

## Committee Staff Summary for September 10, 2026 WRC

**4. Periodic Regulation Changes****Today's Item****Information** ☐**Action** ☒

Receive and discuss Department recommended regulatory amendments, and develop potential recommendations, for 2027-28 seasons related to:

(A) Upland (resident) game bird hunting

(B) Big game hunting

I. Deer

II. Elk

III. Bighorn sheep

IV. Pronghorn antelope

V. Black bear

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

- |                                                          |                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Initial vetting                                        | May 14, 2026; WRC              |
| • <b>Today's discussion and potential recommendation</b> | <b>September 10, 2026; WRC</b> |
| • Present any recommendations to the Commission          | October 13-16, 2026            |

**Background**

When amendments to regulations are regularly sought for a particular subject (e.g., deer hunting), but are not required every year, they are referred to as “periodic” rulemakings. This item is an opportunity to engage in initial discussions with the Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC), staff, and Department staff about recommended regulation changes for periodic rulemakings.

**(A) Upland (Resident) Game Bird Hunting (2027-28)**

Resident upland game bird species include, among others, California quail, pheasant, wild turkey, chukar, and Eurasian collared-dove. Greater sage-grouse is also a resident game bird, though hunting has been disallowed since June of 2023 when it was declared a candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act.

Section 300 provides definitions, hunting zone descriptions, season opening and closing dates, and daily bag and possession limits for resident and migratory upland game birds; the Commission periodically considers recommendations for amendments to these regulations.

**(B) Big Game Hunting (2027-28)**

The Commission periodically adjusts various regulations related to hunting big game mammals, defined in Section 350 as deer (genus *Odocoileus*), elk (genus *Cervus*), pronghorn antelope (genus *Antilocarpa*), black bear (genus *Ursus*), and Nelson bighorn sheep (subspecies *Ovis canadensis nelsoni* in certain defined areas of the state).

## Committee Staff Summary for September 10, 2026 WRC

Seasons, quotas, bag and possession limits, hunt zones, Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Program tags, the tag drawing system, disease management, etc. are defined for each species in sections 351 through 367.5, sections 554 through 555.1, and sections 708.1 through 708.19.

This meeting is an opportunity for interested parties to make suggestions to WRC and the Department regarding potential regulation changes for each of the six subjects identified under this agenda topic.

### ***Today's Meeting***

Today, the Department will present recommendations for rulemakings, including new recommendations for deer hunting (Exhibit 1) and updated concepts for elk hunting (Exhibit 2). Discussion will continue on the other subjects, including previous recommendations for bighorn sheep (Exhibit 3) and black bear (Exhibit 4). WRC potentially will develop recommendations for the Commission to consider in the context of potential rulemakings.

### **Significant Public Comments (N/A)**

### **Recommendation**

**Commission staff:** Recommend the Commission support future rulemakings related to deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and black bear hunting, based on today's discussion.

**Department:** Support future rulemakings regarding deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and black bear hunting, as recommended.

### **Exhibits**

1. [Department presentation for deer](#)
2. [Department presentation for elk](#)
3. [Department presentation for bighorn sheep](#)
4. [Department presentation for black bear](#)

### **Committee Direction/Recommendation**

The Wildlife Resources Committee recommends that the Commission support future rulemaking related to deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and black bear hunting, based on the Department's recommendation and today's discussion.

# DEER HUNTING RECOMMENDATION



*Presented to the  
Wildlife Resources Committee of the  
California Fish and Game Commission  
September 10, 2026*

**PRESENTED BY:**

Brian Leo, Statewide Deer Coordinator  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife



# Agenda

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## Program notes:

- Deer Conservation and Management Plan for California progressing
- Completion of Northeast California/Northeast Sierra population assessment

## Recommendation:

- Adjust X5a and X5b buck tag quotas based on new abundance and post-season composition information.

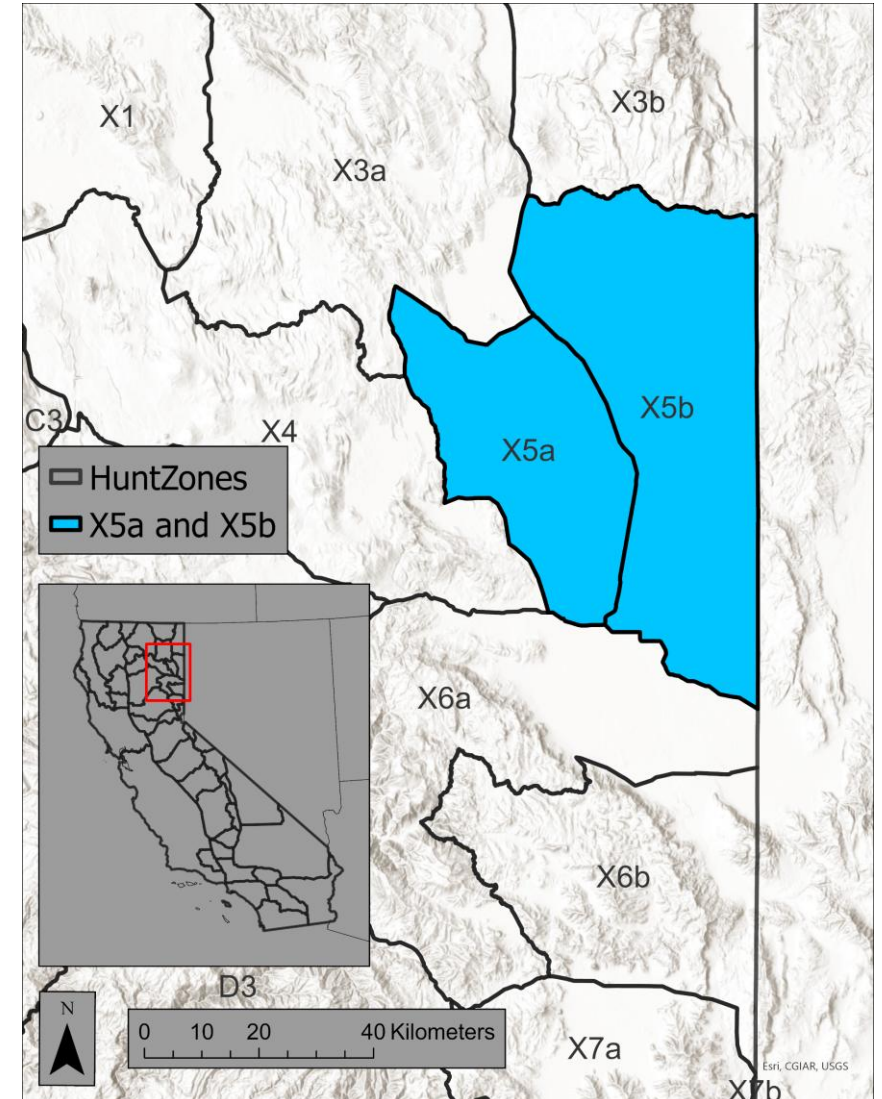


Mule deer buck in X6a; photo credit J. Schulgen

# Recommendation: Reduce X5 Buck Tag Quotas

## Why X5 Was Surveyed

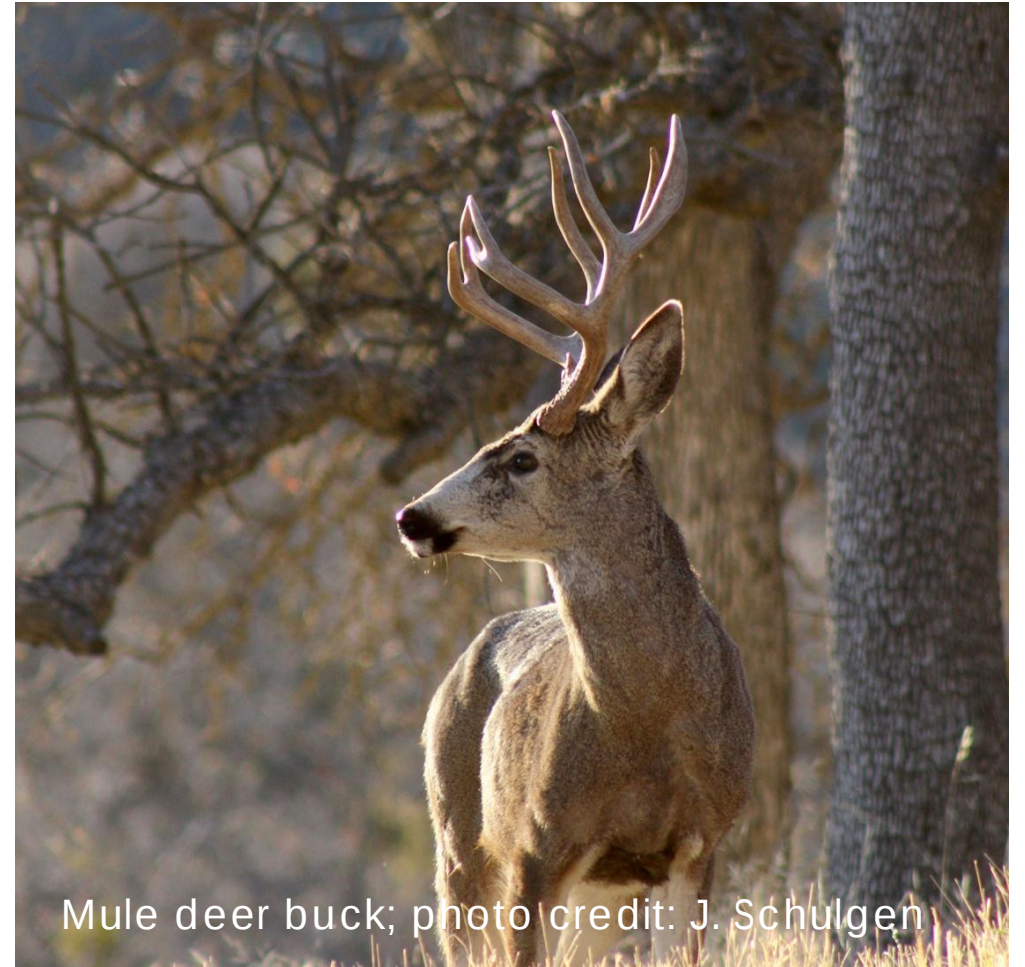
- Existing concern about the status and composition of the X5 deer population
- Opening day postcard surveys show low buck encounter rates and poor hunter sentiment
  - 155 surveys sent, 43 respondents, 34 of which hunted opening day
  - Reported seeing an average of 3 bucks on opening day
- Purpose-built winter helicopter survey covering X5a and X5b
- Designed to estimate abundance, density, and post-season composition



