

Staff Summary for December 10-11, 2025

12. Elk Hunting**Today's Item****Information** ☐**Action** ☒

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

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| • Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) vetting | May 15, 2025; WRC |
| • WRC discussion and recommendation | September 11, 2025; WRC |
| • Today's notice hearing | December 10-11, 2025 |
| • Discussion hearing | February 11-12, 2026 |
| • Adoption hearing | April 15-16, 2026 |

Background

Under its authorities in California Fish and Game Code, the Commission periodically adjusts various regulations related to elk hunting, including specifying elk hunt areas, season opening and closing dates, tag designations and quotas, and individual bag and possession limits, among other things. For regulatory sections where a hunt tag quota change is proposed, statutory requirements and Commission procedures require the rulemaking process to be initiated prior to the Department completing its collection and analysis of the most recent elk survey data. Therefore, the current proposals contain ranges for tag amounts that will be refined as the rulemaking process progresses and the Department analyzes late winter surveys in the first quarter of 2026.

Regulatory amendments recommended by the Department for the 2026-27 seasons affect five sections of Title 14. Details of the proposed amendments to each section are available in the initial statement of reasons (Exhibit 2) and draft proposed regulatory language (Exhibit 3).

Current Regulations

Section 353 defines methods that are authorized for the take of big game.

Section 364 specifies elk hunt areas, season opening and closing dates, methods of take, tag designations (bull, spike bull, antlerless, either-sex), tag quotas, bag and possession limits, and special conditions for elk hunts.

Section 364.1 specifies season opening and closing dates, methods of take, application instructions, tag quotas, and bag and possession limits for Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) elk hunts.

Section 555 defines cooperative elk hunting areas and specifies eligibility requirements and the application process for cooperative elk tags.

Section 555.1 defines conflict zone cooperative elk hunting areas and specifies the ratio of conflict zone cooperative elk hunting tags to public elk hunting tags, and the valid dates of conflict zone cooperative elk hunting tags.

Staff Summary for December 10-11, 2025

Proposed Regulations

The recommended regulation changes for the 2026-2027 seasons include adding a new balance of state elk management zone; adjusting tag quotas; allowing the use of shotguns firing slugs for SHARE elk hunts; and clarifying tag eligibility across general draw, SHARE, cooperative elk hunt area, and conflict zone cooperative area hunt types.

Tag quotas are established based on a variety of factors, including elk population density and abundance, age and sex composition, elk distribution, and human-elk conflict levels, among other population objectives and considerations. An increase of 26 tags across hunts in the Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit is recommended. The tule elk population across the Owen's Valley hunt areas has increased to more than 400 individuals, with bull-to-cow ratios consistently and greatly exceeding the bull-to-cow ratio management objective. At the adoption hearing, the Department will recommend final tag quotas for each zone based upon findings from the 2025-26 surveys.

Today the Department will give a presentation summarizing the recommended regulation changes (Exhibit 5).

Significant Comments

1. The chairman of the North Fork Mono Tribe (Exhibit 6) generally supports the recommended changes, but opposes the use of shotgun for take of elk since often it will not be fatal, it destroys the hide and bruises the meat, and is disrespectful to the animal providing food, hide and other materials.

Recommendation

Commission staff: Authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend regulations related to elk hunting as recommended by WRC and the Department.

Committee: Support the recommended regulation changes related to elk hunting.

Department: Authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend regulations as detailed in the Department's presentation (Exhibit 5).

Exhibits

1. [Memo transmitting ISOR received, December 8, 2025](#)
2. [Draft ISOR](#)
3. [Draft proposed regulatory language](#)
4. [Draft economic and fiscal impact statement](#)
5. [Department presentation](#)
6. [Email from Chairman Ron Goode, North Fork Mono Tribe, received November 12, 2025](#)

Motion

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission authorizes publication of a notice of its intent to amend sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555 and 555.1 of Title 14, California Code of Regulations, related to elk hunting.

Memorandum

Date: November 25, 2025

Received December 8, 2025
Original signed copy on file

To: Melissa Miller-Henson
Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director

Subject: **Item for December 10-11, 2025 Fish and Game Commission Meeting: Regulatory Action to Amend Sections 353, 363, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, re: Methods Authorized for Taking Big Game, Pronghorn Antelope Hunting, Elk Hunting, SHARE Elk Hunts, Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas, and Conflict Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas.**

Please find attached the Initial Statement of Reasons to amend sections 353, 363, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, regarding methods authorized for taking big game, pronghorn antelope hunting, elk hunting, SHARE elk hunts, cooperative elk hunting areas, and conflict cooperative elk hunting areas. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) requests consideration of publication of notice after the December 10-11, 2025 Fish and Game Commission meeting.

The proposed amendments would:

- Potentially reduce tag quotas for pronghorn antelope hunts, pending population assessments to be completed in February 2026.
- Expand methods of take for elk to include shotguns firing single slugs for SHARE elk hunts.
- Define a new elk hunt zone for areas currently undefined in a hunt area.
- Increase tag quotas for elk hunts in the Owens Valley Elk Management Unit.
- Increase tag quotas for SHARE elk hunts.
- Clarify tag eligibility across general, fundraising, SHARE, cooperative, and conflict cooperative elk hunts.

If you have any questions on this item, please contact Scott Gardner, Wildlife Branch Chief, at (916) 801-6257. The Department point of contact for this rulemaking is the Statewide Elk and Pronghorn Antelope Coordinator, Brent Wolf, who can be contacted at BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov.

ec: Chad Dibble, Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division

Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission
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State of California
Fish and Game Commission
Initial Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action

Amend Sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1

Title 14, California Code of Regulations

Re: Methods authorized for taking big game, elk hunting, SHARE elk hunts,
cooperative elk hunting areas, conflict zone cooperative elk hunting areas

I. Date of Initial Statement of Reasons: November 6, 2025

II. Dates and Locations of Scheduled Hearings

(a) Notice Hearing:

Date: December 10, 2025

Location: Sacramento

(b) Discussion Hearing:

Date: February 12, 2026

Location: Sacramento

(c) Adoption Hearing:

Date: April 16, 2026

Location: Sacramento

III. Description of Regulatory Action

(a) Statement of Specific Purpose of Regulatory Change and Factual Basis for Determining that Regulation Change is Reasonably Necessary

Unless otherwise specified, all section references in this document are to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) periodically considers the recommendations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) in amending elk hunting regulations. Considerations include recommendations for adjusting tag quotas (total number of hunting tags to be made available), setting hunt periods, modifying zone boundaries, authorizing methods of take, among others, to help achieve management goals and objectives for elk. To maintain appropriate harvest levels and hunting quality, tag quotas must be adjusted periodically in response to dynamic environmental, biological, and social conditions.

The proposed changes focus on elk tag quotas in subsections 364(u) through (x), defining a new elk management zone in subsection 364(q), Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) elk tag quotas in subsections 364.1(i) through (l), method of take under subsection 353(d), and tag eligibility under subsections 364(k) and 364.1(b) and sections 555 and 555.1. The proposed amendments here represent the cumulation of the Department's internal, external discussion, and data analysis. The proposed changes are necessary to maintain sustainable hunt opportunities, and for consistency with the Elk Conservation and Management Plan (CDFW 2018) recommendations and with the California Fish and Game Code.

Background

A limited number of public elk hunting tags are offered annually via the big game drawing and SHARE program drawing, and public demand for elk hunting tags (as indicated by elk tag draw applications) has annually exceeded tag availability for the last ten years. In addition to harvest opportunity, public elk hunting also provides data that enhances the Department's ability to monitor elk populations including spatial, age, genetic, and disease information. As described in the Department's Elk Conservation and Management Plan (2018), the Department's goal is to increase elk hunting opportunities where feasible and compatible with population objectives, in which case recommendations will be offered to the Commission.

Individuals are awarded an elk hunting tag through the Department's Big Game Drawing or SHARE hunt program drawing. Landowners may apply for a Cooperative Elk Hunting Area (CEHA) tag if their property meets requirements set forth in 555 or 555.1 and located in an area open to elk harvest. Harvest of an elk is authorized for an individual awarded a tag for a specific elk hunt, SHARE property, or CEHA within a license year. 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 and considerations.

Current Regulations

- Section 353 defines methods that are authorized for taking big game.
- Section 364 provides descriptions of elk hunt areas, season opening and closing dates, methods of take (e.g., general methods, archery only), tag designations (bull, spike bull, antlerless, either-sex), tag quotas, bag and possession limits, and special conditions for elk hunts.
- Section 364.1 defines season opening and closing dates, authorized methods of take, application instructions, tag quotas, and bag and possession limits for Department administered SHARE elk hunts.
- Section 555 defines cooperative elk hunting areas, eligibility requirements, and the application process.
- Section 555.1 defines a conflict zone cooperative elk hunting area as an area of private land, at least 60 acres in size, in which landowners experience chronic, elevated levels of human-elk conflict; specifies the ratio of conflict zone cooperative elk tags that may be issued to public elk hunting tags; and specifies the valid dates of tags issued under the provisions of the section.

Proposed Regulations

The proposed amendments to sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1 have been developed to increase hunter opportunity while maintaining science-based management goals. These changes include adjusting tag quotas, expanding methods of take for SHARE elk hunts, and clarifying tag eligibility across general draw, SHARE, cooperative elk hunt area, and conflict zone cooperative area hunt types. The objectives of these proposed regulations are

consistent with the Department's Elk Conservation and Management Plan goals to enhance hunting opportunities (Goal 3) and alleviate human-elk conflict (Goal 4).

Section 353 Methods Authorized for Taking Big Game

- **Amend Section 353** to include shotguns firing slugs as a method of take for SHARE elk hunts and reorganize the subsection into two parts for clarity and flow.
 - Problem Statement: On many SHARE enrolled properties, elk often occur near agricultural lands, roads and residential areas where the use of centerfire rifles may pose safety concerns or limit hunting access. Current regulations do not allow for the use of shotgun slugs for the take of elk, restricting management flexibility in these areas.
 - Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this regulation is to authorize the use of shotgun slugs as a method of take for SHARE elk hunts. This provides hunters with a safe, effective, and practical tool for harvest in areas where rifle use is less suitable.
 - Statement of Benefits: The proposed regulation will provide a range of benefits:
 - Safety benefits: Expands management options in proximity to residences and working lands where rifle use may be restricted or less safe.
 - Recreational opportunity: Increases hunter access by broadening legal methods of take, ensuring SHARE hunts can be implemented effectively.
 - Management benefits: Enhances the Department's ability to meet harvest objectives in areas where elk conflicts occur while maintaining fair chase standards.
 - Statement of Necessity: This regulation is necessary to provide a safe and effective method of take for elk SHARE hunts. Without the option of shotgun slugs, the Department is limited in its ability to offer hunting opportunities or achieve management objectives in areas where rifles are not appropriate.

