

Staff Summary for April 15-16, 2026

13. Elk Hunting (consent)**Today's Item**Information Action

Consider adopting proposed amendments to regulations for elk and taking final action under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

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

Background

At its December 2025 meeting, the Commission authorized publication of a notice of its intent to amend elk hunting regulations to:

- allow use of shotguns (firing slugs) as a method of take for Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) elk hunts;
- clarify that no person may possess more than one general, SHARE, fundraising, or cooperative elk hunting tag in a single hunt year;
- define a new Balance of State Elk Management Zone;
- increase bull tags for the Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit;
- increase SHARE elk tag quotas, including a proposed range of 1 to 10 tags for the balance of state zone; and
- exclude the proposed balance of state zone from cooperative elk hunting areas.

After the December meeting, the Commission published notice of the proposed regulations. At its February 2026 meeting, the Commission received public comments on the proposed regulations. See exhibits 1 and 2 for additional background information and a description of the proposed amendments.

Update

The Department recommends that the Commission adopt an allocation of 10 bull elk tags for the balance of state zone and adopt the other elk hunting regulations as originally proposed for the 2026-2027 season (Exhibit 6).

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

An initial CEQA review of the proposed project was conducted in accordance with CEQA in 2010, and the Commission certified the *Final Environmental Document Regarding Elk Hunting* (State Clearing House (SCH) No. 2009112083) as part of its review and adoption of elk hunting regulations. In 2019, the Commission again amended elk hunting regulations and certified a final supplemental environmental document (SCH No. 2018112037) that assessed an increase in the

Staff Summary for April 15-16, 2026

tag quota range in the Northwestern Elk Hunt Zone, concluding that it would not result in any new significant or substantially more severe environmental effects than previously identified by the Commission in 2010.

Most recently, in 2025, the Commission adjusted the general hunt tag allocations in the Gabilan, Lake Pillsbury, and Tehachapi elk hunt zones; introduced archery-only hunts in the Central Coast, La Panza, and Siskiyou elk hunt zones; adjusted tag quotas for the SHARE program in the Bear Valley Elk Hunt Zone; and allowed harvest under a SHARE tag year-round in the Northwestern Elk Hunt Zone. The amendments were informed by population survey data collected by the Department and aligned with population management goals outlined in the 2010 elk environmental document, as well as environmental, biological, and social factors. In adopting the regulations, the Commission determined that they would not result in any new significant or substantially more severe environmental impacts than previously analyzed in the 2010 and 2019 elk hunting environmental documents.

The 2010 environmental document and 2019 final supplemental environmental document are the basis of the current proposal. The Department drafted an addendum to the 2019 elk supplemental environmental document that Commission staff evaluated and determined to be reflective of the independent judgment of the Commission. Amending the current elk hunting regulations as proposed will not result in any new significant or substantially more severe environmental impacts than those previously analyzed and disclosed in the 2010 and 2019 elk hunting environmental documents; an addendum provides details of the CEQA analysis supporting this conclusion (Exhibit 9).

Significant Public Comments (N/A)

Recommendation

Commission staff: Under a motion to adopt the consent calendar, find that the Commission, having considered the addendum and associated environmental documents, approves the revised project pursuant to CEQA, and adopts the proposed amendments to sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555 and 555.1 related to elk hunting as recommended by the Department.

Department: Adopt an allocation of 10 bull elk tags for the Balance of State Elk Management Zone and adopt the remainder of the regulations as originally proposed in the initial statement of reasons and accompanying proposed regulatory language.

Exhibits

1. [Staff summary for Agenda Item 12, December 2025 Commission meeting \(for background purposes only\).](#)
2. [Staff summary for Agenda Item 23, February 2026 Commission meeting \(for background purposes only\).](#)
3. [Department memo transmitting draft initial statement of reasons, received December 8, 2025](#)
4. [Initial statement of reasons, dated January 8, 2026](#)
5. [Proposed regulatory language](#)
6. [Economic and fiscal impact statement \(STD. 399\)](#)

Staff Summary for April 15-16, 2026

7. [Department memo in lieu of pre-adoption statement of reasons and Department recommended responses to public comments, received March 30, 2026](#)
8. [Department memo transmitting draft *Addendum to the 2019 Supplemental Environmental Document to the 2010 Final Environmental Document Regarding Elk Hunting*, received March 25, 2026](#)
9. [Draft *Addendum to the 2019 Supplemental Environmental Document to the 2010 Final Environmental Document Regarding Elk Hunting*](#)
10. [Department presentation \(*for informational purposes only*\)](#)

Motion

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission adopts the staff recommendations for items 8 through 14 on the consent calendar.

Staff Summary for December 10-11, 2025
For Background Purposes Only

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

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) vetting • WRC discussion and recommendation • Today's notice hearing • Discussion hearing • Adoption hearing | <p>May 15, 2025; WRC</p> <p>September 11, 2025; WRC</p> <p>December 10-11, 2025</p> <p>February 11-12, 2026</p> <p>April 15-16, 2026</p> |
|--|---|

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
For Background Purposes Only

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.

Staff Summary for February 11-12, 2026
For Background Purposes Only

23. Elk Hunting

Today's Item

Information

Action

Discuss proposed amendments to regulations for elk hunting.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

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

Background

At its December 2025 meeting, the Commission authorized publication of a notice of its intent to amend elk hunting regulations to:

- allow use of shotguns firing slugs as a method of take for Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) elk hunts;
- clarify that no person may possess more than one general, SHARE, fundraising, or cooperative elk hunting tag in a single hunt year;
- define a new Balance of State Elk Management Zone;
- increase bull tags for the Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit;
- increase SHARE elk tag quotas; and
- exclude the proposed Balance of State Zone from cooperative elk hunting areas.

