2024 District 2 Hunting Prospects

Spokane, Lincoln, and Whitman counties

Washington Department of FISH & WILDLIFE

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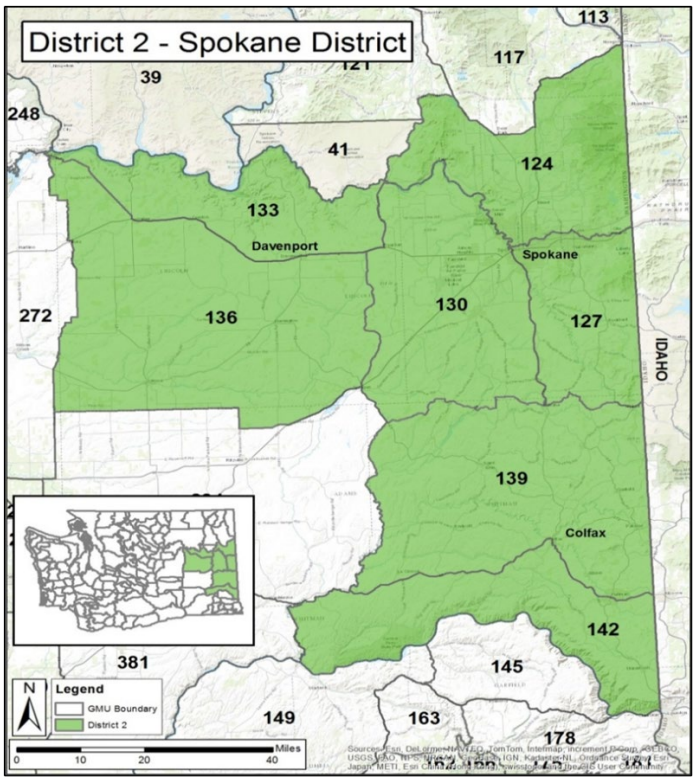
District 2 general overview

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) District 2 is in eastern Washington, bordering Idaho, and covers Lincoln, Whitman, and Spokane counties. Game management units (GMUs) in District 2 include 124 (Mount Spokane), 127 (Mica Peak), 130 (Cheney), 133 (Roosevelt), 136 (Harrington), 139 (Steptoe), and 142 (Almota) (Figure 1). Most of the district is in private ownership, so hunters are highly encouraged to secure access prior to the hunting season or applying for special permits.

The geography of District 2 includes the edge of the Rocky Mountain Range in the east, the Columbia Basin in the west, and the Channeled Scablands and Palouse in between. This diverse geography supports a wide range of habitats that include mixed coniferous forests dominated by Douglas fir, western larch, and Ponderosa pine, scattered aspen groves, scabland, sagebrush steppe, grasslands, and extensive agricultural lands. Topography varies from ~500 feet above sea level along the Snake River in the south to the 5883-foot Mount Spokane in the north. Dominant river drainages include the Spokane, Palouse, Columbia, and Snake rivers.

District 2 is best known for its deer hunting opportunities, including white-tailed deer in the Spokane and Palouse agricultural lands and mule deer in the Channeled Scablands and breaks of the Snake River. Quality hunting opportunities also exist for other game species, including pheasant and elk, if hunters have secured access to private lands. Moose and bighorn sheep hunters can enjoy quality hunting if they are selected for special permit hunts and if they have secured private land access prior to applying.

Figure 1. General location and game management units (GMUs) for WDFW District 2.



Chronic wasting disease

WDFW recently confirmed a case of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in the Fairwood community of north Spokane County in District 2. CWD is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) that infects members of the Cervidae 'deer' family and is fatal in infected animals. TSEs are caused by malformed proteins called prions. There is currently no cure for CWD and it can severely impact cervid populations if it becomes widespread. CWD can only be confirmed through testing of lymph nodes or brain tissue. Testing will be more important than ever to prevent the spread of the disease to other areas of eastern Washington and across the region and state. Information on how to have harvested animals tested, and other steps WDFW is taking to prevent the spread of CWD, is at WDFW.WA.GOV/CWD. New emergency rules were adopted to reduce the spread of CWD, including mandatory CWD testing for all cervids (deer, elk, or moose) harvested or salvaged within GMUs 124, 127 or 130. The emergency rules also made it unlawful to use bait for hunting deer, elk, or moose within those same GMUs.

Be aware of fire conditions

Wherever you choose to hunt, be sure to check on fire conditions, access restrictions, and other emergency rules before you head out. In addition to potential wildfires, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

and WDFW may be conducting prescribed burns and/or forest-thinning projects in your hunt area. For more information, visit:

- Wildfire status updates (InciWeb – Incident Information System)
- Northwest Interagency Coordination Center
- WDFW Wildlife Areas
- WDFW fire restrictions and closures

Elk

General information, management goals, and population status

All elk that occur in District 2 are Rocky Mountain elk and belong to the Spokane sub-herd of the Selkirk elk herd. The Selkirk herd originated in Pend Oreille County and has expanded its range over the last 40 years to this area. As elk habitat in District 2 continues to be lost to agricultural conversion and urban sprawl, WDFW's goal is to maintain the population at its current level (roughly 1000–1500 elk) while limiting agricultural damage and conflict within exurban (areas outside the denser inner suburban area, at the edge of a metropolitan area) areas. Consequently, an "any elk" harvest is offered for the general season in all GMUs in District 2. Most of the land in the district is in private ownership, so managing this population requires landowner tolerance and cooperation. Elk in this herd can be highly mobile and difficult to locate, so learning their behavior and gaining access to numerous private lands will greatly increase your chance of success.

Currently, WDFW does not conduct formal population surveys to monitor elk populations in most of District 2. Rather, harvest data, opportunistic surveys, sightings, and damage complaints are used to indicate population trends. The exception to this is the Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge located in GMU 130 (Cheney). Aerial surveys have been conducted on and near Turnbull over the last 15 years to obtain herd size and composition data. The survey area only covers a small portion of the Spokane sub-herd range; it is designed to inform management decisions for the Refuge and is not likely representative of the entire area. WDFW's herd composition objective is to maintain a ratio of 15 to 35 bulls per 100 cows pre-hunt and/or 12 to 20 bulls per 100 cows post-hunt. The most recent pre-hunt aerial survey of Turnbull and the surrounding area within GMU 130 was in 2020; the survey found the bull to cow ratio to be well above this management objective. Also based on the survey, 2020 calf production was above average, with a calf to cow ratio of 60 calves per 100 cows. Combined data sources for the entirety of District 2 over the last ten years indicate an overall stable population with some local populations declining and others increasing. For more details on the status of elk in Washington, refer to WDFW's most recent Game Status and Trend Report. Also available is a general how-to guide for elk hunting entitled "The Basics of Elk Hunting in Washington."

Which GMU should elk hunters hunt?

This question does not have an easy answer, because it depends on access to private land, hunting method, and the type of hunting experience desired. For archery hunters, GMUs 124 and 127 provide the best terrain and generally contain more forested land, irrigated agriculture, small, developed lakes, and riparian areas. The terrain in GMUs 136–142 is better suited for muzzleloader and modern firearm, with open landscapes dominated by shrubsteppe, scablands, and dryland farming.

Most of the district's elk harvest (25 to 50%) is usually in GMU 130, though a high proportion consistently occurs in GMUs 124 and 127 as well. Hunters who gain access to private lands in GMUs 127 and 130 have often had the highest success, though success in GMU 133 has also been increasing over the past few years. In GMU 130, hunters likely benefit from animals moving on and off Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge during the season. Elk are often targeted by nearby landowners due to seasonal crop, fence, and haystack damage. GMU 124 (Mt. Spokane) sustains the greatest hunting pressure, with one-third of the total elk hunters in District 2. As a result, overall hunter success is lower there, although the unit periodically produces one of the higher harvests of mature 6-point bulls. Private timber companies, especially Inland Empire Paper (IEP), offer public access in this unit with a paid permit. Refer to IEP's Recreational Use webpage for their rules and regulations. Hunters should be aware that motorized access may be limited or closed completely on IEP and other timber company lands due to road conditions, logging operations, or fire danger. Hunters are advised to check closures and restrictions before setting out. Axxess Recreation Management, the property access manager for IEP, provides access updates online. Also be aware that GMU 124 contains several County Parks, Conservation Areas, and State Parks, and they do not allow hunting. In addition, Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge in GMU 130 is NOT open for hunting except for Turnbull special permit holders.

The information in Table 1 provides a quick and general assessment of how GMUs compare regarding harvest, hunter numbers, and hunter success during general modern firearm, archery, and muzzleloader elk seasons. The values presented are the five-year averages for each statistic. The table also summarizes the number of elk harvested per square mile and hunters per square mile to account for the variation in sizes between GMUs.

Each GMU was ranked for elk harvested/mile^2, hunters/mile^2, and hunter success rates during the general season. The three ranking values were then summed to produce a final rank sum, the lower the score the better. Comparisons are most straightforward for modern firearm because seasons are the same across all GMUs. However, when choosing which GMU to hunt, differences that should be taken into consideration are:

1. In addition to the early general archery season in all GMUs, there is a late archery season in GMUs 124 & 127.
2. In addition to the early general muzzleloader season in all GMUs, there is a late muzzleloader season in GMUs 130-142.
3. There is a late Antlerless Only Master Hunter season for all weapon types in GMUs 127-142.

4. There are considerable differences in the sizes of GMUs, so looking at only total harvest or hunter numbers is not always a fair comparison.

Tables 1a, 1b, and 1c provide rank sum analysis for a quick and general summary of how harvest, hunter numbers, and hunter success rates compare among GMUs during general modern, archery, and muzzleloader elk seasons. As a generalization, the lower the rank, the better the overall elk hunting opportunity is within a GMU. Data presented are based on a five-year average (2019-2023).

Table 1a. Modern Firearm

GMU	Size (mi^2)	% public land open to hunting	Total Harvest	Harvest per mi^2	Harvest Rank	Total Hunters	Hunters per mi^2	Hunter Density Rank	Hunter Success	Hunter Success Rank	Rank Sum
124	771	4%	50	.06	2	541	.70	7	9%	5	**14**
127	509	1%	58	.11	1	307	.6	6	19%	2	**9**
130	940	7%	52	.06	2	303	.32	5	17%	3	**10**
133	555	6%	18	.03	3	124	.22	4	14%	4	**11**
136	1586	11%	4	.00	6	45	.03	1	9%	5	**12**
139	1327	3%	18	.01	5	130	.10	2	14%	4	**11**
142	771	8%	18	.02	4	91	.12	3	20%	1	**8**

Table 1b. Archery

GMU	Size (mi^2)	% public land open to hunting	Total Harvest	Harvest per mi^2	Harvest Rank	Total Hunters	Hunters per mi^2	Hunter Density Rank	Hunter Success	Hunter Success Rank	Rank Sum
124	771	4%	14	.02	1	226	.29	5	6%	4	**10**
127	509	1%	12	.02	1	153	.30	6	8%	3	**10**
130	940	7%	11	.01	2	67	.07	4	16%	2	**8**
133	555	6%	2	.00	3	15	.03	3	16%	2	**8**
136	1586	11%	0	.00	3	6	.00	1	0%	5	**9**
139	1327	3%	4	.00	3	23	.02	2	16%	2	**7**
142	771	8%	4	.01	2	18	.02	2	24%	1	**5**

Table 1c. Muzzleloader

GMU	Size (mi²)	% public land open to hunting	Total Harvest	Harvest per mi²	Harvest Rank	Total Hunters	Hunters per mi²	Hunter Density Rank	Hunter Success	Hunter Success Rank	Rank Sum
124	771	4%	11	.01	4	95	.12	4	11%	7	**15**
127	509	1%	14	.03	2	71	.14	5	20%	2	**9**
130	940	7%	39	.04	1	248	.26	7	16%	4	**12**
133	555	6%	12	.02	3	92	.17	6	12%	6	**15**
136	1586	11%	3	.00	5	18	.01	1	14%	5	**11**
139	1327	3%	21	.02	3	115	.09	3	18%	3	**9**
142	771	8%	9	.01	4	44	.06	2	21%	1	**7**

Elk areas

Most of the special permit elk hunts available in District 2 occur in Elk Area 1015, which is located within Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge. Turnbull special permit hunts were created in 2010 to address damage to aspen stands on the Refuge and address damage complaints from landowners in the area. Except for those selected for the disabled hunt, these are walk-in only hunts, and the area open to hunt is limited and assigned by Refuge staff. Permittees receive detailed information from Turnbull on their assigned hunt area, parking, and other regulations. In the first several years of the hunt, one Any Bull permit (any weapon type) and 62 Antlerless permits were offered. Beginning in 2023, youth hunters were allowed to harvest a Spike or Antlerless elk. For the 2024 season, there are 57 total permits: 1 Any Bull, 3 Spike-only, 47 Antlerless, and 6 Spike or Antlerless. Permits include each weapon type as well as hunts for youth, master hunters, and hunters with disabilities. Several hunters did not hunt or failed to report on their permit in 2023; those that did averaged 14% success for antlerless hunts, compared to the previous 5-year average of 12%. The Any Bull permittee harvested a 5-point bull, and none of the Spike hunters who reported were successful. For more detailed harvest information, view the 2023 Elk Individual Hunts. For more information about elk management in the Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, visit Turnbull - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

To address winter property damage in the area, there are also several late-season raffle permits and one WDFW special permit offered on Columbia Plateau Wildlife Management Association (CPWMA) properties in areas near Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge. Refer to the Private Lands Program section for more information on acreage enrolled in Private Land Access programs, and the CPWMA website for details on their hunt management.

What to expect during the 2024 season

General season elk harvest in District 2 has averaged 215 antlered and 166 antlerless elk per year over the last 5 years. In the 2023 season, 30% of bulls harvested were 6-point or better, and 27% of bulls were 5-point. Across all GMUs, elk hunter success during the general season has averaged 14% over the last 10 years, and hunter effort (days/kill) has averaged 36 days/kill. These numbers vary widely by GMU. A good predictor of future harvest during general seasons is the recent trend in the harvest and catch per unit effort (CPUE) or its inverse, days per kill. Figures 2 and 3 provide trend data for these statistics by GMU and are intended to provide hunters with the best information possible to make an informed decision on where to hunt. These numbers are highly variable between GMUs, so pay attention to the scale of each chart as they are not all the same.