Section 364 Elk Hunts, Seasons, and Number of Tags

- **Add subsection 364(q)** to define a new "balance of state" zone:

"(q) Balance of the State Elk Management Zone: That portion of the state not covered by any area defined in subsections 364(a) through (j)."

 - Problem Statement: Elk occur in areas of California outside of currently defined elk hunt areas, but no regulatory framework exists to allow for harvest opportunities in these regions. Without an established hunt area, the Department cannot use programs such as SHARE to offer equitable hunting access or encourage landowner participation in elk habitat stewardship. Furthermore, elk damage in localized areas outside of a hunt area cannot be addressed via harvest. This limits the Department's ability to meet its management objectives and reduces opportunities for hunters and landowners to benefit from elk populations occurring outside traditional elk hunt areas.
 - Statement of Purpose: The purpose of the proposed regulation is to establish a new balance of state zone that includes all areas of the state not currently defined in regulation as elk hunting areas. Establishing the new zone will allow the Department to expand public hunting opportunities through the SHARE program, incentivize private landowners to improve and maintain elk habitat, address potential damage more effectively, and ensure that elk is managed consistently across its range in California. The proposed balance of state zone will provide the Department and Commission with

greater flexibility for providing recreational opportunity, conservation, and landowner engagement.

- Statement of Benefits: The proposed regulation will provide a range of benefits:
 - Increased recreational opportunity: Expands elk hunting opportunities for the public, through the SHARE program, thereby enhancing equitable access to elk hunting in California.
 - Habitat stewardship: Provides incentives for private landowners to enhance and maintain elk habitat, contributing to broader conservation goals and improved ecosystem health.
 - Regulatory benefits: Establishes a clear framework for managing elk statewide, ensuring the Department can fulfill its statutory responsibilities under California Fish and Game Code sections 1801 and 3952.
 - Social benefits: Builds positive partnerships between the Department, hunters, and private landowners by creating mechanisms for shared stewardship of elk populations.
 - Secondary benefits: Provides tools to address localized conflicts where necessary, while keeping the primary focus on opportunity, access, and conservation.
- Statement of Necessity: This regulation is necessary to ensure consistent management across the species' range, create opportunities for recreational access, and foster stronger partnerships with private landowners in support of elk conservation and sustainable use.

Map 1. Proposed Balance of State Zone



- **Amend subsections 364(u)(5) through (11), 364(v)(5), 364(w)(2) through (5), and 364(x)(1)** to increase bull tag quotas for the Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit general methods, archery, and muzzleloader hunts including the Bishop, Tinemaha, West Tinemaha, Tinemaha Mountain, Independence, Whitney, and Lone Pine Elk hunt areas
 - Problem Statement: The tule elk population across the Owen's Valley hunt areas has increased to more than 400 individuals, with bull-to-cow ratios consistently ranging from 34:100 to 84:100. This greatly exceeds the bull-to-cow ratio management objective of 25:100. Despite rising minimum cow counts (the number of cows counted in surveys, thus the minimum number of cows in the population) over the past seven years, these

elevated ratios have persisted, indicating that current management strategies are not achieving the desired demographic balance.

- Statement Purpose The purpose of the proposed regulation is to reduce the bull-to-cow ratio in the Owen's Valley tule elk hunt areas to the established management objective of 25:100. By adjusting tag allocations and harvest opportunities, the regulation will better balance herd demographics and ensure long-term sustainability of the population. This action directly addresses the identified problem of persistently elevated bull-to-cow ratios despite herd growth and aligns management practices with the objectives outlined in the Department's Elk Conservation and Management Plan and direction from the Commission.
- Statement of Benefits: The proposed regulation will provide several important benefits:
 - Regulatory benefits: Implementation of the regulation ensures that the Department fulfills its statutory responsibility to manage elk populations consistent with California Fish and Game Code Section 1801 which directs the Department and Commission to provide for the conservation, utilization, and sustainability of wildlife resources.
 - Social and recreational benefits: By balancing herd demographics, the regulation maintains high-quality hunting opportunities for both bull and antlerless elk while ensuring equitable access across user groups.
- Statement of Necessity: The proposed regulation is necessary to bring herd demographics into alignment with elk bull-to-cow ratio management objectives, ensure compliance with the Department's Elk Conservation and Management Plan, and fulfill the Commission's statutory mandate under the California Fish and Game Code to conserve and sustainably manage wildlife populations. Without this regulatory change, demographic imbalances will persist, undermining long-term management goals.

An increase of 26 tags across hunts in the Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit is proposed. Where adjustments are proposed, current tag quotas are shown in ~~strikeout~~ and the proposed tag quotas are shown in underline. The Department will recommend final tag quotas to the Commission at the adoption hearing. Areas for which tag quota adjustments are not proposed are not included in the table below (Table 1); but all elk hunt areas are shown in the proposed regulatory language for this rulemaking.

Table 1. Proposed Elk Tag Quota Changes Section 364

Subsection	Elk Hunt	Bull Tags	Antlerless Tags	Either-Sex Tags
(v)(5)(A)	Bishop Apprentice	$\frac{0}{1}$	0	0
(x)(1)(A)	Bishop Muzzleloader Only Period 1	$\frac{0}{1}$	0	0
(u)(5)(A)	Bishop Period 3	$\frac{0}{2}$	0	0
(u)(5)(B)	Bishop Period 4	$\frac{0}{2}$	0	0
(u)(6)(A)	Independence Period 2	$\frac{4}{2}$	1	0
(u)(6)(B)	Independence Period 3	$\frac{0}{1}$	1	0
(w)(3)(A)	Lone Pine Archery Only Period 1	$\frac{0}{2}$	1	0
(u)(7)(A)	Lone Pine Period 2	$\frac{4}{2}$	0	0
(u)(7)(B)	Lone Pine Period 3	$\frac{0}{1}$	0	0
(w)(2)(A)	Owens Valley Multiple Zone Archery Only	$\frac{3}{5}$	0	0
(u)(8)(A)	Tinemaha Period 2	$\frac{0}{1}$	0	0
(w)(4)(A)	Tinemaha Archery Only Period 1	$\frac{0}{1}$	0	0
(u)(10)(A)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 1	$\frac{0}{1}$	0	0
(u)(10)(B)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 2	$\frac{0}{1}$	0	0
(u)(9)(A)	West Tinemaha Period 1	$\frac{4}{2}$	0	0
(u)(9)(B)	West Tinemaha Period 2	$\frac{0}{2}$	0	0
(u)(9)(C)	West Tinemaha Period 3	$\frac{0}{2}$	0	0
(w)(5)(A)	Whitney Archery Only Period 1	$\frac{0}{2}$	0	0
(u)(11)(A)	Whitney Period 2	$\frac{4}{2}$	0	0

- **Amend subsections 364(w)(7) through (9),** to add subsection letter “(A)”. These are non-substantive changes for consistency with the subsection numbering format in Section 364.

Section 364.1 Department Administered Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Elk Hunts

- **Amend subsections 364.1(i), (j), and (l)** to increase elk SHARE tag quotas.
 - Problem Statement: Elk populations continue to increase, with elk expanding into spaces outside of defined hunt areas, ergo they cannot be hunted. Private landowners throughout the state are interested in enrolling in the SHARE program but due to the current limited tag allotments or due to being outside of a defined hunt area cannot be onboarded into the program. Similarly, enrolled landowners who are interested in adding more elk hunts, sometimes due to intolerable elk abundance and conflict, are unable to do so due to the current limited tag allotments. Current regulations limit the number of elk SHARE tags offered statewide and do not provide for SHARE hunts in all areas where elk occur, including the Central Coast and the proposed balance of state zone. As a result, opportunity and demand for SHARE tags exceed tag availability, limiting public access to elk hunting opportunities on private land.
 - Statement of Purpose: The purpose of the proposed regulation is to increase the number of SHARE tags allotted for elk across the state and to establish SHARE hunts in additional areas, including the Central Coast and the new balance of state zone. By expanding the SHARE program, the Department will improve equitable access to elk hunting opportunities, foster partnerships with private landowners, and further incentivize habitat conservation on private lands where elk occur.
 - Statement of Benefits: The proposed regulation will provide a range of benefits:
 - Expanded recreational opportunity: Increases the number of elk hunting opportunities available to the public, improving access and equity in one of the state's most sought-after big-game hunts.
 - Habitat stewardship: By expanding SHARE elk hunts, private landowners receive greater incentives to maintain and enhance elk habitat, benefiting both elk populations and broader biodiversity.
 - Regulatory benefits: Helps ensure wildlife resources are conserved, utilized, and made available to the public in a fair and sustainable manner.
 - Social benefits: Builds stronger partnerships among hunters, private landowners, and the Department through cooperative management programs, while ensuring that hunting opportunities are broadly distributed across hunting areas.
 - Wildlife conflict resolution benefits: Provides a structured mechanism to address local elk management needs on private lands, including mitigating depredation or habitat impacts, while keeping the primary focus on opportunity and conservation.
 - Statement of Necessity: This regulation is necessary to provide equitable public access to wildlife resources and maximize incentives for private landowners to conserve elk habitat and provide access for the public to hunt elk. Increasing SHARE tags statewide and establishing new hunts in the Central Coast and balance of state zone ensures that the Department has the tools to manage elk effectively, expand recreational opportunity, and strengthen landowner participation in habitat stewardship.