# Recommendation: Reduce X5 Buck Tag Quotas

## X5 Survey Results

- X5 abundance estimate: **3,161 deer**  
95% CI: **1,795–5,564**
- X5a: **7.6 bucks per 100 does**
- X5b: **6.7 bucks per 100 does**
- Combined: **7.1 bucks per 100 does**
- Low ratios were observed in both zones

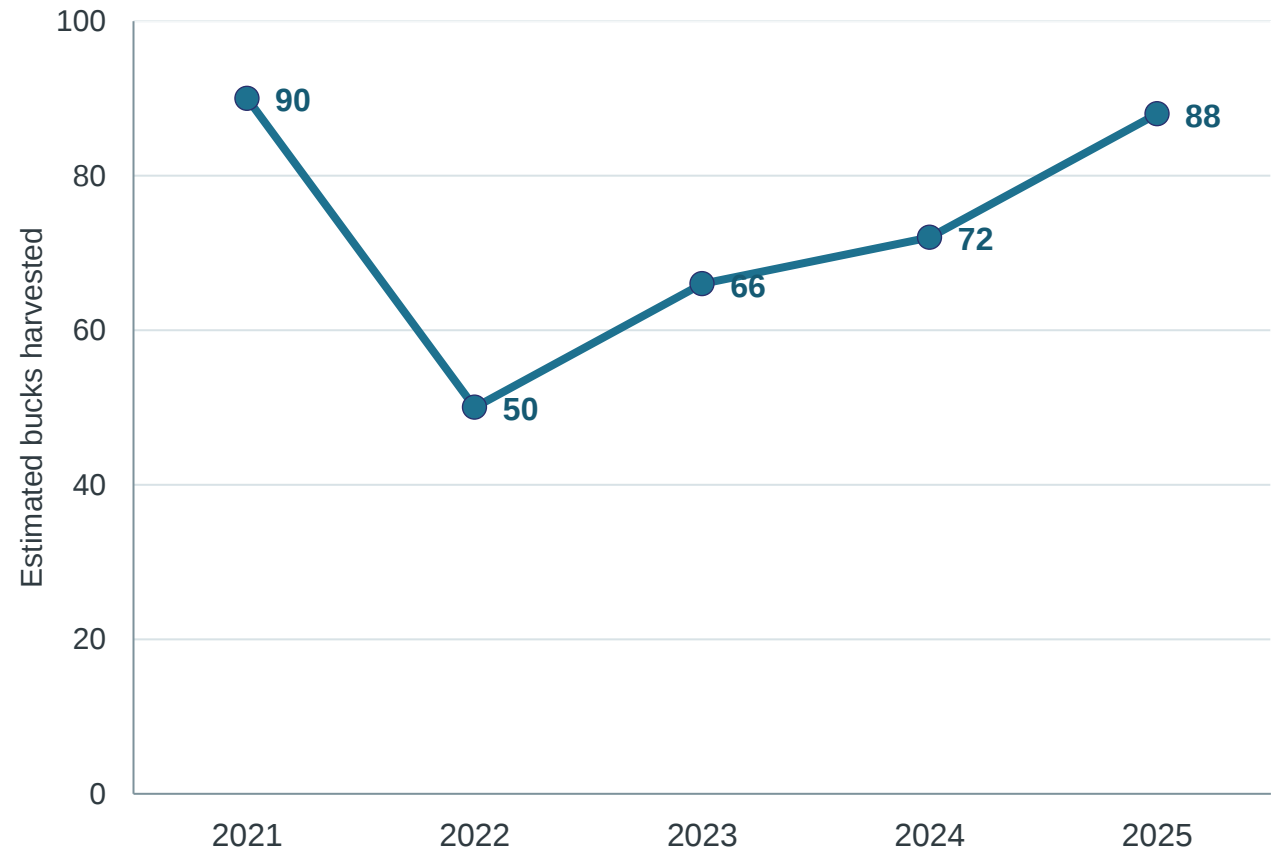


Mule deer buck; photo credit: J. Schulgen

# Recommendation: Reduce X5 Buck Tag Quotas

## Recent Public-Harvest Context

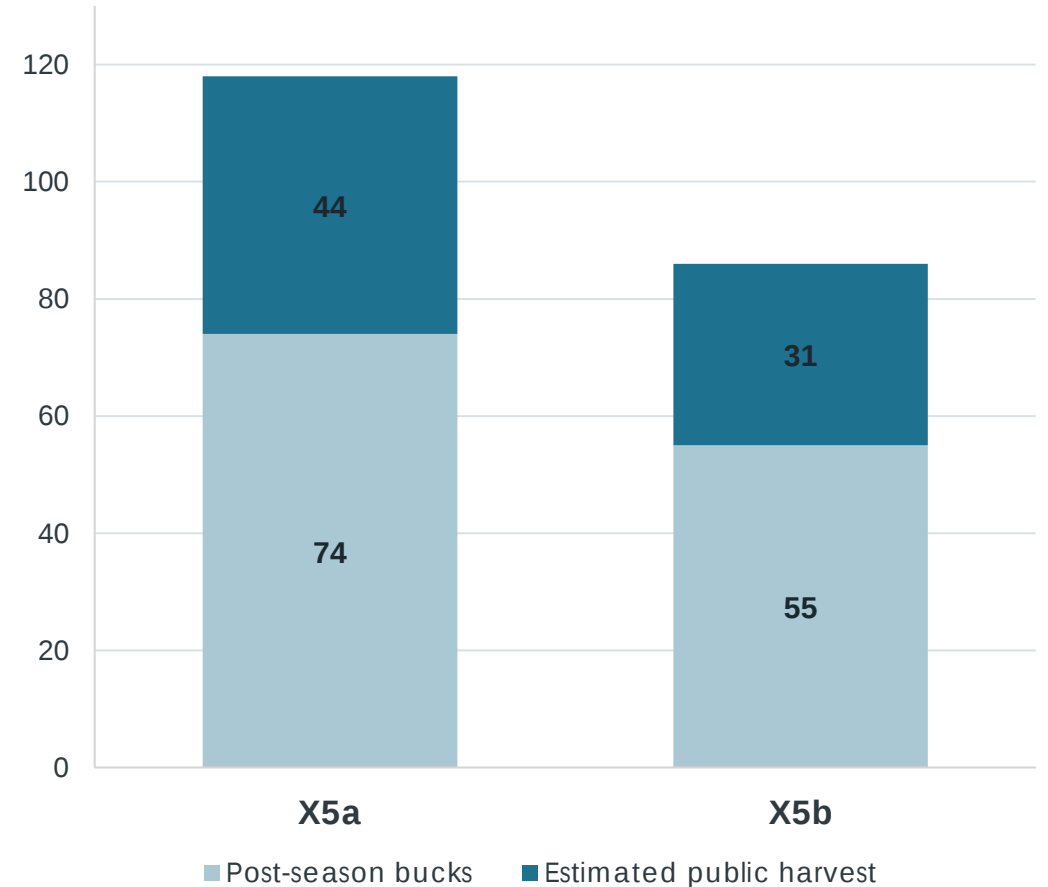
- Buck-tag quotas were unchanged from 2021–2025.
- Estimated public buck harvest fell to **50** in 2022, then increased to **88** in 2025.
- The 2025 estimate was nearly equal to the five-year high of **90** in 2021.



# Recommendation: Reduce X5 Buck Tag Quotas

## 2024 Harvest Rate

- **≈37%** of the reconstructed pre-season buck population was represented by estimated public harvest.
- **X5a:**  $44 \div (74 + 44) = 37.3\%$
- **X5b:**  $31 \div (55 + 31) = 36.0\%$
- **Combined:**  $75 \div 204 = 36.8\%$



# Recommendation: Reduce X5 Buck Tag Quotas

- **Propose a combined 25–50% reduction** across X5a general, X5b general, A-8, and M-4.
- Proposed quota reduction from 145 to **70–110 tags**.
- A-9 and M-5 remain at **5 tags each**.
- Use **adaptive management** to monitor abundance, post-season buck:doe ratios, and harvest, and adjust future quotas as new information becomes available.

| Proposed 2027 X5 Buck-Tag Quota Range |               |                  |                   |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Hunt                                  | Current quota | Proposed Quota   | Percent reduction |
| X5a general                           | 75            | 35–55            | 26.7–53.3%        |
| X5b general                           | 50            | 25–40            | 20.0–50.0%        |
| A-8 X5a archery                       | 10            | 5–10             | 0–50.0%           |
| M-4 Horse Lake muzzleloader           | 10            | 5                | 50.0%             |
| <b>Affected-hunt total</b>            | <b>145</b>    | <b>70–110</b>    | <b>24.1–51.7%</b> |
| <b>A-9</b>                            | <b>5</b>      | <b>No change</b> | <b>-</b>          |
| <b>M-5</b>                            | <b>5</b>      | <b>No change</b> | <b>-</b>          |



# ELK HUNTING RECOMMENDATIONS

*Presented to the  
Wildlife Resources Committee of the  
California Fish and Game Commission  
September 10, 2026*

**PRESENTED BY:**

Brent Wolf, Statewide Elk and Pronghorn Coordinator  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

# Agenda

## **Recommendation:**

- Review season dates and tag allocations.
- Provide additional hunter opportunity where warranted, with focus on conflict areas.
- ★ Add shotguns to legal method of take statewide.
- Streamline regulations to increase clarity and consistency.
- ★ Introduce regional grouping of Elk Management Zones.



