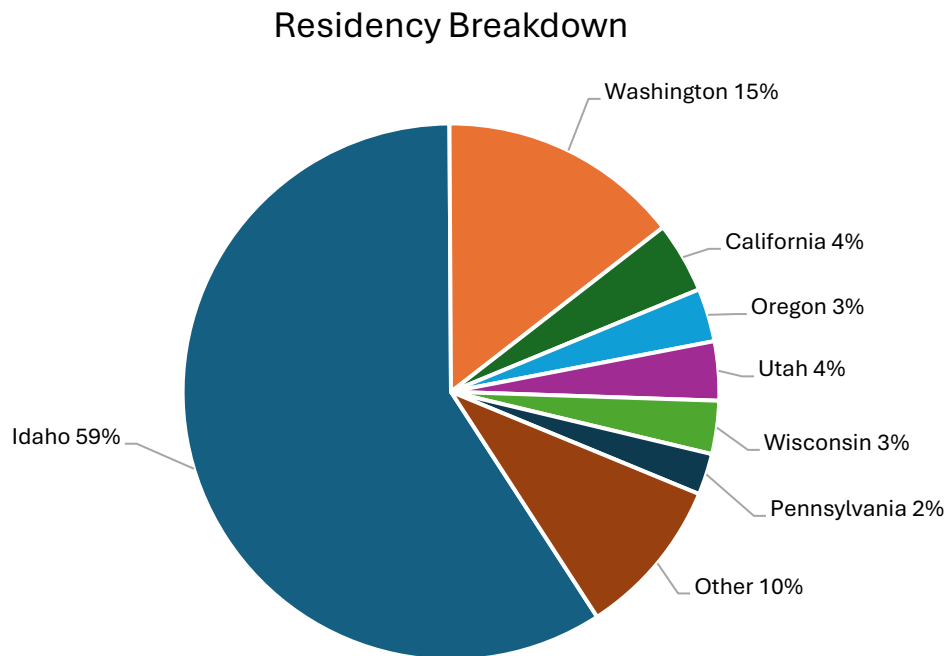


Non-Resident Tag Issuance Advisory Group
Final Public Comment Summation
1/2/2025

At the closing of public comments there were 281 unique responses received through the Non-Resident Tag Issuance Advisory Group’s feedback form on the IDFG website. The majority of responses are resident hunters from Idaho (59%), and 41% are nonresidents from other states. The largest number of nonresident responses come from Washington (15%), Utah (4%) and California (4%). Oregon and Wisconsin comprised 3% of responses, and Pennsylvania was 2%. Other state comprised less than 1%: Kentucky, Nevada, Texas, Illinois, Alaska, Colorado, New York, Indiana, Missouri, Georgia, Maryland, Nebraska, Michigan, Wyoming, North Carolina, Kansas, Iowa, and Ohio. There were also comments from Idaho outfitters including Robson Outfitters, Shattuck Creek Outfitters, and Hamilton Outfitter.