An increase of up to 58 bull tags and 100 antlerless tags are proposed for SHARE elk hunts. Where adjustments are proposed, current tag quotas are shown in ~~strikeout~~ and the proposed tag quotas are shown in underline and the proposed range for the balance of

state zone is shown in brackets. The Department will recommend a final tag quota for the balance of state zone to the Commission at the adoption hearing. Areas for which tag quota adjustments are not proposed are not included in the table below (Table 2); but all SHARE hunt areas are shown in the proposed regulatory language for this rulemaking.

Table 2. Proposed SHARE Tag Quota Adjustments Section 364.1

Elk Hunt Area	Bull Tags	Antlerless Tags	Either-sex Tags
Northwestern	40 <u>48</u>	60 <u>72</u>	0
Marble Mountains	4 <u>4</u>	2 <u>6</u>	0
Northeastern	2 <u>4</u>	0 <u>4</u>	2
Cache Creek	2 <u>4</u>	4 <u>6</u>	0
Central Coast	0 <u>20</u>	0 <u>60</u>	0
Gabilan	0 <u>4</u>	0 <u>6</u>	0
East Park Reservoir	4 <u>2</u>	4 <u>2</u>	0
Bear Valley	2 <u>4</u>	6 <u>8</u>	0
Santa Clara	0 <u>3</u>	0 <u>3</u>	0
Alameda	0 <u>3</u>	0 <u>3</u>	0
Balance of state	<u>[0-10]</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Section 555 Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas

- **Amend Section 555** to exclude the balance of state zone from Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas.
 - Problem Statement: Current regulations do not specify whether CEHA may be established within the balance of state zone. Without clarification, landowners in this zone could be eligible for CEHA tags, which would be inconsistent with the intent of the new zone to manage elk primarily through public opportunities such as the SHARE program.
 - Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this regulation is to omit the balance of state zone from the definition of a CEHA. This ensures that elk management in the balance of state zone remains consistent with the zone's intent which is a focus on public hunting access, habitat stewardship, and equitable opportunity rather than private landowner tag allocations.
 - Statement of Benefits: The proposed regulation will provide a range of benefits:

- Equity and access: Preserves public hunting opportunities and prevents inequitable tag allocation in newly established areas.
- Regulatory clarity: Eliminates ambiguity regarding CEHA applicability within the balance of state zone.
- Consistency: Aligns management actions with the goals of the balance of state zone and the Department's broader elk management objectives under Fish and Game Code sections 200, 203, and 332.
- Statement of Necessity: This regulation is necessary to clarify that CEHA cannot be established within the balance of state zone. Without this exclusion, CEHA tags could be issued inconsistently with the management intent of the zone, reducing public access and undermining the equity and transparency central to the Department's elk management framework.

Tag Eligibility

- Amend subsections 364(k) and 364.1(b), and add subsections 555(f) and 555.1(d) to clarify the tag eligibility across issuance types
 - Problem Statement: Current regulatory language on elk tag eligibility is unclear and has created confusion about whether an individual may obtain multiple general, SHARE, fundraising, or cooperative elk hunting tags in the same hunt year. This lack of clarity undermines consistency and the Department's goal of equitable tag distribution.
 - Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this regulation is to clarify that no person may possess more than one general, SHARE, fundraising, or cooperative elk hunting tag in a single hunt year. This ensures consistency in interpretation and maintains fairness in the allocation of limited hunting opportunities.
 - Statement of Benefits: The proposed regulation will provide a range of benefits:
 - Equity: Promotes fair distribution of elk tags so that opportunities are available to as many hunters as possible.
 - Clarity: Removes ambiguity from current regulations, improving transparency for hunters and administrators.
 - Regulatory benefit: Strengthens alignment with the Department's responsibility under the California Fish and Game Code to manage wildlife resources for the benefit of all Californians.
 - Statement of Necessity: This regulation is necessary to eliminate confusion over tag eligibility and ensure that elk hunting opportunities remain equitable. Without this clarification, inconsistent interpretations could allow individuals to obtain multiple tags in a single year, reducing fairness and limiting access for other hunters.

(b) Goals and Benefits of the Regulation

As set forth in California Fish and Game Code, it is the policy of the state to encourage the preservation, conservation, and maintenance of wildlife resources under the jurisdiction and influence of the state. This policy shall include, but is not limited to, the following objectives:

The maintenance of sufficient populations of all species of wildlife and the habitat necessary to provide for the beneficial use and enjoyment of wildlife by all citizens of the state, to perpetuate all species of wildlife for their intrinsic and ecological values, as well as for their direct benefits to all persons, to provide for aesthetic, educational, and non-appropriative uses of the various

wildlife species, to maintain diversified recreational uses of wildlife, including sport hunting, as proper uses of certain designated species of wildlife, consistent with the maintenance of healthy, viable wildlife resources, the public safety, and a quality outdoor experience, to alleviate economic losses or public health or safety problems caused by wildlife to the people of the state either individually or collectively in a manner designed to bring the problem within tolerable limits consistent with economic and public health considerations and the objectives.

The proposed regulations will contribute to the sustainable management of elk populations in California. Population objectives are maintained and managed in part by periodically modifying the number of hunting tags distributed. The proposed regulations will provide additional elk hunting opportunities and alleviate elk conflict. Further, these changes will clarify bag limits on elk and increase human safety.

(c) Authority and Reference Sections from Fish and Game Code for Regulation

Section 353: Authority cited: Sections 200, 203 and 265, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 2005, 2055, 3004.5 and 3950, Fish and Game Code.

Section 364: Authority cited: Sections 200, 203, 203.1, 265, 325, 332 and 1050, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 332, 1050, 1570, 1571, 1572, 1573 and 1574, Fish and Game Code.

Section 364.1: Authority cited: Sections 332 and 1050, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 332, 1050 and 1574, Fish and Game Code.

Section 555: Authority cited: Section 1575, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 67, 713 and 1575, Fish and Game Code.

Section 555.1: Authority cited: Section 1575, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 67 and 1575, Fish and Game Code.

(d) Specific Technology or Equipment Required by Regulatory Change: None

(e) Identification of Reports or Documents Supporting Regulation Change

California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2018 Elk Conservation and Management Plan: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=162912&inline>

(f) Public Discussions of Proposed Regulations Prior to Notice Publication

- Wildlife Resources Committee, May 2025
- Wildlife Resources Committee, September 2025

IV. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change

No alternatives were identified by or brought to the attention of Commission staff that would have the same desired regulatory effect.

(b) No Change Alternative

Without the proposed changes, the outstanding issues concerning the regulations currently governing elk hunting would remain unaddressed. Retaining the current number of tags for the hunts listed would not be responsive to changes in population status or levels of human-elk conflict. Retaining the current regulations for methods of take would not be responsive to elk conflict and human safety concerns. Retaining the current regulations regarding tag eligibility limits would continue to cause confusion for our constituents.

V. Mitigation Measures Required by Regulatory Action

The proposed regulatory action will have no negative impact on the environment; therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

VI. Impact of Regulatory Action

The potential for significant statewide adverse economic impacts that might result from the proposed regulatory action has been assessed, and the following initial determinations relative to the required statutory categories have been made:

(a) Significant Statewide Adverse Economic Impact Directly Affecting Businesses, Including the Ability of California Businesses to Compete with Businesses in Other States

The proposed action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting business, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states. The proposed action adjusts tag quotas for existing hunts. Given the number of tags available and the area over which they are distributed, these proposals are economically neutral to business.

(b) Impact on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State, the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses, or the Expansion of Businesses in California; Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents, Worker Safety, and the State's Environment

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the creation or elimination of jobs within the State or any significant impacts on the creation of new business, the elimination of existing businesses, or the expansion of businesses in California because the expected economic impacts of the proposed regulations are unlikely to be substantial enough to significantly stimulate demand for goods or services related to elk hunting. As previously mentioned, periodic or annual adjustments of tag quotas in response to dynamic environmental, biological, or social conditions are necessary to maintain hunt opportunities, as well as keeping with management recommendations. If greater numbers of hunters visit the areas in the state with increased annual opportunities, businesses that provide goods and services to elk hunters could benefit from small increases in sales for that license year. The Commission does not anticipate direct benefits to worker safety but anticipates benefits to the environment in the sustainable management of elk populations. Additionally, the Commission anticipates health and welfare benefits to California residents, including the benefits from fresh game to eat and from the exercise associated with outdoor recreation.

(c) Cost Impacts on a Representative Private Person or Business:

The Commission is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action.

(d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State:

The Commission does not anticipate any new direct or indirect costs or savings to state agencies or costs/savings in federal funding to the state. However, the Department is projected to experience higher elk tag sales that may result in revenue increases (see STD399 and Addendum).

(e) Nondiscretionary Costs/Savings to Local Agencies: None

(f) Programs Mandated on Local Agencies or School Districts: None

(g) Costs Imposed on Any Local Agency or School District that is Required to be Reimbursed Under Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4, Government Code: None

(h) Effect on Housing Costs: None

VII. Economic Impact Assessment

(a) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State:

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the creation or elimination of jobs within the state.

(b) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the creation of new businesses or the elimination of existing businesses within the state because the potential economic impacts of the proposed regulations vary annually as tag quotas or hunts change and are unlikely to be substantial enough to stimulate demand for goods or services related to elk hunting in the long run due to annual variability.

(c) Effects of the Regulation on the Expansion of Businesses Currently Doing Business Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the expansion of businesses currently doing business within the state because the potential economic impacts of the proposed regulations vary annually as tag quotas or hunts change, and are unlikely to be substantial enough to stimulate demand for goods or services related to elk hunting in the long run due to annual variability.

(d) Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents

Hunting is an outdoor activity that can provide several health and welfare benefits to California residents. Hunters and their families benefit from fresh game to eat, and from the benefits of outdoor recreation, including exercise. People who hunt have a special connection with the outdoors and an awareness of the relationships between wildlife, habitat, and humans, and hunting can be a family tradition and a bonding activity. Where feasible, regulated hunting is

also a direct means of addressing elk conflict on private lands and meeting hunter requests for new hunting opportunities.

(e) Benefits of the Regulation to Worker Safety:

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on worker safety.

(f) Benefits of the Regulation to the State's Environment

The Commission anticipates benefits to the state's environment in the sustainable management of elk populations. Adoption of science-based tag quotas provide for the management of elk populations to ensure their continued existence and supports recreational opportunities. The fees that hunters pay for licenses and tags help fund wildlife conservation.

Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

Unless otherwise specified, all section references in this document are to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

Background

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) periodically considers the recommendations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) in amending elk hunting regulations. Considerations include recommendations for adjusting tag quotas (total number of hunting tags to be made available), setting hunt periods, modifying area boundaries, authorizing methods of take, among others, to help achieve management goals and objectives for elk. To maintain appropriate harvest levels and hunting quality, tag quotas must be adjusted periodically in response to dynamic environmental, biological, and social conditions.

Section 353 defines methods that are authorized for taking big game.

Section 364 provides descriptions of hunt area boundaries, season opening and closing dates, methods of take (e.g., general methods, archery only), tag designations (bull, spike bull, antlerless, either-sex), tag quotas, bag and possession limits, and special conditions for elk hunts.

Section 364.1 defines season opening and closing dates, authorized methods of take, application instructions, tag quotas, and bag and possession limits for Department administered SHARE elk hunts.

Section 555 defines cooperative elk hunting areas, eligibility requirements, and the application process.

Section 555.1 defines conflict zone cooperative elk hunting areas, specifies the method for computing the number of conflict zone cooperative elk tags that may be issued, and specifies the valid dates of tags issued under the provisions of the section.

Proposed Changes

The Department recommends that the Commission consider the following proposed changes to elk hunting regulations:

- Amend subsection 353(d) to allow use of shotguns firing slugs as a method of take for SHARE elk hunts.
- Amend subsections 364(k) and 364.1(b) and add subsections 555(f) and 555.1(d) to clarify tag eligibility across issuance types.
- Amend subsection 364(q) to define a new Balance of the State Elk Management Zone.
- Amend subsections 364(u)(5) through (11), 364(v)(5), 364(w)(2) through (5), and 364(x)(1) to increase bull tag quotas for the Owens Valley.
- Amend subsection 364.1(i), (j), and (l), to increase elk SHARE tag quotas.
- Amend Section 555 to omit the proposed balance of state zone from Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas.

Benefits of the Regulations

The benefits of the proposed regulations include, but are not limited to, the maintenance of populations of elk to ensure their continued existence and supporting recreational opportunity. Adoption of science-based hunting regulations provides for the maintenance of ecologically functional elk populations to provide for the sport hunting of elk, and to alleviate elk conflict. Further, the proposed changes will clarify bag limits on elk and increase human safety. The fees that hunters pay for licenses and tags help fund wildlife conservation.

Consistency and Compatibility with Existing Regulations

The proposed regulations are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing state regulations. Section 20, Article IV, of the state Constitution specifies that the Legislature may delegate to the Commission such powers relating to the protection and propagation of fish and game as the Legislature sees fit. The Legislature has delegated to the Commission the power to adopt regulations governing elk hunting (California Fish and Game Code section 200 and 332). No other state agency has the authority to adopt regulations governing elk hunting. The Commission has reviewed its own regulations and finds that the proposed regulations are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing state regulations. The Commission has searched the CCR for any regulations regarding the elk hunting; therefore, the Commission has concluded that the proposed elk hunting regulations are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing state regulations.

Proposed Regulatory Language

Section 353, Title 14, CCR, is amended to read:

§ 353. Methods Authorized for Taking Big Game.

. . . [No changes to subsections (a) through (c)]. . .

~~(d) Shotguns capable of holding not more than three shells firing single slugs may be used for the taking of deer, and bear. In areas where the discharge of rifles or shotguns with slugs is prohibited by county ordinance, shotguns capable of holding not more than three shells firing size 0 or 00 buckshot may be used for the taking of deer only.~~

(d) Shotguns:

(1) Shotguns capable of holding not more than three shells firing single slugs may be used for the taking of deer and bear. In areas where the discharge of rifles or shotguns with slugs is prohibited by county ordinance, shotguns capable of holding not more than three shells firing size 0 or 00 buckshot may be used for the taking of deer only.

(2) Shotguns capable of holding not more than three shells firing single slugs may be used for the taking of elk for SHARE hunts as defined in subsection 364.1.

. . . [No changes to subsections (e) through (m)]. . .

Note: Authority cited: Sections 200, 203 and 265, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 2005, 2055, 3004.5 and 3950, Fish and Game Code.

Proposed Regulatory Language

Section 364, Title 14, CCR, is amended to read:

§ 364. Elk Hunts, Seasons, and Number of Tags.

...[No changes to subsections (a) through (j)(4)(B)]. . .

(k) Bag and Possession Limit: ~~Each elk tag is valid only for one elk per season and only in the hunt area drawn, and an individual shall only be eligible for one elk tag per season through section 364.~~ Each elk tag is valid only for one elk in the hunt area drawn. Any individual shall only be eligible for one elk tag per license year issued pursuant to sections 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1.

...[No changes to subsections (l) through (p)(4)]. . .

(q) [subsection reserved] Balance of State Elk Management Zone: That portion of the state not covered by any area defined in subsections 364(a) through (d).

...[No changes to subsections (r) through (t)(1)(A)5.]. . .

(u) Department Administered General Methods Tule Elk Hunts

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(1)(A)	Cache Creek Bull	2	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in October and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(1)(B)	Cache Creek Antlerless	0	2	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(2)(A)	La Panza Period 1	6	5	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in October and continue for 23 consecutive days.
(2)(B)	La Panza Period 2	6	6	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in November and continue for 23 consecutive days.
(3)(A)	Central Coast	10	10	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for 60 consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(4)(A)	Gabilan	10	6	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in November and continue for 23 consecutive days.
(5)(A)	Bishop Period 3	0 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(5)(B)	Bishop Period 4	0 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(5)(C)	Bishop Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(6)(A)	Independence Period 2	4 <u>2</u>	1	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(6)(B)	Independence Period 3	0 <u>1</u>	1	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(6)(C)	Independence Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(6)(D)	Independence Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(7)(A)	Lone Pine Period 2	4 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(7)(B)	Lone Pine Period 3	0 <u>1</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(7)(C)	Lone Pine Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(7)(D)	Lone Pine Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(8)(A)	Tinemaha Period 2	0 <u>1</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(8)(B)	Tinemaha Period 3	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(8)(C)	Tinemaha Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(8)(D)	Tinemaha Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(9)(A)	West Tinemaha Period 1	4 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(9)(B)	West Tinemaha Period 2	0 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(9)(C)	West Tinemaha Period 3	0 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(9)(D)	West Tinemaha Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(9)(E)	West Tinemaha Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(10)(A)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 1	0 <u>1</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(10)(B)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 2	0 <u>1</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(10)(C)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 3	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(10)(D)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(10)(E)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(11)(A)	Whitney Period 2	4 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(11)(B)	Whitney Period 3	0	1	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(11)(C)	Whitney Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(11)(D)	Whitney Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(12)(A)	Goodale Period 1	1	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(12)(B)	Goodale Period 2	0	1	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(12)(C)	Goodale Period 3	0	1	0	0	Shall open on the third Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(12)(D)	Goodale Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(12)(E)	Goodale Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in December and continue for nine consecutive days.
(13)(A)	Grizzly Island Period 1	0	2	0	0	Shall open on the second Tuesday after the first Saturday in August and continue for four consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(13)(B)	Grizzly Island Period 2	0	0	0	2	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 1 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(C)	Grizzly Island Period 3	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 2 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(D)	Grizzly Island Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 3 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(E)	Grizzly Island Period 5	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 4 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(F)	Grizzly Island Period 6	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 5 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(G)	Grizzly Island Period 7	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 6 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(H)	Grizzly Island Period 8	0	0	0	6	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 7 and continue for four consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(13)(I)	Grizzly Island Period 9	0	4	0	0	Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 8 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(J)	Grizzly Island Period 10	4	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 9 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(K)	Grizzly Island Period 11	0	4	0	0	Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 10 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(L)	Grizzly Island Period 12	4	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 11 and continue for four consecutive days.
(13)(M)	Grizzly Island Period 13	3	4	0	0	Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 12 and continue for four consecutive days.
(14)(A)	Fort Hunter Liggett-General Public Period 1	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Thursday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(14)(B)	Fort Hunter Liggett General Public Period 2	0	6	0	0	Shall open on November 25 and continue for nine consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(14)(C)	Fort Hunter Liggett General Public Period 3	8	0	0	0	Shall open on the fourth Tuesday in December and continue for 13 consecutive days.
(15)(A)	East Park Reservoir	2	2	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in September and continue for 27 consecutive days.
(16)(A)	San Luis Reservoir	0	0	5	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for 23 consecutive days.
(17)(A)	Bear Valley	2	1	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.
(18)(A)	Lake Pillsbury Period 1	0	4	0	0	Shall open on the last Saturday in August and continue for seven consecutive days.
(18)(B)	Lake Pillsbury Period 2	0	2	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in September and continue for seven consecutive days.
(18)(C)	Lake Pillsbury Period 3	0	2	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for seven consecutive days.
(18)(D)	Lake Pillsbury Period 4	2	0	0	0	Shall open on the fourth Saturday in September and continue for seven consecutive days.
(18)(E)	Lake Pillsbury Period 5	2	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for seven consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(19)(A)	Santa Clara	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in October and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(20)(A)	Alameda	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in October and continue for 16 consecutive days.

(v) Department Administered Apprentice Hunts

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(1)(A)	Marble Mountain General Methods Roosevelt Elk Apprentice	0	0	4	0	Shall open on the Wednesday preceding the second Saturday in September and continue for 12 consecutive days.
(2)(A)	Northeastern General Methods Rocky Mountain Elk Apprentice	0	0	2	0	Shall open on the Wednesday preceding the third Saturday in September and continue for 12 consecutive days.
(3)(A)	Cache Creek General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice	1	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in October and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(4)(A)	La Panza General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice	0	1	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in October and continue for 23 consecutive days.
(5)(A)	Bishop General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice Period 2	0 <u>1</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in October and continue for nine consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(6)(A)	Grizzly Island General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice Period 1	0	2	0	0	Shall open on the second Tuesday after the first Saturday in August and continue for four consecutive days.
(6)(B)	Grizzly Island General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice Period 2	0	0	0	2	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 1 and continue for four consecutive days.
(6)(C)	Grizzly Island General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice Period 3	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 2 and continue for 4 four consecutive days.
(6)(D)	Grizzly Island General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice Period 4	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 3 and continue for 4 four consecutive days.
(7)(A)	Fort Hunter Liggett General Public General Methods Apprentice	1	1	0	0	Shall open on the fourth Tuesday in December and continue for 13 consecutive days.