See Exhibit 1 for additional background information and a description of the proposed amendments. Further details of the proposed changes are available in the initial statement of reasons (Exhibit 3) and proposed regulatory language (Exhibit 4).

The notice for the proposed amendments authorized in December was published in the California Regulatory Notice Register on January 23, 2026.

Today's meeting is an opportunity for public discussion of the proposed regulations. The Department will provide its final recommendations at the April 2026 adoption hearing.

Significant Public Comments

A commenter objects to current regulations that allow hunting for Roosevelt elk during calving season (in June) and rutting season (August and September). (Exhibit 5)

Staff Summary for February 11-12, 2026
For Background Purposes Only

Recommendation (N/A)

Exhibits

1. [Staff summary for Agenda Item 12, December 2025 Commission meeting \(for background purposes only\).](#)
2. [Department memo, received December 8, 2025](#)
3. [Initial statement of reasons, dated January 8, 2026](#)
4. [Proposed regulatory language](#)
5. [Email from Phoebe Lenhart, dated December 30, 2025](#)

Motion (N/A)

Memorandum

Date: November 25, 2025

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

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director

Received December 8, 2025
Original signed copy on file

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
November 25, 2025
Page 2

Scott Gardner, Chief
Wildlife Branch

Dr. Mario Klip, Environmental Program Manager
Game Conservation and Connectivity Program

Chelle Temple-King, Supervisor
Big Game Unit

Regina Vu, Wildlife Regulations Coordinator
Wildlife Branch

Ona Alminas, Env. Program Manager
Regulations Unit

Mike Randall, Regulatory Analyst
Regulations Unit

David Thesell, Deputy Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

Ari Cornman, Wildlife Advisor
Fish and Game Commission

David Haug, Analyst
Fish and Game Commission

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: January 8, 2026

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 recommendations from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) to amend 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, and 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 State Elk Management Zone: That portion of the state not covered by any area defined in subsections 364(a) through (d)."

 - 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 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 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	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	0	0
(x)(1)(A)	Bishop Muzzleloader Only Period 1	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	0	0
(u)(5)(A)	Bishop Period 3	<u>0</u> <u>2</u>	0	0
(u)(5)(B)	Bishop Period 4	<u>0</u> <u>2</u>	0	0
(u)(6)(A)	Independence Period 2	<u>4</u> <u>2</u>	1	0
(u)(6)(B)	Independence Period 3	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	1	0
(w)(3)(A)	Lone Pine Archery Only Period 1	<u>0</u> <u>2</u>	1	0
(u)(7)(A)	Lone Pine Period 2	<u>4</u> <u>2</u>	0	0
(u)(7)(B)	Lone Pine Period 3	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	0	0
(w)(2)(A)	Owens Valley Multiple Zone Archery Only	<u>3</u> <u>5</u>	0	0
(u)(8)(A)	Tinemaha Period 2	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	0	0
(w)(4)(A)	Tinemaha Archery Only Period 1	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	0	0
(u)(10)(A)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 1	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	0	0
(u)(10)(B)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 2	<u>0</u> <u>1</u>	0	0
(u)(9)(A)	West Tinemaha Period 1	<u>4</u> <u>2</u>	0	0
(u)(9)(B)	West Tinemaha Period 2	<u>0</u> <u>2</u>	0	0
(u)(9)(C)	West Tinemaha Period 3	<u>0</u> <u>2</u>	0	0
(w)(5)(A)	Whitney Archery Only Period 1	<u>0</u> <u>2</u>	0	0
(u)(11)(A)	Whitney Period 2	<u>4</u> <u>2</u>	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 exclude 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

(g) Duplication or Conflict with Federal Regulations

The Commission has searched the Code of Federal Regulations and has determined that the proposed regulations do not unnecessarily duplicate or conflict with federal regulations.

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 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, 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, Department revenue is expected to increase with the proposed increase in available elk tags (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 recommendations from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) to amend 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, and 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 Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (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 changes to elk hunting regulations:

- Amend subsection 353(d) to allow the 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 that no person may possess more than one general, SHARE, fundraising, or cooperative elk hunting tag in a single hunt year.
- 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.
- Amend subsection 364.1(i), (j), and (l), to increase elk SHARE tag quotas.
- Amend Section 555 to exclude 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 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	<u>0</u> 2	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	<u>0</u> 1	0	0	0	Shall open on the second Saturday in September and continue for 16 consecutive days.
(10)(B)	Tinemaha Mountain Period 2	<u>0</u> 1	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	<u>4</u> 2	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	1 <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. Antlerless 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. Antlerless 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 916-201-6201
DESCRIPTIVE TITLE FROM NOTICE REGISTER OR FORM 400 Amend Sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555 and 555.1, Title 14, CCR: Re: Elk Hunting			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:

- a. Impacts business and/or employees
- b. Impacts small businesses
- c. Impacts jobs or occupations
- d. Impacts California competitiveness
- e. Imposes reporting requirements
- f. Imposes prescriptive instead of performance
- g. Impacts individuals
- 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)

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 the number of SHARE tags in the region by 80. 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 anticipated. The proposed increase in elk tags may result in up to \$109,399 in additional tag revenue to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in FY 2026-27. 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

DocuSigned by:
 Dan Reagan

1/14/2026

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

 Melissa A. Miller-Henson Bryan Cash

1/15/2026

01/07/2026

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 of Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Regarding Methods Authorized for Taking Big Game, Elk Hunting, SHARE Elk Hunts, Cooperative Elk Hunts, and Conflict Zone Cooperative Elk Hunting

Background

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) periodically considers recommendations from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) to amend 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, and 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 Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (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 changes to elk hunting regulations:

- Amend subsection 353(d) to allow the 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 state zone from cooperative elk hunting areas.

