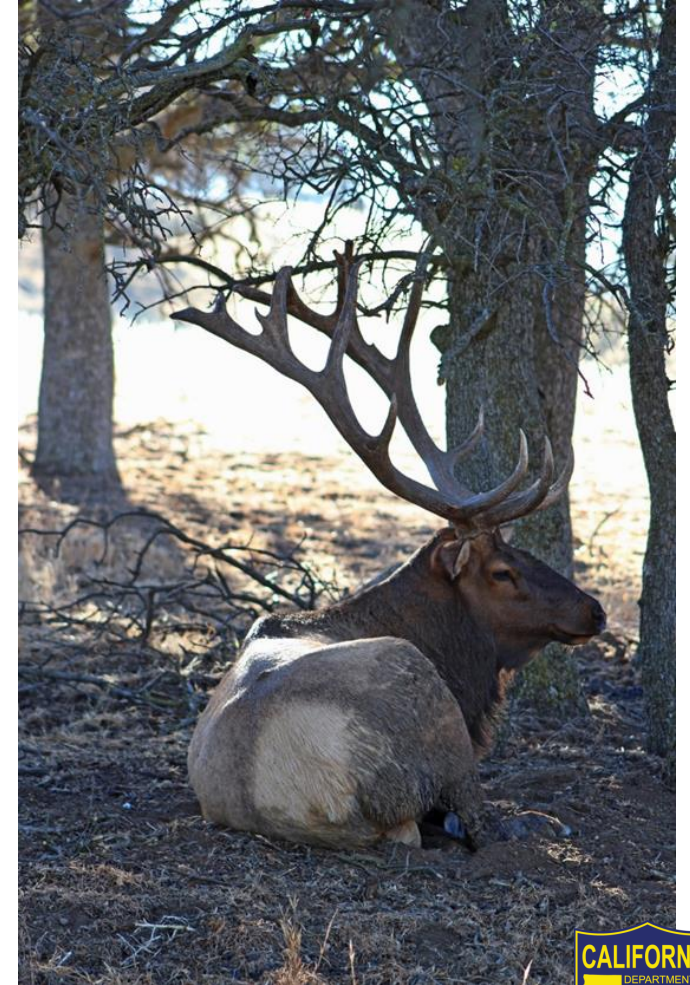


# Tehachapi Hunt Zone

- Proposes to increase current tag allocation by adding 0-5 general bull tags

Tag Type	2024 Bull	2024 Cow	2025 Bull	2025 Cow
General	5	10	5-10	10
PLM	0	0	0	0
SHARE	-	-	-	-
Total	5	10	<b>5 - 10</b>	10