Photo Credit: J. Schulgen

# Recommendation: Season Dates and Tag Allocations Overview

| Region                                                          | Zone               | Current Allocation          | Proposed Change                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| R1 · Northern                                                   | Mendocino          | 2 bull                      | +0–10 bull and +0-15 antlerless (2-12 bull, 0-15 antlerless)        |
| Increasing population in a conflict area.                       |                    |                             |                                                                     |
| R2 · N. Central                                                 | Bear Valley        | 2 bull · 1 cow              | +1 apprentice bull tag (3 bull, 1 antlerless)                       |
| Greater opportunity for apprentice hunters.                     |                    |                             |                                                                     |
| R2 · N. Central                                                 | Cache Creek        | 3 bull (1 appr.) · 2 cow    | -1 antlerless and -1apprentice tag (2 bull, 1 antlerless)           |
| Declining population.                                           |                    |                             |                                                                     |
| R3 · Bay Delta                                                  | Grizzly Island     | 12 bull · 16 cow · 10 spike | +8 antlerless tags (24 antlerless)                                  |
| Population is rapidly increasing beyond management capacity.    |                    |                             |                                                                     |
| R4 · Central                                                    | Central Coast      | 15 bull · 15 cow            | +0-15 bull and +0-15 antlerless tags (15-30 bull, 15-30 antlerless) |
| Rapidly increasing population.                                  |                    |                             |                                                                     |
| R4 · Central                                                    | Gabilan            | 10 bull · 6 cow             | +0-10 bull and +0-14 antlerless tags (10-20 bull, 6-20 antlerless)  |
| Rapidly increasing population.                                  |                    |                             |                                                                     |
| R4 · Central                                                    | San Luis Reservoir | 5 either-sex                | Remove either-sex; +7 antlerless +5 bull, across 6 periods          |
| Current harvest regime is not accomplishing management goals.   |                    |                             |                                                                     |
| R4 · Central                                                    | Tehachapi          | 10 bull · 10 cow            | Remove 0-10 antlerless tags (10 bull, 0-10 cow)                     |
| Ensure only equitable hunts are provided to the general public. |                    |                             |                                                                     |

# Tag Allocations: Mendocino

- **Conflict Zone with an Increasing Population**
  - Increase general tags to help slow population growth and address conflict
  - Provide additional opportunity in an area that can sustain increased harvest
  - Review land access with opportunity

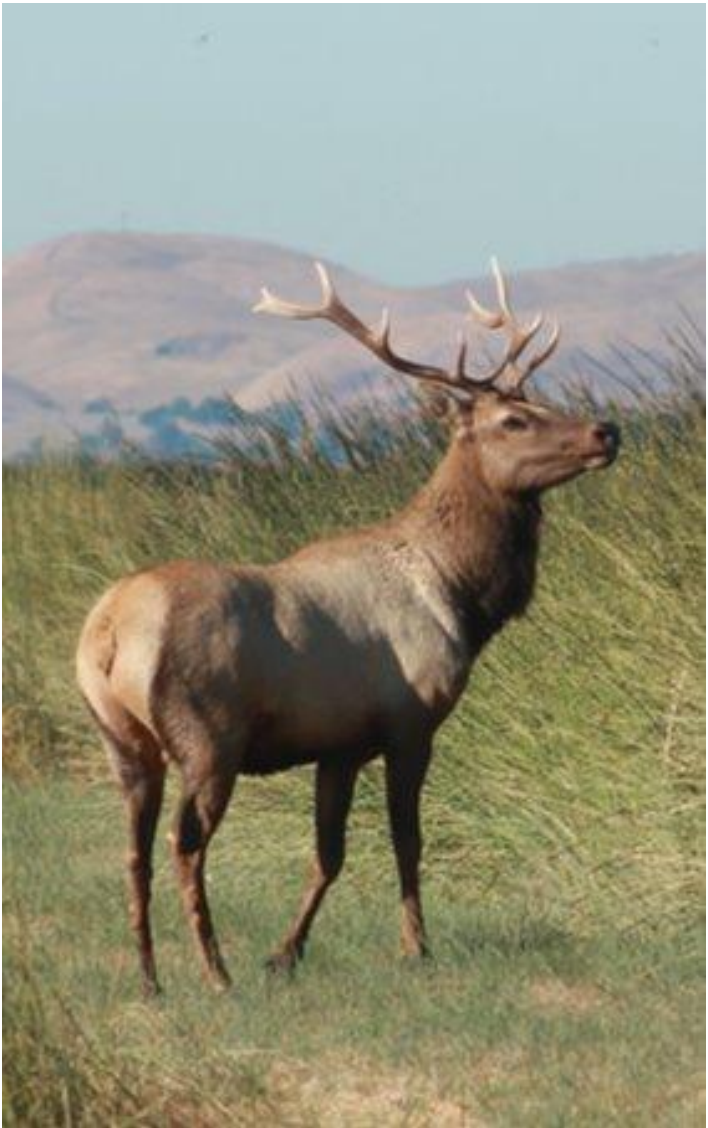


| Management Zone | Population Obj. | Minimum Count | Current Tags | Rec. Tags                  |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Mendocino       | 200 – 1,000     | >2,000        | 2 Bull       | 2-12 Bull, 0-15 Antlerless |

# Tag Allocations: Bear Valley and Cache Creek

- **Bear Valley and Cache Creek combined management goal**
  - Population Objective of 150-450
  - Separate herds
  - Slightly declining population in Cache Creek
  - Greater opportunity for apprentice hunters in Bear Valley
  - Cache Creek has a low population and low cow to calf ratio (5:100) over the past two surveys (2019 and 2025)

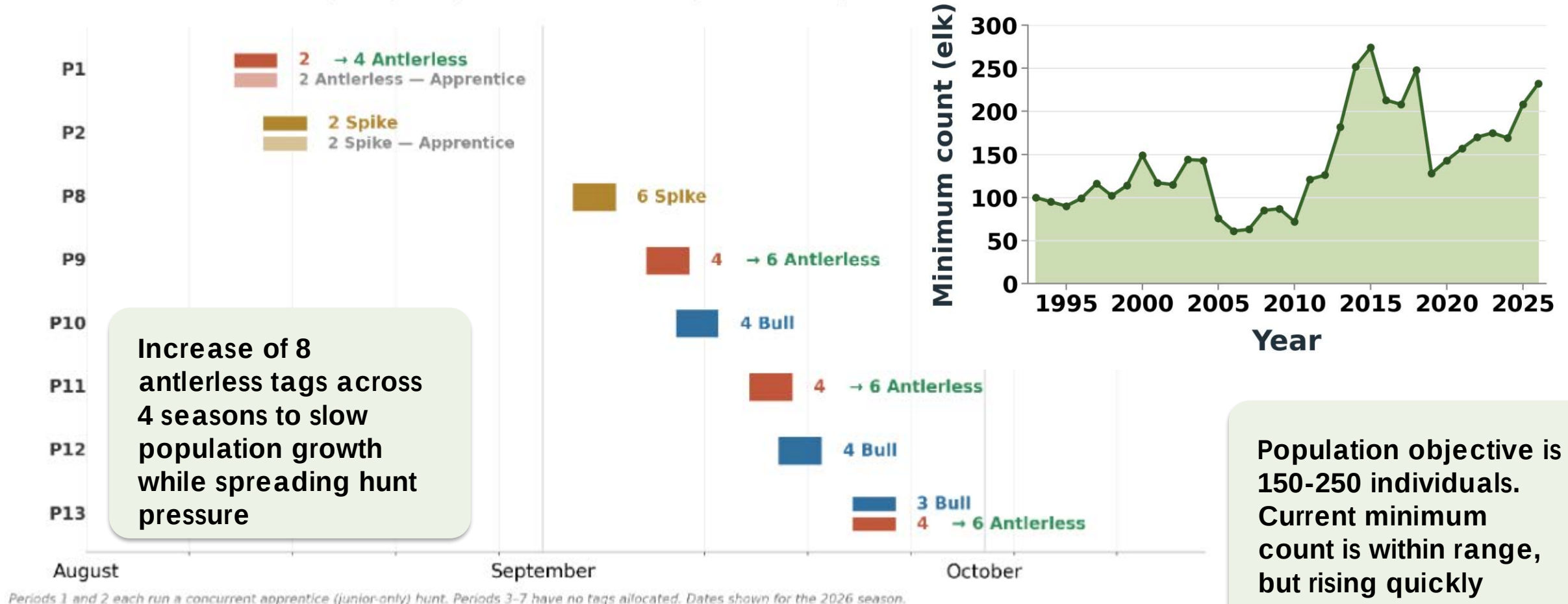
| Management Zone | Minimum Count | Current Tags   | Rec. Tags      |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Bear Valley     | 290           | 2 Bull, 1 Ant. | 3 Bull, 1 Ant. |
| Cache Creek     | 40            | 3 Bull, 2 Ant. | 2 Bull, 1 Ant. |



# Tag Allocations: Grizzly Island

## Grizzly Island Elk Hunt: Current Season Structure

Current: 12 bull, 16 antlerless, and 10 spike tags. Proposed: +2 antlerless in each general antlerless period (+8; 16 → 24).



# Tag Allocations: Central Coast and Gabilan

- **Increasing Populations**
  - Central Coast and Gabilan populations have dramatically increased in recent years more opportunity available
- **More Information Needed**
  - Access for hunting is challenging
  - Inventory of accessible public land with opportunity