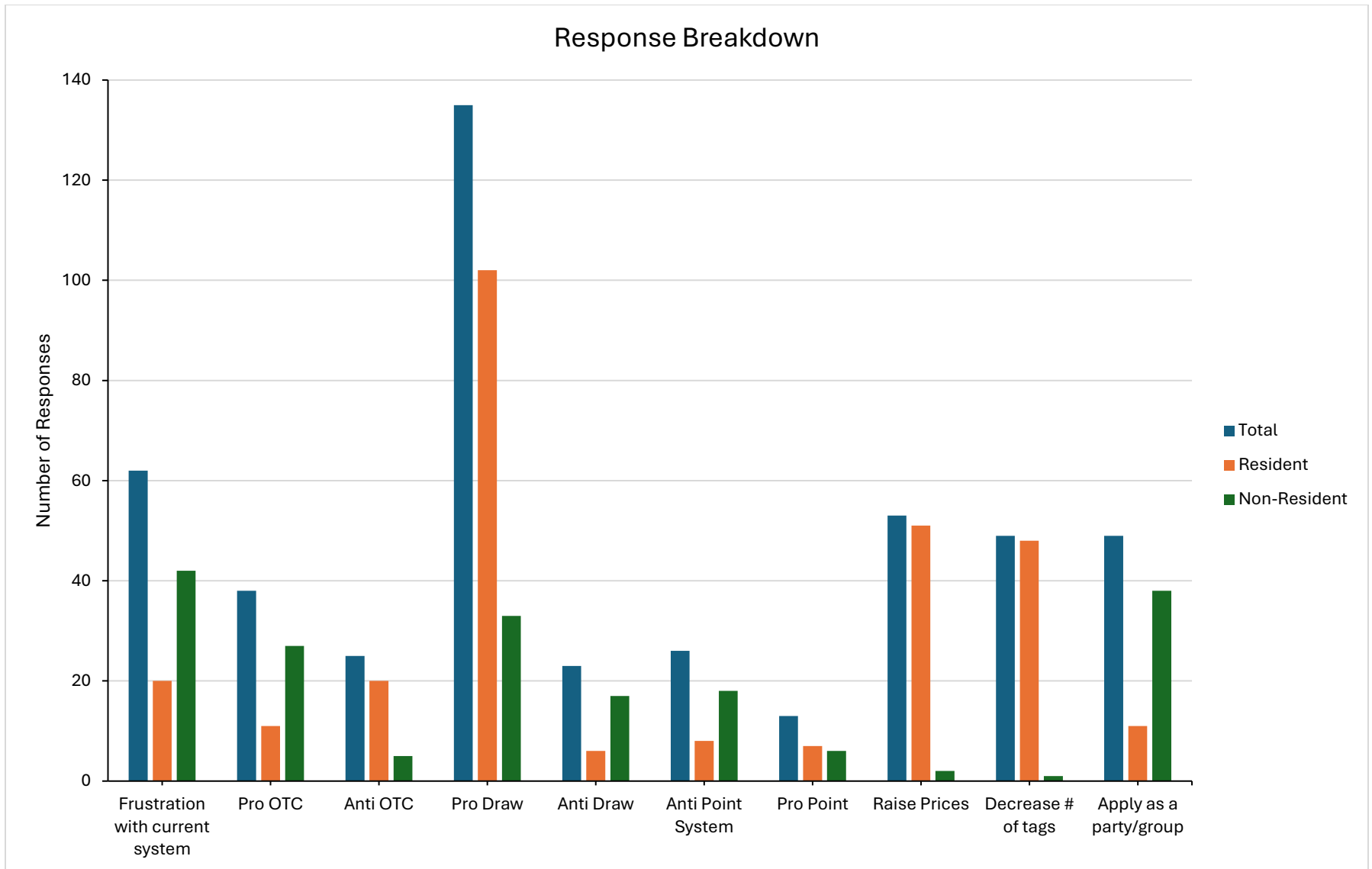


Responses:

*RESULTS QUALIFIERS: IDFG **only** marked responses if they specifically indicated that they are **for or against** draws or OTC. Responses that **only** had suggestions for modifying the current OTC **weren't** counted as pro-OTC, and cases where hunters were pro-draw and anti-OTC were marked in **both** categories. Please be aware of the limitations of the data as it is being represented. In general, the results presented capture the general flavor of responses, but it might not accurately convey the number of people that are happy with the current system **if** there were some modifications. While this is a summation of received public feedback, members of the Non-Resident Tag Issuance Advisory Group were still encouraged to read the comments submitted by*

members of the public to fully understand and appreciate the breadth, depth, and nuance of perspectives on this topic.

In general, many hunters cited their frustration with the current system for a variety of reasons including the online application process, perceived unfairness with in-person or vendor tag accessibility vs online, the in-person ability to purchase tags for other people, and the inability to apply for tags online as a hunt party. There was also concern with increased demand on the resource leading to overhunting and lower wildlife quality/health, and perceptions that changes to tag sales were primarily to increase the Department revenues. The bulk of responses were pro-draw (n=135), with the majority of those individuals being residents (n=102). Non-residents are mostly split between pro-draw (n=33) and pro-OTC (n=27). Residents also have strong responses towards increasing the price of non-resident tags (n=51) and reducing the overall number of non-resident tags (n=48), many citing a goal of reducing the total number of non-resident hunters. Only one non-resident hunter suggested increasing prices or reducing the number of tags.