**Net Change: 0-5 additional bull tags**

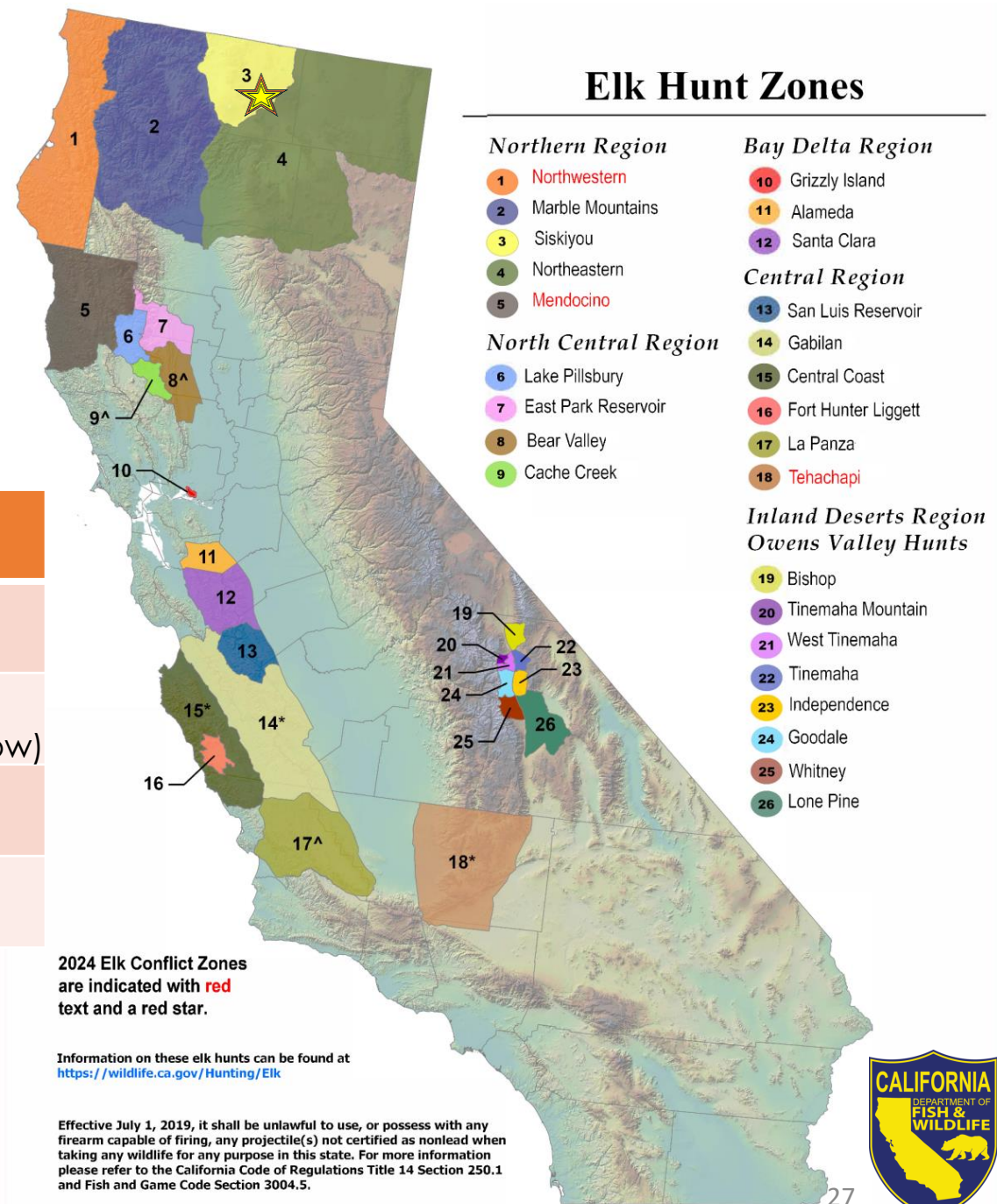




# Siskiyou Hunt Zone

- Previously considered as conflict zone
- County expressed desire to have general tags instead

Unit	Number
Population Objective	600-1000
2024 Minimum Count	506 Road survey count (low)
Bull:Cow Ratio Objective	1:4 (25%)
2024 Bull:Cow Ratio	17:100 (17%) Below objective



# Siskiyou Hunt Zone

- Proposes to add 0-10 **archery-only** bull tags
- Current Season: Wednesday preceding the second Saturday in September and continue for 12 consecutive days (Section 364(r)(1)(A)-(B))
- Proposed Season: 4<sup>th</sup> Wed Aug to 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues Sept
- Winter survey to complete census

Tag Type	2024 Bull	2024 Cow	2025 Bull	2025 Cow
General	20	30	20	30
Archery	0	0	[0-10]	0
PLM	4	2	4	2
SHARE	2	2	2	2
Total	26	34	<b>26-36</b>	34