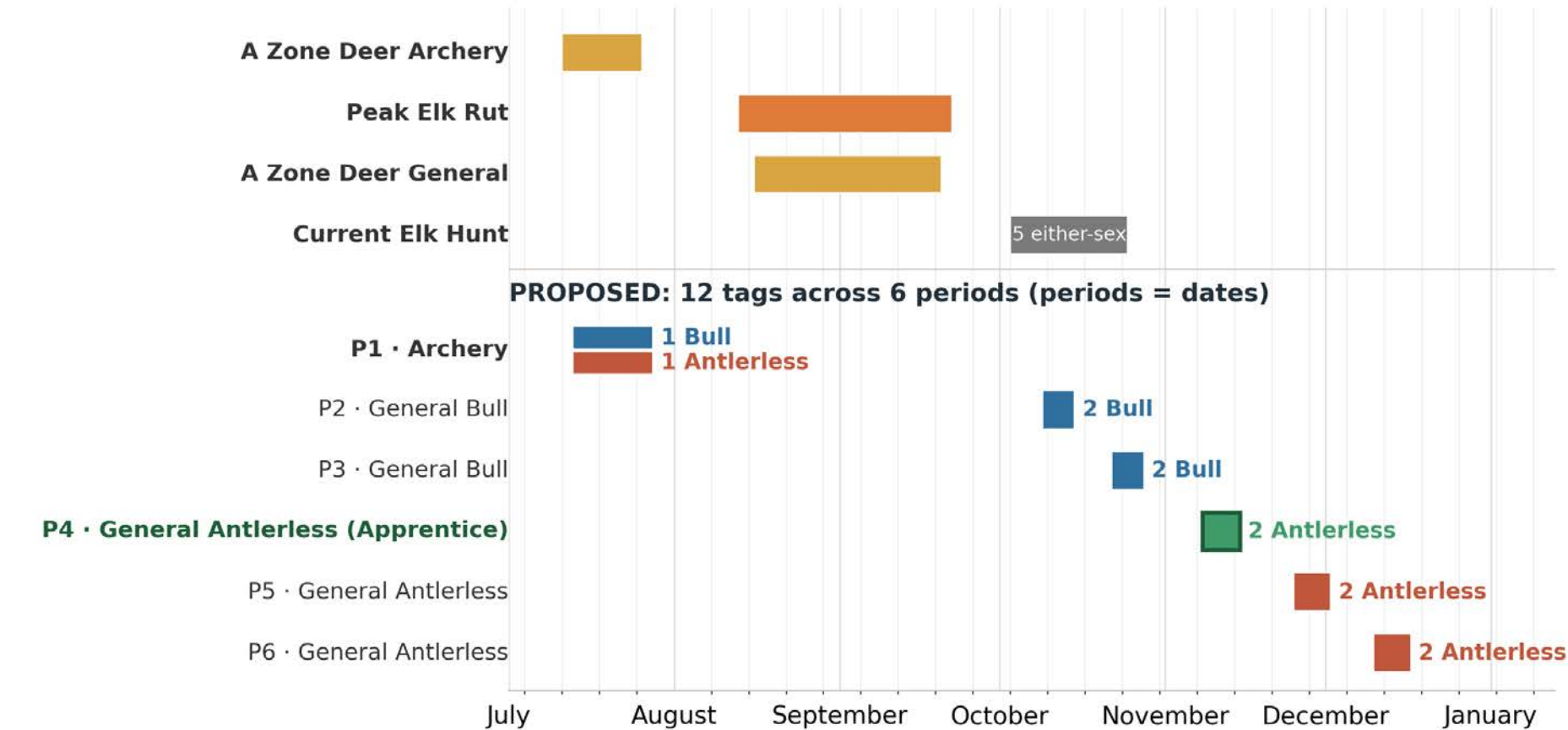


| Management Zone | Population Obj. | Minimum Count | Current Tags           | Rec. Tags              |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Central Coast   | 100 - 300       | >1400         | 15 bull, 15 antlerless | 15-30 bull, 15-30 ant. |
| Gabilan         | 150 - 250       | >1000         | 10 bull, 6 antlerless  | 10-20 bull, 6-20 ant.  |

# Season Dates and Tag Allocations: San Luis Reservoir

## San Luis Reservoir Elk Hunt: Current vs. Proposed Season Structure

Current: 5 either-sex tags, single 23-day period. Proposed: 12 tags (7 antlerless, 5 bull) across 6 staggered periods.



Proposed period dates are illustrative; final dates TBD. Apprentice tags placed in the first general antlerless period (P4), not archery.

**Current:** 5 either-sex tags, one 22-day period; success often reaches 100% and nearly all take is bulls.

Elk population increasing rapidly far above population objective (300-500), with estimated abundance of 960.

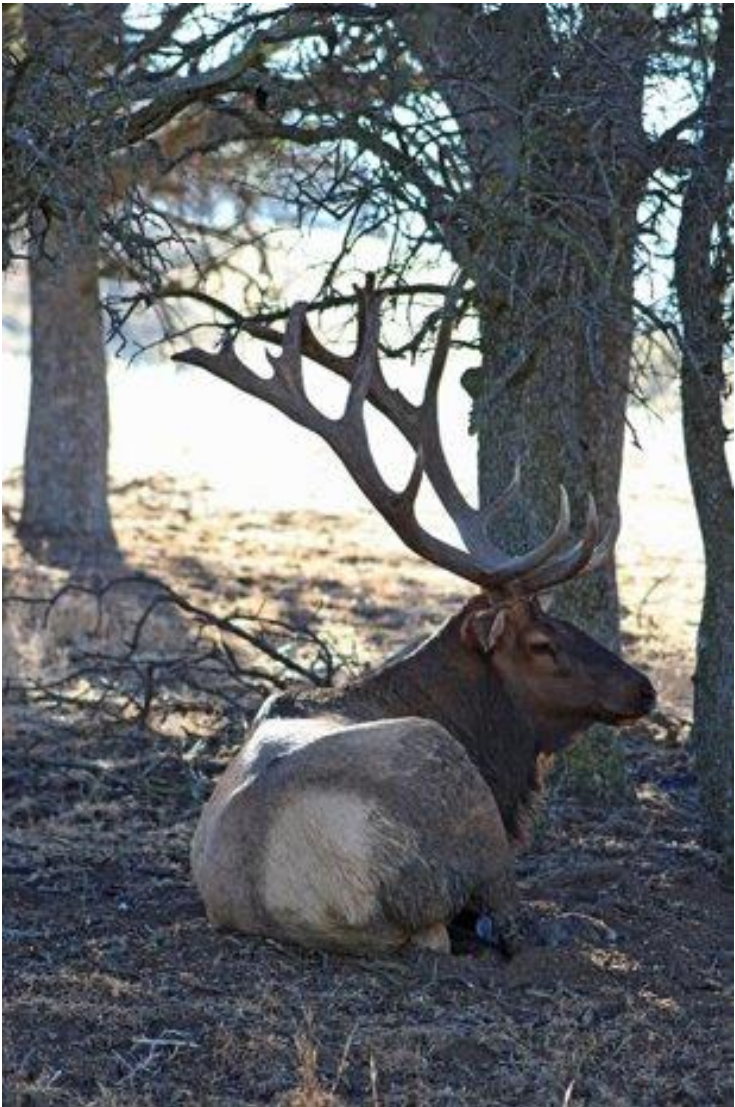
**Recommended:** 12 tags (7 antlerless, 5 bull) across 6 staggered periods; splits the max-point applicant pool.

# Tag Allocations: Tehachapi

- **Non-native Rocky Mountain Elk**
  - Almost entirely on private lands
  - General hunts introduced in 2023
  - Trespass fees for trophy bull elk and antlerless as well
  - Results in returned tags and low antlerless harvest and not accomplishing zone objectives

Antlerless Harvest Success for Tehachapi Hunt Zone

| 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|------|------|------|
| 70%  | 20%  | 40%  |



# Recommendation: Increase Elk Hunting Opportunities

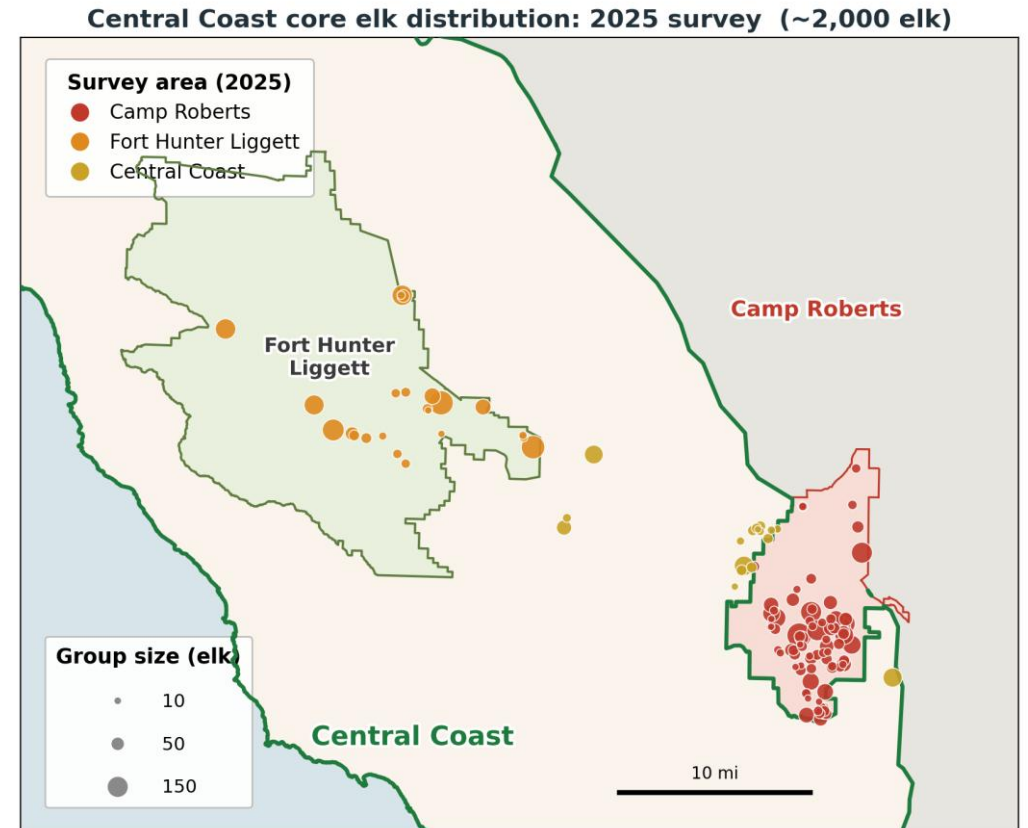
## Create Central Coast Conflict Area

- **Growing fast**
  - The Central Coast herd population has risen rapidly; the sharpest increases are in the south, around Camp Roberts.
- **Limited public land**
  - Elk are most numerous on military installations and cause agricultural damage on surrounding private properties, so General hunts cannot affect the population beyond the military installations.
- **Whole-herd management**
  - Increasing cow harvest can reduce population growth rate