This figure shows some of the most common responses received through the Non-Resident Tag Issuance Advisory Group feedback form on the IDFG website. The Resident (orange) and Non-Resident (green) responses sum to the Total (blue).

Recurring Themes:

The ability to apply as a group/party comes up frequently, both in draw and current OTC comments (n=49). Hunters would like the opportunity to hunt within their own group or with family, either by having the same place in line or adopting a permit process so groups can hunt together. There are some concerns about larger group hunting parties, and most suggest a cap of 4-6 people within a group.

In-person sales and vendors are a sticking point for some, especially with the use of proxy purchasers. Some hunters explicitly say their preference for a draw is in-person hunters purchasing multiple (10+) tags for others. Some suggestions are to limit the number of tags an in-person buyer can purchase, limit the purchases to 1 other hunter or direct dependents/youths, or ensuring the purchaser is part of the hunting party. This is similar to anecdotal comments about Outfitters “gaming” the system by having proxies stand in line to buy additional NR tags to the outfitter tags. There are also concerns about outside (and out of state) vendors, such as Cabela’s, providing an unfair advantage to online sales with a rush on preferred units. Some ask for a delay in vendor sales.

Other reasons hunters are for a draw are to specifically make it more difficult or limit opportunity for non-resident hunters, and also suggest raising prices or decreasing the total number of tags. There is also concern about deer and elk populations not being able to rebound from increased hunting pressure. Resident hunters mention keeping OTC for residents a priority.

There is an overall frustration with the online process. Many cite issues of people logging in from multiple devices or the use of bots that lead to a perceived increase in wait times and incorrect estimates of positions in line. Some suggestions center around requiring hunters to be logged into the portal and requiring the use of their sportsman ID before assigning a waitlist number to avoid multiple logins.

If the tag sale moves to a draw, the majority of hunters have a strong opposition to “preference points” or a point system (n=26). The perception is you will never draw a good unit due to point creep, and point to New Mexico or Alaska as models for a drawing system. Others suggest limiting the number of successful draws for a specific time period, such as only being able to draw a tag once every 1-3 years.

Comments from Outfitters generally center around concern for reducing the total number of outfitter tags and ensuring that outfitters have access to non-resident tags. Some suggestions are to separate the outfitter tags from the non-resident allotment or to increase the number of outfitter tags. Outfitters often cite the added economic benefits that the outfitting industry brings to Idaho. Comments from the general public suggest frustration with outfitters accessing non-resident tags and “gaming” the system, and a wish for them to be removed or reduced from the tag sale.

Sample of Public Suggestions for a Future System *(copied verbatim from feedback forms):*

- You may only purchase a tag for yourself or for your dependent youth when purchasing from an in-person vendor. Too many people are buying for other people.

- Remove the things that tilt the playing field in favor of outfitters and people with friends in ID, online purchases only, or in person only, not both, and only one tag per person in line, no proxy purchases.
- My recommendation is that any system that is used be tied directly to an individual's sportsman's Id. The current system allows an individual to generate multiple random numbers. This is unfair to those individuals that follow the rules and only enter the queue once. It would also be nice to have some type of group application so that I can hunt with other members of my immediate family.
- A draw system with possible "preference points" accumulated each year nonresidents fail to draw....At least accumulating preference points you might have a chance after a few years.
- If you go to draw put non resident youth in with the resident draw.
- Each account number should only be able to log in on once device online. Multiple devices per hunter seems to bog the system down.
- In-person sales should be limited to 1-2 tags per buyer. One person buying 10 or more tags seems unfair.
- Draw system only for key units (54, 40)
- Minimums on archery experience for archery sale
- The State needs to remove the refund clause or dramatically reduce the percentage that can be refunded for a tag being turned in. People use Idaho as a "plan C" and all it's doing is taking away from others ability to hunt a state that they want to commit to hunting every year. A 25% max refund for returned tags by a specific date, after which, you forfeit the cost of the application/tag/license.
- Permit only for non residents. This would give us the option to apply as a group and then if we draw we all hunt together in the unit we want to hunt in or not at all.
- Stop the authorized sale by vendors to non-resident customers until 24 hours past the opening time. Force all license to be purchased through the department's website for that first 24 hours before it is released to vendors. Residents are purchasing NR tags in person at vendors for friends out of state at high levels based on first hand talks I've had with hunters in the field describing how they had friends doing this for them.
- Make everyone login to their portal BEFORE being assigned a waiting list number. Everyone knows now that you can have multiple IP addresses waiting in line for you thus, clogging the system and skewing the numbers of actual customers online.
- Authorize party hunts of one other member when purchasing tags. Folks coming from out of state generally don't come alone. Allowing a person to purchase ONLY ONE additional tag for their pre-designated hunting partner would cause less strain on the system and increase hunter satisfaction.
- Consider limiting outfitters ability to buy tags for others if you want more hunters to have more chances to get a tag. Outfitters although already allocated a certain amount of non-resident tags also have people at fish and game division offices purchasing licenses for already booked clients - this should not be allowed.
- NO requirement to purchase a hunting license during the application process
- I recommend opening in person sales several hours before online sales. I'd allow in person sales of the same tags for a hunting party where a member of the hunting party is physically