(w) Department Administered Archery Only Hunts

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(1)(A)	Northeastern Archery Only	0	0	10	0	Shall open on the Wednesday preceding the first Saturday in September and continue for 12 consecutive days.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(2)(A)	Owens Valley Multiple Zone Archery Only	3 <u>5</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in August and continue for nine consecutive days.
(3)(A)	Lone Pine Archery Only Period 1	0 <u>2</u>	1	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(4)(A)	Tinemaha Archery Only Period 1	0 <u>1</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(5)(A)	Whitney Archery Only Period 1	0 <u>2</u>	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(6)(A)	Fort Hunter Liggett General Public Archery Only Either Sex	0	0	6	0	Shall open on the last Saturday in July and continue for nine consecutive days.
(6)(B)	Fort Hunter Liggett General Public Archery Only Antlerless	0	8	0	0	Shall open on the first Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.
(7)(A)	Central Coast Archery Only Tule Elk Hunt	5	5	0	0	Shall open on September 1 and continue until September 30.
(8)(A)	La Panza Archery Only Tule Elk Hunt	5	5	0	0	Shall open on September 1 and continue until September 30.

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(9)(A)	Siskiyou Archery Only Roosevelt Elk Hunt	10	0	0	0	Shall open on the fourth Wednesday in August and continue until the second Tuesday in September.

(x) Department Administered Muzzleloader Only Tule Elk Hunts

§	Hunt	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	5. Season
(1)(A)	Bishop Muzzleloader Only Period 1	0 1	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(2)(A)	Independence Muzzleloader Only Period 1	1	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(3)(A)	Goodale Muzzleloader Only Period 1	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(4)(A)	Fort Hunter Liggett General Public Muzzleloader Only	0	0	0	0	Shall open on the fourth Saturday in November and continue for nine consecutive days.

...[No changes to subsections (y) through (aa)(4)(A)5.] ...

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 200, 203, 203.1, 265, 325, 332 and 1050, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 332, 1050, 1570, 1571, 1572, 1573 and 1574, Fish and Game Code.

Proposed Regulatory Language

Section 364.1, Title 14, CCR, is amended to read:

§ 364.1. Department Administered Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Elk Hunts.

. . . *[No changes to subsection (a)]. . .*

(b) Bag and Possession Limit: ~~Each elk tag is valid only for one elk per season and only in the SHARE hunt area drawn, and persons shall only be eligible for one elk tag per season through section 364.1.~~ Each elk tag is valid only for one elk in the hunt area drawn. Any individual shall only be eligible for one elk tag per license year issued pursuant to sections 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1.

. . . *[No changes to subsections (c) through (h)]. . .*

(i) Department Administered SHARE Roosevelt Elk Hunts

§	(A) Hunts	1. Bull Tags	2. Antler-less Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	(B) Area
(1)	Siskiyou	20	20	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(a)(1)(A).
(2)	Northwestern	40 <u>48</u>	60 <u>72</u>	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(a)(2)(A).
(3)	Marble Mountain	4 <u>4</u>	2 <u>6</u>	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(a)(3)(A).

(j) Department Administered General Methods SHARE Rocky Mountain Elk Hunts

§	(A) Hunts	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	(B) Area
(1)	Northeastern	<u>2</u> <u>4</u>	<u>0</u> <u>4</u>	2	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(b)(1)(A).
(2)	Tehachapi	40	60	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(b)(2)(A).

(k) Department Administered SHARE Roosevelt/Tule Elk Hunts

§	(A) Hunts	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	(B) Area
(1)	Mendocino	20	30	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(c)(1)(A).

(l) Department Administered SHARE Tule Elk Hunts

§	(A) Hunts	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	(B) Area
(1)	Cache Creek	<u>2</u> <u>4</u>	<u>4</u> <u>6</u>	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(1)(A).
(2)	La Panza	5	10	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(2)(A).
(3)	Central Coast	<u>0</u> <u>20</u>	<u>0</u> <u>60</u>	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(3)(A).

§	(A) Hunts	1. Bull Tags	2. Antlerless Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	(B) Area
(4)	Gabilan	0 <u>4</u>	0 <u>6</u>	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(4)(A).
(5)	Bishop	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(5)(A).
(6)	Independence	0	0	0	0	(B) Area: The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(6)(A).
(7)	Lone Pine Period 2	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(7)(A).
(8)	Tinemaha	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(8)(A).
(9)	West Tinemaha	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(9)(A).
(10)	Tinemaha Mountain	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(10)(A).
(11)	Whitney	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(11)(A).

§	(A) Hunts	1. Bull Tags	2. Antler-less Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	(B) Area
(12)	Goodale	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(12)(A).
(13)	Grizzly Island	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(13)(A).
(14)	Fort Hunter Liggett	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(14)(A).
(15)	East Park Reservoir	<u>4</u> 2	<u>4</u> 2	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(15)(A).
(16)	San Luis Reservoir	2	3	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(16)(A).
(17)	Bear Valley	<u>2</u> 4	<u>6</u> 8	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(17)(A).
(18)	Lake Pillsbury	0	0	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(18)(A).
(19)	Santa Clara	<u>0</u> 3	<u>0</u> 3	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(19)(A).

§	(A) Hunts	1. Bull Tags	2. Antler-less Tags	3. Either-Sex Tags	4. Spike Tags	(B) Area
(20)	Alameda	0 <u>3</u>	0 <u>3</u>	0	0	The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(20)(A).
<u>(21)</u>	<u>Balance of the State</u>	<u>[0-10]</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(q)</u>

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 332 and 1050, Fish and Game Code.
Reference: Sections 332, 1050 and 1574, Fish and Game Code.

Proposed Regulatory Language

Section 555, Title 14, CCR, is amended to read:

§ 555. Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas.

To encourage protection and enhancement of elk habitat and provide eligible landowners an opportunity for limited elk hunting on their lands, the department may establish cooperative elk hunting areas and issue license tags to allow the take of elk as specified in Section 364, and subject to the following conditions:

- (a) Definition and Scope. A cooperative elk hunting area is an area of private land located within the boundary of an area open to public elk hunting as defined in subsections 364(a), (b), (c), and (d). The cooperative hunting area shall encompass not less than a total of 5,000 acres, except that such area may consist of neighboring lands not less than 640 acres in size under the control of one or more owners.

Within an area open to public elk hunting the number of cooperative elk hunting license tags issued shall not exceed 20 percent of the number of general methods public license tags for the corresponding public hunt and shall be of the same designation (i.e., antlerless, spike bull, bull or either-sex) as the public license tags. Public license tags shall equate to the sum of the general methods elk license tags under Section 364 and the Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) elk license tags under Section 364.1 for the corresponding hunt and for the same designation issued annually.

. . . *[No changes to subsections (b) through (e)].* . .

- (f) Bag and Possession Limit: Each elk tag is valid only for one elk in the hunt area specified. Any individual shall only be eligible for one elk tag per license year issued pursuant to sections 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 1575, Fish and Game Code.

Reference: Sections 67, 713 and 1575, Fish and Game Code.

Proposed Regulatory Language

Section 555.1, Title 14, CCR, is amended to read:

§ 555.1. Conflict Zone Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas.

. . . *[No changes to subsections (a) through (c)]. . .*

(d) Bag and Possession Limit: Each elk tag is valid only for one elk in the hunt area specified. Any individual shall only be eligible for one elk tag per license year issued pursuant to sections 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 1575, Fish and Game Code.

Reference: Sections 67 and 1575, Fish and Game Code.

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT NAME California Fish and Game Commission	CONTACT PERSON David Thesell	EMAIL ADDRESS fgc@fgc.ca.gov	TELEPHONE NUMBER 916-902-9291
DESCRIPTIVE TITLE FROM NOTICE REGISTER OR FORM 400 Amend Sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1, Title 14, CCR: Re: Elk Hunting 2026-27			NOTICE FILE NUMBER Z

A. ESTIMATED PRIVATE SECTOR COST IMPACTS *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record.*

1. Check the appropriate box(es) below to indicate whether this regulation:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Impacts business and/or employees | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Imposes reporting requirements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Impacts small businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Imposes prescriptive instead of performance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Impacts jobs or occupations | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Impacts individuals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Impacts California competitiveness | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h. None of the above (Explain below): |

Proposed annual adjustments to Elk hunting regulations have no new private sector costs. See addendum.

If any box in Items 1 a through g is checked, complete this Economic Impact Statement.

If box in Item 1.h. is checked, complete the Fiscal Impact Statement as appropriate.

2. The _____ estimates that the economic impact of this regulation (which includes the fiscal impact) is:
(Agency/Department)

- ☐ Below \$10 million
- ☐ Between \$10 and \$25 million
- ☐ Between \$25 and \$50 million
- ☐ Over \$50 million *[If the economic impact is over \$50 million, agencies are required to submit a [Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment](#) as specified in Government Code Section 11346.3(c)]*

3. Enter the total number of businesses impacted: _____

Describe the types of businesses (Include nonprofits): _____

Enter the number or percentage of total businesses impacted that are small businesses: _____

4. Enter the number of businesses that will be created: _____ eliminated: _____

Explain: _____

5. Indicate the geographic extent of impacts: ☐ Statewide
☐ Local or regional (List areas): _____

6. Enter the number of jobs created: _____ and eliminated: _____

Describe the types of jobs or occupations impacted: _____

7. Will the regulation affect the ability of California businesses to compete with other states by making it more costly to produce goods or services here? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If YES, explain briefly: _____

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

Draft Document**ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT (CONTINUED)****B. ESTIMATED COSTS** *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record.*

1. What are the total statewide dollar costs that businesses and individuals may incur to comply with this regulation over its lifetime? \$ _____

a. Initial costs for a small business: \$ _____ Annual ongoing costs: \$ _____ Years: _____

b. Initial costs for a typical business: \$ _____ Annual ongoing costs: \$ _____ Years: _____

c. Initial costs for an individual: \$ _____ Annual ongoing costs: \$ _____ Years: _____

d. Describe other economic costs that may occur: _____

2. If multiple industries are impacted, enter the share of total costs for each industry: _____

3. If the regulation imposes reporting requirements, enter the annual costs a typical business may incur to comply with these requirements.
Include the dollar costs to do programming, record keeping, reporting, and other paperwork, whether or not the paperwork must be submitted. \$ _____4. Will this regulation directly impact housing costs? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If YES, enter the annual dollar cost per housing unit: \$ _____

Number of units: _____

5. Are there comparable Federal regulations? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Explain the need for State regulation given the existence or absence of Federal regulations: _____

Enter any additional costs to businesses and/or individuals that may be due to State - Federal differences: \$ _____

C. ESTIMATED BENEFITS *Estimation of the dollar value of benefits is not specifically required by rulemaking law, but encouraged.*

1. Briefly summarize the benefits of the regulation, which may include among others, the health and welfare of California residents, worker safety and the State's environment: _____

2. Are the benefits the result of: ☐ specific statutory requirements, or ☐ goals developed by the agency based on broad statutory authority?