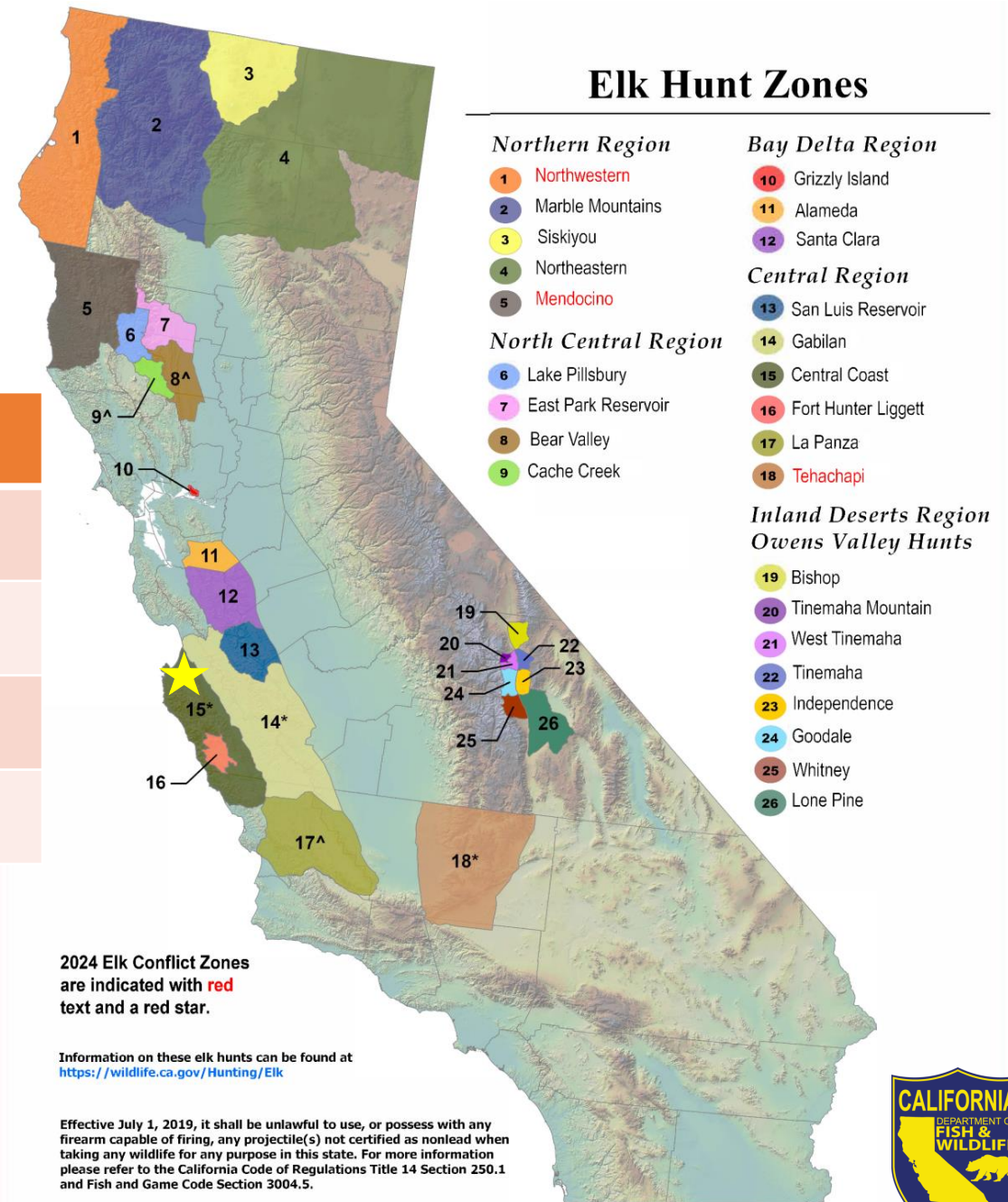
**Net Change: 0-10 additional bull tags**



# Central Coast Hunt Zone

- Populations increasing and causing conflict

Unit	Number
Population Objective	100-300
2024 Minimum Count	650 Above (2x) objective
Bull:Cow Ratio Objective	1:4 (25%)
2024 Bull:Cow Ratio	3:10 (30%) Above objective