present. I'd require the person buying the tags to be in the hunting party and all members of the party to get the same tags. This would prevent hunters from paying non-hunters to stand in line for them.

- The other option is to break the tags out over 3 days. Day one could be just archery elk, day two any weapon elk and day three would be the deer tags. This way at least you know you are only competing with others looking for the same tag as you and not in the system with everyone.
- One option is to make it so that you can only draw a tag once in a designated timeframe. Don't make it a once in a lifetime hunt but once every 3-5 years.
- To even the playing fields for resident hunters, I think it should be mandatory that all non-residents retain a outfitter/guide to hunt big game in the state of Idaho.
- IDFG should consider at the initial offering of Nonresident Elk and Deer tags, using different sale dates. Possibly a week apart.
- I feel non-residents with lifetime Idaho hunting licenses should be able to pay instate fees but tags should come from the non-resident pool. Since they are no longer citizens of Idaho, I don't think they should draw tags from the same pool as the wildlife is in trust to the citizens of the state, not former citizens. I know of several out of staters that are claiming residency in Idaho to get the lifetime tag. They have a residence on paper in Idaho but don't actually live here.
- Idaho needs to follow suit and delay give residents the advantage of a 3-7 day start on hunting season before non-residents can hunt, they both end the same day, neighboring states like Wyoming are implementing these types of rules and Idaho should follow suit.
- The telephone Queue for the out of state application process can be frustrating (holding for hour(s) only to find hunts no longer available). Displaying the available tags for those waiting in the queue is value-added.
- If you go to a draw is there any way we can have a non-resident with immediate family resident's category that assures families can hunt together. Alaska has different rules (pertaining to guide requirements) for immediate family non-residents.
- Like the waiting period after drawing a controlled hunt antlered tag, implement a one year waiting period after receiving a nonresident general tag. If the quota isn't filled, have a second draw similar to our current controlled hunt application. If tags are then left over, sell on a first come first serve basis. If demand increases, extend the waiting period to two years.
- Make similar to capped zone tags
- Non residents should not be allowed hunting in wilderness areas without a guide. It would help our guides and protect our wilderness areas. Non residents should have to draw tags no over the counter tags. Residents should be allowed to purchase none resident tags as they go on sale in December. Less tags better hunting increase fees I think the majority would agree.
- If i had a say on Non Resident tags i would suggest a few things. One, shorten non resident hunting seasons to allow residents to hunt without non resident pressure. Two, make more non resident tags outfitter allocated tags. Three, make all non resident tags draw tags. Four, raise prices of non resident tags a decrease the amount of non resident tags allowed.

- We urge you to explore solutions that ensure outfitters have reliable access to nonresident tags. Such measures would allow us to continue contributing to Idaho's economy, preserve our hunting heritage, and expand our businesses responsibly.