Explain: _____

3. What are the total statewide benefits from this regulation over its lifetime? \$ _____

4. Briefly describe any expansion of businesses currently doing business within the State of California that would result from this regulation: _____

D. ALTERNATIVES TO THE REGULATION *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record. Estimation of the dollar value of benefits is not specifically required by rulemaking law, but encouraged.*

1. List alternatives considered and describe them below. If no alternatives were considered, explain why not: _____

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

2. Summarize the total statewide costs and benefits from this regulation and each alternative considered:

Regulation: Benefit: \$ _____ Cost: \$ _____

Alternative 1: Benefit: \$ _____ Cost: \$ _____

Alternative 2: Benefit: \$ _____ Cost: \$ _____

3. Briefly discuss any quantification issues that are relevant to a comparison of estimated costs and benefits for this regulation or alternatives: _____

4. Rulemaking law requires agencies to consider performance standards as an alternative, if a regulation mandates the use of specific technologies or equipment, or prescribes specific actions or procedures. Were performance standards considered to lower compliance costs? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Explain: _____

E. MAJOR REGULATIONS *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record.****California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) boards, offices and departments are required to submit the following (per Health and Safety Code section 57005). Otherwise, skip to E4.***1. Will the estimated costs of this regulation to California business enterprises **exceed \$10 million**? ☐ YES ☐ NO***If YES, complete E2. and E3******If NO, skip to E4***

2. Briefly describe each alternative, or combination of alternatives, for which a cost-effectiveness analysis was performed:

Alternative 1: _____

Alternative 2: _____

(Attach additional pages for other alternatives)

3. For the regulation, and each alternative just described, enter the estimated total cost and overall cost-effectiveness ratio:

Regulation: Total Cost \$ _____ Cost-effectiveness ratio: \$ _____

Alternative 1: Total Cost \$ _____ Cost-effectiveness ratio: \$ _____

Alternative 2: Total Cost \$ _____ Cost-effectiveness ratio: \$ _____

4. Will the regulation subject to OAL review have an estimated economic impact to business enterprises and individuals located in or doing business in California exceeding \$50 million in any 12-month period between the date the major regulation is estimated to be filed with the Secretary of State through 12 months after the major regulation is estimated to be fully implemented?

☐ YES ☐ NO*If YES, agencies are required to submit a [Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment \(SRIA\)](#) as specified in Government Code Section 11346.3(c) and to include the SRIA in the Initial Statement of Reasons.*

5. Briefly describe the following:

The increase or decrease of investment in the State: _____

The incentive for innovation in products, materials or processes: _____

The benefits of the regulations, including, but not limited to, benefits to the health, safety, and welfare of California residents, worker safety, and the state's environment and quality of life, among any other benefits identified by the agency: _____

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**A. FISCAL EFFECT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT** *Indicate appropriate boxes 1 through 6 and attach calculations and assumptions of fiscal impact for the current year and two subsequent Fiscal Years.*

- ☐ 1. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year which are reimbursable by the State. (Approximate)
(Pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution and Sections 17500 et seq. of the Government Code).

\$ _____

- ☐ a. Funding provided in _____
Budget Act of _____ or Chapter _____, Statutes of _____

- ☐ b. Funding will be requested in the Governor's Budget Act of _____
Fiscal Year: _____

- ☐ 2. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year which are NOT reimbursable by the State. (Approximate)
(Pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution and Sections 17500 et seq. of the Government Code).

\$ _____

Check reason(s) this regulation is not reimbursable and provide the appropriate information:

- ☐ a. Implements the Federal mandate contained in _____
- ☐ b. Implements the court mandate set forth by the _____ Court.

Case of: _____ vs. _____

- ☐ c. Implements a mandate of the people of this State expressed in their approval of Proposition No. _____

Date of Election: _____

- ☐ d. Issued only in response to a specific request from affected local entity(s).

Local entity(s) affected: _____

- ☐ e. Will be fully financed from the fees, revenue, etc. from: _____

Authorized by Section: _____ of the _____ Code;

- ☐ f. Provides for savings to each affected unit of local government which will, at a minimum, offset any additional costs to each;

- ☐ g. Creates, eliminates, or changes the penalty for a new crime or infraction contained in _____

- ☐ 3. Annual Savings. (approximate)

\$ _____

- ☐ 4. No additional costs or savings. This regulation makes only technical, non-substantive or clarifying changes to current law regulations.

- ☐ 5. No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any local entity or program.

- ☒ 6. Other. Explain May increase local tax revenue in Monterey County by approximately \$500 for the 2026-27 season by increasing SHARE tags by 80 tags in the region. See addendum.

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**B. FISCAL EFFECT ON STATE GOVERNMENT** *Indicate appropriate boxes 1 through 4 and attach calculations and assumptions of fiscal impact for the current year and two subsequent Fiscal Years.*☐ 1. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ _____

It is anticipated that State agencies will:☐ a. Absorb these additional costs within their existing budgets and resources.☐ b. Increase the currently authorized budget level for the _____ Fiscal Year☐ 2. Savings in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ _____

☐ 3. No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any State agency or program.☒ 4. Other. Explain No change in costs or savings are anticipated. The Commission's proposed increase in elk tags may result in up to \$111,802 in additional tag revenue in FY 2026-2027, see addendum.**C. FISCAL EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDING OF STATE PROGRAMS** *Indicate appropriate boxes 1 through 4 and attach calculations and assumptions of fiscal impact for the current year and two subsequent Fiscal Years.*☐ 1. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ _____

☐ 2. Savings in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ _____

☒ 3. No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any federally funded State agency or program.☐ 4. Other. Explain _____

FISCAL OFFICER SIGNATURE

DATE

*The signature attests that the agency has completed the STD. 399 according to the instructions in SAM sections 6601-6616, and understands the impacts of the proposed rulemaking. State boards, offices, or departments not under an Agency Secretary must have the form signed by the highest ranking official in the organization.*

AGENCY SECRETARY

DATE

*Finance approval and signature is required when SAM sections 6601-6616 require completion of Fiscal Impact Statement in the STD. 399.*

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE PROGRAM BUDGET MANAGER

DATE



STD. 399 Addendum
Amend Sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1
Title 14, California Code of Regulations
Regarding methods authorized for taking big game, elk hunting, SHARE elk hunts,
cooperative elk hunts, conflict zone cooperative elk hunting

Background

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) periodically considers the recommendations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) in amending elk hunting regulations. Considerations include recommendations for adjusting tag quotas (total number of hunting tags to be made available), setting hunt periods, modifying area boundaries, authorizing methods of take, among others, to help achieve management goals and objectives for elk. To maintain appropriate harvest levels and hunting quality, tags must be adjusted periodically in response to dynamic environmental, biological, and social conditions.

Section 353 defines methods that are authorized for taking big game.

Section 364 provides descriptions of hunt area boundaries, season opening and closing dates, methods of take (e.g., general methods, archery only), tag designations (bull, spike bull, antlerless, either-sex), tag quotas, bag and possession limits, and special conditions for elk hunts.

Section 364.1 defines season opening and closing dates, authorized methods of take, application instructions, tag quotas, and bag and possession limits for Department administered SHARE elk hunts.

Section 555 defines cooperative elk hunting areas, eligibility requirements, and the application process.

Section 555.1 defines conflict zone cooperative elk hunting areas, specifies the method for computing the number of conflict zone cooperative elk tags that may be issued, and specifies the valid dates of tags issued under the provisions of the section.

Proposed Changes

The Department recommends that the Commission consider the following proposed changes to elk hunting regulations:

- Amend subsection 353(d) to allow use of shotguns firing slugs as a method of take for SHARE elk hunts.
- Amend subsections 364(k) and 364.1(b), and add subsections 555(f) and 555.1(d) to clarify tag eligibility across issuance types.
- Amend subsection 364(q) to define a new Balance of State Elk Management Zone.
- Amend subsections 364(u)(5) through (11), 364(v)(5), 364(w)(2) through (5), and 364(x)(1) to increase bull tag quotas for the Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit.

- Amend subsections 364.1(i), (j), and (l), to increase elk SHARE tag quotas.
- Amend Section 555 to exclude the proposed balance of the state zone from Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas.

Table 1: Summary of 2025 Elk Tag Quotas and 2026 Proposed Tag Quota Range

Title 14 Subsection	Hunt Area	2025 Bull Tags	2026 Bull Tags	Potential Net Change
364(v)(5)(A)	Bishop General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice Period 2	0	1	+1
364(x)(1)(A)	Bishop Muzzleloader Only Period 1	0	1	+1
364(u)(5)(A)	Bishop Period 3	0	2	+2
364(u)(5)(B)	Bishop Period 4	0	2	+2
364(u)(6)(A)	Independence Period 2	1	2	+1
364(u)(6)(B)	Independence Period 3	0	1	+1
364(w)(3)(A)	Lone Pine Archery Only Period 1	0	2	+2
364(u)(7)(A)	Lone Pine Period 2	1	2	+1
364(u)(7)(B)	Lone Pine Period 3	0	1	+1
364(w)(2)(A)	Owens Valley Multiple Zone Archery Only	3	5	+2
364(u)(8)(A)	Tinemaha Period 2	0	1	+1
364(w)(4)(A)	Tinemaha Archery Only Period 1	0	1	+1
364(u)(10)(A)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 1	0	1	+1
364(u)(10)(B)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 2	0	1	+1
364(u)(9)(A)	West Tinemaha Period 1	1	2	+1
364(u)(9)(B)	West Tinemaha Period 2	0	2	+2
364(u)(9)(C)	West Tinemaha Period 3	0	2	+2
364(w)(5)(A)	Whitney Archery Only Period 1	0	2	+2
364(u)(11)(A)	Whitney Period 2	1	2	+1
	Total Tags	7	33	+26

The Department will recommend final tag quotas to the Commission at the April 2026 adoption hearing.

