

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 8:59 AM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: 2016 Elk Proposal 2016

Categories: Commission

From: Sean Fulton [<mailto:seanfulton77@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2016 9:54 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: 2016 Elk Proposal 2016

My Public Comment on 2016 Elk Proposals

I recently attended the public meeting in Rapid City about the 2016 elk proposals and feel that the SD GFP is working in the right direction.

There are a few things that concern me and I would like to mention them.

I am not a biologist but do spend immense amounts of time in the black hills mainly hunting and hiking. I have noticed and believe the elk population to have increased from a few years ago but do not feel that the numbers are any where near what they were 10+ years ago. Large areas of canopy having been eliminated in the hills due to bug tree kill off, has created massive increases in forage not only for the ungulates like deer and elk but for many other creatures too. I along with several other outdoorsman that I converse with feel that the elk population could be raised well above the proposed 6000-8000 that is being sought after. We would like to see that population increased to numbers well over 10,000.

Next I would like to address the landowner tags. I personally don't have a problem with landowners receiving elk tags every year but I don't feel they should be able to receive ANY-ELK tags every year. I would like to see landowners able to receive antlerless tags every year and one person in the family unit able to apply for and receive an ANY-ELK tag once every three years. This would still allow the landowners to put pressure on the elk herds on their property every year and give more sportsmen and women an opportunity to draw a coveted and for some a once-in-a-lifetime Elk tag in the Black Hills of SD.

Lastly I would like to suggest allowing landowner assistance contingent on Walk-In-Area access. I know that some landowners want elk and others do not. Some receive assistance for haystack corrals and other damages. Many of these landowners get this assistance even though they will not let hunters on their property to help, by hunting and putting pressure on the elk. Therefore some of these landowners may be taking advantage of the assistance. My suggestion to alleviate this would be to require any landowner that asks for assistance or depredation tags in areas that are recognized as hunt-able units to place their property in the WALK-IN-AREA program for a minimum of two years

for the species that the complaints are about. Elk-Deer-Turkeys, Etc... Also this stipulation on the walk in would allow ANY SEX of the species to be taken with a valid license, not just antlerless animals. This walk in could be done in a limited number of hunters per day process to keep landowners from worrying about overuse. Requiring a landowner to put maybe 50% or the majority of the land that is being overused into a program like this will also give them more assistance as part of their lease in the Walk-in-Program. Maybe some of these landowners will end up liking the program and enroll in it longer than the required time.

I really appreciate your consideration on all of these topics and hope that my voice can make a difference to help our fellow sportsmen/women and landowners achieve a better outdoor experience.

Sincerely, Sean C. Fulton

11675 W. Hwy 44
Rapid City, SD 57702

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2016 12:26 PM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: 2016 Elk Season Proposal

Categories: Commission

-----Original Message-----

From: Jesse Kurtenbach [<mailto:jessepkurt@icloud.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2016 11:55 AM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: 2016 Elk Season Proposal

Jesse Kurtenbach
Deadwood SD

First of all thank you for reading the public comments at the commission hearing.

Second thank you for having the open house last week in Rapid City as having the final meeting on the other side of the state has left many of the black hills residents feeling excluded not being able to attend the final proposal on a Tuesday 350 miles away.

I have thoroughly reviewed all of the information provided on the elk management proposal and have spent a significant amount of time speaking with biologists on the phone and in person. The following are some things that come to mind on the increase of elk tags for 2016.

1. The data from the aerial survey looks very good on paper and unfortunately is the best we can do without the ability to fly yearly. Unfortunately this year we had a very mild winter and the elk are spread out more than a normal winter. While the surveyors did everything they could to prevent double counting I have a hard time believing that a count was obtained with a 95% confidence interval due to the mild conditions.

2. There is still a shock value in the fact that we are going from tag numbers in the 500's to tag numbers in the 1300's in one year! A 768 tag increase is more than 10% of the estimated herd number of 7200 elk.

3. I would like the commission to look at options on how landowner tags are distributed. Currently the majority of qualified landowners can receive an any elk tag on a YEARLY basis. (Excluding the prairie units where there is more private land).

-- If the problem is really population control hunting the males is never the answer. I would propose giving out several antlerless tags instead of 1 any elk tag. We would all be surprised at how much the tolerance for elk numbers would increase then.