Table 1 identifies Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit hunt areas with their associated bull elk tag quotas in 2025 (a total of 7), the proposed 2026 quotas for each hunt area (up to 33 total), and the resulting potential net change to the quota (up to 26 additional tags). The Department will recommend final tag quotas to the Commission at the adoption hearing scheduled for the Commission’s April 2026 meeting.

Table 1: Owens Valley Tule Elk Management Unit Bull Elk Tag Quotas in 2025 and Proposed Tag Quotas for 2026

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

Table 2 identifies SHARE elk hunt areas recommended for quota adjustments, their associated elk tag quotas in 2025, the proposed 2026 quotas, and the resulting potential net change (up to between 148 and 158 total additional tags). The Department will recommend a final tag quota for the balance of state zone at the adoption hearing scheduled for April 2026.

Table 2: SHARE Elk Tag Quotas for 2025 and Proposed for 2026

Title 14 Subsection	SHARE Elk Hunt	2025 Bull	2026 Bull	2025 Antler-less	2026 Antler-less	2025 Either-sex	2026 Either-sex	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

Economic Impact Statement

Section A. Estimated Private Sector Cost Impacts

Question 1. Answer: h. None of the above.

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.

This regulation does not affect any local entity or program. However, the increase in SHARE program tags in Monterey County may bring additional revenue to that area from increased spending from hunters. The most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFW) National Survey from 2022 estimates that the average big game hunter spends approximately 12 days spread out over approximately eight hunts. Average annual 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, and \$334 (\$364 in 2025 dollars) for special equipment¹.

Trip-related expenditure items include food, drink, refreshments, lodging, public and private transportation, airfare, charters, guides, 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 eight hunts, or approximately \$68 per hunt.

Special equipment includes boats, campers, trail bikes, 4x4 vehicles, ATVs, 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%. An expected increase of 80 SHARE tags in the Central Coast Tule Elk Hunt Area could increase local tax revenue. Table 3 displays the inflation-adjusted, per-hunter, trip-related expenditures, average tax rate, and expected annual increase of approximately \$500 in tax revenue for Monterey County.

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

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

Section B. Fiscal Effect on State Government

Answer: 4. Other.

The Department Wildlife Branch, Law Enforcement Branch, and License and Revenue Branch work is projected to be unchanged from 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, while Table 2 shows a potential increase of between 148 to 158 SHARE tags.

If 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 as shown in Table 4. The estimate assumes an increase of up to 25 resident tags and 1 nonresident tag sold, and assumes between 147 to 157 SHARE tags are sold to residents and up to 1 SHARE tag is sold to nonresidents (Section 332 of the California Fish and Game Code currently limits nonresident tags issued under Section 364 to 1 each year).

Table 4: Projected Increase in Department Revenue

Tag Type	Proposed 2026-27 Tag Number Increase	2026-27 Tag Fee	Potential Revenue Increase
Resident Elk	25	\$581.50	\$14,537.50
Non-Resident Elk	1	\$1,783.00	\$1,783.00
Resident SHARE Elk	147-157	\$581.50	\$85,480.50 to \$91,295.50
Non-Resident SHARE Elk	1	\$1,783.00	\$1,783.00
Total			\$103,584.00 to \$109,399.00

MEMORANDUM

Received March 30, 2026
Original signed copy on file

Date: March 27, 2026

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

From: Meghan Hertel, Director

Subject: Submission of Memo in Lieu of Pre-Adoption Statement of Reasons for the April 15-16, 2026, Fish and Game Commission Meeting to Amend Section 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, re: Elk Hunting

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has prepared this Memorandum to update the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) as well as summarize and provide responses to public comments received by the Commission on the proposed amendments to sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1 regarding elk hunting. The Department received 10 comments as of February 27, 2026. The Department is not recommending amendments to the regulatory text based on comments received.

The regulatory text accompanying the Initial Statement of Reasons includes a range of tags (0-10) for the Balance of State Zone. The Department recommends an allocation of 10 bull tags to provide a conservative approach to expanding elk hunting while accommodating strong landowner and partner interest in participation. These tags are focused in areas where elk are actively expanding, and limiting harvest to a small number of bull-only tags helps avoid hindering population growth while still providing targeted management and access opportunities.

The Department recommends the Commission adopt the proposed rulemaking for elk hunting to allow the use of shotguns firing non-lead slugs as a method of take for SHARE elk hunts; to limit elk hunt tags to one per hunter across elk hunts in the general draw, SHARE, Cooperative and Conflict Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas; to define a new Balance of State



Zone; to increase bull tag quotas for Owens Valley; and to exclude the Balance of State Zone from Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas.

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 Statewide Elk Coordinator, Brent Wolf, who can be contacted at BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov.