Elk harvest in GMUs 139 (Steptoe) and 142 (Almota) has been highly variable over the last few years (Figure 3). Timing and access to private lands will be the key to successful elk hunting in these GMUs, as elk likely move back and forth between Idaho and Washington. Complaints of agricultural damage have risen, especially in areas where crops have been recently converted to legumes. Scattered groups of 20–100 elk have been reported causing damage in several areas including Fairfield south to Tekoa in GMU 127, the area from Dusty east to Palouse, south to Uniontown, and along the Snake River breaks in GMUs 139 and 142, and from Tyler near the Lincoln/Spokane County border to Sprague and north to Edwall in GMU 130. Additionally, there has been an increase in reported crop damage by 30–60 elk along the river breaks in northern GMU 133 in recent years; this GMU has also seen a steady increase in harvest over the past 5 years. Herds of 30 and 160+ elk also frequent private lands in the Deer Park area bordering GMUs 124 and 117.

Success depends heavily on the work the hunter is willing to put in to obtain access to private property. There are nearly 150 properties enrolled in WDFW's private land hunting access programs in District 2. Many of these are built around upland game and deer hunting, however some also support elk hunting, so opportunities exist for elk hunters who do their research. For locations of these properties, visit our Hunt Planner Web map. For more detailed harvest information, refer to District 2 - 2023 Elk General Season Harvest Reports.

Figure 2. GMUs 124 – 130. Left column: Ten-year trends in general season elk harvest by weapon type: modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). Right column: Ten-year trends in general season hunter effort (measured in days per kill) by weapon type: modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). Note the difference in scales for each GMU.

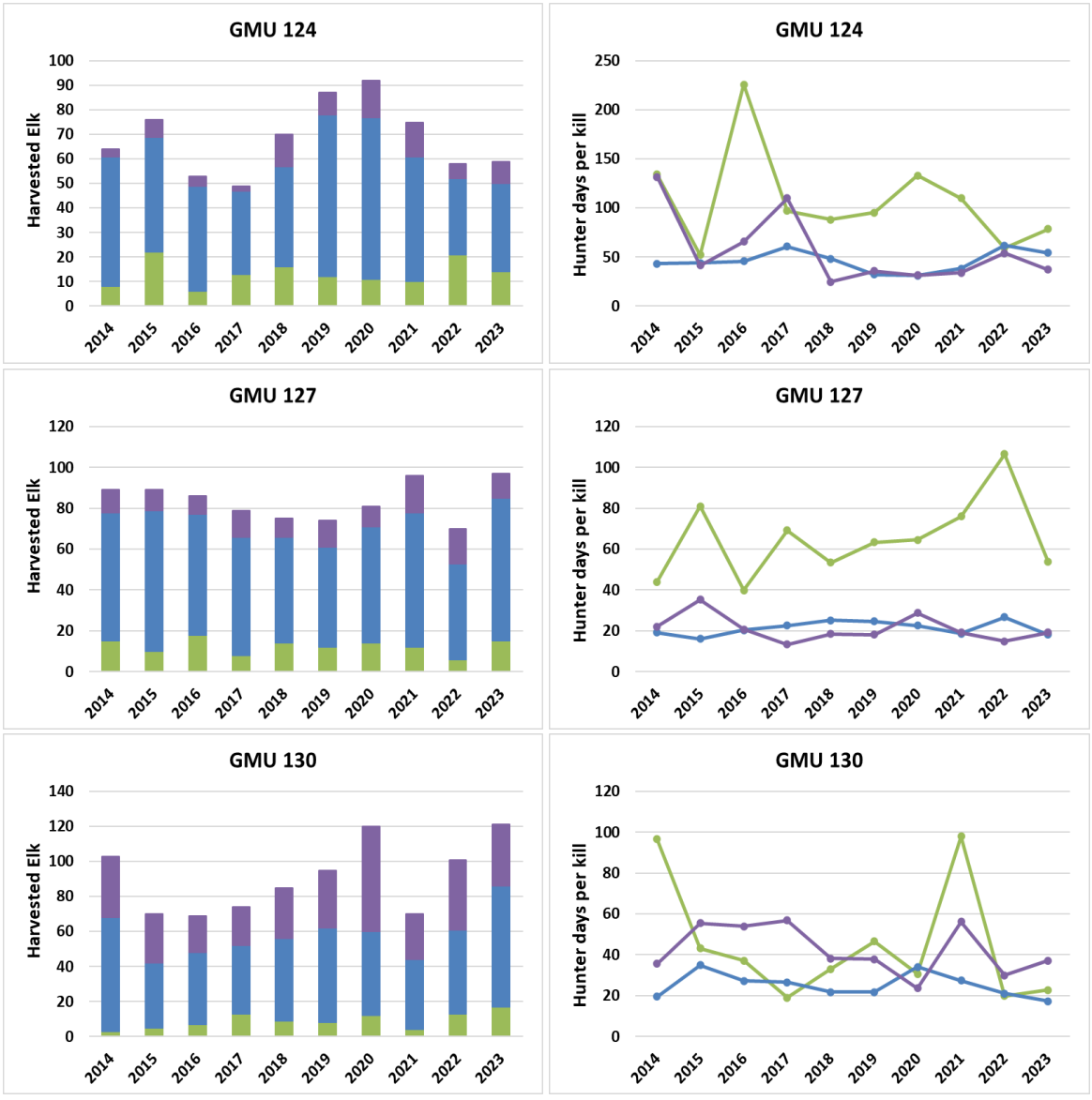
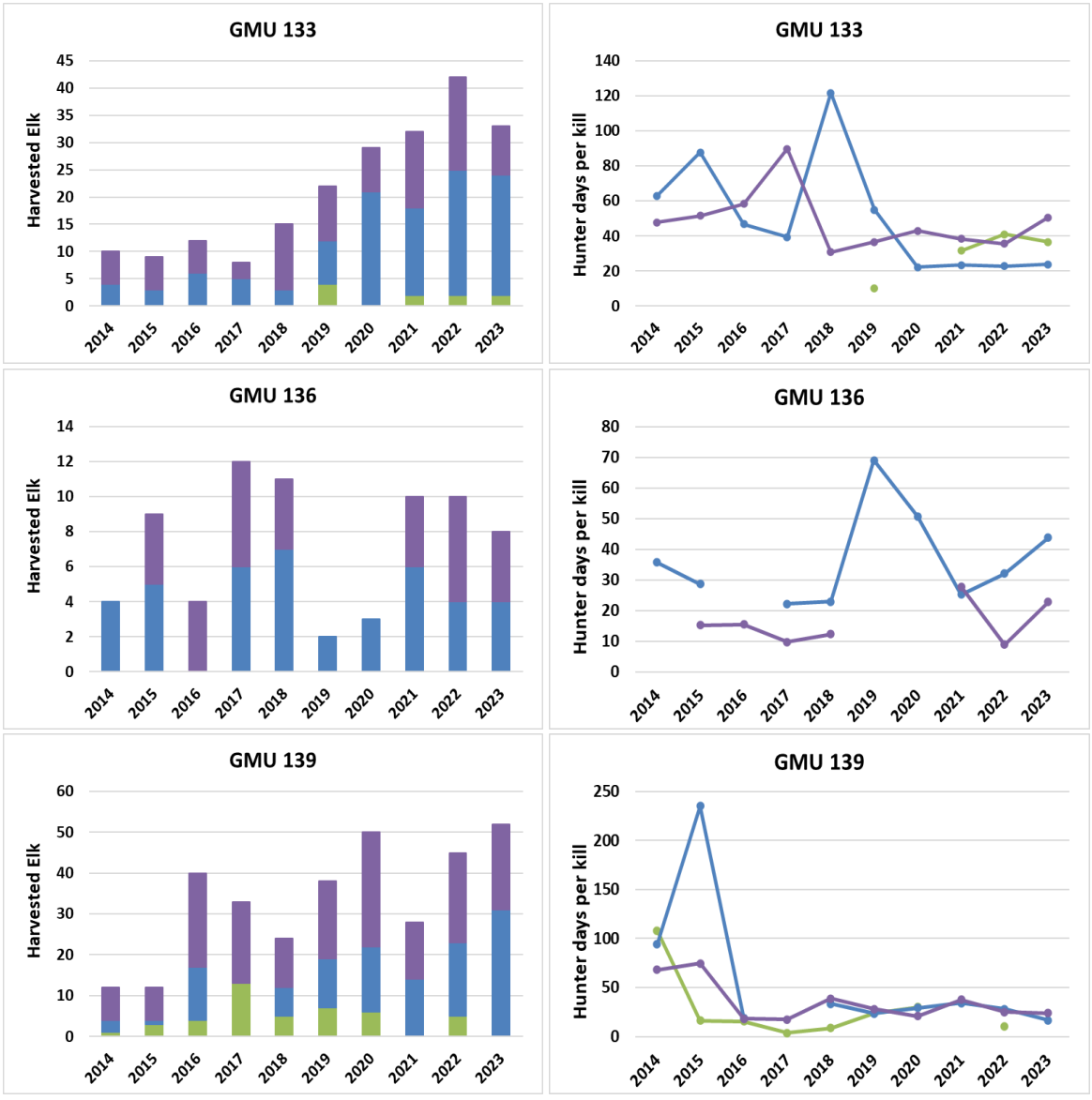
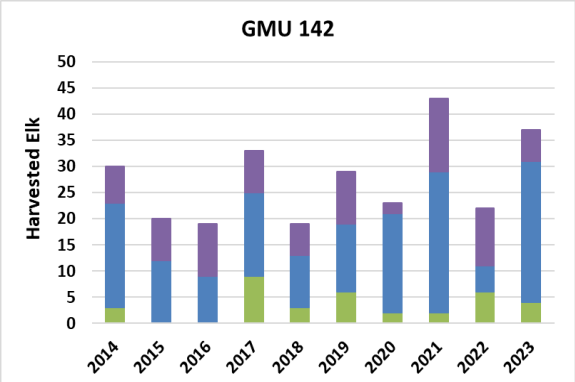
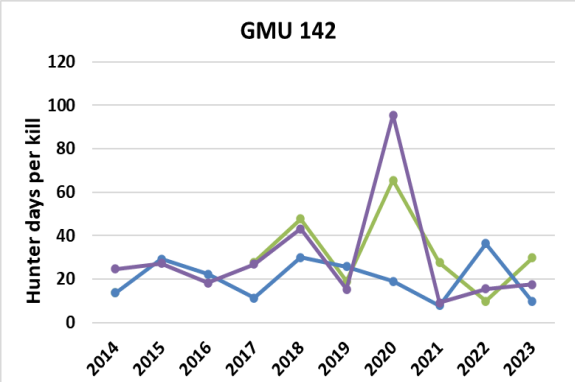


Figure 3. GMUs 133 – 142. Left column: Ten-year trends in general season elk harvest by weapon type: modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). Right column: Ten-year trends in general season hunter effort (measured in days per kill) by weapon type: modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). Note the difference in scales for each GMU.







Elk hoof disease (treponeme bacteria)

Since 2008, reports of elk with deformed, broken, or missing hooves have increased in southwest Washington, with some observations in other areas west of the Cascade Range. While elk are susceptible to many conditions which result in limping or hoof deformities, the prevalence and severity of this new affliction suggested something altogether different. WDFW diagnostic research (2009–2014), in conjunction with a panel of scientific advisors, found that these hoof abnormalities were strongly associated with treponeme bacteria, known to cause a hoof disease of cattle, sheep, and goats called digital dermatitis. Although digital dermatitis has affected the livestock industry for decades, Treponeme-Associated Hoof Disease (TAHD) is the first known instance of digital dermatitis in a wild ungulate. The disease is currently concentrated in southwestern Washington where prevalence is highest in Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, and western Lewis County. The disease is also present at lower prevalence in elk herds that are distant and discrete from the core affected area, including three counties east of the Cascades. It has **NOT** been detected in the Selkirk herd to date.

While many questions remain about the disease, several aspects of TAHD in elk are clear:

- **Susceptibility:** The disease appears to be highly infectious among elk, but there is no evidence that it affects humans. TAHD can affect hooves of any elk, young or old, male or female.
- **Hooves only:** Tests show the disease is limited to animals' hooves and does not affect their meat or organs. If the meat looks normal and if hunters harvest, process and cook it practicing good hygiene, it is probably safe to eat.
- **No treatment:** There is no vaccine to prevent the disease, nor are there any proven options for treating it in the field. Similar diseases in livestock are treated by cleaning and bandaging their hooves and giving them foot baths, but that is not a realistic option for free-ranging elk.

How hunters can help:

- **Hunting in areas where TAHD is uncommon (GMUs in the 100, 200, and 300 series):** If you harvest an elk with abnormal looking hooves (for example, overgrown or broken hoof claws or skin lesions), please keep the hooves and report your observation to your local WDFW regional office. While there are several conditions other than TAHD that may cause hoof deformities, we may want to examine the hooves and/or arrange for diagnostic testing.

- **Hunting in TAHD prevalent areas (GMUs in the 400, 500, and 600 series):**
    - If you harvest an elk, remove the hooves, and leave them onsite.
    - Help WDFW track TAHD by reporting observations of healthy or limping elk and dead elk with hoof deformities on the Department's online reporting form.
    - Clean shoes and tires: Anyone who hikes or drives off-road in an area known to be affected can help minimize the risk of spreading the disease to new areas by removing all mud from their shoes and tires before leaving the area.

WDFW is working with scientists, veterinarians, outdoor organizations, tribal governments, and others to better understand and manage TAHD. Additional information on TAHD and the west-side incentive program to harvest elk with TAHD, can be found on pages 65–66 of the Big Game Hunting Pamphlet.

Deer

A mule deer doe standing in a grassy field. Photo by WDFW.