Table 2: Summary of 2025 SHARE Elk Tag Quotas and 2026 Proposed SHARE Tag Quotas

Title 14 Subsection	SHARE Elk Hunt	2025 Bull Tags	2026 Bull Tags	2025 Antler-less Tags	2026 Antler-less Tags	2025 Either-sex Tags	2026 Either-sex Tags	Potential Net Change
364.1(i)(2)	Northwestern Roosevelt Elk	40	48	60	72	0	0	+20
364.1(i)(3)	Marble Mountains Roosevelt Elk	1	4	2	6	0	0	+7
364.1(j)(1)	Northeastern Rocky Mountain Elk	2	4	0	4	2	2	+6
364.1(l)(1)	Cache Creek Tule Elk	2	4	1	6	0	0	+7
364.1(l)(3)	Central Coast Tule Elk	0	20	0	60	0	0	+80
364.1(l)(4)	Gabilan Tule Elk	0	4	0	6	0	0	+10
364.1(l)(15)	East Park Reservoir Tule Elk	1	2	1	2	0	0	+2
364.1(l)(17)	Bear Valley Tule Elk	2	4	6	8	0	0	+4
364.1(l)(19)	Santa Clara Tule Elk	0	3	0	3	0	0	+6
364.1(l)(20)	Alameda Tule Elk	0	3	0	3	0	0	+6
364.1(l)(21)	Balance of State Tule Elk	n/a	[0-10]	n/a	0	n/a	0	+0 to 10
	Total Tags	48	96 to 106	70	170	2	2	+148 to 158

The Department will recommend final tag quotas to the Commission at the April 2026 adoption hearing.

Economic Impact Statement

Section A. Estimated Private Sector Cost Impacts

Question 1. Answer h. None of the above (Explain below):

No new private sector costs are necessarily incurred with these annual regulatory amendments. The Commission is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private

person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action because the proposed amendments are to adjust hunt quotas; the adjustments are expected to result in a net increase in elk hunt opportunities with no changes to individual or businesses fee, equipment, and reporting requirements. The proposed increase in tag quotas is anticipated to add to the demand for goods or services related to elk hunting. If greater numbers of hunters visit the areas in the state with increased opportunities, businesses that provide goods and services to elk hunters could benefit from small increases in sales.

Fiscal Impact Statement

Section A. Fiscal Effect on Local Government

Answer 6. Other. Explain:

This regulation does not affect any local entity or program. However, the increase in SHARE tags in Monterey County may bring additional revenue to those areas from increased spending from hunters. The most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife National Survey from 2022 estimates that the average big game hunter spends approximately 12 days spread out over approximately 8 hunts while during the year; average spending per hunter is approximately \$1,352 (\$1,474 in 2025 dollars) for all trip related spending, \$501 (\$546 in 2025 dollars) for trip-related expenditures, \$335 (\$365 in 2025 dollars) for hunting equipment, \$181 (\$197 in 2025 dollars) for auxiliary equipment, \$334 (\$364 in 2025 dollars) for special equipment¹.

Trip-related expenditure items include food, drink, refreshments, lodging, public and private transportation, airfare, charter, guide, package, and pack trips, public and private land use, heating and cooking fuel, equipment rental, and boating expenses. The per-hunt average trip expenditure is \$546 in 2025 dollars over 8 hunts, or approximately \$68 per hunt.

Special equipment includes boats, campers, trail bikes, 4x4 vehicles, ATVs, 4-wheelers, snowmobiles, pickups, vans, travel and tent trailers, motor homes, house trailers, and recreational vehicles.

Auxiliary equipment includes sleeping bags, packs, duffel bags, tents, traps, binoculars and field glasses, special clothing, boots and waders, maintenance and repair of equipment, processing and taxidermy costs, and electronic auxiliary equipment such as global positioning systems.

The average local tax rate (city and county taxes) in Monterey County is approximately 9.14%. It is expected for SHARE tags to increase by 80 in the hunt zone in Monterey County, which could increase local tax revenue. The inflation-adjusted per-hunter trip-related expenditures, average tax rate, and expected annual increase of approximately \$500 in tax revenue for Monterey County are displayed in Table 3.

¹ Adjusted from 2022 dollars to 2025 dollars using the Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics: [CPI Inflation Calculator](#)

Table 3: Expected Local Revenue from Increased SHARE Tags

USFW 2022 Survey Results	\$2025 Amount	Monterey Tax Per Spender
Average Trip-related Expenditures Per Hunt	\$68.25	\$6.24
	Total	\$499.20

Section B. Fiscal Effect on State Government

Answer 4. Other.

Explanation: The Department Wildlife Branch, Law Enforcement Branch, and License and Revenue Branch work is projected to be unchanged from currently existing budgets and resources. However, Department revenue is expected to increase with the proposed increase in available elk tags: Table 1 shows an increase of up to 26 tags, along with the proposed increase of up to 148 to 158 SHARE tags as described in Table 2. If up to 174 to 184 more elk tags are available at the 2026-27 price of \$581.50 for a resident and \$1,783.00 for a nonresident, the projected increase in revenue in 2026-2027 could be anywhere from \$103,584 to \$109,399 (assuming an increase of up to 25 resident tags and 1 nonresident tag sold due to current regulations limiting nonresident tags under Section 364 to 1 each year, and assuming up to 147 to 157 SHARE tags are sold to residents and up to 1 SHARE tag is sold to nonresidents).

Section C. Fiscal Effect on Federal Funding of State Programs

Answer 3. No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any federally funded State agency or program.



ELK HUNTING: PROPOSALS FOR REGULATORY CHANGE

Presentation to the California Fish and Game Commission
December 10, 2025

Dr. Mario Klip, Game and Connectivity Programs Manager

Photo Credit: CDFW

Adjust Tag Quotas: Owens Valley EMU

- + 26 Bull tags
- Owens Valley elk population has increased to over 400 individuals
- Statute sets the upper limit of elk in Owens Valley at 490 individuals (FGC §3951)
- Increasing population allows for increased public harvest opportunity

Subsection	Elk Hunt (Owens Valley EMU)	Current Bull Tags	Proposed Bull Tags
(v)(5)(A)	Bishop Apprentice	0	1
(x)(1)(A)	Bishop Muzzleloader Only Period 1	0	1
(u)(5)(A)	Bishop Period 3	0	2
(u)(5)(B)	Bishop Period 4	0	2
(u)(6)(A)	Independence Period 2	1	2
(u)(6)(B)	Independence Period 3	0	1
(w)(3)(A)	Lone Pine Archery Only Period 1	0	2
(u)(7)(A)	Lone Pine Period 2	1	2
(u)(7)(B)	Lone Pine Period 3	0	1
(w)(2)(A)	Owens Valley Multiple Zone Archery Only	3	5
(u)(8)(A)	Tinemaha Period 2	0	1
(w)(4)(A)	Tinemaha Archery Only Period 1	0	1
(u)(10)(A)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 1	0	1
(u)(10)(B)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 2	0	1
(u)(9)(A)	West Tinemaha Period 1	1	2
(u)(9)(B)	West Tinemaha Period 2	0	2
(u)(9)(C)	West Tinemaha Period 3	0	2
(w)(5)(A)	Whitney Archery Only Period 1	0	2
(u)(11)(A)	Whitney Period 2	1	2
Total		7	33

Elk: New SHARE Hunts and Allotment Increases

- Interest in SHARE participation exceeds current tag allotment
- Establish SHARE hunts on the Central Coast
- Increase SHARE hunt opportunity statewide
- Overall increase of:
 - + 48-58 bull tags
 - + 100 antlerless tags
- Establish an allotment for Balance of State
- SHARE provides equitable public opportunity, agricultural conflict mitigation, and habitat improvement incentives

Elk Hunt Area	Current Bull Tags	Proposed Bull Tags	Current Antlerless Tags	Proposed Antlerless Tags
Northwestern	40	48	60	72
Marble Mountains	1	4	2	6
Northeastern	2	4	0	4
Cache Creek	2	4	1	6
Central Coast	0	20	0	60
Gabilan	0	4	0	6
East Park Reservoir	1	2	1	2
Bear Valley	2	4	6	8
Santa Clara	0	3	0	3
Alameda	0	3	0	3
Balance of State	-	[0-10]	0	0
Total	48	[96-106]	70	170



Elk: Method of Take

- For SHARE elk hunts
- Authorize shotguns with slugs as a method of take
- Gives SHARE properties flexibility in methods of take