Attachment 1: Summarized Comments and Responses

ec: **Department of Fish and Wildlife**

Chad Dibble, Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division

Scott Gardner, Branch Chief
Wildlife Branch

Mario Klip, Game Conservation and Wildlife Connectivity Programs
Manager
Wildlife Branch

Chelle Temple-King, Big Game Unit Supervisor
Wildlife Branch

Regina Vu, Regulations Specialist
Wildlife Branch

Brent Wolf, Statewide Elk Coordinator
Wildlife Branch

Ona Alminas, Env. Program Manager
Regulations Unit

Daphne Nandino, Regulatory Scientist
Regulations Unit

Fish and Game Commission

David Thesell, Deputy Executive Director

Ari Cornman, Wildlife Advisor

Sherrie Fonbuena, Analyst

Attachment 1 – Summarized Comments and Responses

Proposed Changes to Elk Hunting Regulations for 2026-27 Season

Responses to oral comments received at the December 10, 2025 and February 12, 2026, Fish and Game Commission meetings.

Commenter Name, Affiliation, Comment Format, Date Received	Comment Summary	Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) Recommended Response
<p>1. Jacinthe Messier, Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians, also speaking on behalf of Grindstone Indian Rancheria for Sheila; Dec 10, 2025</p>	<p>The commenter states the proposal does not include the indigenous perspective; they fundamentally disagree with opening private lands for public hunting access; and that key terms such as “viable,” “balance of state,” “subsistence,” and “hunter,” should be clearly defined and notes that these concepts have specific and important meanings within tribal contexts.</p>	<p>In the context of this proposal, “Balance of State” is intended to establish a hunt zone encompassing any land within California that is not part of another elk hunt zone. Other comments within this statement fall outside of the scope of the proposed rulemaking.</p>
<p>2. Bill Gaines, California Houndsmen for Conservation, California Bowmen Hunters and State Archery Association, California Deer Association; Dec 10, 2025</p>	<p>Appreciation for the proposals put forward by the Department.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>

Attachment 1 – Summarized Comments and Responses

Proposed Changes to Elk Hunting Regulations for 2026-27 Season

Commenter Name, Affiliation, Comment Format, Date Received	Comment Summary	Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) Recommended Response
3. Chris Bowles, California Bowmen Hunters and State Archery Association; Dec 10, 2025	Acknowledges the work put into this proposal. Supports the proposal. Raises the issue that there is discontent in the hunting community regarding trespass fees private landowners charge or quote public elk tagholders to access.	Support noted. The Department has received similar feedback regarding trespass fees and understands the concern.
4. J. R. Young; Dec 10, 2025	General support for the proposal. Supports the new method of take and thinks it should be paired with education. Raises a concern regarding the spring hunts, and only one tag per year. Commenter is concerned that a hunter may be drawn in spring, then again in the general draw in June and potentially lose points accumulated.	Support noted. Hunting licenses are issued across a calendar year, from July 1 to June 30 th . Thus, spring elk hunts are pertinent to the previous calendar year's fall tags and June drawing. For example, a person may draw and hunt a spring 2026 elk tag, which falls into the 2025-26 license year, and still apply for the upcoming fall hunts belonging to the 2026-27 license year. However, if a person draws and accepts a 2026-27 elk tag, they are not eligible for a spring 2027 elk tag, as it is still the same license year.

Attachment 1 – Summarized Comments and Responses

Proposed Changes to Elk Hunting Regulations for 2026-27 Season

Commenter Name, Affiliation, Comment Format, Date Received	Comment Summary	Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) Recommended Response
5. Bill Gaines, California Houndsmen for Conservation, California Bowmen Hunters and State Archery Association, California Deer Association; Feb 12, 2026	Commenter appreciates that the Department is working to keep elk hunting affordable in California.	Support noted.
6. Jeremy Cutler; Feb 12, 2026	Commenter reiterates earlier appreciation for Department. Commenter appreciates the opportunity to harvest and share the meat with their community.	Support noted.
7. Amanda Duchardt, California Bowmen Hunters, State Archery Association; Feb 12, 2026	Commenter expresses appreciation for the Department, especially in terms of increased archery tags in recent years.	Support noted.
8. Alex Birkhoffer; Feb 12, 2026	Commenter would like to see more archery opportunities, especially in the Gabilan hunt zone.	Archery tag allocations are outside the scope of the proposed rulemaking.

Attachment 1 – Summarized Comments and Responses

Proposed Changes to Elk Hunting Regulations for 2026-27 Season

Commenter Name, Affiliation, Comment Format, Date Received	Comment Summary	Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) Recommended Response
9. Nick Cutler; Feb 12, 2026	Commenter expresses agreement with Jeremy Cutler and appreciates the opportunity to get to know the local community through hunting.	Support noted.
10. Donald Martin – Hunting Guide; Feb 12, 2026	Commenter appreciates increased SHARE tags and the increased opportunity this brings to working class hunters.	Support noted.

MEMORANDUM

Received March 25, 2026
Original signed copy on file

Date: March 24, 2026

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

From: Meghan Hertel, Director

Subject: Submission of Addendum to CEQA Document for Amendments to Sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1 Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR), RE: Elk Hunting

Please find attached the addendum to the 2019 Supplemental Environmental Document to the 2010 Final Environmental Document pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regarding Elk Hunting. The Department of Fish and Wildlife recommends adoption of the proposed regulations, slated for adoption at the Commission's April 15-16, 2026 meeting.

If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact Scott Gardner, Wildlife Branch Chief, at (916) 801-6257.