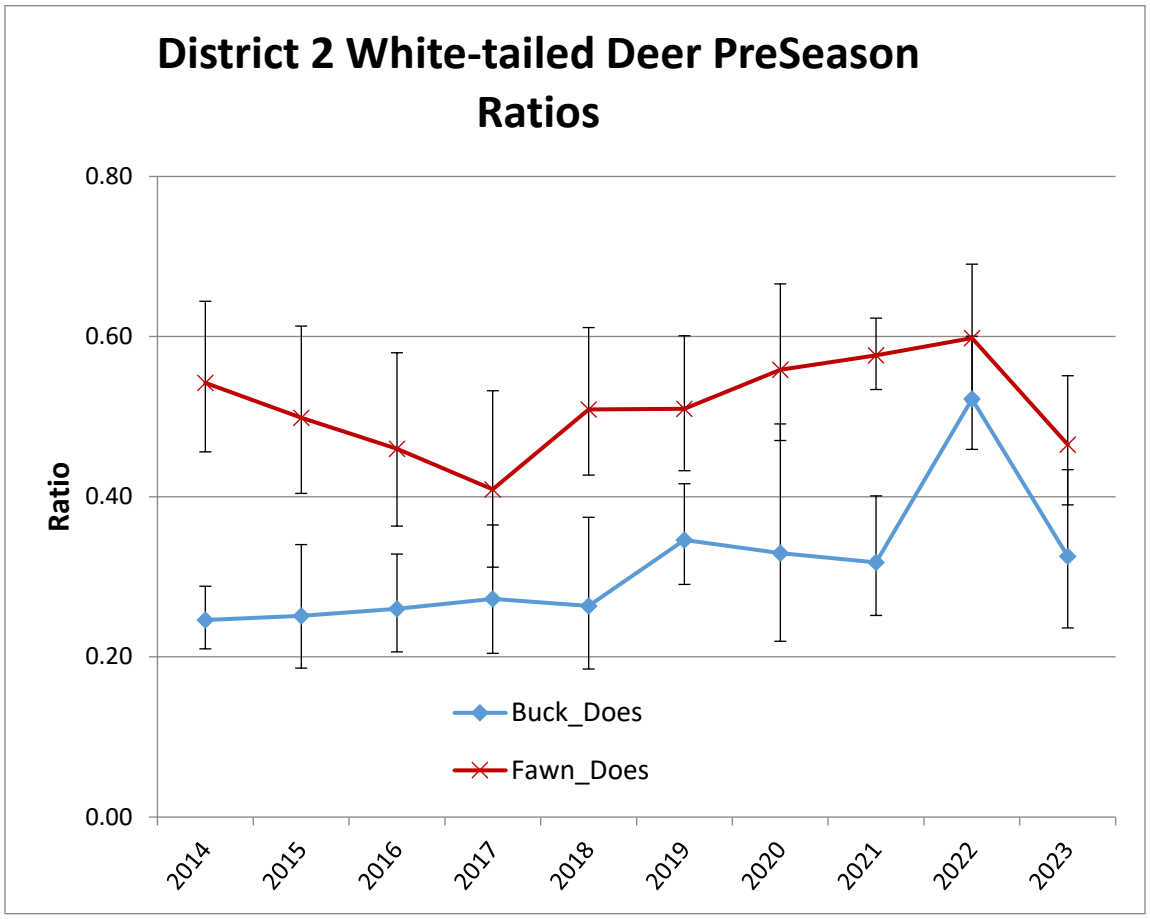
General information, management goals, and population status

District 2 has both white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*). White-tailed deer are found predominantly in the north and east portions of the district in forested habitat, irrigated ag fields, and along riparian corridors. Mule deer are predominantly found in the west and south of the district in the shrub steppe, scablands, and farmland habitats.

Deer population levels are closely tied to droughts, severe winters, disease, and land-use practices. The primary management objective for white-tailed and mule deer in District 2 is to keep the herds stable to slightly increasing and within landowner tolerance. Given that most of the land in the district is in private ownership, managing these populations without landowner cooperation is impossible.

Currently, WDFW does not use formal estimates or indices of population size to manage white-tailed deer populations in District 2. Instead, trends in harvest, hunter success, days per kill, and pre-hunting season sex and age ratios are used to monitor populations. WDFW recognizes the limitations of using these data to monitor trends in population size and is evaluating new approaches to monitoring white-tailed deer populations. Harvest metrics indicate a significant decline in the white-tailed deer population from the high in 2014. This decline has been predominantly driven by hemorrhagic disease outbreaks. Pre-season ground surveys noted a slightly lower fawn to doe ratio (i.e., recruitment) in 2023 than has been observed since 2017 (Figure 4). This may be a result of low sample sizes as the deer population is still suppressed after the hemorrhagic disease outbreak in 2021. The buck to doe ratio observed in 2023 (33 bucks/100 does) was slightly above the 10-year average of 31 bucks/100 does. The buck to doe ratio observed in 2022 was artificially inflated because of a reduction in total deer on the landscape (i.e., there were not necessarily more bucks available to harvest, but just fewer animals overall and therefore a skewed buck to doe ratio observed).

Figure 4. District 2 pre-season buck to doe (August) and fawn to doe (September) ratios (90% Confidence Interval in black) for white-tailed deer.



The harvest statistics noted above are also used in managing mule deer, but congregations of mule deer on wintering grounds allow for viable postseason aerial surveys to estimate populations. Flights are conducted every three to five years in conjunction with Districts 4 and 5, and ground surveys for ratios are completed every year. The last aerial survey for the Benge sub-herd (GMUs 139, 142, 284, & 381) was completed in 2021, resulting in an estimate of ~13,000 mule deer, in line with the two previous surveys conducted in 2011 and 2015. The 2023 ground survey estimated ~73 fawns per 100 does, which is above the 10-year average and the second highest observed since surveys were initiated in 2009. The Odessa sub-herd (GMUs 133, 136, & 272) was last surveyed from the air in 2023, resulting in an estimate of ~12,000 mule deer, nearly the same as the previous estimate from 2019 flights. The 2023 ground survey estimated ~63 fawns per 100 does, which is the same as the long-term average, but higher than in 2021 and 2022.

For more details, please refer to the Columbia Basin Mule Deer Management Zone section and the Palouse White-tailed Deer Management Zone section of the 2023 Game Status and Trend Report.

Which GMU should deer hunters hunt?

Probably the most frequent question from hunters is "What GMU should I hunt?" This is not always easy to answer because it depends on the hunting method and the type of hunting experience desired. Some hunters are looking for a quality opportunity to harvest a mature buck, while others just want to "fill the freezer," and still others prefer to hunt an area with the lowest chance of running into another hunter.

The ideal GMU for most hunters would be entirely or mostly comprised of public land, have high deer densities, low hunter densities, and high hunter success rates. Unfortunately, this scenario does not exist in any GMU that is open during the general modern firearm, archery, or muzzleloader seasons in District 2. Instead, because of general season opportunities, the GMUs with the highest deer densities tend to have the highest hunter densities as well. For many hunters, high hunter densities are not enough to deter them from hunting in a GMU where they see lots of deer. Some hunters prefer to hunt in areas with moderate to low numbers of deer if that means there are also very few hunters, and/or it provides a backcountry experience.

The information provided in Table 2 provides a quick and general assessment of how GMUs compare regarding harvest, hunter numbers, and hunter success during general modern firearm, archery, and muzzleloader deer seasons. The values presented are the five-year averages for each statistic. Furthermore, harvest and hunter numbers were divided by the area of each GMU to account for the variation in sizes between GMUs. Mule deer and white-tailed deer are combined in this table. Because both species can be hunted with the same tag, we cannot separate white-tailed deer hunters from mule deer hunters. However, the percentage of mule deer in the total harvest is given to provide a gauge of how prominent each species is in each GMU.

Each GMU was ranked for deer harvested/mile^2, hunters/mile^2, and hunter success rates. The three ranking values were then summed to produce a final rank sum, the lower the score the better. Comparisons are relatively straightforward because bag limits and seasons are similar between GMUs.

However, when choosing which GMU and/or species to hunt, differences that should be taken into consideration are:

1. There is a 3-point minimum harvest restriction for both species in all GMUs, except for white-tailed deer in GMU 124 where “any buck” is legal.
2. There is a late general modern firearm season for white-tailed deer in GMU 124. The late modern firearm season for white-tailed deer is by permit only for all other GMUs.
3. There is a late general muzzleloader season for white-tailed deer in GMUs 130-142.
4. There is a late general archery season for white-tailed deer in GMUs 124 & 127.

Tables 2a, 2b, and 2c provide rank sum analysis for a quick and general summary of how harvest, hunter numbers, and hunter success rates compare among GMUs during general modern, archery, and muzzleloader deer seasons. As a generalization, the lower the rank, the better the overall deer hunting opportunity is within a GMU. Data presented are based on a five-year average (2019-2023).

Table 2a. Modern Firearm

GMU	Size (mi^2)	% public land open to hunting	Total Harvest	% mule deer	Harvest per mi^2	Harvest Rank	Total Hunters	Hunters per mi^2	Hunter Density Rank	Hunter Success	Hunter Success Rank	Rank Sum
124	771	4%	1030	1%	1.34	1	3404	4.41	7	31%	1	9
127	509	1%	101	12%	0.20	5	560	1.10	4	19%	6	15
130	940	7%	133	76%	0.14	7	772	0.82	3	17%	7	17
133	555	6%	177	74%	0.32	3	798	1.44	6	21%	5	14
136	1586	11%	278	95%	0.17	6	957	0.60	1	29%	3	10
139	1327	3%	273	57%	0.21	4	1041	0.78	2	27%	4	10
142	771	8%	291	78%	0.38	2	932	1.21	5	29%	2	9

Table 2b. Archery

GMU	Size (mi^2)	% public land open to hunting	Total Harvest	% mule deer	Harvest per mi^2	Harvest Rank	Total Hunters	Hunters per mi^2	Hunter Density Rank	Hunter Success	Hunter Success Rank	Rank Sum
124	771	4%	244	2%	0.32	1	855	1.11	7	28%	1	9
127	509	1%	94	2%	0.18	2	357	0.70	6	26%	4	12
130	940	7%	25	64%	0.03	4	128	0.14	4	15%	7	15
133	555	6%	28	71%	0.05	3	102	0.18	5	22%	5	13
136	1586	11%	21	100%	0.01	7	91	0.06	3	21%	6	16
139	1327	3%	21	73%	0.02	6	72	0.05	2	27%	3	11
142	771	8%	13	80%	0.02	5	42	0.05	1	27%	2	8

Table 2c. Muzzleloader

GMU	Size (mi^2)	% public land open to hunting	Total Harvest	% mule deer	Harvest per mi^2	Harvest Rank	Total Hunters	Hunters per mi^2	Hunter Density Rank	Hunter Success	Hunter Success Rank	Rank Sum
124	771	4%	26	11%	0.03	4	110	0.14	5	20%	6	15
127	509	1%	9	50%	0.02	7	24	0.05	1	22%	5	13
130	940	7%	58	44%	0.06	2	281	0.30	6	18%	7	15
133	555	6%	61	54%	0.11	1	226	0.41	7	25%	4	12
136	1586	11%	40	86%	0.03	6	110	0.07	2	31%	1	9
139	1327	3%	53	35%	0.04	3	183	0.14	4	28%	2	9
142	771	8%	26	55%	0.03	5	101	0.13	3	25%	3	11

What to expect during the 2024 season

Overall, the white-tailed deer population is still down significantly in District 2 due primarily to two large hemorrhagic disease outbreaks: Bluetongue (BT) in 2015 and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) in 2021; you can learn more about these diseases from our website. Additionally, between these two outbreaks the area experienced hard winters; the winter of 2016/17 was one the most difficult in the past 10 years and decreased overwinter fawn survival, and the winter of 2018/19 was another tough winter, though not as bad as 2016/17.

Overall, mule deer herds are near their long-term averages. The mule deer populations also suffered losses due to the same series of events noted above, though mule deer do not typically die from BT and EHD, and the snows left the Columbia Basin sooner than in the northeast, so the effects were not as devastating. However, the severe drought and heat wave of 2021 did impact mule deer, especially fawn survival/recruitment. The past few winters have been relatively mild which means overwinter fawn survival should have been above average for mule deer and may help offset some of the losses from the summer of 2021.

In general, the best opportunities to harvest a white-tailed deer in District 2 occur in GMUs 124 and 127. The best opportunities to harvest a mule deer in District 2 occur in GMUs 136, 139, and 142. For archery hunters, GMUs 124 and 127 provide the best terrain, whereas the terrain in GMUs 136–142 is better suited for muzzleloader and modern firearm.

White-tailed and mule deer hunting opportunities in District 2 vary from marginal to excellent, depending on the GMU and if private land access has been secured. A good predictor of future harvest during general seasons is recent trends in the harvest and catch per unit effort (CPUE) or its inverse, days per kill. Figures 5 and 6 provide trend data for each of these statistics by GMU and are intended to provide hunters with the best information possible to make an informed decision on where to hunt.

Figure 5. GMUs 124 – 130. *Left column*: Ten-year trends in general season harvest of deer bucks (solid) and antlerless (slash) by weapon type: modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). Note the different scale for GMU 124. *Right column*: Ten-year trends in general season hunter days per kill by weapon type: modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). Note the different scale for GMU 130 due to high effort for archery in 2021-2023 and high effort for muzzleloader in 2021.