**~2,000**  
minimum elk  
count in Central  
Coast and FHL

**~65%**  
on Camp  
Roberts alone

**~90%**  
on military  
installations



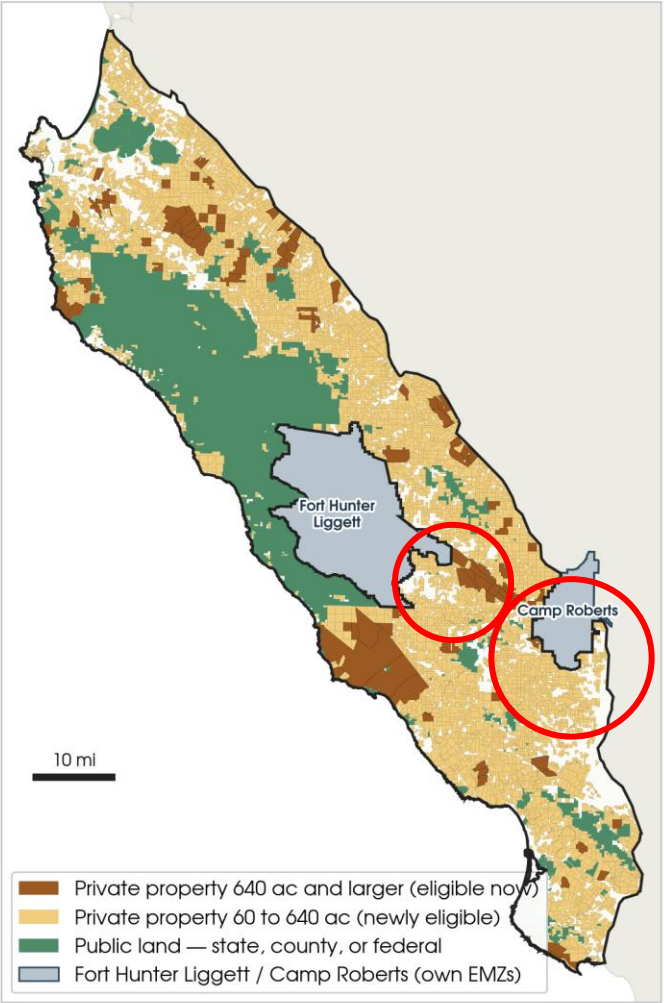
# Recommendation: Increase Elk Hunting Opportunities

## Create Central Coast Conflict Area

|                                        | Standard Zone          | Conflict Zone            |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Min. property size for a landowner tag | 640 acres              | 60 acres                 |
| Antlerless landowner tags              | 1/5 of the public tags | Equal to the public tags |

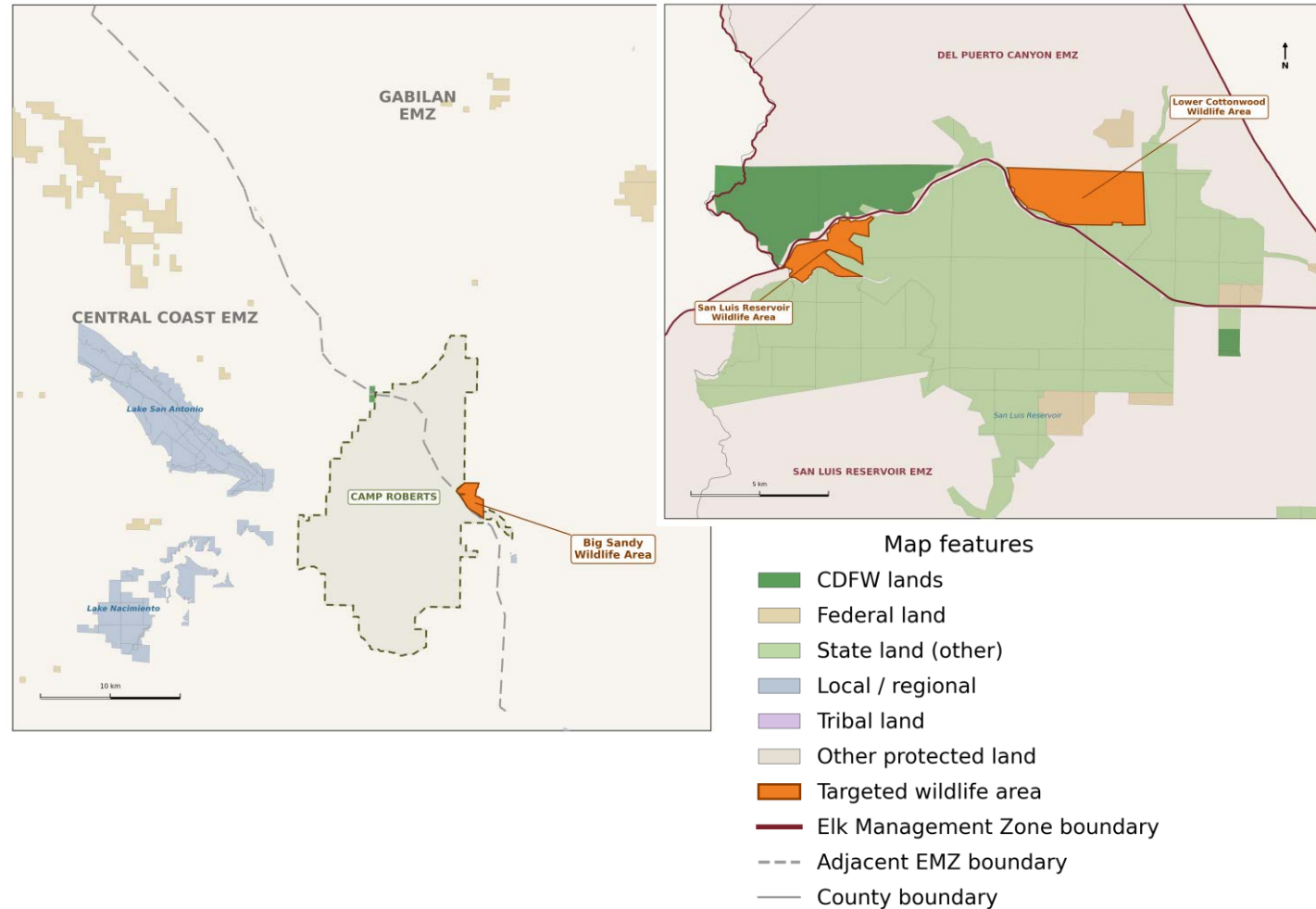
- SHARE and General hunts continue; the designation increases landowner-tag opportunity.
- Targeted conflict area will focus in where relief is needed most
- Creating a conflict area will require updating regulations on Conflict Zones and Cooperative Elk Hunt Agreements

Central Coast: Property Eligibility and Public Land



# Recommendation: Add Shotguns to Legal Methods

- **Affects two sections**
  - Amends §353 (methods of take) as well as §364.
- **Opens public land**
  - Allows hunting on public land where centerfire rifles are restricted, expanding access for elk hunters.



# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

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- 1 Name the zones:** replace generic “areas” with “Elk Management Zones” explicitly throughout
- 2 Separate tag type from method:** define hunt/tag tier (General Draw, Apprentice, Military, Fundraising) independently of method of take (archery, muzzleloader, general methods), so the two no longer tangled together.
- 3 Three standardized tables:** reorganize into (f) zone boundaries, (g) season dates, and (h) methods and tag quotas.
- 4 Consolidate & reorder:** one bag limit and one-elk-per-season rule at the beginning of Section 364; subsections reordered for readability.

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

## Simplification in Action: Grizzly Island

### **CURRENT §364**

*One zone, scattered across 6 subsections in 2 separated halves:*

**Area / Boundary:** (d)(13)(A), re-referenced at (e)(6)(A) & (i)(2)(A)

**Hunt Types & Conditions:** (d)(13), (e)(6), (i)(2)

**Tags & Season Dates:** (u)(13), (v)(6), (z)



### **Recommended §364**

*One row set in each of three standardized tables:*

#### **(f) Boundaries**

Zone description

#### **(g) Season Dates**

Periods 1–13, with dates

#### **(h) Methods & Quotas**

Type, method, and tags by period

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

## Simplification in Action: Grizzly Island

### CURRENT §364

- (13) **Grizzly Island General Methods Tule Elk Hunt:**
- (A) Area: Those lands owned and managed by the Department of Fish and Wildlife as the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area.
  - (B) Special Conditions: All tagholders will be required to attend a mandatory orientation. Tagholders will be notified of the time and location of the orientation meeting after receipt of their elk license tags.
- (6) **Grizzly Island General Methods Tule Elk Apprentice Hunt:**
- (A) Area: The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(13)(A).
  - (B) Special Conditions:
    - 1. All tagholders will be required to attend a mandatory orientation. Tagholders will be notified of the time and location of the orientation meeting after receipt of their elk license tags.
    - 2. Only persons possessing valid junior hunting licenses may apply for Apprentice Hunt license tags. Apprentice Hunt tagholders under 18 years of age shall be accompanied by a nonhunting, licensed adult chaperone 18 years of age or older while hunting.
- (2) **Grizzly Island Fundraising Tule Elk Hunt:**
- (A) Area: The tag shall be valid in the area described in subsection 364(d)(13)(A).
  - (B) Special Conditions: Advance reservations required by contacting the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area by telephone at (707) 425-3828.