Sample of Public Feedback Quotes (*copied verbatim from feedback forms*):

- All non-resident tags should be controlled hunt draws only. I strongly oppose OTC tags for non residents. Likewise, all nonresident tag prices should be greatly increased.
- Out of state hunters are ruining hunting in Idaho. Fees need to be increased and draw only. Idaho has grown enough with its own residents it's time to protect our culture. It is also time to reign in out of state hunters paying guides.
- If I am being honest, have no real preference for how the non-resident tag allocation is conducted. UNLESS the 'slippery slope' argument comes to fruition and some time after going to a draw for non-residents, a draw only system is implemented for us residents. Because of this concern, I am against a draw system for non-residents.
- I feel the current system is a good one, it just needs some cleaning up.
- [I] would be ok with the way it is if you would just have people log in some how so every person isn't on 5 devices. Once they get their tag or their tag is sold out they just set their phone down, but the problem is it still holds their place in line and then when it goes in to buy there is no one there.
- I would like to see tags stay OTC. I've hunted Idaho since I was 12 years old and hate the thought of losing that opportunity. My suggestion would be to limit "in person" OTC tag purchases to the tag holder and next of kin. This would solve the problem of people buying 10 tags at a time in person as I've witnessed. I truly hope Idaho doesn't go to a draw system. The tag is worth the cost of a plane ticket to buy in person if that's what I have to continue doing.
- If Idaho is going to keep costs that high for NRs, at least open it up to a draw so that people can apply on their own time, rather than forcing everyone into this waiting room at 10:00AM on a certain date. It's already a draw, just without any of the benefits of being able to plan your application and hunts, if successful.
- Idaho will have to change now period due to Colorado (the only other over the counter elk tag state) going to draw for all out of state elk tags. If Idaho does not change, the system will get completely hammered with hunters trying to get a tag.
- With all of the advertised "strategy" businesses like Randy Newberg, OnX, GoHunt, etc., non-residents can compete that way.
- I want to propose a resident sponsor system, where non residents can get tags by a resident registering them as their hunting partners. A maximum of 2 people could be allocated
- One huge point of concern is the ability of outfitters or proxies to travel to Idaho to purchase tags in person and forego the online "que" ordering that everyone else is subject to. This is a prejudicial practice at worst, an oversight at best, and subjects the online portion of nonresident hunters to stalled electronic lines for fewer tags because they've already been

gobbled up by outfitters greedy to take more than their fair share, much like buying 100 milkshakes for your friends in the back of the line at a carnival.

- I don't like limited entry drawings but i feel it would be better in this situation. That way we can apply as a group.
- I'd require the person buying the tags to be in the hunting party and all members of the party to get the same tags. This would prevent hunters from paying non-hunters to stand in line for them.
- There should be a drawing for tags for non-residents, with party applications allowed
- Somehow, the 437 tags allotted for unit 76 sold out in 18 minutes this year. Yet, according to the website, only 120 customers had been served in that 18 minutes. How does that work? In a randomized system where you have to wait for your number to be called, how is it physically possible for 437 tags in one unit to be found, clicked on and credit card info inputted in 18 minutes, especially when you don't allow group hunting? That means 437 individual hunters supposedly choose unit 76 in 18 minutes. One cannot help but to suspect foul play here as it seems statistically impossible. It makes people think that these 437 tags were all "spoken for" before the drawing even started. What other explanation could there possibly be?
- I have been hunting with my brother for too many years. He is a resident of Idaho, but I am not. This was not a problem in the past, but with the new system, I did not get a low enough number to get a tag last year. As I get older, the number of hunts where I can hike up and down those Idaho hills is getting fewer. There should be a way that a resident could purchase a tag for a non-resident relative to hunt as a party.
- I wasted way to much time on a very poorly run system. I'd rather waste my money trying for a lottery draw.
- Thank you for being one of the only states left with an OTC system for nonresidents and all the support the IDFG has to give to the program. I hope to see it continue and hunt Idaho with my friends and family for many more years.
- Each year I log in to get a place in line in the thousands and call 800 number every 5 minutes with no answer. I hear stories of the long lines at Cabelas Utah locations (how is it fair that Utah residents buy nonresident Idaho license five minutes from where they live).
- The biggest opportunity Idaho has with nonresident hunters is to adopt an approach where applicants feel like they have the same opportunity as everyone else in getting a license.