-- Maybe we need to have a separate drawing for landowners only and a separate preference point system. For instance have it set up so that an any elk tag would be drawn every 3 years instead of annually. This could open up more tags for the general public and get more people of the list with 15+ yrs preference.

-- SDGFP needs to step up there approach to landowners with depredation needs. While these elk may spend part of there time on private lands, the elk are owned by the public and entrusted to the state to be managed. Our neighbors in Wyoming and Montana take the approach of mandatory hunter access if they agree there are depredation needs. The

states decides the depredation needs and hunters are provided mandatory access to address those needs on dates decided on by the state. If access isn't allowed, no depredation help is given.

4. Hunters are the biggest spending conservation group. With this being said I believe the elk preference point cost needs to be updated. There is typically 10-15000 applications yearly. Increasing the cost of a preference by \$10 would significantly help with the ability to fly more often or collar more elk. This is a small price to pay when the cheapest out of state point is about \$50.

I realize most people buy 5/6 preference points per year. So if increasing the individual preference point would be deemed to much, Instead create a elk habitat stamp of \$10 that is required prior to applying. If the SDGFP took these money's and directly applied them to elk and published how the money was used it would be widely accepted by applicants.

--The state spent approximately \$226,000 on depredation costs last year.

--it cost around \$200,00 to conduct the aerial survey in 2016.

Thank you for taking the timers read my comments in front of the commission.

Comes, Rachel

From: Cary, Joe
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2016 1:38 PM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: 2016 elk

Categories: Commission

-----Original Message-----

From: Dylan Deuter [<mailto:ddeuter2001@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2016 1:31 PM
To: GFP Wild Info; ddeuter2001@yahoo.com
Subject: 2016 elk

I believe you a putting out to many cow tags AGAIN. What happened to slow and steady +750 extra cow tags looks like a lot to me. If cows are such a problem for ranchers on public ground then I think they should be issued 2 cow tags to be killed on their own privately owned land. NO GUARANTEE BULL TAGS for land owners, but can apply with every one else for a bull tag.

I have been to told that the reason that you will not split up H2 into two separate units for any elk was to simplify things, your proposals now do NOT look that simple so what gives. Do you think cow hunters a are that much more intelligent than bull hunters?

I believe the December season should gone for ever. I moves elk around when they should be resting an conserving energy to make it threw a tough winter to come. As a land owner east river most of our problems come from late seasons: poaching, trespassing, and forcing deer into large groups where they could potently cause a depredation problem.

I was lucky enough to draw an archery Any Elk tag in 2015. It was a great hunt, Best elk hunt i have ever been on in comparison to Montana and Wyoming limited entry areas as well. However I hunted 25 days of the season. I had seen elk every day and heard elk every day, but it took 15 days before I had seen my first cow of the season. So I do not believe you should be increasing cow tags at all.

In Custer State Park if you don't have enough elk to put out more bull tags. Why would you turn out 20 cow tags.

Don't increase cow tags in H2
Do away with land owner bull tags
No more December season
Don't kill any cows in the Park

Dylan Deuter
Ree Heights SD 57371

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2016 8:02 AM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: Elk damage

Categories: Commission

From: skphilli@gwtc.net [<mailto:skphilli@gwtc.net>]

Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 9:01 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Cc: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Elk damage

Dear GF&P Commissioners,

I am a landowner in Fall River County who makes a living off of farming and ranching. The amount of elk we currently have throughout the year on our property creates a serious hardship for me. Fences are continually needing repaired which takes time and money, and the devastation they cause to the hay fields is terrible. The more elk I have the less production I have for my livestock. I am no longer able to raise an alfalfa seed crop due to the amount of elk that graze my fields and pastures each year.

For these reasons we hope you increase the number of cow tags. The elk are a constant hardship the farmers and ranchers in our county and will continue to be so until something is done.

Sincerely,

Scott Phillips
Kristi Phillips
Farmer & Rancher
Fall River County, SD

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2016 12:54 PM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: elk licenses

Categories: Commission

-----Original Message-----

From: blmiller@gwtc.net [<mailto:blmiller@gwtc.net>]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2016 12:53 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: elk licenses

Dear GFP Commissioner,

We would like to voice our opinion about the number of elk licenses slated to be issued for the 2016 hunting season. We feel the number should be increased due to the amount of damage the elk cause to our property including the amount of our forage they eat, the amount of fences which they destroy, and the number of hay bales which are destroyed if they are left in the field a day too long. The elk create a massive amount of labor intensive work, which some of which could be reduced if the number of possible harvested animals is increased. This elk situation gravely affects our livelihood and costs us so much financially and also our time management is affected because of the requirements the large herds of elk cause.