- (v) **Department Administered Apprentice Hunts**
- | §                                                                                                           | Hunt                   | 1.Bull | 2.Antl | 3.E-S | 4.Spike |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|-------|---------|
| (6)(A)                                                                                                      | Grizzly Island GM Tule | 0      | 2      | 0     | 0       |
| Apprentice Period 1                                                                                         |                        |        |        |       |         |
| Shall open on the second Tuesday after the first Saturday in August and continue for four consecutive days. |                        |        |        |       |         |
| (6)(B)                                                                                                      | Grizzly Island GM Tule | 0      | 0      | 0     | 2       |
| Apprentice Period 2                                                                                         |                        |        |        |       |         |
| Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 1 and continue for four consecutive days.  |                        |        |        |       |         |
| (6)(C)                                                                                                      | Grizzly Island GM Tule | 0      | 0      | 0     | 0       |
| Apprentice Period 3                                                                                         |                        |        |        |       |         |
| Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 2 and continue for four consecutive days.   |                        |        |        |       |         |
| (6)(D)                                                                                                      | Grizzly Island GM Tule | 0      | 0      | 0     | 0       |
| Apprentice Period 4                                                                                         |                        |        |        |       |         |
| Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 3 and continue for four consecutive days.  |                        |        |        |       |         |
- (z) **Fundraising Elk tags**
- |                                                                                  |                            |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| (A)                                                                              | Grizzly Island Fundraising | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Tags                                                                             |                            |   |   |   |   |
| Shall open on the first Saturday in August and continue for 30 consecutive days. |                            |   |   |   |   |

- (u) **Department Administered General Methods Tule Elk Hunts**
- | §                                                                                                           | Hunt                      | 1.Bull | 2.Antl | 3.E-S | 4.Spike |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------|--------|-------|---------|
| (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. |                           |        |        |       |         |
| (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.  |                           |        |        |       |         |
| (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 104 | 0      | 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 110 | 4      | 0      | 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 124 | 0      | 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 133 | 4      | 0      | 0     | 0       |
| Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 12 and continue for four consecutive days.  |                           |        |        |       |         |

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

## Simplification in Action: Grizzly Island

### Recommended §364

#### (f) Elk Hunt Zone Geographic Boundaries

| Elk Hunt Zone  | Geographic Boundary                                                                                       |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grizzly Island | Those lands owned and managed by the Department of Fish and Wildlife as the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area. |

#### (g) Elk Hunt Season Dates

| EHZ            | Per. | Dates                                                                                                       |
|----------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grizzly Island | 1    | Shall open on the second Tuesday after the first Saturday in August and continue for four consecutive days. |
| Grizzly Island | 2    | Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 1 and continue for four consecutive days.  |
| Grizzly Island | 3    | Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 2 and continue for four consecutive days.   |
| Grizzly Island | 4    | Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 3 and continue for four consecutive days.  |
| Grizzly Island | 5    | Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 4 and continue for four consecutive days.   |
| Grizzly Island | 6    | Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 5 and continue for four consecutive days.  |
| Grizzly Island | 7    | Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 6 and continue for four consecutive days.   |
| Grizzly Island | 8    | Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 7 and continue for four consecutive days.  |
| Grizzly Island | 9    | Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 8 and continue for four consecutive days.   |
| Grizzly Island | 10   | Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 9 and continue for four consecutive days.  |
| Grizzly Island | 11   | Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 10 and continue for four consecutive days.  |
| Grizzly Island | 12   | Shall open on the first Thursday following the opening of Period 11 and continue for four consecutive days. |
| Grizzly Island | 13   | Shall open on the first Tuesday following the opening of Period 12 and continue for four consecutive days.  |

#### (h) Elk Take Methods and Quotas

| Per. | Type       | Method  | Bull | Antl. | E-S | Spike |
|------|------------|---------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| 1    | Apprentice | General | 0    | 2     | 0   | 0     |
| 1    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 2     | 0   | 0     |
| 2    | Apprentice | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 2     |
| 2    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 2     |
| 3    | Apprentice | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 0     |
| 3    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 0     |
| 4    | Apprentice | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 0     |
| 4    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 0     |
| 5    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 0     |
| 6    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 0     |
| 7    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 0     |
| 8    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 0     | 0   | 6     |
| 9    | Gen Draw   | General | 0    | 4     | 0   | 0     |

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

## One Statewide Set of Elk Management Zones



**Elk Hunt Zones  
(26 in regulation)**

+



**Elk Management Units  
(22 in Management Plan)**

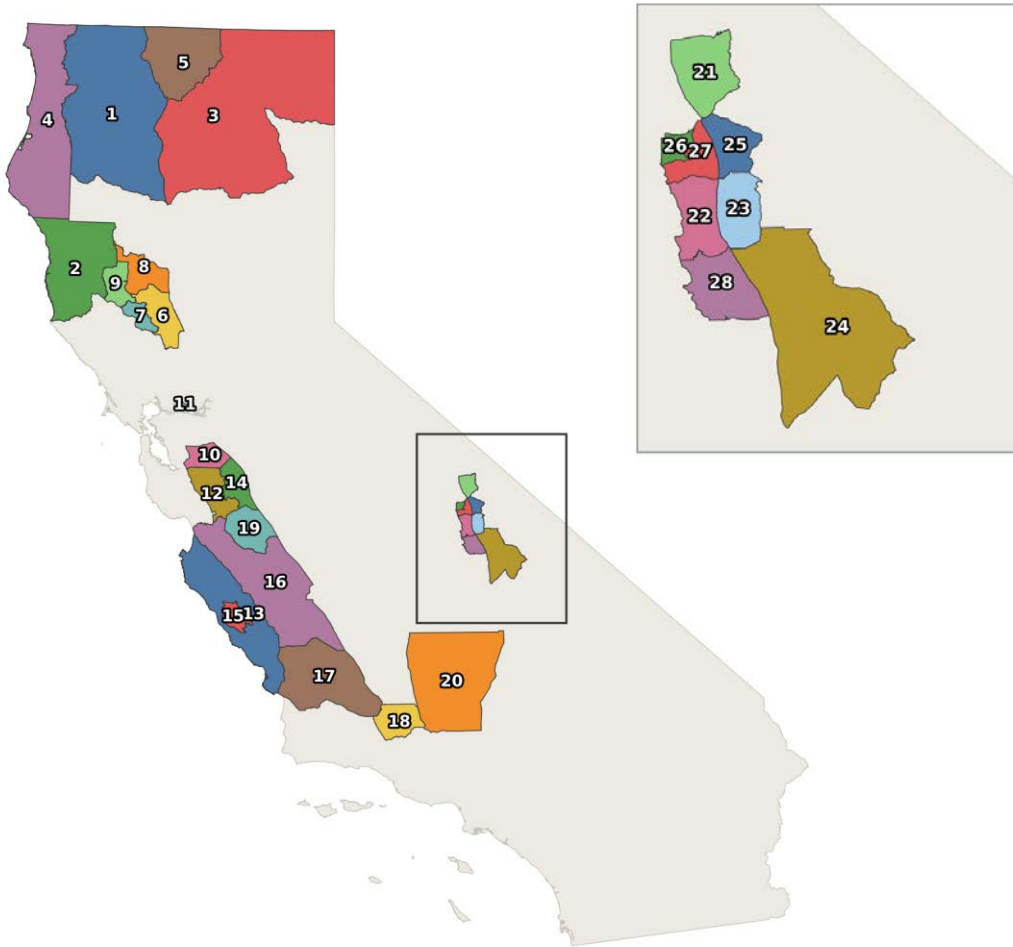
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**Elk Management Zones  
(28 proposed)**

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

## One Statewide Set of Elk Management Zones



1 Marble Mountains

2 Mendocino

3 Northeastern

4 Northwestern

5 Siskiyou

6 Bear Valley

7 Cache Creek

8 East Park Reservoir

9 Lake Pillsbury

10 Alameda

11 Grizzly Island

12 Santa Clara

13 Central Coast

14 Del Puerto Canyon

15 Fort Hunter Liggett

16 Gabilan

17 La Panza

18 San Emigdio Mtn.

19 San Luis Reservoir

20 Tehachapi

21 Bishop

22 Goodale

23 Independence

24 Lone Pine

25 Tinemaha

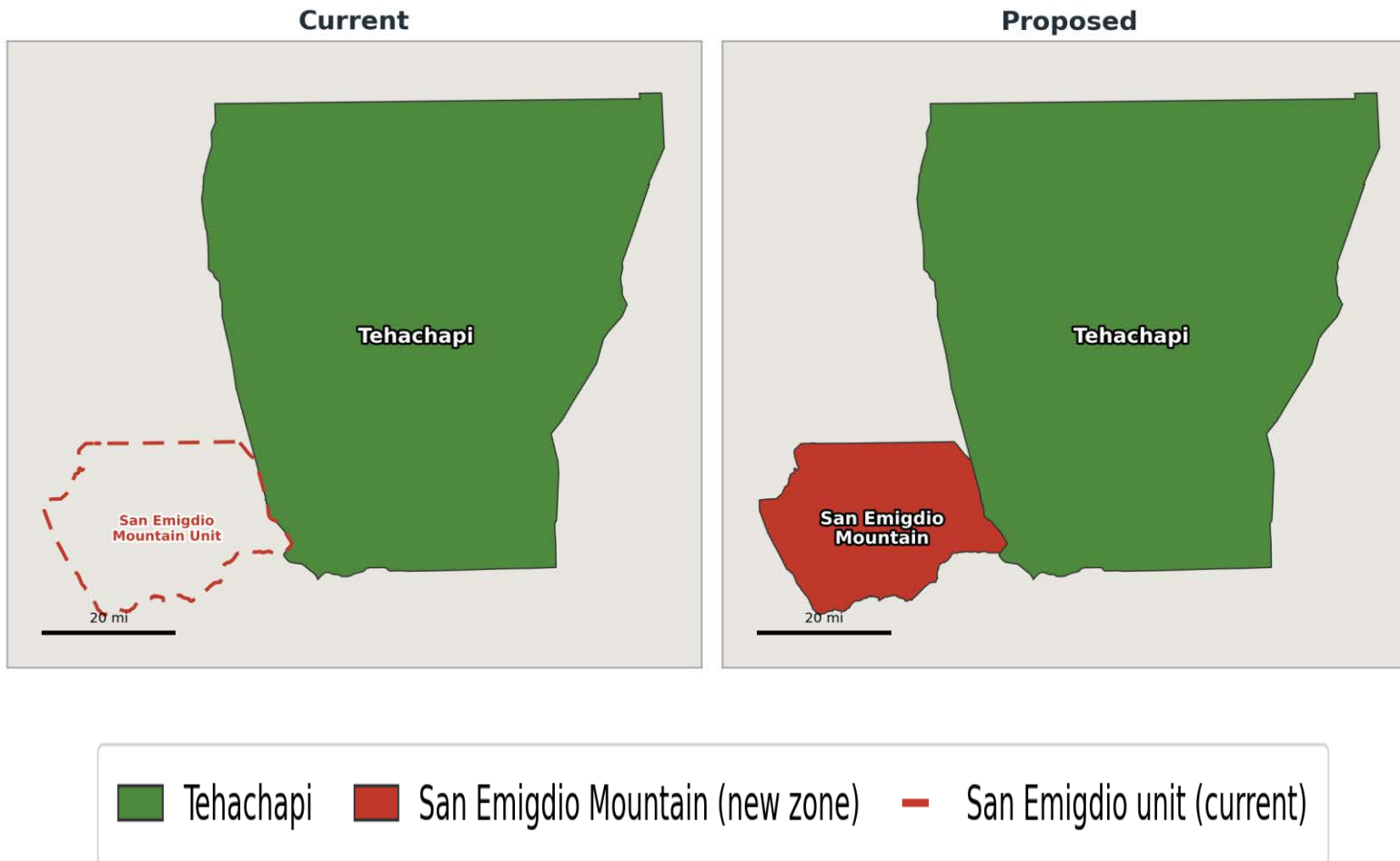
26 Tinemaha Mtn.