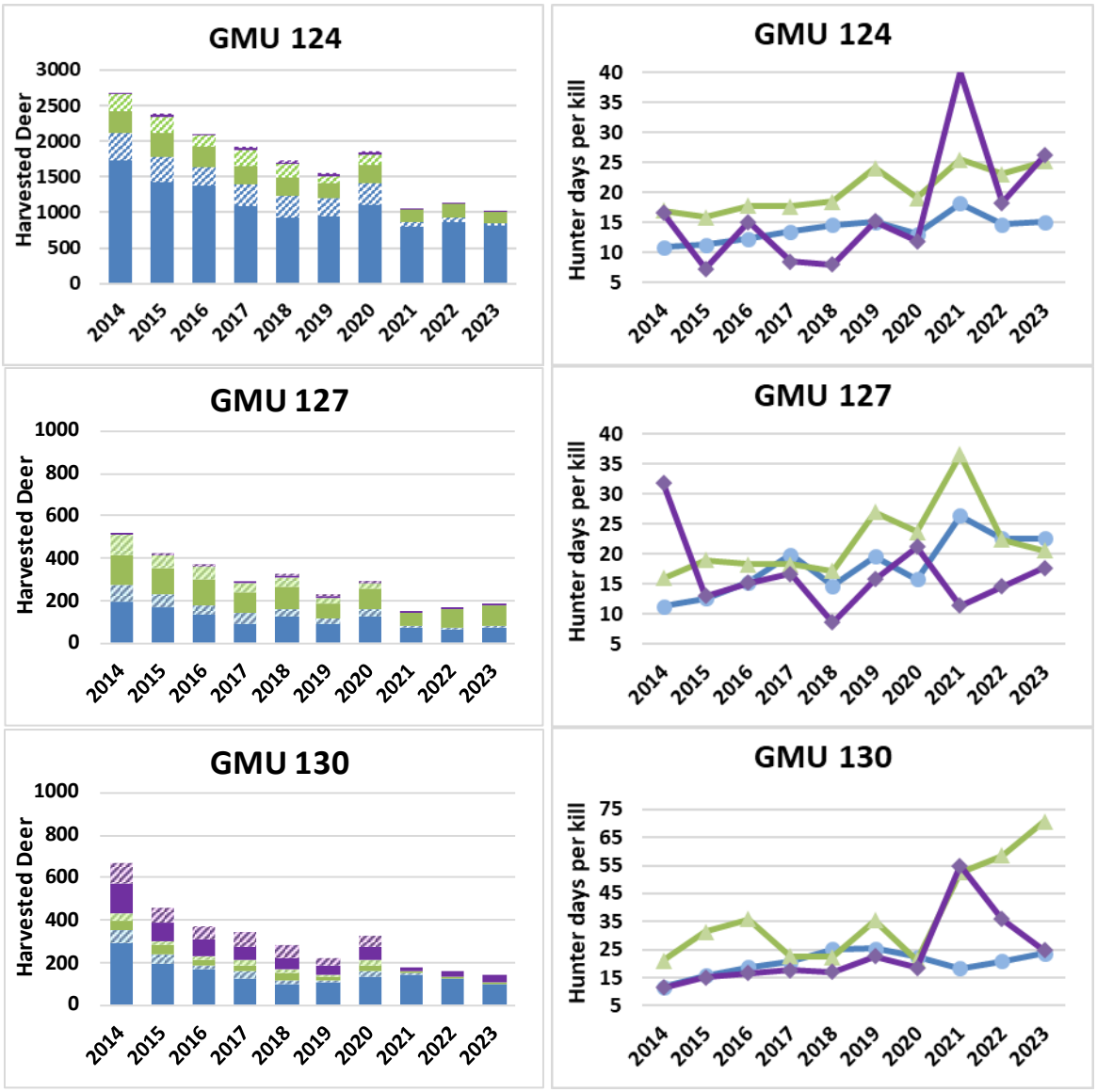
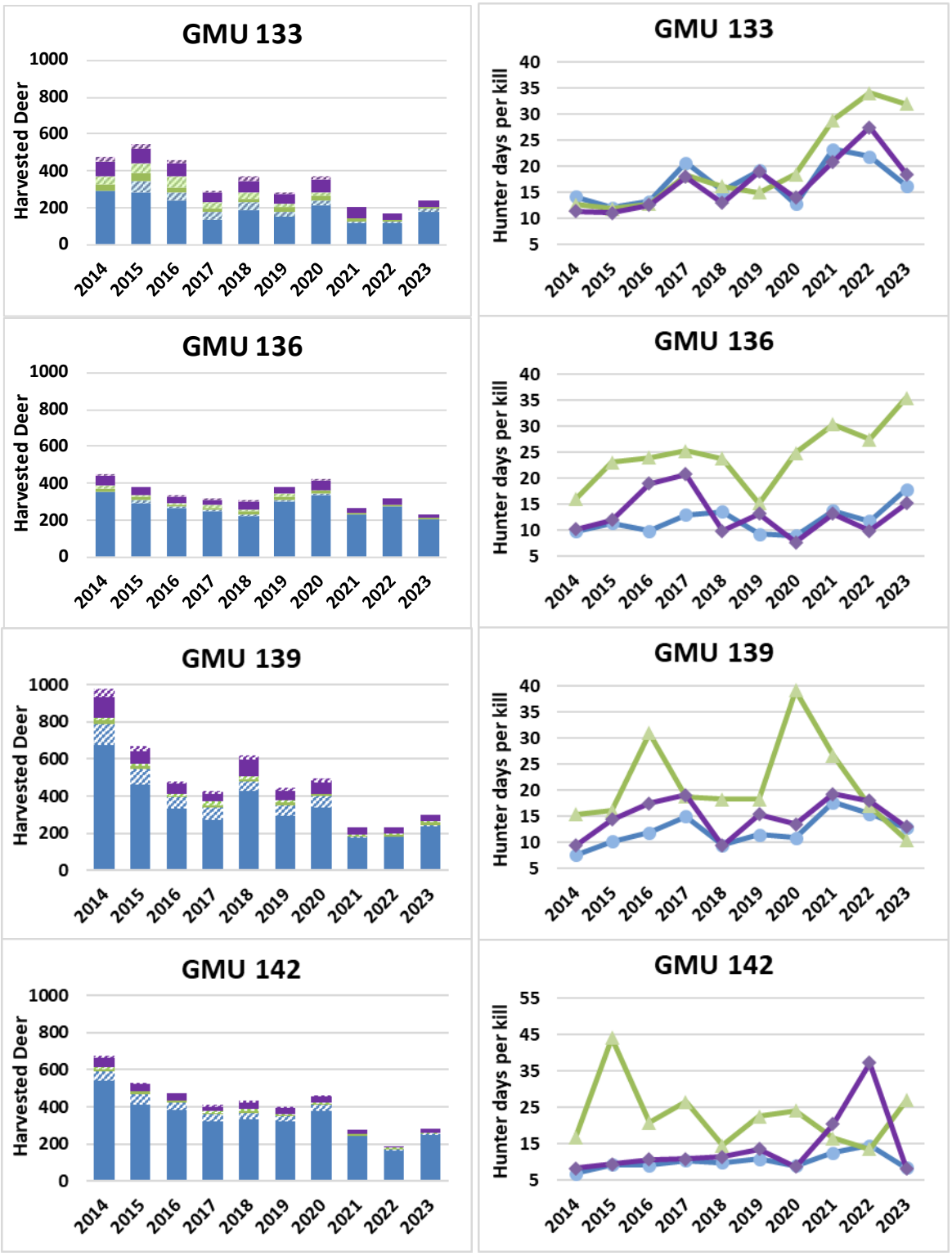


Figure 6. GMUs 133 – 142. *Left column*: Ten-year trends in general season harvest of deer bucks (solid) and antlerless (slash) by weapon type: modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). *Right column:* Ten-year trends in general season hunter days per kill by weapon type modern firearm (blue), archery (green), and muzzleloader (purple). Note different scale for GMU 142.



There is a 3-point minimum antler point regulation in GMUs 127–142 for white-tailed deer, and the late white-tailed deer season in GMUs 127–142 is by permit only (the Palouse Special Permit Hunt) as of 2006. Hunter success over the previous ten years is, on average, slightly higher for the Palouse hunt (39% versus 29% in the general season). This includes data from the 2021 season where the success rate for the Palouse hunt dropped to only 13%, however the success rate improved to 35% in 2022, and was 39% in 2023. Additionally, 5+ point bucks make up, on average, a greater percentage of the harvest (35% versus 30% in the general season). Historically there have been between 600-750 permits offered for the Palouse hunt, in 2022 it was dropped to 300 permits due to the decline in this population and remained at this level for the 2023 season.

Mule and white-tailed deer populations overlap in District 2, so make sure to identify the species before harvesting an animal, as regulations can differ between species within a GMU. The bulk of District 2 is private land, and buck hunters will have to put in time to get access. Doe hunters should have an easier time given the agricultural nature of this district. Many landowners are enrolled in WDFW's hunter access programs in southeastern Washington. Refer to the Private Lands Program section of this document and note that their locations can be mapped by selecting the Private Lands Hunting Opportunities on the WDFW Hunt Planner.

For more 2023 harvest information from District 2:

- Deer General Harvest District 2
- Deer Special Permits Harvest District 2

Bighorn sheep

General information, management goals, and population status

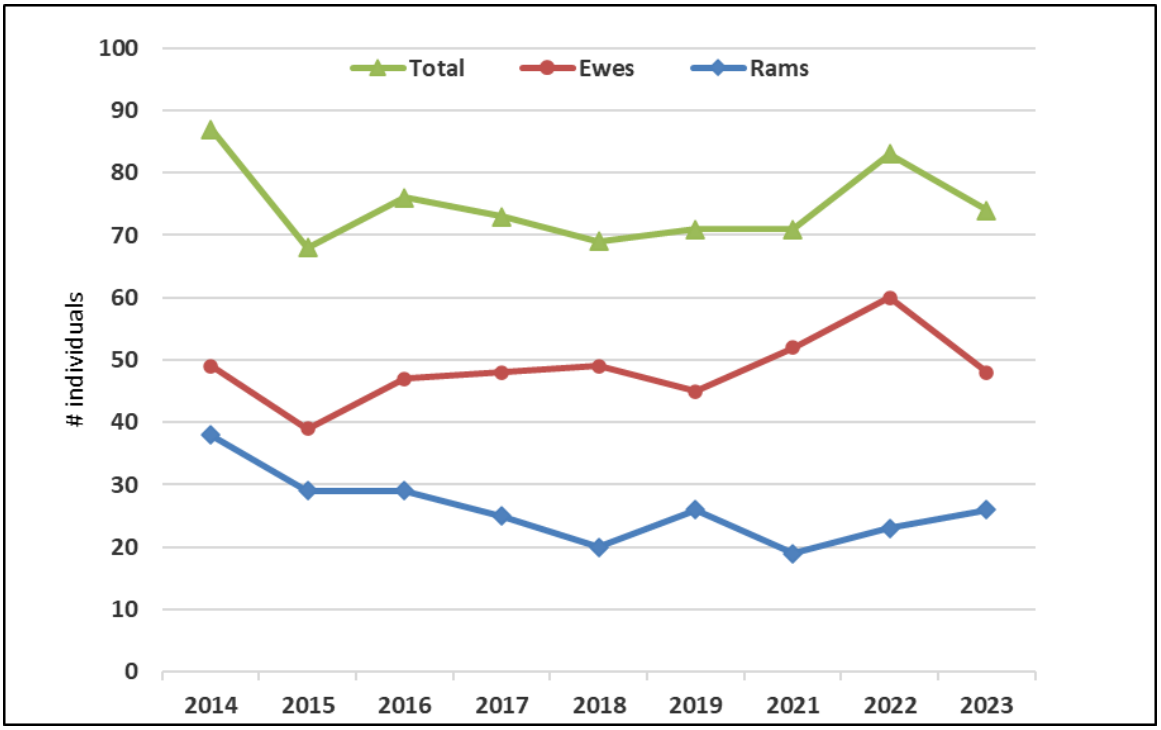
District 2 is home to one herd of California bighorn sheep, the Lincoln Cliffs herd, found in GMU 133 north of Highway 2 in Lincoln County (visit the Hunt Planner Web map for a map). These sheep can most often be seen throughout the residential community of Lincoln and the cliffs above it, and in the cliffs around Whitestone Rock approximately seven miles downriver from Lincoln on Lake Roosevelt. Sheep are also observed frequently in the cliffs and canyons above Sterling Valley (the area between Lincoln and Whitestone) and in surrounding agricultural fields, where they are sometimes reported causing crop damage.

WDFW has conducted annual aerial surveys to assess the status of the Lincoln Cliffs herd since 2002. The minimum population size is estimated by the count of rams and ewes observed during these flights (Figure 7). After several years of increase, the population is showing signs of leveling off and has likely reached the largest feasible herd size here due to human tolerance and availability of quality habitat. For more details on the history of the Lincoln Cliffs herd and the status of bighorn sheep in Washington, refer to WDFW's 2023 Game Status and Trend Report.

What to expect during the 2024 season

Bighorn sheep hunting in Washington requires a special permit. One ram permit for the Lincoln Cliffs herd was offered each year from 1997–2013 and in 2017. Based on ram numbers and population size, this was increased to two permits in 2014–16 and again starting in 2018. The average number of applicants for this ram hunt over the last five years is 2,402 and harvest success for reporting hunters has been 100%. Ewe permits were introduced in 2018, with two offered–one in the Whitestone Unit and one in the Lincoln Cliffs Unit. From 2020 to 2023, only one ewe permit was offered and only for the Whitestone Unit. Two ewe permits were offered in the Whitestone Unit for the 2024 season to help mitigate some of the crop damage being reported from sheep in this area. The 2021 Whitestone ewe permittee did not report, and the 2020 permittee was unsuccessful in harvesting an ewe after 3 days of hunting. All other ewe hunters have reported 100% success on their hunts, including the 2023 hunter in 2 days of hunting. The Lincoln Cliffs area is almost entirely private property and permittees will need to obtain permission to access these properties for their hunt.

Figure 7. Lincoln Cliffs minimum population estimate by sex for 2014–2023. Estimated as the maximum adult count from helicopter surveys conducted each year. No survey was conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Moose

General information, management goals, and population status

Two hunters with a harvested moose. Photo by John Moore.

Moose in northeast Washington are Shiras moose (*Alces alces shirasi*), the smallest of the four subspecies of moose in North America. Moose were not believed to be common or widely distributed in the Rocky Mountain states in the 1800s, and it was not until 1908, when explorer George Shiras III found a fairly large population in Yellowstone National Park, that this mountain race was described. Shiras moose were only rarely noted in Washington until the late 1950s when distribution began to expand into eastern Pend Oreille County. Moose dramatically increased in number and distribution in the decades that followed and are now relatively common throughout northeast Washington.

Statewide moose management goals are to 1) Preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage moose and their habitats to ensure healthy productive populations; 2) Manage for a variety of recreational, educational, and aesthetic purposes; and 3) Manage statewide moose populations for a sustained yield. The proximity of a moose population near the Spokane metropolitan area adds the challenge of balancing population objectives with human safety and the community's tolerance of moose.

From 2013-16, WDFW completed a project to develop a new survey methodology that would produce a reliable population estimate over the entire northeast area of Washington (GMUs 101–130). This project resulted in an estimate of 5,169 (95% credible interval = 3,510 to 7,034) moose in the northeast in 2015. Though the estimate produced by the new method was less variable than previous methods, the larger area of coverage made it impractical to apply the results to individual hunt units and the cost makes it unrealistic to repeat annually.