Photo Credit: Josh Schulgen



Tag Issuance, Eligibility

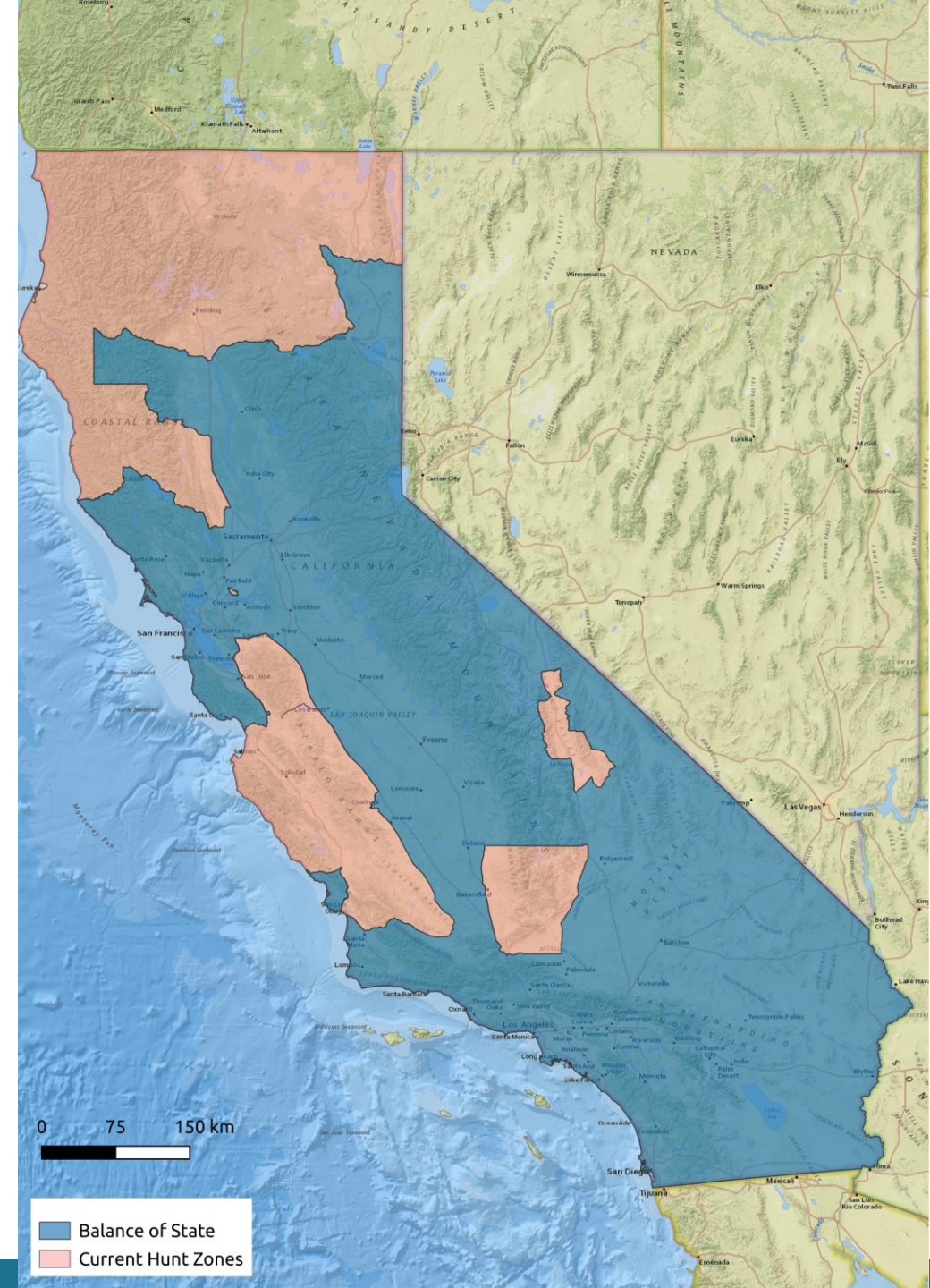
- One elk tag per license year, per hunter across:
 - General drawing
 - Fundraising
 - SHARE
 - Cooperative elk hunts, including conflict zone cooperative elk hunts
- Current exception: PLM
- Remove ambiguity in regulations



CDFW Stock Photo

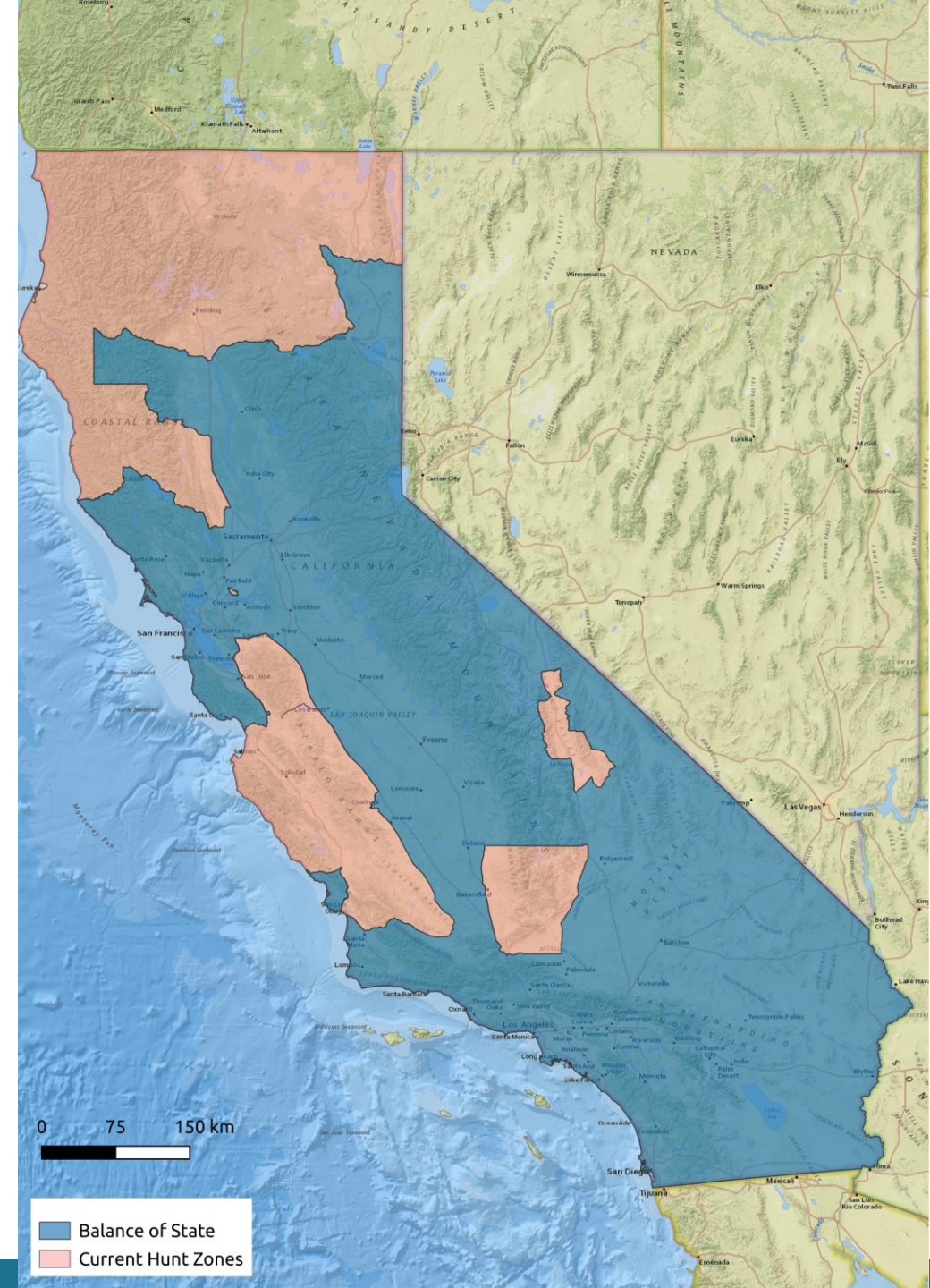
Elk Management Unit: Balance of State

- Proposing a new elk management unit: Balance of State
- Address elk management in California outside of current Elk Management Units
- Enable CDFW to:
 - Increase equitable harvest opportunities across the state where appropriate
 - Create public access to elk on private lands
 - Address conflict scenarios as they arise
 - Manage population challenges such as genetic spillover between sub-species



Elk Management: Balance of State Zone

- SHARE harvest only, no General, Fundraising or Landowner Tags will be issued
 - Conservative tag allotment
 - Tags will only be filled with SHARE contract
- No unit-wide population goals will be created
 - Tag allocation will be consistent with current SHARE hunt tag allocations
 - Herd objectives transcend hunt zone boundaries
- Local population monitoring will be flexible to the local area
- Areas with sustainable populations and public access may be converted to new Elk Hunt Zones if/when appropriate



Questions | Contact

Dr. Mario Klip, Game and Connectivity Programs Manager
Wildlife Branch

BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov



Re: Notification Pursuant to CEQA to Amend Hunting Regulations

From Ron W. Goode [REDACTED]
Date Wed 11/12/2025 06:01 PM
To Vu, Regina [REDACTED]
Cc FGC <FGC@fgc.ca.gov>; Wildlife Tribal Liaison <tribal.liaison@wildlife.ca.gov>; Wildlife Big Game Management <BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov>; Wildlife Waterfowl Mgmt <Waterfowlmgmt@wildlife.ca.gov>

Hi, Chairman Ron Goode, North Fork Mono Tribe, all looks good per your letters.
Two bears ok, with tags. Biggest problem, is do to wildfires, bears are down lower foothills on private lands or along rivers not in hunting zones.

However, I object to using a shotgun on Elk. I know in Minnesota they use shotguns on deer, it literally destroys the hide and batters up/bruises the meat, so why use a shotgun unless it is a shotgun plug. Sport hunting should not just be for the "sport" of it, but to feed and be respectful to the animal. Besides that, more often than not, all a shotgun will do is wound the animal, especially an Elk.
Chairman Goode

From: Vu, Regina [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 7, 2025 3:48 PM
To: Vu, Regina [REDACTED]
Cc: FGC <FGC@fgc.ca.gov>; Wildlife Tribal Liaison <tribal.liaison@wildlife.ca.gov>; Wildlife Big Game Management <BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov>; Wildlife Waterfowl Mgmt <Waterfowlmgmt@wildlife.ca.gov>
Subject: Notification Pursuant to CEQA to Amend Hunting Regulations

Greetings Honorable Tribal Representative,
The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) would like to inform you, as a tribal representative, that the Department is proposing to amend hunting regulations pertinent to desert bighorn sheep, elk, black bear, waterfowl, and potentially pronghorn antelope pending late winter surveys. The proposals are scheduled for notice at the Commission's December 10-11, 2025 meeting. The attached letter contains more information on the proposals and meeting. A copy of this letter is also being mailed to you, at the address you've provided.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you, Regina Vu
Wildlife Regulations Coordinator, Wildlife Branch
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. BOX 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090