We also feel it would be more humane to offer more licenses to hunters rather than having the large herds on the highway where the general public is now in danger because it is extremely difficult to avoid the large herds of elk in the roadways, especially during the dark hours.

Statistically, there were more elk killed on Highway 18 by motor vehicles than were harvested during the 2015 elk season for the unit located here near Minnekahta Junction.

Thank you for your time listening to our concerns.

Bill and Lisa Miller
11755 US Highway 18
Hot Springs SD

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2016 8:00 AM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: Elk Permits and Allocation

From: Dana Rogers [<mailto:dana.rogers.1@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2016 7:26 PM
To: GFP Wild Info; Peterson, Cathy; Jensen, Barry; Cooper, John; Dennert, Paul H.; Jensen, Gary; Olson, Russell; Phillips, W. Scott; Spies, Jim
Subject: Elk Permits and Allocation

Please take for public comment under the Subject Elk Tags, Landowner Allocation, Depredation and Preference/Draw Process

Commissioners

First off, thank you for your time and efforts on behalf of SD wildlife and hunters. Often, I'm sure all you here are negative thoughts so I wanted to start by thanking you.

1. We have a current range goal of 6-8,000 elk in the Black Hills. The vast majority of that land is public National Forest which can support a few thousand more elk. I have discussed this with biologists, some ranchers and many hunters. A vocal minority of grazing lease holders and a similar number (small) of landowners are wanting reduction. The habitat can support it and though private land depredation needs to be considered and addressed that can be done with the emergency depredation pool that is above and beyond normal tag allocation. Please consider eliminating or reducing the increase in cow elk tags. We had a significant knee jerk reaction a decade ago and over-killed our cow elk herd. We are now recovering but that is tenuous and dependent on weather and significantly improved cal recruitment.

2. The 50% set aside for either sex landowner tags is extreme. I am wholeheartedly in support of ranchers and giving them preference but this is our premier species in SD with regard to tag allocation that most can ever 'expect' to draw. In 2015 19% of Either Sex elk tags went to qualifying landowners so it certainly didn't approach the entire 50% it 'could' have. However, given the significant odds against the rest of SD residents, with hundreds of people already holding more than 15 preference points in many hills units for both Rifle and Archery licenses, change is in order. I would propose offering the landowners qualifying cow elk tags annually. If that is entirely too severe for their taste, then I would propose limiting the qualifying landowner to receiving an either sex elk license every third year. They would still receive a huge amount of license accumulation over a lifetime compared to an average citizen. Additionally, given the fact that elk are so migratory and spend much of their lives on public land each year, if these landowners were to draw a tag, I feel they should be restricted to hunting their own land claimed in the elk use survey. This would be much more equitable given they control access on their deeded lands and would spread out either sex opportunity on the public areas within a unit. Elk are NOT deer where non-landowners can expect to draw at least every other year. These highly coveted elk permits take double digit years

for the average South Dakotan and then they must wait another 10 years before even applying again, while the landowner does not. I am thankful for the farmers and ranchers that do provide elk habitat but the equity for these permits needs to be addressed.

3. Depredation is certainly a consideration on some ranchers alfalfa and cattle feed. That can and definitely should be addressed where a complain exists and is verified. I would ask if exclusion cages are used? Is fencing that can significantly reduce depredation around stored feeds or fields mandated? If the claimant expresses depredation they certainly need to be open to tag holders or the depredation mitigated.

4. The preference system we use also needs to be addressed. I do appreciate that we have a hybrid or modified draw system where the highest percentage of tags first is drawn for the applicants with the most preference points and then on down the line. There are many western states that offer options I would recommend we South Dakotans consider. I would propose the hybrid system be modified to use a square system +1 for the current years application as well as modifying the percentage of available tags into different pools given the high number of applicants waiting extended periods.