Currently, WDFW uses harvest, success, and hunter effort to monitor and manage moose populations in District 2. Based on these harvest metrics, and results from a WDFW/University of Montana partner study from 2014–2018 in northeast Washington, it appears that the ~5000 moose in 2015 was a high point in the moose population in northeast Washington that has since started to decline. Primary drivers of this decline are the poor body condition of cows and reduced calf survival.

WDFW initiated a new project to monitor moose in northeast Washinton in February of 2024. This project will last for several years to identify key factors influencing population status and trend and will ultimately assist in setting hunting seasons and harvest levels for moose. A total of 28 cow moose were fitted with GPS collars in 2024. Of those 28 moose, 13 were captured in District 2 (six in the Spokane West MHU and seven in the Mt. Spokane area).

Harvest management emphasizes quality hunting opportunities through limited special permits drawn by lottery each year. A total of 34 permits are offered in District 2 in a variety of categories (Table 3). Prior to 2012, District 2 had two moose hunt units (MHU), Mount Spokane (GMU 124 east of Highway 395), and Hangman (GMUs 127 and 130). In 2012, the Mount Spokane MHU was split into Mount Spokane North and Mount Spokane South Moose Areas to help distribute hunters more evenly across the area and increase hunter opportunity. In 2015, the Hangman MHU was split into the Mica Peak (GMU 127) and Cheney (GMU 130) MHUs, for the antlerless hunts only, to better distribute hunters and try to address increasing moose conflict in Cheney. The Hangman MHU was retained for bull hunts. Additionally, in 2015, the Spokane West MHU was split off from the Huckleberry MHU to distribute hunters and increase opportunity. In 2022, GMU 139 was added to the Hangman and Cheney MHUs; there are not many moose in GMU 139 but there are some and they periodically cause damage and nuisance issues. Adding this GMU allows for easier use of hunters to address these issues when they occur.

Table 3. Permits offered in District 2 by moose hunt unit for 2024.

Moose Unit	Antlered Bull General	Antlerless General	Antlerless Disabled	Antlerless Youth
Mount Spokane North	8	2	1	0
Mount Spokane South	8	2	0	1
Spokane West	2	2	0	0
Hangman	4	0	0	0
Mica Peak	0	2	0	0
Cheney	0	2	0	0

What to expect during the 2024 season

Hunters should take note that moose are a solitary animal by nature and are scattered over very wide areas as individuals or in small groups. While they can be found at any elevation, they are most likely found between 3,000 and 5,000 feet. In the fall they are looking for deciduous browse, primarily willow brush, alder, serviceberry, ceanothus, and other shrubs in clear-cuts or burns 10–20 years old. Moose seek out cool, moist drainage basins and slopes, and generally prefer north slopes or east-flowing drainages.

Moose are still in the rut in early October and some hunters have been effective with calls. By November, snow is common and locating moose tracks and seeing these dark animals with a snowy background is much easier. However, by mid to late November, there is usually enough snow that motor vehicle access can be limited.

Moose seek out snow rather than avoid it in late fall and early winter because they are in their winter coats and start to experience thermal stress at temperatures exceeding 28°F. In years without much snow, they are typically found at a higher elevation and on north slopes with tree cover. In years with a lot of snow, they move down to the foothills of the mountains. Moose habitat in District 2 is largely located on private timber company lands, but smaller private ownerships can also harbor good moose concentrations. Permit holders should exercise caution and know where they and the targeted moose are at all times given the percentage of private land ownership, proximity to Idaho, and non-hunting lands (State and County Parks, National Wildlife Refuge) within the moose hunting units. WDFW requires all successful moose hunters to submit tooth samples in the envelopes provided with their informational packet. Tooth samples allow biologists to get an overview of the age structure of the moose population, which will help inform future management decisions.

Specific harvest metrics and access for each MHU

Mount Spokane North Moose Area

The success rate for the eight Bull Moose permits in this unit was 86% in 2023, although only seven of those permit holders reported. The success rate for this hunt has averaged 88% since its creation in 2012. Hunters have spent 11 days per kill on average; however, the trend is increasing with hunters spending on average 16 days per kill in the last five years of the hunt compared to just five days per kill in the first five years. In 2023, hunters spent an average of nine days per kill, much lower than the average over the past five years. The average antler spread of bulls harvested is 35 inches, with the largest bull harvested measuring 49 inches.

Success rates for the Antlerless Only hunt in this unit was 100% in 2023 and has averaged 90% since its creation in 2012. Hunters have spent six days per kill on average, though it reached as high as 19 days per kill in 2016. Decreasing hunter success rates and increasing hunter effort combined with low pregnancy rates and low calf survival in a local study led the department to reduce antlerless opportunity in this area to two permits starting in 2020. One antlerless permit is also offered to disabled hunters in this unit; the permittees for this disabled hunt were unsuccessful in 2020 and 2021 having

spent 18 days and 35 days hunting, respectively. The permittee in 2022 declined the permit after being selected, so no hunting occurred on that permit in 2022. In 2023, the hunter on the disabled permit was successful after spending 12 days hunting.

Access in this unit is primarily on timber company lands, Inland Empire Paper (IEP) and Hancock Timber, and DNR lands around the East Blanchard Road area. The DNR lands are free to hunt but do require a Discover Pass. Full-sized vehicles are not typically allowed, so be careful and read signage at gates – they might be open in the morning if crews are working but you might get locked in that evening. IEP typically allows full-sized vehicles through October but may close gates at any time if conditions present risk of road damage or fire. IEP does charge an access fee, but it is reasonable and comes in daily and annual versions. For more information on IEP and maps of their property please visit their website.

Hancock has traditionally had a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with WDFW to allow **non-motorized** access for free to hunters, but please check with Hancock or WDFW to confirm this MOU is still in place prior to hunting their properties. WDFW Enforcement officers monitor their property and will ticket offenders. Please respect the agreement or this access could be lost. Hancock does not supply a map of their property; hunters are encouraged to use the Spokane County Assessor's online parcel map to identify Hancock ownership or invest in third-party software (e.g., OnX maps).

A wildfire burned through a large portion (~11,000 acres) of the Mount Spokane North MHU in 2023, which may impact moose distribution in this area for the next few years. Much of the fire was on private property, but some of the private timber company lands, including a block of IEP property were at least partially impacted by this fire.

Mount Spokane South Moose Area

The success rate for the eight Bull Moose permits in this unit was 100% in 2023 and has averaged 93% since its creation in 2012. Hunters spent seven days per kill on average in 2022; the average for this hunt since its creation is eight days but was higher than average the previous five years (9-15 days per kill on average from 2018-2022). The average antler spread of bulls harvested is 35 inches, with the largest bull harvested measuring 52 inches (this bull was harvested in 2023).

Two antlerless permittees hunted this unit in 2023, but only one was successful. Success has averaged 77% since its creation in 2012 but has varied considerably from 100% in 2020 and 2022 to zero in 2021. Hunters have spent seven days per kill on average, though it has been as high as 16 days per kill and the single permittee during the 2021 season hunted 22 days without success. This is drastically different from the two permittees that hunted in 2022 as they averaged just 3 days per kill. Observed decline in hunter success rates and increasing hunter effort combined with low pregnancy rates and low calf survival in a local study led the department to reduce antlerless opportunity in this area to two permits in 2020. There is also one antlerless permit offered to youth hunters in this unit; the 2023 youth was successful after 18 days of hunting.

Access in this unit is primarily on Inland Empire Paper (IEP) timber company lands in the Thompson Creek and Brickel Creek areas. There is a small parcel of DNR lands north of the Brickel Creek area as

well. The DNR lands are free to hunt but do require a Discover Pass. Full-sized vehicles are not typically allowed, so be careful and read signage at gates – they might be open in the morning if crews are working but you might get locked in that evening. IEP typically allows full-sized vehicles through October but may close gates at any time if conditions present risk of road damage or fire. IEP does charge an access fee, but it is reasonable and comes in daily and annual versions. IEP lands are adjacent to Mount Spokane State Park, which is not open to hunting, and the border with Idaho, so hunters need to know where they are before shooting at an animal. Hunters are recommended to use the Spokane County Assessor's online parcel map to identify ownership or invest in third-party software (e.g., OnX maps). For more information on IEP rules and maps of their property please visit their website.

Spokane West Moose Hunt Area

The success rate for the two Bull Moose permits in this unit was 100% in 2023 and has averaged 100% since its creation in 2015; however, the single permittee in 2017 did not report and did not respond to calls. Hunters spent only four days per kill on average in 2023; the average for this hunt since its creation is five days. The average antler spread of bulls harvested is 37 inches, with the largest bull harvested measuring 48 inches.

The success rate for the Antlerless Only hunt in this unit was 100% in 2023, however only one of the two permittees hunted. The average success rate for this antlerless hunt is 89% since its creation in 2015. Hunters have spent six days per kill on average, with the one successful hunter in 2023 spending 9 days to harvest a moose.

Harvest stats and limited composition flights suggest the moose population in this unit may be doing better than the other units in District 2. However, most of the access is non-motorized, so **do not apply** for this unit if you are not in good physical condition or do not have private land access. Access in this unit is primarily on Hancock Timber Company lands and scattered DNR parcels. The DNR lands are free to hunt but do require a Discover Pass. Full-sized vehicles are not typically allowed, so be careful and read signage at gates; they might be open in the morning if crews are working but you might get locked in that evening. Hancock has traditionally had an MOU with WDFW to allow **non-motorized** access for free to hunters, but please check with Hancock or WDFW to confirm this MOU is still in place prior to hunting their properties. WDFW Enforcement officers monitor their property and will ticket offenders. Please respect the agreement or this access could be lost. Hancock does not supply a map of their property; we recommend hunters use the Stevens County Assessor's property map to identify Hancock ownership or invest in third-party software (e.g., OnX maps). Access to Hancock lands in this unit are from the gate east off Hwy 231 just south of the intersection with Reservation Road.

Hangman Moose Hunt GMUs 127, 130, and 139

The number of Bull Moose permits offered for this hunt was reduced from seven to four in 2017, due to reduced success, ≤86%, and increased effort (as high as 23 days) observed the previous four years. This reduction in permits seemed to improve hunter success as the average success rate was 90% and hunter effort averaged 6 days per kill from 2017-2021. This was not the situation in 2022, as the success rate was 50%, the lowest ever recorded despite increased effort (47 days per kill). In 2023, the success rate

rebounded to 100% for the three hunters that reported, though hunter effort was still higher than average at 16 days per kill. The average antler spread of bulls harvested in the last 10 years is 35 inches, with the largest bull ever harvested in this area measuring 52 inches in 2012. Overall, the moose population in this unit appears to be declining in areas open to general hunting access (e.g., DNR and Inland Empire Paper Company), but increasing in areas closed to hunting or where access is limited (Conservation Areas and suburban Spokane). *Hunters are strongly encouraged to secure private land access for this hunt before applying.*

Access in this unit is primarily on Inland Empire Paper (IEP) timber company lands on Mica Peak and scattered sections of DNR throughout. The DNR lands are free to hunt but do require a Discover Pass. Full-sized vehicles are not typically allowed, so be careful and read signage at gates before entering. IEP does **NOT** allow vehicular access on their lands in this unit due to a history of road damage. Because it is non-motorized only, IEP does not require an access permit on Mica Peak. IEP lands are adjacent to Spokane County Parks lands, which are not open to hunting, and are on the border with Idaho, so hunters need to know where they are before taking a shot. Hunters are advised to use the Spokane County Assessor's online parcel map to identify ownership or invest in third-party software (e.g., OnX maps). For more information on IEP, maps of their property, and access rules please visit their website. Two primary entry points for this hunt are the Belmont Road County Park trailhead and FAA Starr Road gate.

Mica Peak Moose Hunt GMU 127

There are no Bull Moose permits specific to just this unit (Hangman MHU incorporates both Mica Peak and Cheney MHUs). The following Antlerless harvest statistics include the Hangman Unit data because most permittees prior to 2015 harvested their animals in Mica Peak. Due to declining hunter success, Antlerless Only permits were reduced from seven to four in 2017. The success rate for this hunt increased to 100% in 2017, up significantly from the previous 5-year average of 69% and remained at 100% in 2018. However, success dropped to 50% in 2019 and effort spiked to an all-time high of 21 days/kill on average. Permits were reduced to two in 2020; hunter success rebounded to 100% and hunter effort was similar (average of 5 days per kill) to that observed before the reduction in tags. In 2021 hunter success remained at 100%, but effort increased to 10 days on average. Effort increased again in 2022 (30 days per kill) and hunter success decreased to 50%. In 2023, the two permittees for this hunt spent a combined total of 18 days hunting and neither was successful. Overall, the moose population in this unit appears to be declining in areas open to general hunting access (e.g., DNR and Inland Empire Paper), but increasing in areas closed to hunting or where access is limited. *Hunters are encouraged to secure private land access for this hunt if they want to increase their odds of success.*

Refer to the Hangman unit section for more access information.

Cheney Moose Hunt GMUs 130 and 139

There are no Bull Moose permits specific to just this unit (Hangman MHU incorporates both Mica Peak and Cheney MHUs). This MHU was split off from the Hangman MHU in 2015 for Antlerless only hunts because very few permittees hunted it while the number of complaints regarding moose in the unit's

suburban/rural areas increased. This unit is almost entirely private land. The larger blocks of public land are NOT open to hunting, and the moose are dispersed and highly mobile. Since inception of this hunt in 2015, two antlerless permits have been offered annually and average hunter success has been 83%, with an average effort of 10 days per kill. From 2017-2022, all permit holders that hunted and reported were successful (one permit holder did not hunt in 2017, and one did not report in 2020). In 2023 only one of the two permit holders was successful, and effort averaged 14 days per kill. **Hunters are strongly encouraged to secure private land access for this hunt prior to applying for the permit.**

Cougar

Adult cougar in an evergreen tree. Photo by WDFW.