27 West Tinemaha

28 Whitney

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

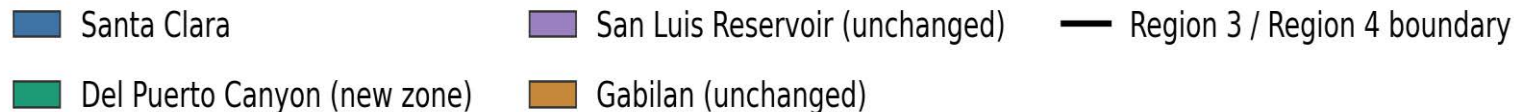
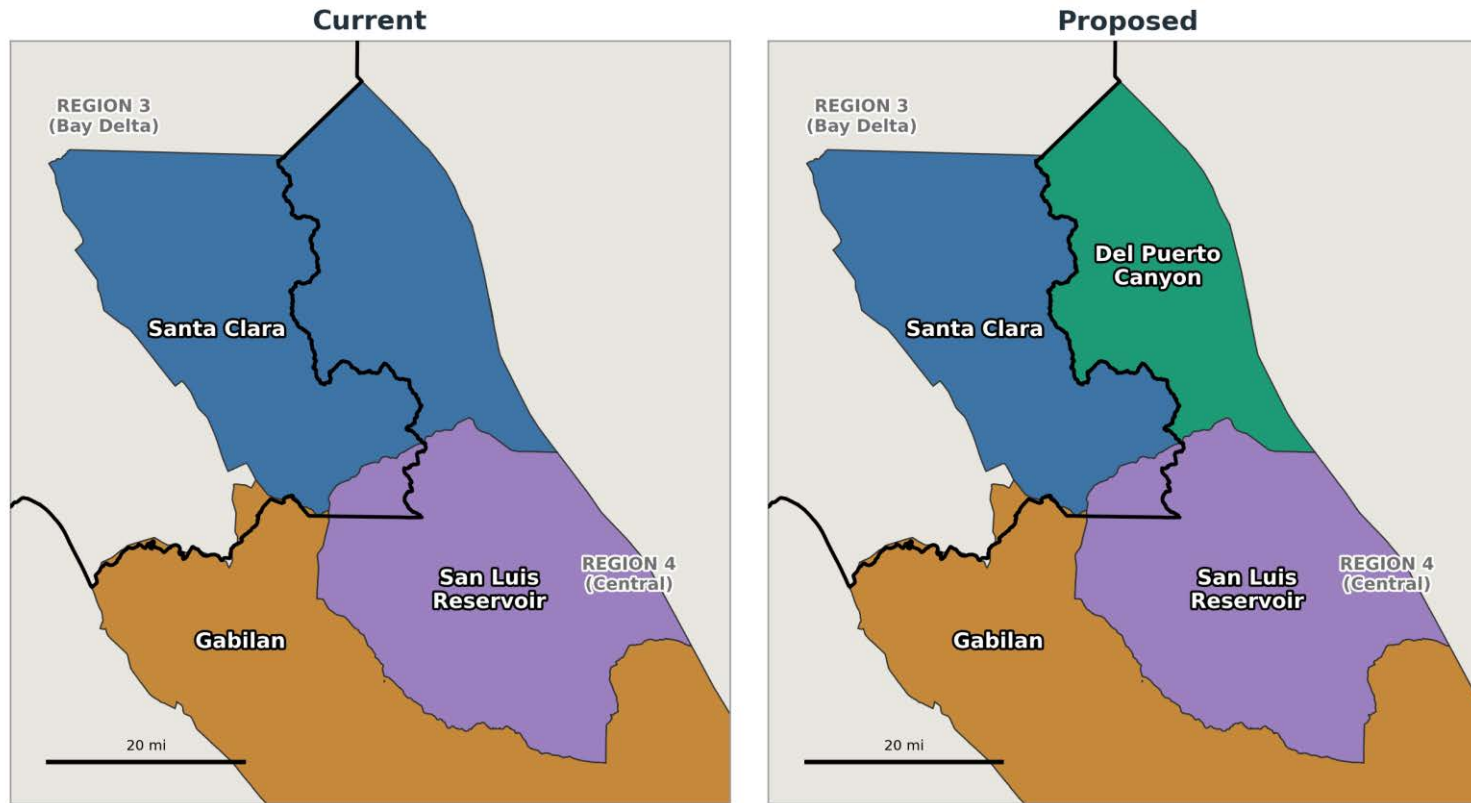
## Add San Emigdio Mountain to the Elk Management Zones



- San Emigdio Mountain is currently an EMU in the Balance of State Zone
- San Emigdio Mountain holds a distinct population of tule elk
- Clean Tehachapi and San Emigdio Mountain border
- Tehachapi increases by 54 acres
- San Emigdio decreases by 27 acres

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

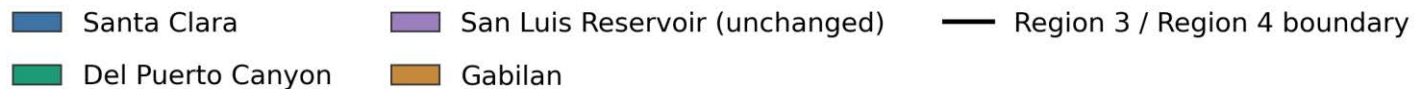
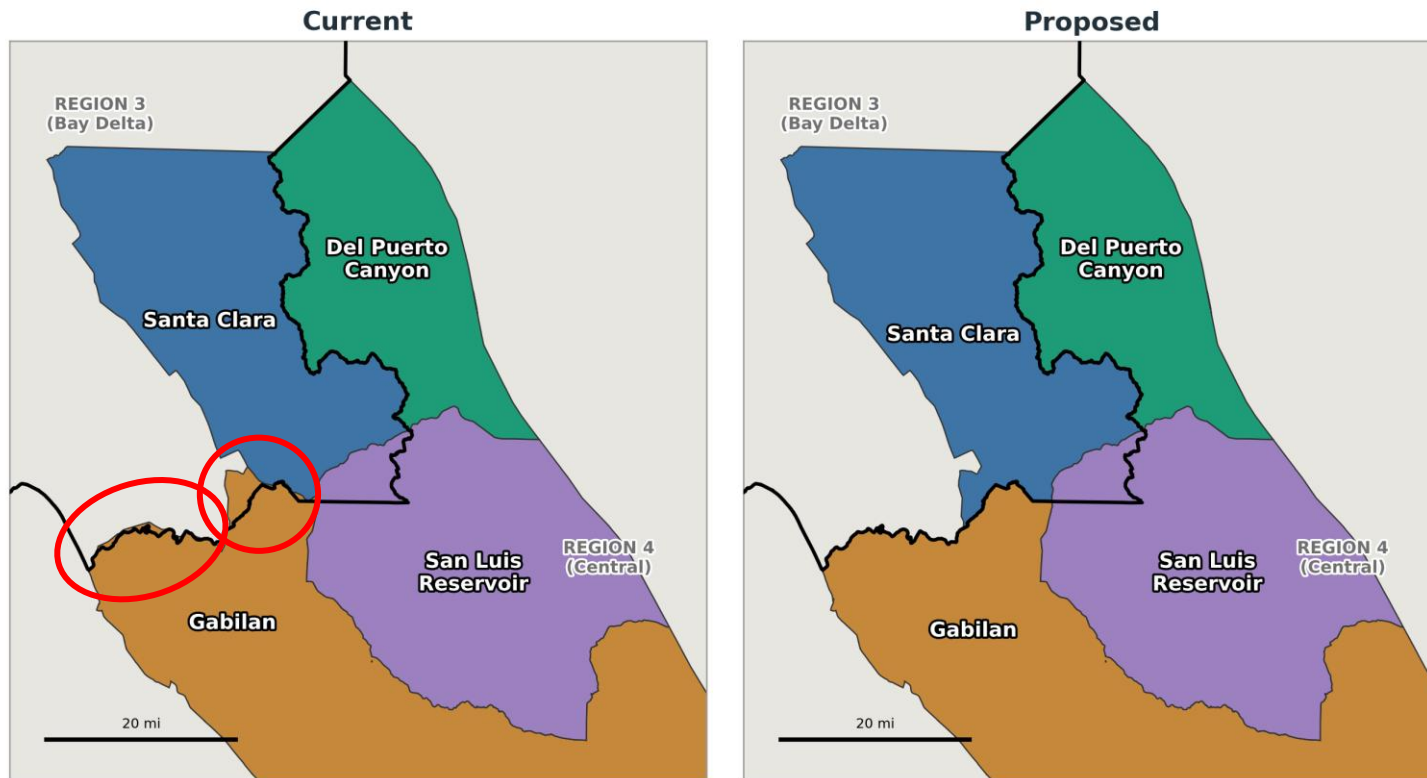
## Add Del Puerto Canyon to the Elk Management Zones



- Del Puerto Canyon EMZ is carved from the Region 4 portion of the Santa Clara EMZ
- Del Puerto Canyon elk are a separate population from Santa Clara's
  - Can sustain limited harvest: 2 bull tags
- Creating Del Puerto Canyon EMZ reduces Santa Clara EMZ by 328k acres

