January 21st, 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 14th, 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

"Conserving Wildlife - Serving People"
Wyoming Game and Fish Department Hunt Areas 66 and 70 Survey

1. For Deer Hunt Areas 66 and 70, would you prefer to maintain general license hunting or change to a limited quota structure?
   - [ ] General License
   - [ ] Limited Quota

2. Did you apply for a limited quota deer license in the past five years?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

3. Did you hunt either Hunt Area 66 or Hunt Area 70 in the past five years?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

4. Did you harvest a mule deer in Hunt Area 66 or 70 in the last five years?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

5. In years when you held a general deer license, how many different general areas did you typically hunt?
   ______

6. How acceptable or unacceptable is the number of hunters in the field in Hunt Areas 66 and 70?
   - [ ] Very Acceptable
   - [ ] Somewhat Acceptable
   - [ ] Neutral
   - [ ] Somewhat Unacceptable
   - [ ] Very Unacceptable

7. What aspects of mule deer hunting are most important to you? Please rank the following in importance from 1-7 (1 = most important, 7 = least important). Use each number only once.
   - [ ] Hunt deer every year
   - [ ] Harvest a trophy buck
   - [ ] Harvest any buck
   - [ ] Hunt for meat
   - [ ] Be outside in nature
   - [ ] Test your hunting skills
   - [ ] Hunt with family and friends

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us!

Please provide us with any additional comments you may have:

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