Attachment

cc: Department of Fish and Wildlife

Chad Dibble, Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division

Scott Gardner, Branch Chief
Wildlife Branch

Dr. Mario Klip, Environmental Program Manager
Game Conservation and Wildlife Connectivity Programs Manager

Chelle Temple-King, Big Game Unit Supervisor
Wildlife Branch

Brent Wolf, Statewide Elk Coordinator
Wildlife Branch



Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission
March 24, 2026
Page 2

Regina Vu, Regulations Coordinator
Wildlife Branch

Ona Alminas, Env. Program Manager
Regulations Unit

Mike Randall, Regulatory Analyst
Regulations Unit

Fish and Game Commission

David Thesell
Deputy Executive Director

Ari Cornman
Wildlife Advisor

Sherrie Fonbuena
Analyst

State of California
Natural Resources Agency

Addendum to the
2019 Supplemental Environmental Document
to the
2010 Final Environmental Document
Regarding Elk Hunting

Title 14, California Code of Regulations
Sections 353, 364 Elk, 364.1 SHARE Elk, 555 Cooperative Elk
Hunt Zones, and 555.1 Conflict Zone Cooperative Elk Hunt Zones
2026 Hunting Season

Prepared by:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
on behalf of

California Fish and Game Commission
as
Lead Agency under the
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

December 2025

(OAL Notice No. **Z2026-0113-10**)

Introduction

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has prepared this addendum pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., to inform consideration by the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) of proposed amendments to existing regulations governing elk hunting in California (California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, 555.1). California Fish and Game Code (FGC) Section 3950 designates elk as a game mammal in California. FGC sections 203 and 332 authorize the Commission to determine the area or areas, seasons and hours, bag and possession limit, sex, and total number of elk that may be taken pursuant to its regulations. FGC Section 203.1 requires the Commission to consider populations, habitat, food supplies, the welfare of individual animals, and other pertinent facts when establishing hunting regulations for elk. The Commission establishes elk hunting tag quotas through regulations amended annually, or as needed, based on current population estimates derived from population surveys by the Department.

The Commission serves as the CEQA lead agency when it promulgates new or amends the elk hunting regulations (Public Resources Code, Section 21067; CEQA Guidelines Section 15367, Title 14, CCR). The Commission established maximum tag quotas for all elk hunting zones (EHZs) in California in 2010 with, among other things, the certification of a Final Environmental Document under CEQA (2010 Elk ED) (SCH No. 200912083). The Commission amended the existing regulations in 2019 by, among other things, certifying a Final Supplemental Environmental Document under CEQA (2019 Elk SED) (SCH No. 2018112037). The 2010 Elk ED and the 2019 Elk SED provide relevant and important informational value as the Commission, as CEQA lead agency, considers proposed amendments to the existing regulations for the 2026 elk hunting season in California. This addendum documents the Commission's consideration of related environmental effects.

Earlier Project Approval

CEQA review of the proposed project was conducted in accordance with the Commission's certified regulatory program approved by the Secretary for the California Natural Resources Agency pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.5 (See generally California Code of Regulations, Title 14, sections 781.5 and 15251(b)). CEQA requires all public agencies in the State to evaluate the environmental impacts of discretionary projects they propose to carry out or approve, including promulgating regulations, which may have a potential to significantly affect the environment.

In 2010, the Commission certified a Final Environmental Document Regarding Elk Hunting (2010 Elk ED) (SCH No. 200912083) as the lead agency under CEQA as part of the Commission's review and adoption of the elk hunting regulations.

In 2019, the Commission amended the elk hunting regulations and certified a Final Supplemental Environmental Document Regarding Elk Hunting (2019 Elk SED) (SCH No. 2018112037) which focused on the potential for any new significant or substantially more

severe environmental impacts from an increase in the tag quota range in the Northwestern, Northeastern, and Marble Mountains EHZs. The Commission considered the proposed project increase of 20 tags and three alternatives. The Commission as lead agency certified the SED and determined adoption of the amended regulations as proposed would not result in any new significant or substantially more severe environmental effects than previously identified by the Commission in 2010. The Commission approved the increase of 31 tags for the 2019-20 elk hunting regulations.

In 2020, the Commission amended the elk hunting regulations and adopted hunt-specific tag quota adjustments across multiple Elk Hunt Zones (EHZs) for the 2020–21 season. For general draw hunts, tag adjustments across the Northwestern, Marble Mountains, Independence, Lone Pine, West Tinemaha, Goodale, Whitney, Grizzly Island, and Fort Hunter Liggett EHZs resulted in a net decrease of 8 bull tags, a net decrease of 26 antlerless tags, and a net decrease of 4 spike tags. For SHARE hunts, changes in the Northwestern, Marble Mountains, and Bear Valley EHZs resulted in a net increase of 23 bull tags and a net increase of 2 antlerless tags. Apprentice hunt adjustments in the Grizzly Island and Fort Hunter Liggett EHZs resulted in a net increase of 1 bull tag, a net decrease of 3 antlerless tags, and a net decrease of 2 spike tags. Military hunt adjustments in the Fort Hunter Liggett EHZ resulted in a net decrease of 4 bull tags, a net decrease of 4 antlerless tags, and a net 0 change of either-sex tags. Collectively, these changes reflect a redistribution of hunting opportunity across hunt types and regions, including a shift toward increased bull hunting opportunity through SHARE hunts in northwestern California and reductions in antlerless and spike tag availability in several EHZs.

In 2023, the Commission amended the elk hunting tag quotas in the Siskiyou and Northwestern EHZs, adding 10 and 22 tags, respectively; modified the boundaries of the Bear Valley, Cache Creek, and La Panza EHZs; and created the Gabilan, Central Coast, and Tehachapi EHZs, adding 80 elk tags across these new zones. The Commission approved the tag allocations, boundary modifications, and new hunt zones for the 2023-24 elk hunting regulations.

