

Meeting Date: November 16, 2021

Agenda Item No.11

Agenda Item: Outfitter tag use update and modification of 2022 allocated tags and non-resident limits in five Clearwater Region deer units (Action).

Bureau Chief Approval: ES

Prepared by: Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager

Background:

Outfitter Tag Use:

In November 2020, the Commission set nonresident limits for 2021 and 2022 general hunt participation for each game management unit for deer and for each previously uncapped elk zone. The Commission also allocated a portion of these tags for outfitters based on the highest outfitted use in each newly limited zone/unit during 2018 and 2019. The Commission made subsequent adjustments to tag numbers in some elk zones and general-season deer units at their meetings in December 2020 and January and March 2021. Beginning with the 2021 season, outfitter tag sales are administered through IDFG's licensing system, providing improved tracking and monitoring of outfitter tag use.

Staff will present a statewide overview of the status of 2021 general-hunt outfitter tag sales and use by tag type, including:

- Tags allocated to outfitters
- Tags purchased by outfitters
- Allocated tags returned to the nonresident pool
- "Over-the-counter" tags converted to outfitted tags
- Unused outfitter allocation

Staff will also provide an update on the designation of 2022 outfitter-allocated tags to individual outfitters by the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board.

Modification of 2022 allocated tags and non-resident limits:

In March 2021, the Commission set 2021 and 2022 big game seasons, which included the removal of Units 11, 11A, 13, 14, and 18 from regular-deer-tag general seasons beginning in 2022. In September 2021, the Commission set 2022 nonresident tag limits and outfitter allocation for general-season regular deer tags, white-tailed deer tags, and elk tags in previously uncapped elk zones. Staff inadvertently included units 11, 11A, 13, 14, and 18 in the list of nonresident regular deer tag limits and units 14 and 18 for outfitter allocations. Both were subsequently approved by the Commission.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Rules addressing implementation of caps and allocation of tags in capped general hunt zones and controlled hunts appear in IDAPA 13.01.04.505, Deer and Elk Tag Allocation.

Commission authority and options for allocating general season deer and elk tags to clients of licensed outfitters appear in Idaho Code 36-408 and IDAPA 13.01.04.505.

Public Involvement Process:

Department staff continue to work closely with IOGA leadership and IOGLB staff on outfitter use data and tag allocation. Public input was collected in conjunction with prior Commission meetings

and during rulemaking and legislation related to nonresident limits and outfitter set-aside tag limits.

Justification:

Commission action is required to modify nonresident limits and outfitter allocation set by proclamation at the September 2021 meeting. Additional information is provided as an update.

Staff Recommendation:

Nonresident Regular Deer Tags: Staff recommends the Commission amend its September 1, 2021 proclamation by eliminating 2022 nonresident regular deer tags from units 11, 11A, 13, 14, and 18.

Outfitter Deer Tag Allocation: Staff recommends the Commission amend its September 1, 2021 proclamation by eliminating outfitter allocated regular deer tags in units 14 and 18 and replacing them with a new allocation of white-tailed deer outfitter tags in the same quantities by unit with a corresponding reduction in nonresident over-the-counter white-tailed deer tags.

Sample Motion: *I move that the Commission amend its September 1, 2021 proclamation as it relates to 2022 nonresident over-the-counter and outfitter-allocated regular and white-tailed deer tags in units 11, 11A, 13, 14, and 18, as specified in the tables as they now appear before us.*