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

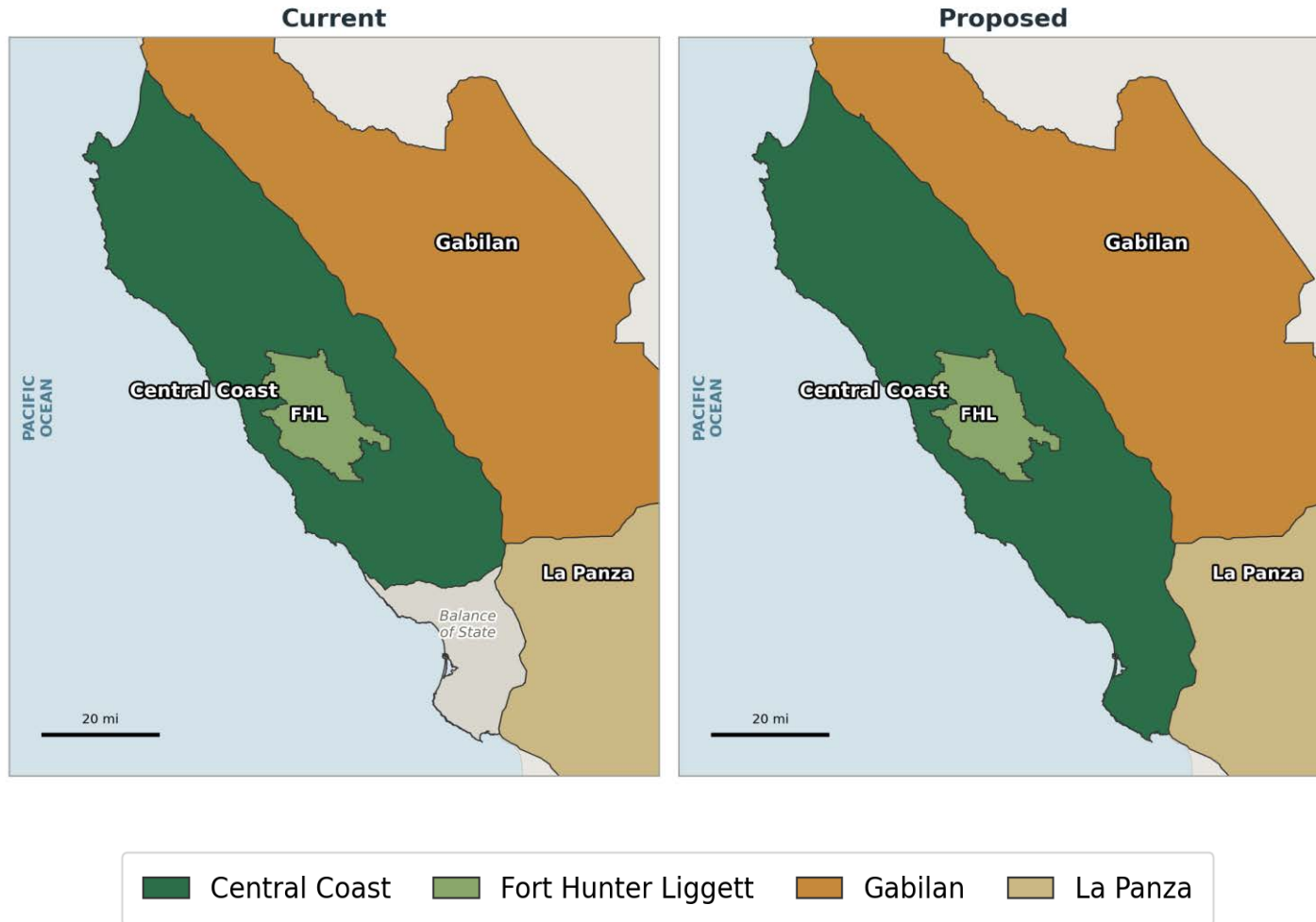
## Cleanup Region 4 EMZ Boundaries



- Santa Clara EMZ absorbs portion of Gabilan EMZ that is in Region 3
- Gabilan EMZ clipped to Region 4
  - Small, detached fragments become Balance of State

# Recommendation: Streamline Section 364 Regulations

## Expand Central Coast EMZ South



- Balance of State pocket holds an expanding elk population from the Central Coast



# Recommendation: Group EMZs by Department Region

## Benefits to Grouping by Region

- **Better use of landowner tags**
  - Challenge in directing unclaimed landowner tags where conflict and elk population challenges are greatest
  - Regional grouping lets unclaimed landowner tags from one zone be offered elsewhere in the same Region
  - No reduction in opportunity for landowners; re-allocation only applies to unclaimed tags
- **Administrative structure for multi-zone hunts**
  - Some elk hunts occur in multiple zones

### EXAMPLE

#### Fort Hunter Liggett

This installation generates landowner tags that go unclaimed. Grouping lets Region 4 direct them to other zones, where elk conflict and population control challenges are greatest.

### EXAMPLE

#### Owens Valley

Multi-zone hunts already run across several zones in one Region. Elk Regions give that kind of hunt the administrative home it needs.

# Recommendation: Group EMZs by Department Region

## EMZs grouped into five Elk Regions by Department Region

### ● Region 1 • Northern

1 Marble Mtns • 2 Mendocino • 3 Northeastern  
4 Northwestern • 5 Siskiyou

### ● Region 2 • North Central:

6 Bear Valley  
7 Cache Creek • 8 East Park Res. • 9 Lake Pillsbury

### ● Region 3 • Bay Delta:

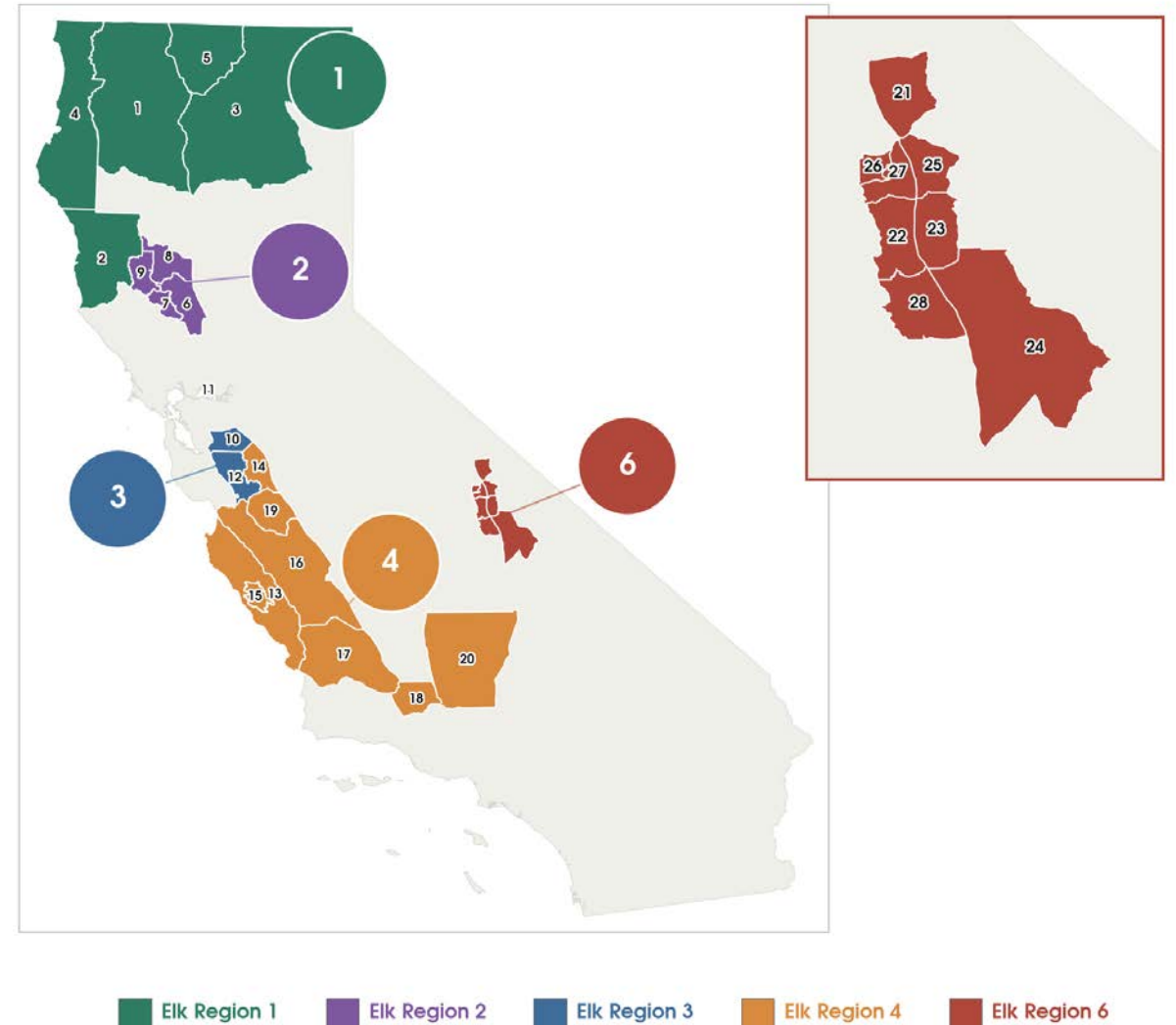
10 Alameda  
11 Grizzly Island • 12 Santa Clara

### ● Region 4 • Central:

13 Central Coast  
14 Del Puerto Canyon • 15 Fort Hunter Liggett • 16  
Gabilan 17 La Panza • 18 San Emigdio Mtn • 19 San Luis  
Reservoir • 20 Tehachapi

### ● Region 6 • Inland Deserts:

21 Bishop  
22 Goodale • 23 Independence • 24 Lone Pine  
25 Tinemaha • 26 Tinemaha Mtn • 27 West Tinemaha  
28 Whitney



# DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP HUNTING RECOMMENDATIONS



*Presented to the  
Wildlife Resources Committee of the  
California Fish and Game Commission  
September 10, 2026*

**PRESENTED BY THE BIG GAME PROGRAM**  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife



# Modify Fundraising Tags and Tag Quotas



- Based on population surveys, proposal is to:
  - Change the Single Zone Fundraising tag zone
  - Adjust tag quotas in any of the existing hunt zones



# BLACK BEAR HUNTING RECOMMENDATIONS



*Presented to the  
Wildlife Resources Committee of the  
California Fish and Game Commission  
September 10, 2026*

**PRESENTED BY:**

Arjun Dheer, Statewide Black Bear Coordinator  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

# Black Bear Hunting Recommendations



Photo Credit: G. Harse

- No changes to concepts discussed in May:
  - Bear conservation region implementation
  - Season dates
  - Cub weight limit
  - Reporting requirements
- Consolidate tooth extraction (10 calendar days) and tag validation (immediate or 1 business day) deadlines into single process
  - Feedback from public on vetted 10-day concept discouraged an extended period without validation
  - Propose replacing 10-day concept with concept to present skull during countersigning