



## WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

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January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014

Dear Wyoming Mule Deer Hunter:

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is interested in hearing your opinion about mule deer hunting in Hunt Areas 66 and 70. These two areas (see map on enclosed survey) have long been managed under a general license season structure. In Wyoming and other western states, mule deer numbers have declined over the past 15 years due in large part to poor fawn production and survival. This is also the case for Hunt Areas 66, 70, and Wyoming's limited quota hunt areas. While mule deer numbers have declined throughout Wyoming, different hunting season structures result in different hunter experiences. There are pros and cons with each season structure.

Hunt areas with general license seasons, like Areas 66 and 70, allow you to hunt mule deer every year and give you the ability to hunt multiple areas each year. General license seasons can result in higher hunter densities relative to mule deer numbers and some areas experience lower hunter success rates. Hunt areas 66 and 70 had success rates of 24% and 36% in 2012 respectively. General hunt areas may also have more restrictive seasons such as shorter season length and antler point restrictions.

Hunters with limited quota licenses typically experience lower hunter densities and higher harvest success rates but these licenses are often difficult to draw. For example, in 2012, resident drawing odds in adjacent hunt areas 87, 89, and 34 (see map) were 7%, 17%, and 23%, respectively. However, these areas had hunter success rates of 68%, 74%, and 74% respectively for 2012. Limited quota hunt areas often have less restrictive and longer seasons but restrict the hunter to the area for which they drew the license.

We are interested in your opinion on whether Hunt Areas 66 and 70 should remain general hunt areas or be converted to limited quota hunt areas. Should Areas 66 and 70 be converted to limited quota, hunters should experience lower hunter densities and higher success, but will only be able to hunt one of these areas during years in which they draw a license. Local hunters wishing to hunt mule deer every year in remaining general license areas may then have to travel farther to access general areas with public lands. These areas may experience increased hunter densities as more general areas have been converted to limited quota.

Please help us understand public sentiment regarding season structures in Hunt Areas 66 and 70 by filling out the enclosed survey and returning it in the self-addressed envelope by February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

The Department sincerely values your input, and we thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Justin Binfet  
Casper Wildlife Management Coordinator

Corey Class  
Laramie Wildlife Management Coordinator