In 2024, the Commission amended elk hunting tag quotas for Grizzly Island EHZ in periods 10, 12, 13 by a total of 5 bull general tags, and hunt tag quotas for Siskiyou, Northwestern, Tehachapi, and Mendocino Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) elk hunts, increased tag quotas of 36, 32, 65, and 44, respectively. Tehachapi and Northwestern EHZs were designated as conflict zones, which allowed for increased cooperative hunt area tags to be available in those zones.

The adopted 2025 regulations adjusted the general hunt tag allocations in the Gabilan, Lake Pillsbury, and Tehachapi EHZs, introduced archery-only hunts in the Central Coast, La Panza, and Siskiyou EHZs, and adjusted tag quotas for the SHARE program in the Bear Valley EHZ. These changes were informed by population survey data collected by the Department and aligned with population management goals outlined in the 2010 Elk ED, as well as environmental, biological, and social factors. Six additional bull tags were added in the

Gabilan EHZ and five additional bull tags were added in the Tehachapi EHZ for general hunts. In the Lake Pillsbury EHZ, two additional bull tags and four antlerless tags were added. Three EHZs were allotted additional tags for archery-only seasons: in the both the Central Coast and La Panza EHZs, five bull and five antlerless tags were added; in the Siskiyou EHZ, ten bull tags were added. Tags were also increased in the SHARE program. The Bear Valley EHZ added five antlerless tags. In the Northwestern EHZ, harvest under a SHARE tag was allowed year-round.

Proposed Amendments to Elk Hunting Regulations

The proposed regulatory action would amend sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1 of Title 14, CCR, governing elk hunting seasons, tag quotas, hunt area definitions, methods of take, and tag eligibility. The proposed amendments are intended to maintain sustainable harvest, improve management flexibility, address localized elk conflicts, and expand equitable public hunting opportunity, while remaining consistent with statewide elk population objectives.

The proposed amendments include the following components:

1. Modifications to Authorized Methods of Take for SHARE Elk Hunts

The proposed regulation change in Section 353 would authorize the use of shotguns firing slugs (non-lead, pursuant to Section 250.1, Title 14, CCR) as a method of take for elk during certain SHARE hunts.

This modification is intended to improve hunter safety and management flexibility in areas where centerfire rifle use may be constrained by proximity to residences, agricultural operations, or roadways. The proposed change applies only to specified SHARE hunts and does not alter methods of take for general elk hunts.

This amendment does not increase harvest levels and does not result in new environmental impacts.

2. Establishment of a Balance of State Elk Management Zone

The proposed regulations would establish a new Balance of State Elk Management Zone (EMZ), defined as all areas of California not currently included within existing EHZs described in Section 364.

The purpose of this zone is to provide a regulatory framework for managing elk populations that occur outside traditionally defined hunt areas, particularly in regions where elk are expanding their geographic distribution. Establishment of this zone does not authorize additional hunting tags or seasons, and allows for future implementation of managed hunting opportunities through the SHARE program where biologically appropriate.

This amendment does not expand the statewide maximum harvest capacity analyzed in prior CEQA documents.

3. Adjustments to Elk Tag Quotas in Existing Hunt Areas

The proposed regulations 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 EHZs.

These quota adjustments are intended to better align harvest levels with current population conditions, including elevated bull-to-cow ratios and increasing minimum population counts that are nearing the maximum population level for Owens Valley set in FGC Section 3951. The proposed changes do not introduce hunting into new areas and do not exceed the range of harvest levels analyzed in the 2010 Environmental Document or the 2019 Supplemental Environmental Document. Tag quotas may be modified in future years based on updated population survey and harvest data.

4. Expansion and Adjustment of SHARE Elk Hunting Opportunities

The proposed regulations would increase the number of Department-administered SHARE elk tags statewide and expand SHARE eligibility to the Central Coast EHZ and the Balance of State EMZ.

These amendments are intended to:

- Increase public access to elk hunting opportunities
- Encourage private landowner participation in elk habitat stewardship
- Provide tools to address localized elk conflict on private lands

SHARE elk hunts would remain subject to established tag quotas, hunt-specific seasons, and method-of-take restrictions. The proposed changes do not introduce new environmental effects beyond those previously analyzed for regulated elk hunting programs.

5. Modifications to Cooperative Elk Hunting Area Provisions

The proposed regulations would amend provisions governing Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas (CEHAs) and Conflict Zone Cooperative Elk Hunting Areas to clarify tag eligibility and explicitly exclude the Balance of State EMZ from CEHA eligibility.

These amendments are intended to ensure that management within the Balance of State EMZ prioritizes public hunting access and consistency with statewide elk management objectives. No new hunting opportunities are created by this amendment, and no environmental impacts result.

6. Clarification of Elk Tag Eligibility Across Issuance Types

The proposed regulations would clarify that an individual may receive only one elk tag per license year across all elk hunting issuance types, including general draw hunts, SHARE hunts, CEHAs, and fundraising tag hunts.

This amendment is intended to improve regulatory clarity and ensure equitable distribution of limited elk hunting opportunities. The clarification does not change the number of tags issued and does not affect harvest levels.