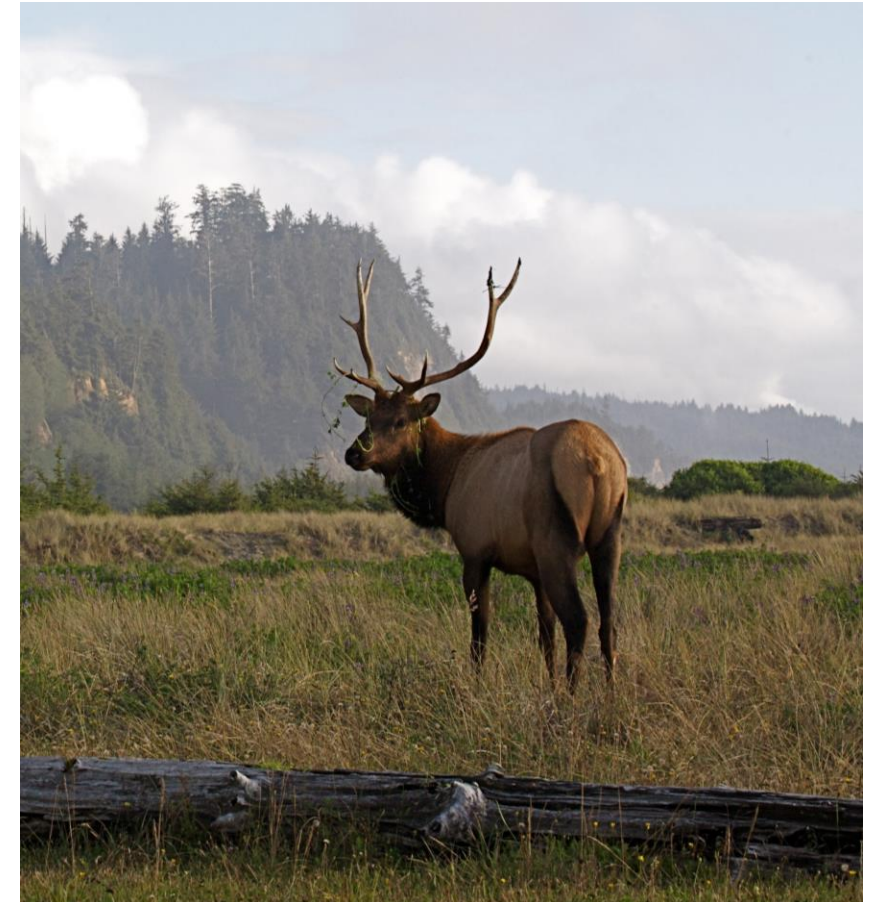


# Central Coast Hunt Zone

- Additional archery season opportunity proposed

Tag Type	2024 Bull	2024 Cow	2025 Bull	2025 Cow
General	10	10	10	10
Archery	0	0	[0-4]	[0-2]
PLM	30	25	28	25
SHARE*	-	-	-	-
Total	40	35	<b>38-42</b>	<b>35-37</b>

