

**Meeting Date:** March 18, 2021

**Agenda Item No. 5C**

**Agenda Item:** Identify a Waiting Period for Capped Zone  
Tag Sales to Resident Hunters (Action)

**Bureau Chief Approval:** TB

**Prepared by:** Michael Pearson, Chief Bureau of Administration and Toby Boudreau, Chief of Wildlife

**Background:**

In recent years, high demand in some general season hunts with limited tags has been a significant source of tag buyer congestion at Department offices, vendor locations, and on-line sales. Capped elk zone tags go on sale for residents on July 10<sup>th</sup> (or the following business day if on a weekend), and some zones have sold out in mere minutes due to their popularity. In 2017 Sawtooth Zone tag sales were moved to a different date to help manage the congestion, but other zones also began to experience similar interest and quick sale.

To address this issue, the Commission adopted a rule (effective in 2020) to allow the Commission to establish a wait period of up to five (5) days for resident controlled hunt applicants to buy general hunts with tag limits (capped zones). In 2020, the Commission acted to delay eligibility (in 2020 only) for 5 days for controlled hunt applicants to purchase capped zone elk tags.

A comparison of sales data for elk tags between 2020 and 2019 indicates that the 5-day waiting period did extend the availability of some capped zone tags in 2020. In 2020, only 3 of the 17 capped zones (excluding the Sawtooth Zone) sold out within 5 days, and in those zones the available tag times were extended by 1.5 days compared to 2019.

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:**

IDAPA 13.108.1903.252 “Delay in Eligibility for buying limited general hunt tag”:

*When the Commission limits the number of tags available for a general big game hunt, the Commission may establish a period of no more than five (5) days at the beginning of a tag sale period, during which any applicant for a controlled hunt in the same calendar year for the same species is not eligible to buy a tag for that limited hunt.*

**Public Involvement Process:**

The public had a comment opportunity in conjunction with this Commission meeting via email or in-person.

**Justification:**

Establishing a wait period for over-the-counter tags is a method for managing buyer congestion for high-demand general hunts. Administrative rule authorizes the Commission to set a wait period by proclamation.

<b>Zones with a slower sell out time in 2020 (compared with 2019)</b>					
Zone	2020		2019		Time
	Date	Time	Date	Time	Inc/Dec
Bear River Zone – B Tag	7/15/2020	10:16 AM	7/10/2019	9:36 PM	5 days, 2 hrs
Big Desert Zone - B Tag	8/22/2020	7:43 PM	7/12/2019	10:14 AM	41 days
Diamond Creek Zone – A Tag	7/12/2020	10:19 PM	7/10/2019	11:00 AM	2 days, 11 hrs
Dworshak Zone – B Tag	10/1/2020	1:23 PM	10/9/2019	1:45 PM	8 days
Pioneer Zone - B Tag	7/21/2020	7:30 AM	7/16/2019	9:46 AM	5 days, 2 hrs
Salmon Zone – B Tag	7/15/2020	12:44 PM	7/13/2019	1:08 PM	2 days
Smoky-Bennett Zone - B Tag	10/15/2020	3:18 PM	7/21/2019	8:58 PM	~3 months
<b>Zones with "no impact"</b>					
Zone	2020		2019		Time
	Date	Time	Date	Time	Inc/Dec
Sawtooth Zone – A Tag - AM SALE	7/13/2020	10:05 AM	7/12/2019	10:06 AM	
Sawtooth Zone – A Tag - PM SALE	7/13/2020	1:12 PM	7/12/2019	1:32 PM	
Sawtooth Zone – B Tag - AM SALE	7/13/2020	10:06 AM	7/12/2019	10:05 AM	
Sawtooth Zone – B Tag - PM SALE	7/13/2020	1:05 PM	7/12/2019	1:06 PM	
Elk City Zone – A Tag	9/28/2020	11:39 AM	10/12/2019	8:05 PM	Faster
Elk City Zone – B Tag	8/4/2020	5:26 PM	9/5/2019	4:53 PM	Faster
Selway Zone – B Tag	9/16/2020	3:03 PM	11/9/2019	9:27 AM	Faster
Weiser River Zone – B Tag	9/19/2020	4:02 PM	10/2/2019	2:34 PM	Faster
South Hills Zone - B Tag	N/A		7/21/2019	11:10 PM	Didn't sell out
Lolo Zone – A Tag	N/A		N/A		Didn't sell out
Lolo Zone – B Tag	N/A		N/A		Didn't sell out
Middle Fork Zone – A Tag	N/A		N/A		Didn't sell out
Middle Fork Zone – B Tag	N/A		N/A		Didn't sell out
Selway Zone – A Tag	N/A		N/A		Didn't sell out

**Staff Recommendation:**

Should the Commission decide to implement a wait period and delay eligibility for residents who apply for an elk controlled hunt in the same calendar year, staff recommends adoption of a consistent wait period for capped elk zones. A five-day wait period means a 2021 elk controlled hunt applicant would not be able to buy a resident capped zone elk tag until July 17, 2021, and a 2022 elk controlled hunt applicant would not be able to buy a resident capped zone elk tag until July 16, 2022.

**Suggested Motion:**

“I move that a wait period of five (5) days be established for eligibility in 2021 and 2022 to buy a resident capped elk zone tag for any person who applies for a controlled elk hunt in the same calendar year.”