For Example:

Points Squared + Current Year = Chances in Draw

0 sq 0 + 1 = 1
1 sq 1 + 1 = 2
2 sq 4 + 1 = 5
3 sq 9 + 1 = 10
4 sq 16 + 1 = 17
5 sq 25 + 1 = 26
6 sq 36 + 1 = 37
7 sq 49 + 1 = 50
8 sq 64 + 1 = 65
9 sq 81 + 1 = 82
10 sq 100 + 1 = 101 Etc

50% of available license (after LO tags drawn) in over 15 or even 20 PP pool
25% of available to 10 or 15+ pp pool
20% to 7 or 10+ pool
5% to all remaining undrawn

These changes would significantly alter the drawn dynamics in favor of longtime applicants and still provide the opportunity to draw for all.

Thank you again for taking public comment into consideration and I respectfully request that all SD hunters be taken into consideration for these coveted tags as equitably as is humanly possible.

D. Rogers
Box Elder SD

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 9:46 AM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: Proposed Elk Season Recommendations

Categories: Commission

-----Original Message-----

From: Lien [<mailto:4walleye@midstatesd.net>]
Sent: Sunday, April 03, 2016 12:41 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Proposed Elk Season Recommendations

Dear Commissioners:

I have a difficult time with the proposed shooting of 20 Custer State Park cow elk and the numbers are no where near the target population of

700 to 900 elk, and reduce the potential for more calf recruitment to the population. Have you tried any other alternatives to move the elk?

And what makes you think that by shooting the cows it will move them to other parts of the park? Maybe there is a reason they prefer that area other than they are from Wind Cave, it is more open and less potential for predation? I agree the elk are not inhabiting great habitat in other parts of the park but I think this is a shot in the dark.

Also, I know that the elk management plan said that 25% of the tags would be for archery elk, but where did this arbitrary and capricious number come from? You want to shoot more cows in the park, but reduce the early archery elk tags from 4 to 3? This was my dream tag and was fortunate enough to draw it last year after 24 years of applying, and it was a wonderful hunt. Archery hunting is so low impact that even a couple of more tags would have little impact on the elk or herd. I would like to see my son and friends also have a chance to enjoy this hunt some day.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Alan Lien
James Lien
Chamberlain, SD 57325

Dale Springer
Roger Springer
Bradley, SD 57217

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 10:03 AM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: Subject: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

Categories: Commission

From: Jeb [<mailto:jebbordewyk@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 8:07 AM
To: GFP Wild Info; Peterson, Cathy; Jensen, Barry; Cooper, John; Dennert, Paul H.; Jensen, Gary; Olson, Russell; Phillips, W. Scott; Spies, Jim
Subject: Re: Subject: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

Commissioners,

I strongly agree with the sentiments of Mr. Rippentrop. He is well studied in this area and knows the land area and wild life in unit #3. His comments and statements are very difficult to refute. Please reconsider the drastic increase in cow tags for the south half of Unit #3.

Thank you all for your time and the work you do as SDGFP commissioners and thank you for your consideration.

Jeb Bordewyk
Piedmont SD
605-484-8943

From: mattrippentrop@hotmail.com
To: wildinfo@state.sd.us; cathy.peterson@state.sd.us; barry.jensen@state.sd.us; john.cooper@state.sd.us; paul.dennert@state.sd.us; gary.jensen@state.sd.us; russell.olson@state.sd.us; wscott.phillips@state.sd.us; jim.spies@state.sd.us
Subject: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags
Date: Sun, 3 Apr 2016 20:13:46 -0600

Hello SD GFP Commissioners

I'm not in favor of unit #3's south half 150 (50/50/50) total cow elk tags you are proposing for 2016 & 2017. It's too many cow elk tags being proposed for this area for two consecutive years. Please consider a smaller increase to 75 (25/25/25) cow elk tags rather than the 150 cow elk tags currently proposed. As a landowner in the area I believe if the

cow elk quota is set as high as proposed the herd's size and quality will be set back, which took so long to rebuild to where it is today. Here are some additional past harvest numbers for you to review provided by SD GFP's website:

1) In 2015, there were only 60 cow elk tags issued in unit #3's south half and 23 cows were harvested.

2) From 2011 to 2015, unit #3's south half averaged 31 cow elk/year being harvested.

How can unit #3's south half average cow elk harvest rate for the last five years of 31 cow elk/year support a new tag allocation of 150 cow elk for the 2016 & 2017 hunting seasons?

Thank you for your time and consideration of lowering unit #3's south half cow elk tag allocation to 75 cow elk tags/year (25/25/25).

