Hunter Management Access Program

Casper Region Update

During the 2017-18 hunting season, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department hired Hunter Management Coordinator (HMC) Nate Holst to administer the Hunter Management and Access Program (HMAP) in the Black Hills area of northeastern Wyoming. This program was implemented to facilitate cow elk and doe deer harvest on private lands in Elk Hunt Area 117 and Deer Hunt Area 1. The HMC concentrated on property north of Newcastle for elk and near Devils Tower for deer. Elk were harvested August through January. During November, the HMC focused on harvesting doe white-tailed deer. The HMC was able to gain access on private lands, communicate with landowners, coordinate hunts, and guide hunters. The goal was to reduce elk and deer populations on private lands that were experiencing damage to cultivated crops throughout the year. The HMC collected CWD samples and extracted teeth for aging from harvested animals.

During the 2017 deer season, 74 antlerless white-tailed deer were taken by HMAP hunters and another 30 were taken independently on the same property. During the elk season, over 55 were taken by HMAP hunters and an additional 18 on the adjacent landowner’s property by family and friends.
Aside from animals harvested, other benefits were realized including: 1) Hunters were very appreciative of this hunting opportunity and exhibited good ethics; 2) The HMAP provided great opportunity for new hunters (youth and adults) to harvest their first elk; 3) Hunters did not contact the landowners for permission to hunt which allowed the landowner to complete ranch work without worrying about hunting issues and problems; 4) Increased interaction between WGFD personnel and landowners improved relationships; and 5) Increased chronic wasting disease sampling in the area.

A final report will be completed by the HMC in February and will include the complete harvest results, acres enrolled and participating landowners. The report will also address strategies for continuing the HMAP program in this area during the 2018-19 hunting season.

February Fishing

Ice Fishing Safety

Ice safety continued to be an issue in the Casper Region this winter with only limited access for ice fishing. Please remember these safety tips if venturing out on ice. Many waters across the region are open and anglers are reminded this can be the can amazing time to fish from boat or shore.

FIVE ICE TIPS

1. CHECK THICKNESS
   Contact a local bait shop or sporting goods store to ask about ice conditions and check ice once you get there. Rough guidelines for clear, new solid ice are:
   - 2 inches – Stay off
   - 4 inches – OK for ice fishing and other activities on foot.
   - Check the thickness of the ice every 100 to 150 feet.
   - Never take any vehicles, snowmobiles or ATVs onto the ice.

2. BE SURE IT’S SAFE
   - Avoid pressure ridges in the ice and large cracks that can emerge in a lake.
   - Clear ice is stronger than white ice, which has freeze, thaw and refreeze cycles and is not always stable.
   - White ice can also be from air bubbles in frozen snow and is much weaker than clear ice. For safety, double the recommended 150 lbs.

3. REMEMBER
   No matter your preparation and ice conditions, ice should never be considered 100 percent safe. Be prepared and take necessary actions.

4. BUDDY SYSTEM
   Anglers should never fish alone. Always fish with someone else and be certain to be a select known where you are going.

5. STAY WARM
   To prevent hypothermia if an ice fishing accident occurs, pack an extra set of clothes and fuel liquids.

What else should I know?

Floating insulating vests help to conserve body heat and keep an ice fisherman warm. Keep a warm blanket in case someone falls in, and always wear a life jacket when venturing onto open water. Be aware of current wind and wave conditions. If possible, a person with a boat should be waiting nearby. By following these safety tips, anglers can enjoy a rewarding sport.

Contact Game & Fish

Cheyenne Headquarters: 1-800-842-1934
Casper Regional Office: 1-800-233-8544
Cody Regional Office: 1-800-654-1178
Green River Regional Office: 1-800-831-8936
Jackson Regional Office: 1-800-423-4133
Lander Regional Office: 1-800-654-7852
Laramie Regional Office: 1-800-843-7575
Pinedale Regional Office: 1-800-452-9107
Sheridan Regional Office: 1-800-333-9934
Of Interest

Public Meetings

The Casper Region of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department will hold a series of public meetings to present and discuss proposed 2018 hunting seasons.

During the meetings, Game and Fish personnel will be available to discuss the proposed 2018 hunting seasons for local hunt areas. Public meetings will be at the following locations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Game and Fish Casper Regional Office, 3030 Energy Lane, Casper, 6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 27</td>
<td>Niobrara County Courthouse, 424 S. Elm, Lusk, 4 p.m.</td>
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<td>March 28</td>
<td>Converse County Courthouse basement, 107 N. 5th St, Douglas, 6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>Crook County Courthouse basement, 309 Cleveland Street, Sundance, 4 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>U.S.D.A. Forest Service Office, 1225 Washington Blvd, Newcastle, 7 p.m.</td>
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Attending a public meeting is one way to learn about local wildlife populations, ask questions and visit with local Game and Fish biologists and game wardens. The public is always welcome to call, email or stop by and talk with their local game warden or biologist anytime.

If you are unable to attend any of the meetings, written comments may also be mailed to: Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Attn: Regulations, 3030 Energy Lane, Casper, WY 82604. Individuals may also provide comments by going online at: wgfd.wyo.gov and clicking on Get Involved and the Public Meetings tab. All written comments must be received by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 4, 2018 and are provided to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission and field personnel for review.

The State of Wyoming supports the Americans with Disabilities Act. Every effort will be made for reasonable accommodations.

Snowy Owl

A Glenrock area rancher called saying that a white owl had been hit on Interstate 25. Upon investigation, it was discovered to be a Snowy owl. The son of the rancher had a picture of it the week before it was hit. Snowy owls are very large owls with no ear tuffs. They are one of the largest and heaviest owl species in North America, eating a variety of small mammals. These birds often seek out perches like fence posts, hay bales or power poles. These owls nest mainly in the Arctic Circle heading south during winter months, but seeing one in the lower 48 is a treat.
**Education**

Glenrock Game Warden Cody Bish and Douglas Wildlife Biologist Willow Bish went to Grant Elementary in Glenrock to give the kids a hands-on presentation on Wyoming’s wildlife. Youth from the school were able to touch the hides and skulls from numerous wildlife species managed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. They learned about predators and prey along with how their skulls differ.

Game Wardens Adam Parks and Trevor Meadows visited Paradise Valley Elementary. These students were learning about how animals adapt to winter conditions.