No Subsequent Environmental Document is Required

In general, CEQA applies whenever a public agency proposes to carry out or approve a discretionary project. (Public Resources Code, subdivision 21080(a)). CEQA provides that, where a public agency proposes to modify a previously approved project for which a final environmental document was prepared and certified:

“The lead agency or a responsible agency shall prepare an **addendum** to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.” (Title 14, CCR Section 15164)

- A subsequent environment document (Title 14, CCR Section 15162) is required when there is substantial evidence that:
 - Substantial changes are proposed in the project, which will require major revisions to the previous environmental impact report (EIR) or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.
 - Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken, which will require major revisions to the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.
 - New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or negative declaration was adopted, becomes available.
- A supplement to an EIR (Title 14, CCR Section 15163) may be prepared rather than a subsequent EIR when:
 - Any of the conditions described in Section 15162 would require the preparation of a subsequent EIR, and.
 - Only minor additions or changes would be necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation.
 - The supplement to the EIR need contain only the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project as revised.

- An addendum to a previously certified EIR (Title 14, CCR Section 15164) is proper when:
 - Some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.
 - The decision-making body shall consider the addendum with the final EIR prior to making a decision on the project.

No Additional Impacts Under CEQA

The Commission has determined that amending the current elk hunting regulations based on annual survey results will not result in any new or significant or substantially more severe environmental impacts than previously analyzed and disclosed in the 2010 Elk ED and 2019 Elk SED for this project.

This project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. There are no impacts to the habitat of fish and wildlife species.

This approval action adjusts the previous year's general and SHARE tag quotas based on more current population information, creates the new Balance of State Elk Management Zone, adds a legal method of take to SHARE hunts, and clarifies elk tag eligibility. No other aspect of the project is changed. No new significant or substantially more severe impacts under CEQA will occur due to this change.

Amendment of the Elk Hunt Regulations

The Commission subjected the draft to its own review and analysis. Based on that review and analysis, the draft reflects the independent judgment of the Commission and fulfills the Commission's responsibilities.

In conclusion, the Commission finds that amending the elk hunt regulations in Title 14, CCR sections 353, 364, 364.1, 555, and 555.1, will not result in any new significant or substantially more severe environmental effects than previously analyzed and disclosed in the 2010 Elk ED and the 2019 Elk SED. The Commission also finds that subsequent or supplemental review beyond this Addendum is not warranted pursuant to Title 14, CCR, Section 15164, in connection with this proposed action.

Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission

Date

Photo Credit: CDFW



ELK HUNTING: FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Supplemental document prepared for the Fish and Game Commission
for the April 16, 2026 meeting

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	Recommended 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:
 - + 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	Recommended Bull Tags	Current Antlerless Tags	Recommended 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) 10	0	0
Total	48	106	70	170

Highlighted text denotes the range presented at the notice hearing, and the recommendation in bold.



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

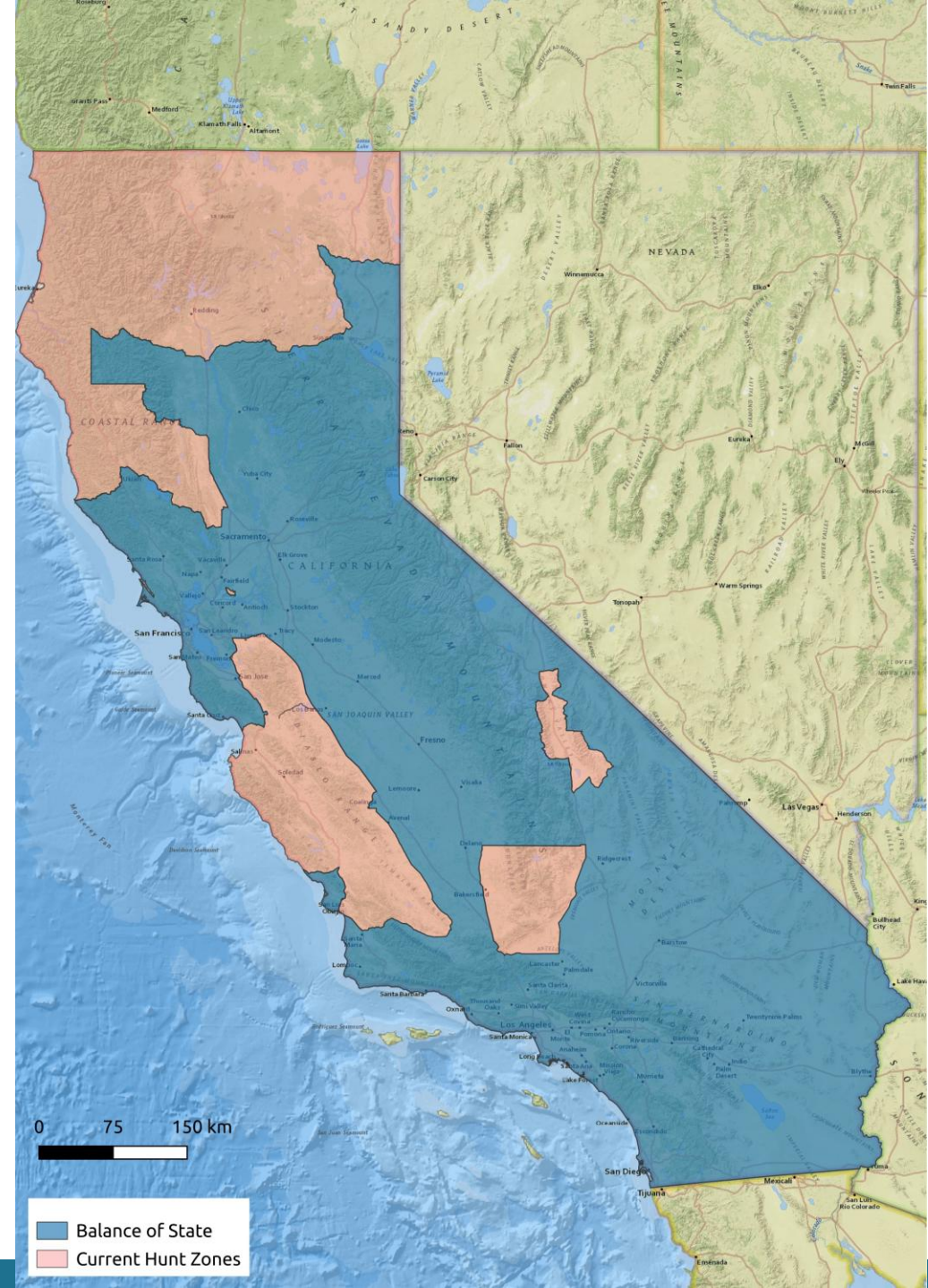
- Recommend one elk tag per license year, per hunter across:
 - General drawing
 - Fundraising
 - SHARE
 - Cooperative elk hunts, including conflict zone cooperative elk hunts
- Current exception: PLM
- Remove ambiguity in regulations