**Net Change: additional 0-2 bull & 0-2 cow tags**

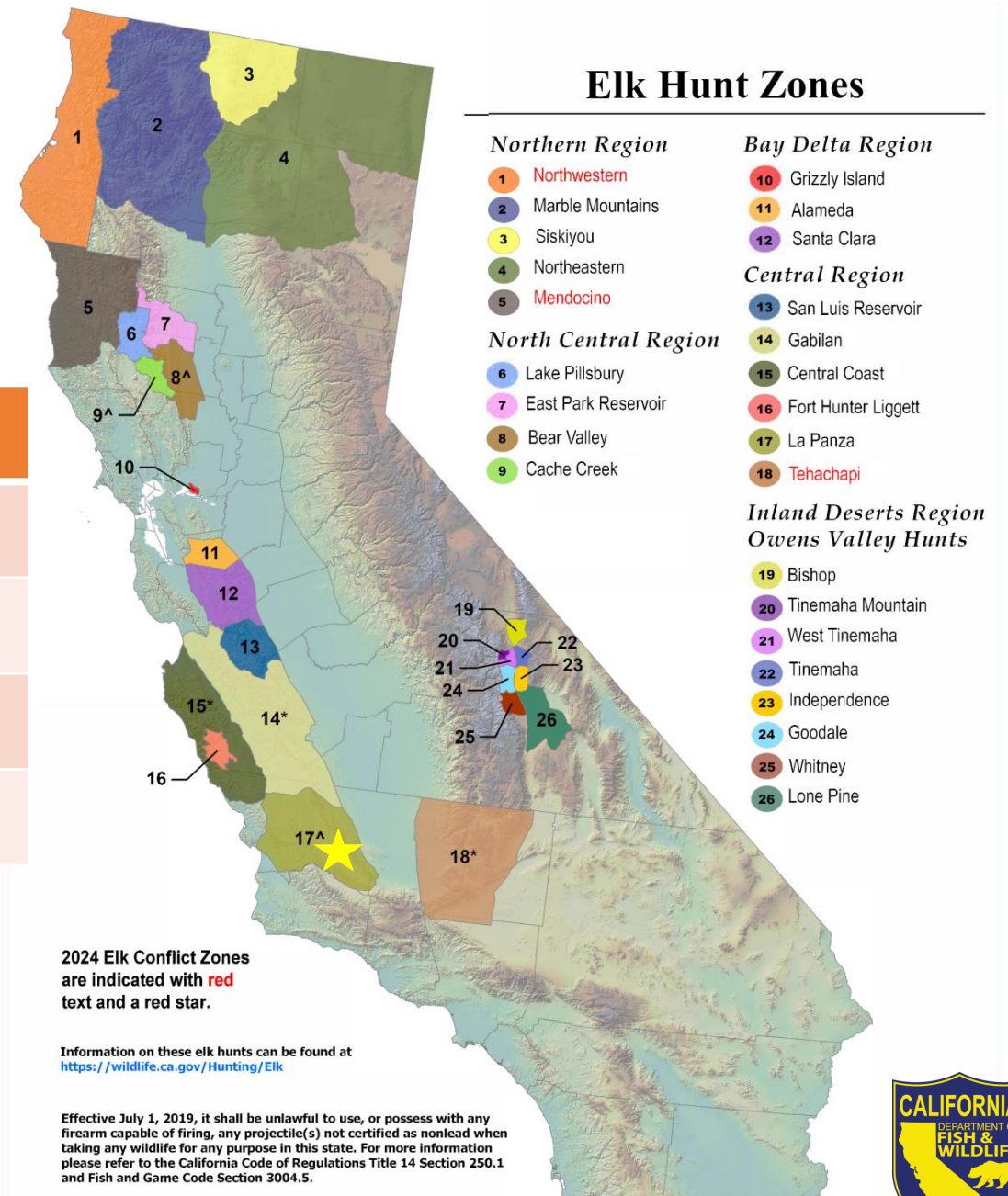


\*No SHARE elk tags in the Central Coast Hunt Zone

# La Panza Hunt Zone

- Populations increasing - limited public lands

Unit	Number
Population Objective	500-1200
2024 Minimum Count	890
Bull:Cow Ratio Objective	1:4 (25%)
2024 Bull:Cow Ratio	31:100 (31%)
	Above objective

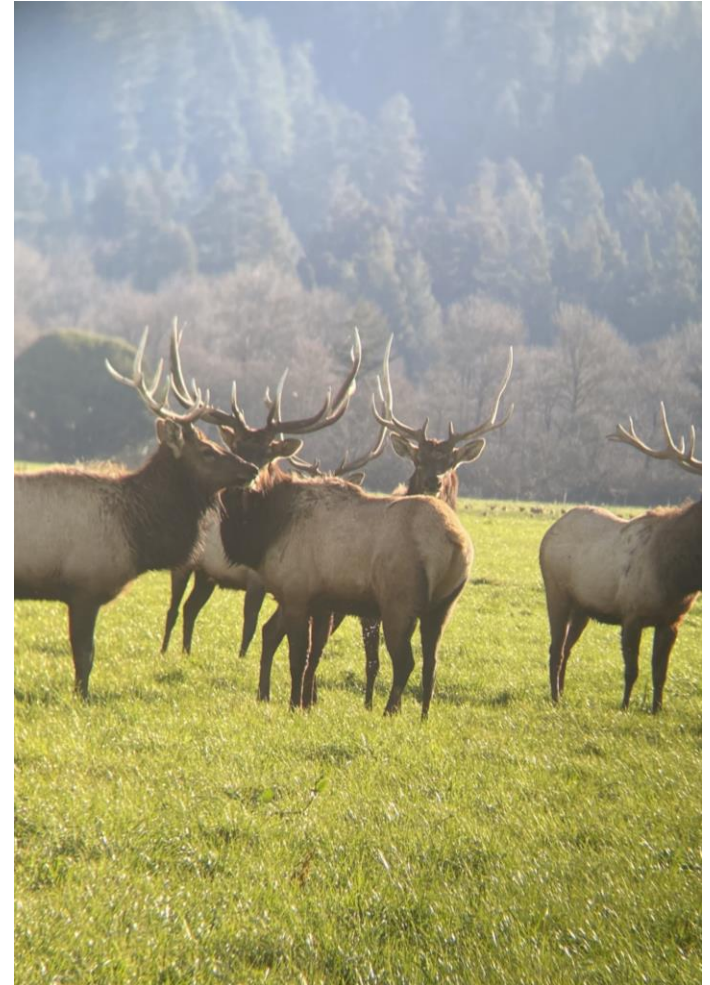


# La Panza Hunt Zone

- Additional archery season opportunity proposed Sept 1 – Sept 30

Tag Type	2024 Bull	2024 Cow	2025 Bull	2025 Cow
General	12	12	12	12
Archery	0	0	[0-4]	[0-2]
PLM	27	21	27	21
SHARE*	0	0	0	0
	39	33	<b>39-43</b>	<b>33-35</b>

**Net Change: additional 0-4 bull & 0-2 cow tags**



\*No SHARE *properties* in the La Panza Hunt Zone



# Northwestern and Mendocino Hunt Zones

- Conflict occurring outside existing hunting season
  - Adjust season timing on SHARE properties to account for conflict timing
  - Propose to have year-round season in NW and Mendo conflict zones
  - Spring hunts to target bulls as conflicts arise
  - Amend Title 14 Section 364.1 (a) required
- New SHARE properties for 2024:
  - 1 in Northwestern zone
  - 3 in Mendocino zone