Matt "Rip" Rippentrop

Hot Springs, SD

wildinfo@state.sd.us , cathy.peterson@state.sd.us , barry.jensen@state.sd.us , john.cooper@state.sd.us ,
paul.dennert@state.sd.us , gary.jensen@state.sd.us , russell.olson@state.sd.us , wscott.phillips@state.sd.us ,
jim.spies@state.sd.us, mattrippentrop@hotmail.com

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 10:02 AM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

Categories: Commission

From: Matt Rippentrop [<mailto:mattrippentrop@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, April 03, 2016 9:14 PM
To: GFP Wild Info; Peterson, Cathy; Jensen, Barry; Cooper, John; Dennert, Paul H.; gary.jenses@state.sd.us; Olson, Russell; Phillips, W. Scott; Spies, Jim
Subject: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

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Thank you for your time and consideration of lowering unit #3's south half cow elk tag allocation to 75 cow elk tags/year (25/25/25).

Matt "Rip" Rippentrop

Hot Springs, SD

Comes, Rachel

From: Miller, LouAnn
Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2016 7:59 AM
To: Comes, Rachel
Subject: FW: Unit 3 Elk

From: Jade Konst [<mailto:JadeKonst@goldenwest.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2016 5:24 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Unit 3 Elk

Dear Commissioners

I have recently moved to hot springs south Dakota, the main reason I moved to this area was to enjoy the wildlife and to hunt. This I do not believe you should issue the number of cow elk tags in Unit 3 the south unit. There are not enough elk in that unit. GFP numbers are right about how many elk there are but we still want the population higher. Please issue 25/25/25 on the split cow season that will insure that the population raise and still make the landowners happy they get to shoot some cows off their places. You issued a survey in 2013 and 95% of hunters wanted more elk and wanted bigger bulls. Shooting more cows will not make this happen. Unit 3 doesn't have enough elk and there aren't any big bulls in that unit anymore. If you were to issue this many tags it would destroy the elk population and would take years to rebuild it. I Believe the negatives greatly out way the positives in this situation.

Sincerely,

Jade Konst

Note: The information contained in this message, including any attachments, may be privileged, confidential, or protected from disclosure under state or federal laws. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or an employee or agent responsible for delivering this message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the Sender immediately by a "reply to sender only" message and destroy all electronic or paper copies of the communication, including any attachments.

Comes, Rachel

From: Peterson, Cathy
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 10:32 AM
To: Leif, Tony; Kirschenmann, Tom; Hepler, Kelly
Subject: Fwd: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Matt Rippentrop <mattrippentrop@hotmail.com>
Date: April 3, 2016 at 9:13:46 PM CDT
To: "wildinfo@state.sd.us" <wildinfo@state.sd.us>, Cathy SD GF&P Peterson <cathy.peterson@state.sd.us>, "Barry.Jensen@state.sd.us" <barry.jensen@state.sd.us>, "John.Cooper@state.sd.us" <john.cooper@state.sd.us>, "Paul.Dennert@state.sd.us" <paul.dennert@state.sd.us>, "gary.jenses@state.sd.us" <gary.jenses@state.sd.us>, Russell SD GFP Olson <russell.olson@state.sd.us>, "wscott.phillips@state.sd.us" <wscott.phillips@state.sd.us>, "Jim SD GF&P Spies" <jim.spies@state.sd.us>
Subject: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

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Thank you for your time and consideration of lowering unit #3's south half cow elk tag allocation to 75 cow elk tags/year (25/25/25).

Matt "Rip" Rippentrop

Hot Springs, SD

Comes, Rachel

From: Peterson, Cathy
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 10:33 AM
To: Leif, Tony; Kirschenmann, Tom; Hepler, Kelly
Subject: Fwd: Subject: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jeb <jebbordewyk@hotmail.com>
Date: April 4, 2016 at 8:07:25 AM CDT
To: <wildinfo@state.sd.us>, <cathy.peterson@state.sd.us>, <barry.jensen@state.sd.us>, <john.cooper@state.sd.us>, <paul.dennert@state.sd.us>, <gary.jensen@state.sd.us>, <russell.olson@state.sd.us>, <wscott.phillips@state.sd.us>, <jim.spies@state.sd.us>
Subject: Re: Subject: Rip - Please Reduce Unit #3's South Half Cow Elk Tags

Commissioners,

I strongly agree with the sentiments of Mr. Rippentrop. He is well studied in this area and knows the land area and wild life in unit #3. His comments and statements are very difficult to refute. Please reconsider the drastic increase in cow tags for the south half of Unit #3.

Thank you all for your time and the work you do as SDGFP commissioners and thank you for your consideration.

Jeb Bordewyk
Piedmont SD
605-484-8943

From: mattrippentrop@hotmail.com
To: wildinfo@state.sd.us; cathy.peterson@state.sd.us; barry.jensen@state.sd.us; john.cooper@state.sd.us; paul.dennert@state.sd.us; gary.jensen@state.sd.us; russell.olson@state.sd.us; wscott.phillips@state.sd.us; jim.spies@state.sd.us
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Matt "Rip" Rippentrop

Hot Springs, SD

wildinfo@state.sd.us , cathy.peterson@state.sd.us , barry.jensen@state.sd.us ,
john.cooper@state.sd.us , paul.dennert@state.sd.us , gary.jensen@state.sd.us ,
russell.olson@state.sd.us , wscott.phillips@state.sd.us , jim.spies@state.sd.us ,
mattrippentrop@hotmail.com

Comes, Rachel

From: Peterson, Cathy
Sent: Saturday, April 02, 2016 11:07 PM
To: Leif, Tony; Kirschenmann, Tom; Hepler, Kelly; Comes, Rachel
Subject: Fwd: Unit 3 Elk Cow tags

Categories: Commission

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ryan Cuny <RyanCuny@GoldenWest.com>
Date: April 1, 2016 at 2:02:36 PM CDT
To: "Cathy.Peterson@state.sd.us" <Cathy.Peterson@state.sd.us>, "Barry.Jensen@state.sd.us" <Barry.Jensen@state.sd.us>, "John.Cooper@state.sd.us" <John.Cooper@state.sd.us>, "Paul.Dennert@state.sd.us" <Paul.Dennert@state.sd.us>, "Gary.Jensen@state.sd.us" <Gary.Jensen@state.sd.us>, "Russell.Olson@state.sd.us" <Russell.Olson@state.sd.us>, "WScott.Phillips@state.sd.us" <WScott.Phillips@state.sd.us>, "Jim.Spies@state.sd.us" <Jim.Spies@state.sd.us>
Subject: Unit 3 Elk Cow tags

Dear SD GFP Commissioners,

Within the last nine months I moved back to Hot Springs, Southern Black Hills, to enjoy the wildlife and outdoors with my wife, two boys and daughter. As I review your plan to increase the Elk Cow tags in Unit three for the next two seasons, I am very concerned with the damage it will cause to the total Elk population. As I hope to draw a tag someday or just listen and photograph the bulls bugle in the fall, it seems with the route of your plan, it is going to strongly diminish the current herd for future years. Please consider the ramifications of how these extreme actions are going to effect the Black Hills elk conservation in Unit three.

Sincerely,

Ryan C. Cuny

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Comes, Rachel

From: Peterson, Cathy
Sent: Saturday, April 02, 2016 11:07 PM
To: Leif, Tony; Kirschenmann, Tom; Hepler, Kelly; Comes, Rachel
Subject: Fwd: Unit 3 elk tags.

Categories: Commission

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mike Jarding <MikeJarding@GoldenWest.com>
Date: April 1, 2016 at 1:53:35 PM CDT
To: "Cathy.Peterson@state.sd.us" <Cathy.Peterson@state.sd.us>, "Barry.Jensen@state.sd.us" <Barry.Jensen@state.sd.us>, "John.Cooper@state.sd.us" <John.Cooper@state.sd.us>, "Paul.Dennert@state.sd.us" <Paul.Dennert@state.sd.us>, "Gary.Jensen@state.sd.us" <Gary.Jensen@state.sd.us>, "WScott.Phillips@state.sd.us" <WScott.Phillips@state.sd.us>, "Jim.Spies@state.sd.us" <Jim.Spies@state.sd.us>
Subject: Unit 3 elk tags.

- 610 visual -2013 (793 with model)
- 724 visual, 122 WCNP elk included -2014 (no model)
- 810 visual -2016 (1149 with model)
- If they didn't move 122 elk from WCNP the population would only have grown 78 elk in 4 years. (810-122=688 elk)
- 1149-793= 356 elk increase in 3 years, the elk population only grew 31% in 3 years, 10% each year, which is with the 122 elk that came from WCNP
- Herd composition count 24 bulls per 100 cows (all BH) = 287 bulls and 862 cows
- Estimate of harvest success: 60%, 195 cow tags = 117 cows shot, harvested 14% cow population
- Estimate of harvest success: 80%, 80 any elk tag = 64 bulls shot, harvested 22% bull population
- In all BH units age structure for bulls: 56% = 2-3 year olds, 7% yearling bulls, 4% calves, 33% were 4+
- In 2015 27,000 applicants applied for elk tags giving \$135,000 earmarked to "enhance elk depredation abatement services for landowners in an effort to raise the social tolerance for higher numbers of elk in the BH".

In 2016 GFP will have 195 cow tags and 80 any elk tags issued in unit 3. That is 5 cow tags less than in 2009 season. In the 2009 season, you could hunt the entire unit and it wasn't split in half and there were many more elk. In the 2013 opinion survey "74% of elk hunters and 62% of landowners who have spent time hunting elk in SD consider harvesting a mature bull elk very important to their overall satisfaction". In GFP public meeting people are extremely frustrated on the roller coaster fluctuations of the elk tags and population of the elk. Last year they issued 60 cow tags and now GFP wants to issue 195 cow tags 150 just in the south unit of unit 3. In the 2013 survey 92% of hunters and 62% of landowners wanted more elk in the BH. The elk population only grew 31% in 3 years with the elk from WCNP, and they want to shoot 14% of the cow herd and 22% of bulls in one year with an average success rate. The fluctuation in the

tags is like we are going back to the old days in which GFP said they are not doing the roller coaster ride in tags anymore. Hunters wait on average 12 years to draw a hunting tag and all the surveys indicate they want to harvest a mature bull, and 7 to 9 year old is a mature bull. It is proven the only way to get the age structure up on bulls is lower the tags and up the population. I don't see GFP lowering the any elk tags so we need to get the population of the cows up. I would recommend only issuing 30/30/30 cow tags in the three split cow seasons not a total of 195 cow tags. Ranchers would still be able to harvest elk off their property, and we also can see how this split season will work out.

Thank you, Mike Jarding

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March 31, 2016

Brent R. Phillips
23679 Dogleg Drive
Rapid City, SD 57702

Gary Jensen
Game Fish & Parks Commission South Dakota
P O Box 9579
Rapid City, SD 57709

Dear Mr. Jensen,

We are new land owner in southern Custer County. My wife and I own 517.5 acres (two distinct parcels) of the most beautiful land in the Black Hills. We are about 3 miles southwest of Wind Cave Park. We bought the land for the sole purpose of providing habitat for elk, deer, turkey and other wildlife as well as a place we can go on weekends away from the busy work life of Rapid City. The land is primarily treed and serves as an excellent bedding and calving area for elk and last Fall we saw dozens of elk each day. I am a hunter, have been for decades and enjoy hunting and seeing game in our Black Hills.

I understand there are a few land owners in my area that have had significant influence on opinions related to the elk population, harvest quotas and are being quoted as saying they want all elk gone. That would be a significant travesty for our area. Providing the opportunity for 150 elk cows to be harvested in this area in a single year seems excessive. I grew up in Idaho and have seen successful and unsuccessful game management strategies. The elk are a resource that we need to carefully manage for our generation and generations to come. I do not believe a very small minority should have any influence beyond their share.

I am a land owner, my wife is a land owner and we appeal to you to consider our needs and desires to have elk, to support their growth in our region and have personally taken the next step and become land owners to help preserve our wildlife. I would suggest a more modest harvest of 25-30 cows per season or 75-90 tags would be more appropriate. It would reduce population and provide hunting opportunities. Regarding the remedy of the few who lose grazing or alfalfa production due to elk, there are funds to help compensate them and despite stated losses of \$50,000 per year and payments of \$10,000 per year there might be a compromise somewhere in between the two figures.

We moved to the Black Hills for several reasons, one was the outdoors and wildlife. I am an avid outdoorsman and hunter. I mentor disadvantaged kids and help them achieve their hunter safety certificate and take them on their first deer hunt as well as spent time helping them develop skills and take on responsibilities. What a wonderful opportunity to serve and live in the Black Hills. We have invested in supporting our passion and appeal to you to take all of these issues into account before you make a decision. Call me anytime if you want to talk about my comments or discuss solutions. My cell is 262 212 4174.

Thank you for your time,

Brent R. Phillips