CDFW Stock Photo

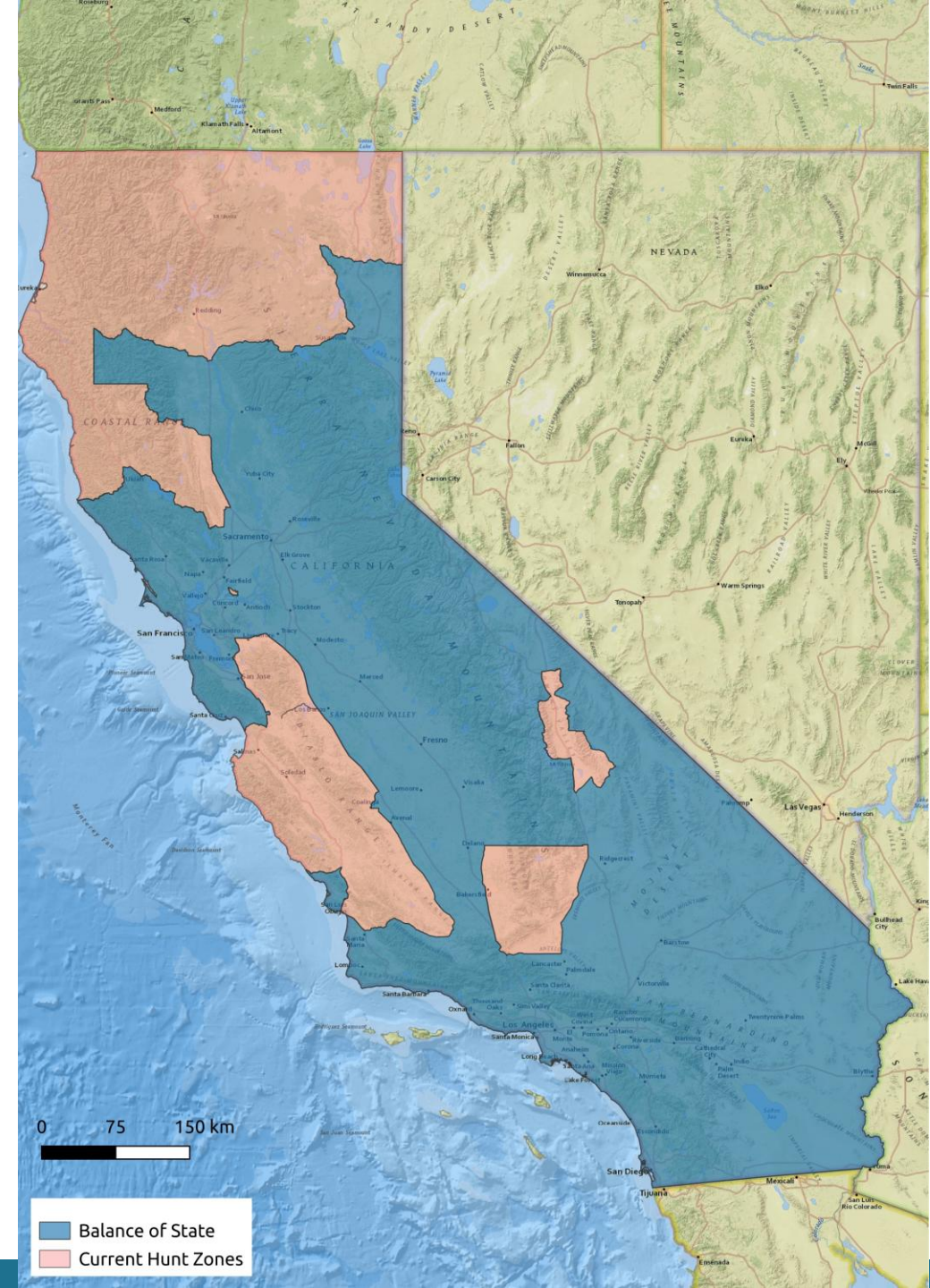
Elk Management Unit: Balance of State

- Recommend 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

Brent Wolf, Statewide Elk and Pronghorn Coordinator
Big Game Unit, Wildlife Branch
BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov