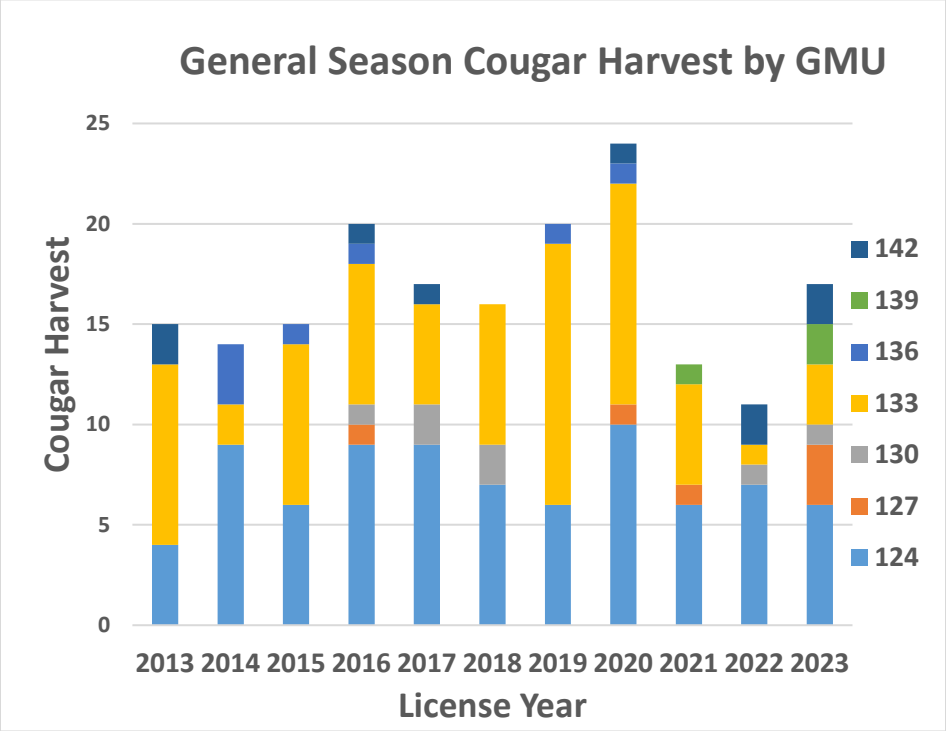
General information, management goals, and population status

Cougars may be found in varying densities throughout District 2, depending on habitat availability. Cougars are managed to provide maximum harvest opportunity while promoting population stability and social structure and minimizing human-cougar conflict.

In July 2024 the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission approved changes to cougar hunting seasons. The new cougar hunting season will be from September 1 to March 31, but there will be a cap set for each population management unit (PMU) at the intrinsic growth rate of 13% based on specific statewide density estimates. All known human-caused cougar mortalities will count towards the 13% cap (e.g., cougars removed to protect humans or livestock will count towards the cap). If a PMU reaches the 13% cap before the season opens September 1, the cap for that PMU will extend to 20%. Once the assigned cap is reached, that area will close to cougar harvest. All hunters are responsible for knowing if their

hunt area is open or closed; to confirm its status, all hunters must call the cougar hotline (1-866-364-4868) or check WDFW's website prior to hunting. To facilitate implementation of the cap, all successful cougar hunters are required to report their harvest to WDFW via the hotline within 72 hours of harvest (press 3 after greeting), and state name, WILD ID, date of kill, sex of kill, and GMU of kill. The **unfrozen** hide and skull must be presented to WDFW within five days of the kill (please leave proof of sex attached). More information about changes to the cougar hunting season can be found on the WDFW website.

Figure 8. General season cougar harvest by GMU for license years 2013–2023.



What to expect during the 2024 season

In general, cougar harvest was increasing in District 2 through the 2020 license year when it reached a high of 24 cougars; however, harvest in 2021 and 2022 declined to the lowest levels reported since the 2012 license year (Figure 8). This decrease in cougar harvest may have been due, in part, to the large hemorrhagic disease outbreak in 2021 that resulted in a die-off of white-tailed deer, cougar's primary prey. Having fewer deer available to hunt may have resulted in cougars moving to other areas with more abundant prey or switching to other prey items such as livestock or pets, resulting in conflict situations with landowners. Less commonly, cougars will die of starvation when prey is less abundant, a situation that is more likely to occur with young cats (kittens or juveniles). A decrease in hunter participation may have also contributed to the lower cougar harvest, as most of the general season cougar harvest in the district is opportunistic, occurring while hunters are seeking deer or elk. During the 2023 license year there was an increase in cougar harvest from the previous two seasons, but still not reaching the levels observed in 2019 and 2020.

The average harvest across the District over the last 10 license years is 17 cougars annually. Harvest is typically the highest in GMUs 124 and 133, and sightings in these units are also more common than in other GMUs in District 2. Cougar harvest in all other GMUs in District 2 is often very low, but harvest in 2023 was more evenly distributed among District 2 GMUs than what is usually observed (Figure 8).

The proportion of males and females in the harvest varies each year, but the typical age at harvest is three years or younger. For harvest details by GMU, refer to the Game Harvest Reports. The Department website has more information on reporting and pelt-sealing requirements.

Black bear

Black bear walking through the forest. Photo by WDFW.

General information, management goals, and population status

Black bears in Washington are managed with the goal of ensuring healthy and productive populations while minimizing conflict with people. The state is divided into nine Black Bear Management Units (BBMUs); District 2 is part of both the Northeastern BBMU (GMUs 124–130) and the Columbia Basin BBMU (GMUs 133–142). Harvest levels vary within and between BBMUs depending on local habitat conditions and corresponding bear densities, as well as hunter effort and access limitations. WDFW does not currently conduct annual surveys or have formal population estimates for bear but relies on harvest statistics to infer population trends and evaluate management decisions. Density monitoring projects have been ongoing throughout the state since 2013 and that data will soon be incorporated into harvest guidelines.

Bear harvest in District 2 is substantially lower than in the rest of the Northeastern BBMU, likely due to habitat and hunter access limitations. Bear harvest in District 2 also varies widely year by year (Figure 9), as bears are most often harvested opportunistically by deer and elk hunters. The proportion of males and females in the harvest is also highly variable year to year, likely for the same reason (Figure 10).

Most of the harvest in the past 10 years has occurred in GMUs 124 and 127. Although the Columbia Basin BBMU is not thought to support resident black bear populations due to lack of forested habitat, GMU 133 has averaged 7 bears per year over the past 10 years. Bear harvest in the other GMUs in the Basin (136–142) is very low or nonexistent and therefore would not be worthwhile to target this species in these units.

Figure 9. The number of black bears harvested in each GMU during the 2023 general season in District 2. Also included are the 10-year (2014–2023) and 5-year (2019–2023) average for the total number of bears harvested in each GMU.

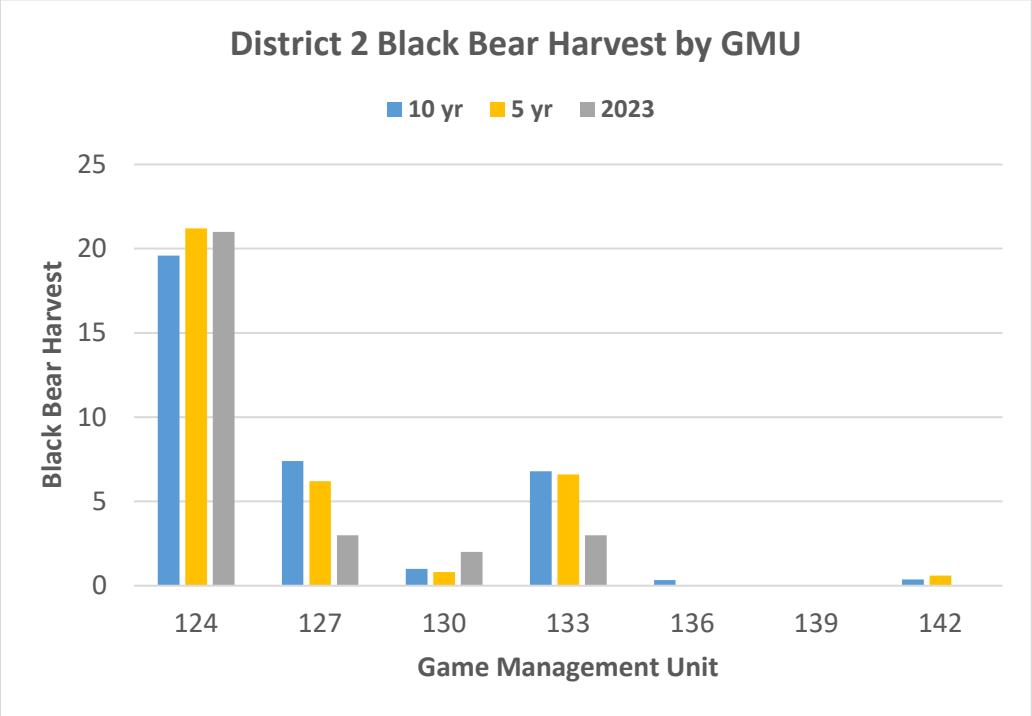
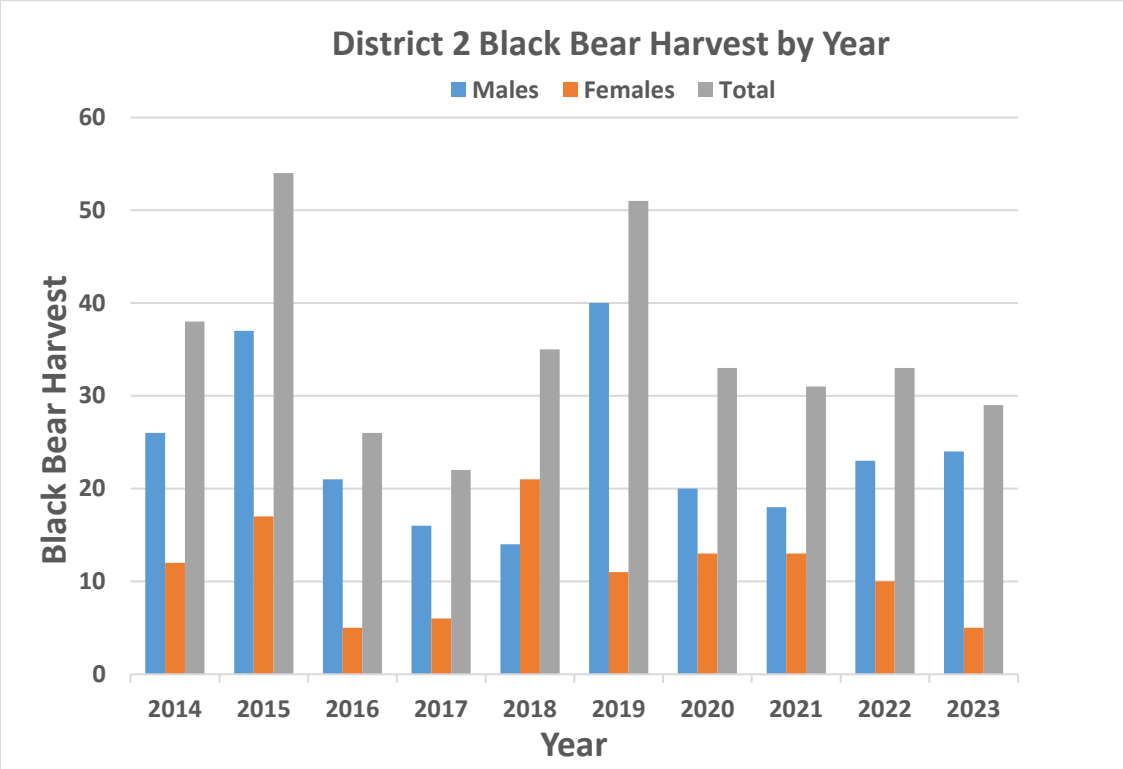


Figure 10. Black bear total harvest in District 2, 2014–2023.



What to expect during the 2024 season

Beginning in 2019, the fall general season dates were standardized statewide, allowing eastside hunters to start hunting August 1 in all GMUs. Additionally, the bag limit was increased to two bears, regardless of location. Hunters must purchase a second bear tag to harvest a second bear. District 2 is not known for black bear hunting, though an increase in harvest in recent years suggests the local population is doing well, especially in the forested areas of Spokane and Lincoln counties.

Scouting and securing private land access are extremely important factors that hunters should consider when specifically hunting for black bears in District 2. Although black bears are fairly common in some areas, they are seen infrequently because they tend to spend most of their time in forest cover and limit their time in the open to cooler times of the day. Much of the bear habitat in the district is either in State or County Parks and Conservation Areas (which are not open to hunt), or private timber company land (where you may need an access permit). Refer to the public and private lands sections at the end of this document for more information on hunting access in District 2.

Bear hunters are strongly urged not to shoot females with cubs. In the fall, cubs are 30 to 50 pounds and tend to lag behind when traveling. Please be patient and spend time watching for cubs before shooting a bear. Remember that it is **mandatory** to submit a premolar tooth from all fall season harvested bears. Tooth envelopes are available at WDFW offices, and hunters are welcome to make an appointment for help with pulling the tooth if needed. If you are unable to reach a regional WDFW office for a tooth

envelope, contact the Wildlife Program at 360-902-2515. Hunters that submitted a tooth can look up the age of their harvest several months after the close of the season.

Waterfowl

Flock of mallard ducks flying. Photo by WDFW.

At the statewide level, District 2 is not known for its duck hunting and is not a substantial duck production area due to the ephemeral nature of the water bodies in the Channeled Scablands. The most common breeding duck species in the area are mallard, gadwall, green-winged teal, and redhead. Other common waterfowl species in District 2 during the spring/summer include blue-winged and cinnamon teal, ruddy duck, and American coot. Species that are seen in larger numbers during migration include northern pintail, American wigeon, scaup, ring-necked ducks and common goldeneyes.

Aerial breeding population surveys (BPOP) for the entire Potholes region of eastern Washington show a decreasing trend in ducks and coots observed since 2018; however, there are two years without data because flights in 2020 and 2021 were canceled due to COVID-19 (Figure 12). Observations of geese during BPOP surveys increased from 2018 to 2019 but were down in 2022 and 2023 (Figure 12). This trend aligns with brood counts from ground surveys in District 2 except in 2023 where a slight increase was observed in both duck and coot broods (Figure 11).

Given the limited number of local nesting ducks, waterfowl hunting opportunity in this district is dependent upon the number of migrants coming from Canada and Alaska, the amount of precipitation, and how long waterbodies remain ice-free. Although coot and goose brood counts were higher this year than the past two years, the duck broods observed were the lowest recorded in the past 10 years (Figure 11). This could mean that early season hunting opportunities for ducks in District 2 could be limited with fewer local birds available. Hunters should focus their efforts on larger perennial waterbodies unless fall rains are significant, then shallow, flooded agricultural fields become duck and goose hot spots. Scouting after fall/winter storm events for incoming migrants and flooded agricultural fields, and subsequently attempting to secure permission on those private agricultural lands may provide the best opportunities for success later in the season. For more information on waterfowl hunting techniques and waterfowl hunting areas in Region 1, refer to the WDFW waterfowl webpage.

Figure 11. Total number of young of the year observed on District 2 brood ground survey routes for the past 10 years.

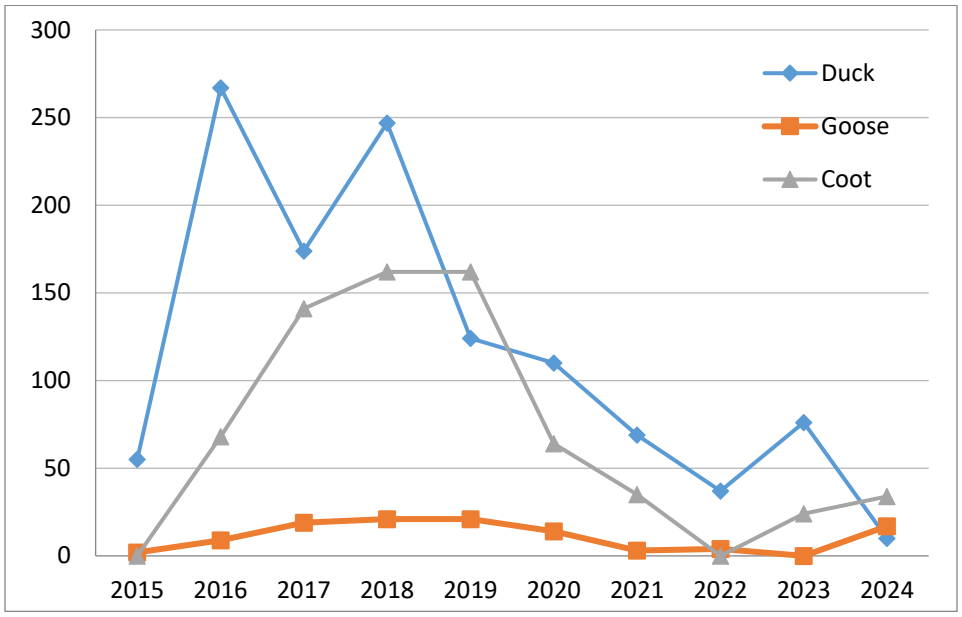
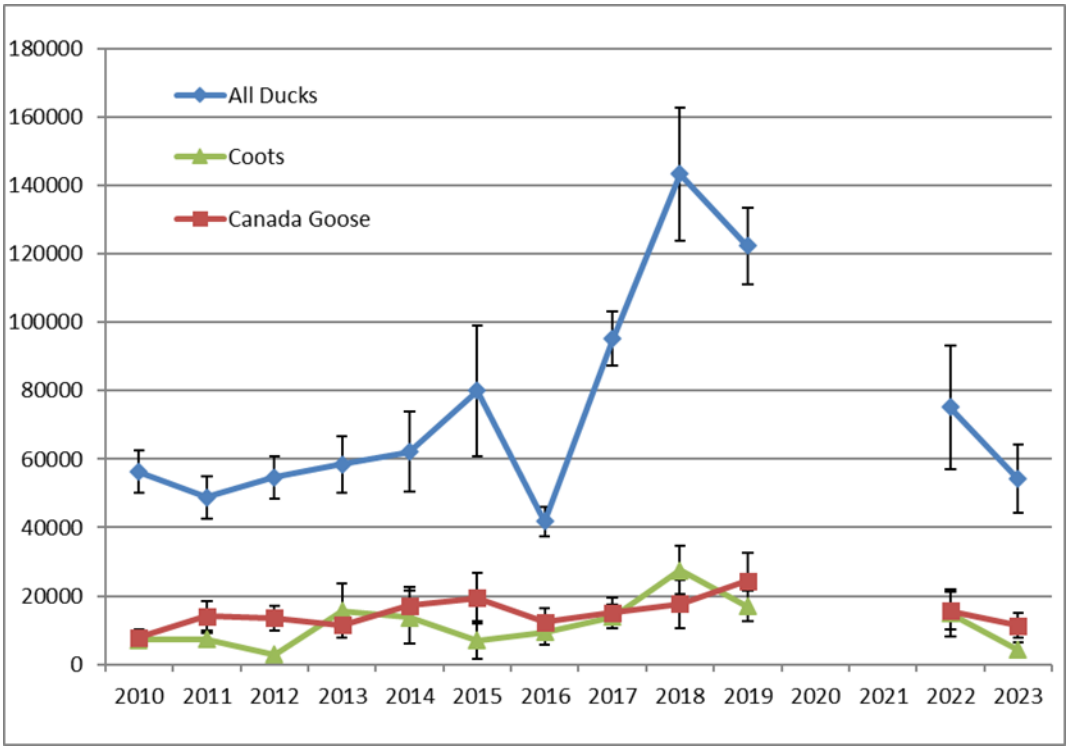


Figure 12. Waterfowl estimates from aerial breeding population surveys for the Potholes region of eastern Washington. BPOP flights were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19.



Pheasants

A male ring-necked pheasant perched in a shrub. Photo by WDFW.

The pheasant population available for harvest in the fall is highly dependent on annual recruitment. The winter of 2023/24 was relatively mild, as was much of the spring so overwinter survival should have been above normal for juvenile birds, and hatching success should have been decent this spring. However, consistent high temperatures observed in July may reduce forage available in late summer/early fall which could decrease chick survival prior to hunting opener.

District-wide harvest was on an increasing trend, reaching a 10-year high in 2020, but saw a steep decline in 2021 (Figure 13). WDFW's methods for analyzing harvest data changed in 2022 so estimates from the past two seasons should not be compared directly with previous seasons. Approximately 15.8% of estimated statewide harvest of pheasants occurred in District 2 (n = 8,324 pheasants; 29.6% of eastern WA pheasant harvest) in 2023. An estimated 2,238 hunters targeted pheasants in District 2 in 2023, compared to 2,043 in 2022 (20.5% of pheasant hunters statewide), but again this should not be compared with previous seasons as new analyses were used to develop this estimate. Days per hunter have remained relatively stable in the district, but harvest per hunter dropped in 2021 (Figure 14). The 2022 and 2023 estimates of days per hunter (4.42 and 4.27, respectfully) were similar to previous trends observed. Harvest per hunter increased from 2022 (3.05) to 2023 (3.72), which aligns with the trend observed statewide. The declines seen in harvest in 2021 were likely tied to the extreme drought and excessive heat of 2021, reducing nest success and chick survival. Statewide harvest appears to have increased since then, which suggests an increase in recruitment that may have occurred with milder winters and higher than average overwinter survival.

Most of the pheasant hunting occurs in Whitman County, which has about three times the harvest and about two times more hunters than Lincoln or Spokane counties. For more information on the harvest statistics refer to the most recent Statewide Small Game Harvest Statistics: Pheasant – Statewide Only.

For more information on pheasant status in Washington, refer to the most recent Game Status and Trend Report.

Overall, pheasant populations are experiencing long-term declines. This is a trend seen across the country and it is likely associated with current cleaner farming practices and habitat loss. Examples of this include the switch to large-scale monoculture farming, removal of hedgerow (farming through small creeks beds and up into the gravel of the road), the more efficient harvest machinery leaving less waste grain, increased use of herbicides and pesticides, and more recently the use of neonicotinoid insecticides. These factors combine to reduce adult, nest, and chick survival through less food (fewer insects and forbs) and less cover, and in the case of neonicotinoids, potential direct mortality of individuals that consume the coated seeds.

Since most of the land in this district is private ownership, hunters will need to spend some time seeking permission for access to the better sites. Many private landowners have recently enrolled in WDFW hunter access programs in southeast Washington. Refer to the Private Lands Program section for access program acres by GMU, and the Hunt Planner Web map for mapped locations. The Department has tips on pheasant hunting in general and recommends hunters use the "Basics of Upland Bird Hunting in Washington" publication.

WDFW will be releasing game farm-produced roosters once again this fall at the traditional release sites, which are also mapped on the Hunt Planner Web map and the Eastern Washington Pheasant Enhancement Program publication. There is also a summary of upland game bird seasons.

Figure 13. Pheasant harvest and hunter numbers for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.

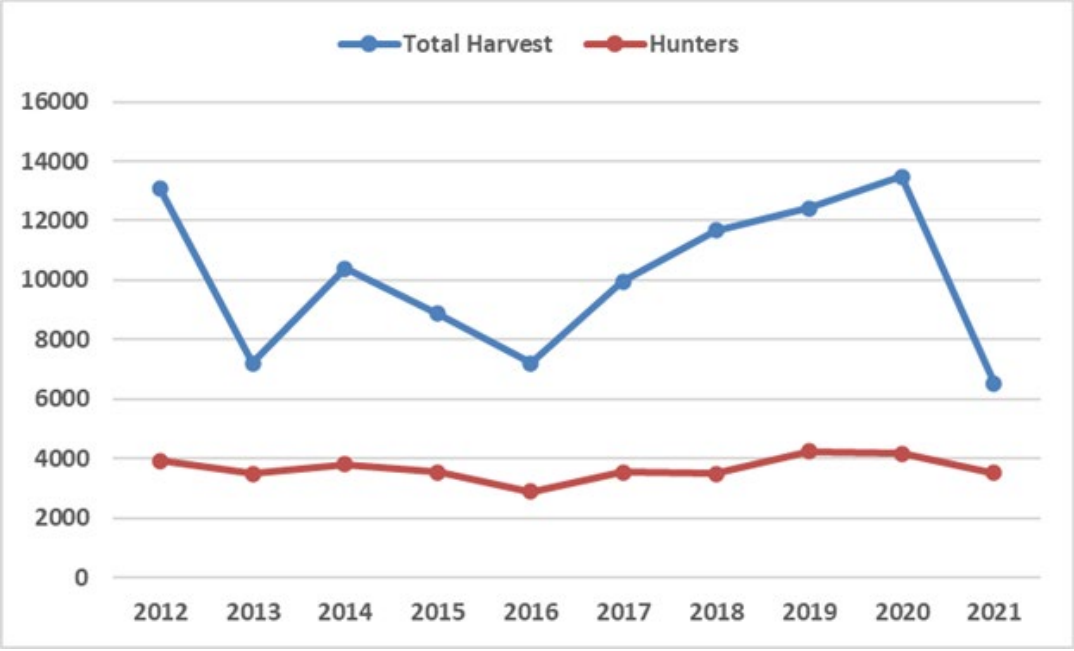
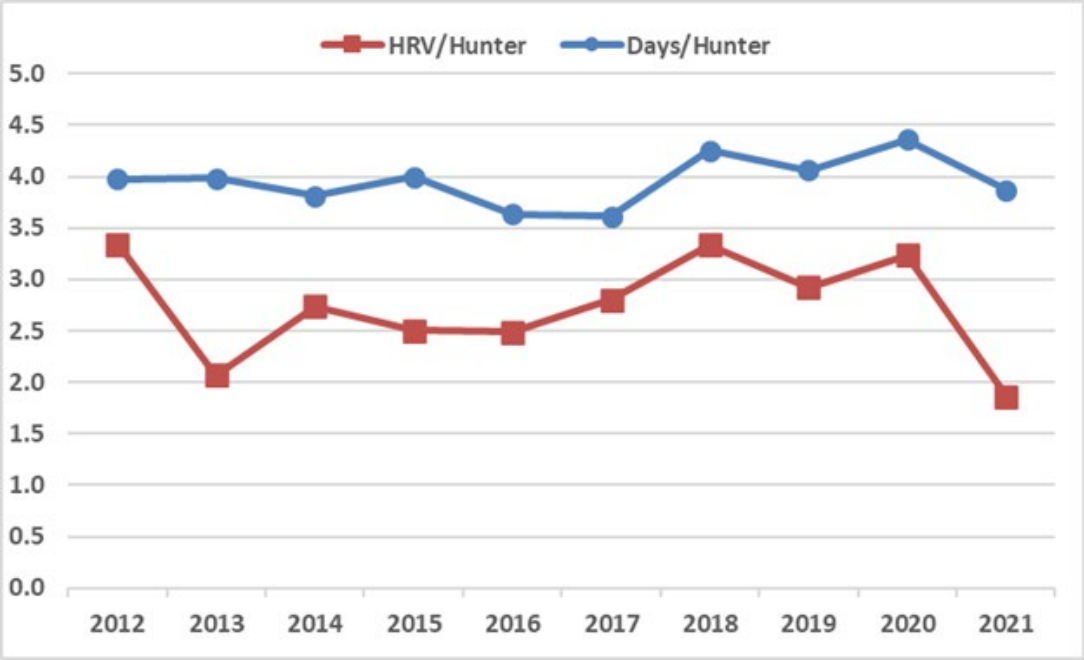


Figure 14. Pheasant harvest and days hunted per hunter for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.



Chukar and gray partridge

Two gray partridge in a dry hay field. Photo by Alan L. Bauer.

Nest and early chick survival for chukar and partridge likely suffered from the cold wet spring in 2022, but the late nesters and re-nesters likely benefited from the increased forage and insects. The winter of 2023/24 was typical for the inland northwest, even a little on the mild side overall which should have resulted in average to above-average juvenile overwinter survival. The spring of 2024 was also relatively mild so hatching success should have been high. Precipitation levels are below normal for the year, and that, coupled with above average temperatures may reduce forage in late summer and could decrease juvenile survival if those conditions continue into fall.

Harvest has varied over the past ten years with spikes in 2012 and 2018 and declines in 2020 and 2021 (Figures 15 and 16). Harvest estimates were calculated using different analyses in 2022 so the numbers should not be compared directly with previous seasons. In 2022, hunter effort for chukar and partridge in District 2 averaged approximately 3.6 days per hunter which resulted in 2.0 birds harvested per hunter. Harvest effort increased in 2023 to 5.3 days per hunter, but despite this increased effort, harvest declined slightly to 1.6 birds harvested per hunter.

Statewide numbers for chukar and partridge were more favorable for hunters in 2023 than in 2022, as harvest increased from 4.0 birds per hunter in 2022 to 4.9 birds per hunter in 2023. This may have been, in part, due to increased hunting pressure as hunting effort also increased from 5.3 days per hunter in 2022 to 6.5 days per hunter in 2023.

Partridge are most common in Lincoln and Whitman counties and are most often seen in, and adjacent to, agricultural fields. When hunting for partridge in Lincoln County please be sure to identify your bird before pulling the trigger - there are populations of Sage grouse and Sharp-tailed grouse in the county, and both are State Endangered species.

There are few chukar in District 2. They are predominantly found along the breaks of the Snake River, where the terrain is steep and rocky with limited public access from above. There is some access via the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Snake River from below, but not all the Corps lands allow hunting. Refer to the Army Corps website for details.

For more information on gray partridge and chukar harvest, refer to the Statewide small game harvest statistics, and check out the most recent Game Status and Trend Report.

The Department has tips on chukar and gray partridge hunting in general and recommends hunters use the "Basics of Upland Bird Hunting in Washington" publication as well. There is also a summary of upland game bird seasons.

Figure 15. Chukar and partridge harvest and hunter numbers for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.

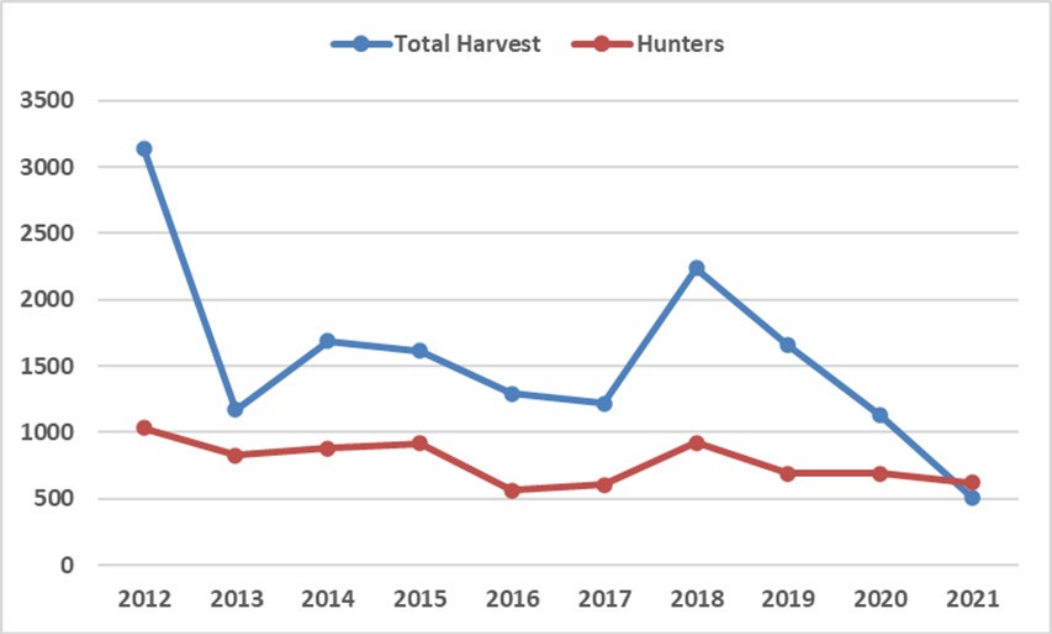
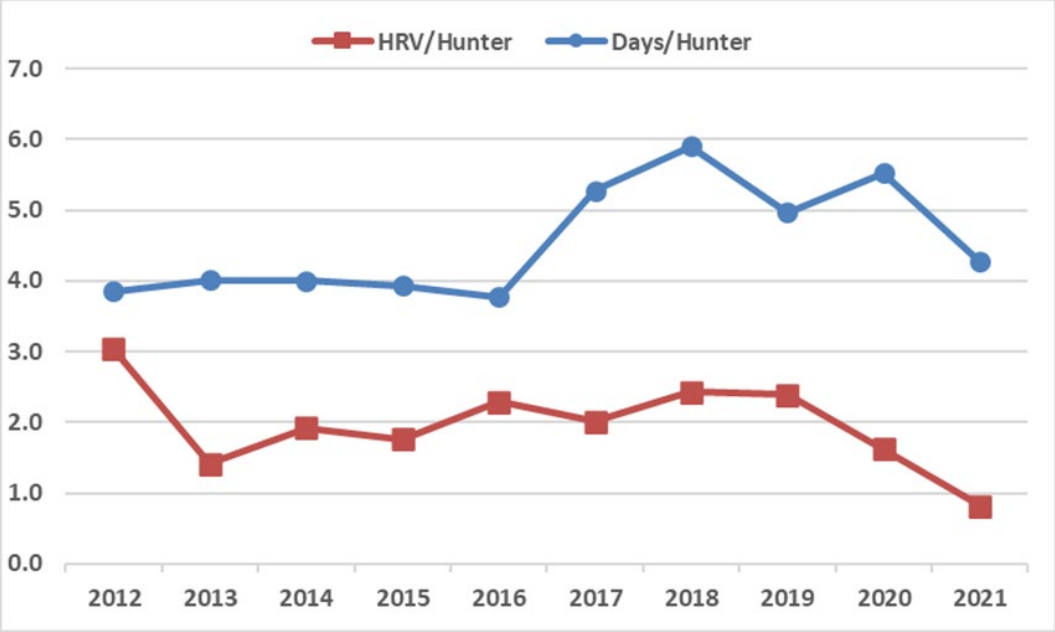


Figure 16. Chukar and partridge harvest and days hunted per hunter for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.



Forest grouse

Ruffed grouse in the forest. Photo by WDFW.

The forest grouse season opener was delayed to September 15 in 2021 and will be opening on this date again in 2024. Statewide harvest data indicated a declining trend in the forest grouse population, and wing barrel data showed that early season harvest was biased towards young of the year and brood hens. This delay has been implemented to allow for more brood break up to occur, thereby reducing brood hen vulnerability to harvest, ultimately resulting in a growing population.

Overall, forest grouse populations appear to be low but stable in District 2, with the best success found in the forested portions of GMUs 124, 127, and 133. Of the four forest grouse species, only ruffed and dusky grouse are found in District 2. Ruffed grouse are the most common of the two, but dusky grouse can be found in higher elevations of the District. The relatively dry and warm spring in 2024 should have improved hatching success and chick survival of early nesters, but those hot and dry conditions continuing into the summer may decrease recruitment as it could limit forage availability.

Hunter numbers prior to 2022 were down relative to long term averages but were stable during the previous few seasons (Figure 17). Similarly, total grouse harvested, and hunter success (harvest per hunter) were down in 2021 which may have been due to drought conditions in spring/summer 2021 (Figure 18). In 2022, WDFW's methods for estimating small game harvest underwent significant modifications so data from 2022 should not be directly compared with previous seasons. In District 2, hunters averaged 4.8 days of effort in 2022 with an average harvest of 1.3 birds per hunter. Effort in 2023 decreased to only 3.7 days per hunter, and harvest also decreased to 1.1 birds per hunter. In both years, this effort was lower than statewide estimates (8.6 and 8.1 days per hunter in 2022 and 2023, respectively). Average harvest was similar in 2022(1.6 birds per hunter), but in 2023 statewide harvest increased to an average of 2.4 birds per hunter.

For more information on forest grouse, refer to the Statewide Small Game Harvest Statistics, and the most recent Game Status and Trend Report. There are tips on hunting forest grouse and the department recommends hunters use the "Basics of Upland Bird Hunting in Washington" publication as well. There is also a summary of upland game bird seasons.

To evaluate population trends and harvest changes, WDFW began collecting forest grouse wings and tails from hunters in 2016 and will continue to do so in 2024. Collection barrels will be distributed at various hunting access points, as well as WDFW offices throughout Region 1. You can help with this effort by dropping off a wing and tail from each forest grouse harvested, following the instructions at the barrel. Locations of wing barrels and other information about this sampling effort can be found on WDFW's website.

Figure 17. Forest grouse harvest and hunter numbers for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.

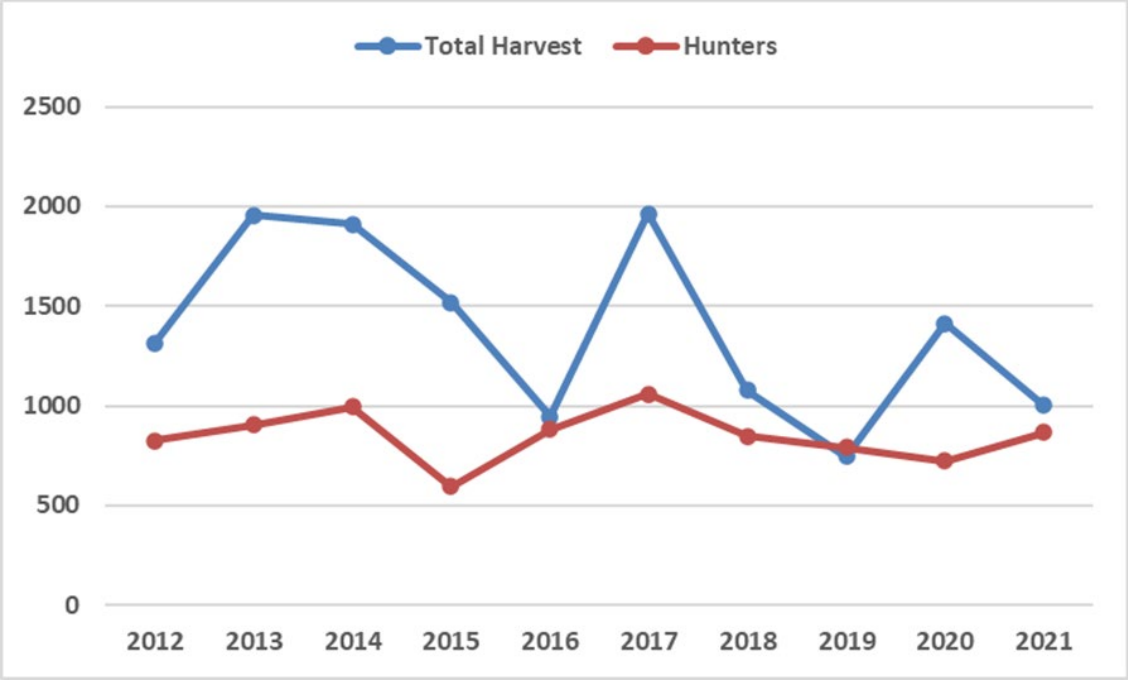
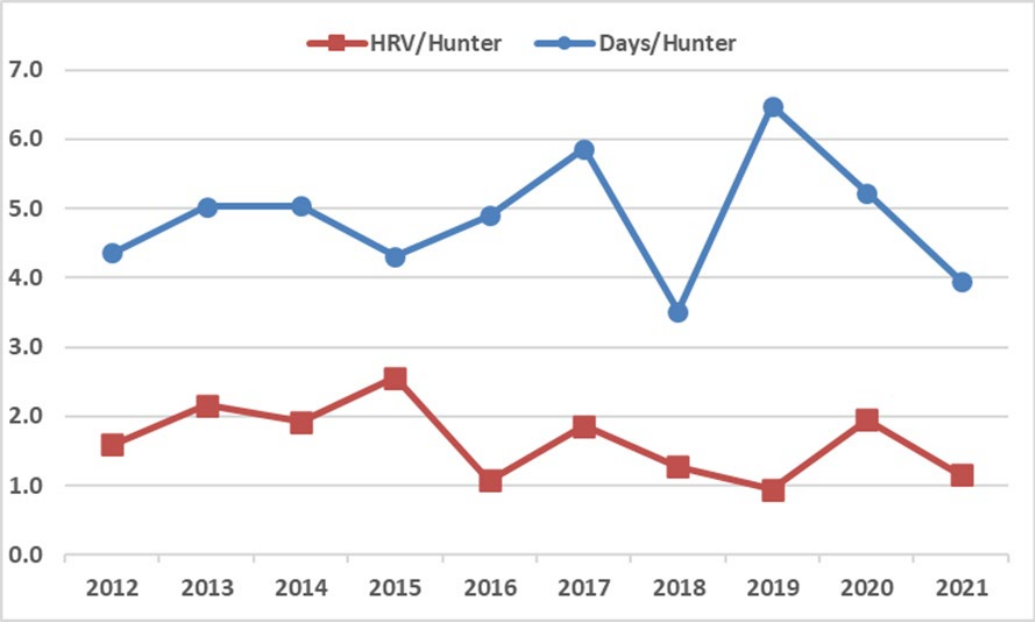


Figure 18. Forest grouse harvest and days hunted per hunter for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.



Quail

Male California quail perched on a wooden structure. Photo by Carrie Dugovic.

The 2023/24 winter was milder than normal which should have resulted in average overwinter survival and the relatively dry and warm spring in 2024 should have improved hatching success and chick survival of early nesters. However, the hot and dry conditions experienced in July may decrease recruitment as it could limit forage availability later in the summer/early fall.

Harvest was down and hunter numbers slightly up in 2021, but both were in line with the ten-year average (Figure 19). Hunter success (harvest/hunter) was below average and hunter effort (days/hunter) was average (Figure 20). Harvest estimates were derived using different analyses in 2022 so the numbers should not be compared directly with previous seasons. Average hunter effort in District 2 during the 2022 season was 4.4 days and success rates were estimated at 4.3 birds per hunter. Both estimates increased in 2023: hunters spent more time targeting quail, 5.7 days on average, and harvested an average of 6.3 birds per hunter. In 2022, hunter effort and harvest were lower than statewide estimates (5.2 days per hunter and 6.5 birds per hunter), but the estimates in 2023 are more similar to statewide estimates of 6 days per hunter and 6.9 birds per hunter. It is important to note that statewide totals include harvest of mountain quail which are only legal to hunt on the west side of the state.

Access can be challenging, especially with most of the good quail habitat occurring in and around farmsteads and towns. For more information on harvest statistics, refer to the Statewide Small Game Harvest Statistics: Quail - Statewide. For more information on quail status in Washington, refer to the most recent Game Status and Trend Report.

Consider reviewing tips on quail hunting in general, as well as the "Basics of Upland Bird Hunting in Washington" publication available on the WDFW website. There is also a summary of upland game bird seasons.

Figure 19. Quail harvest and hunter numbers for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.

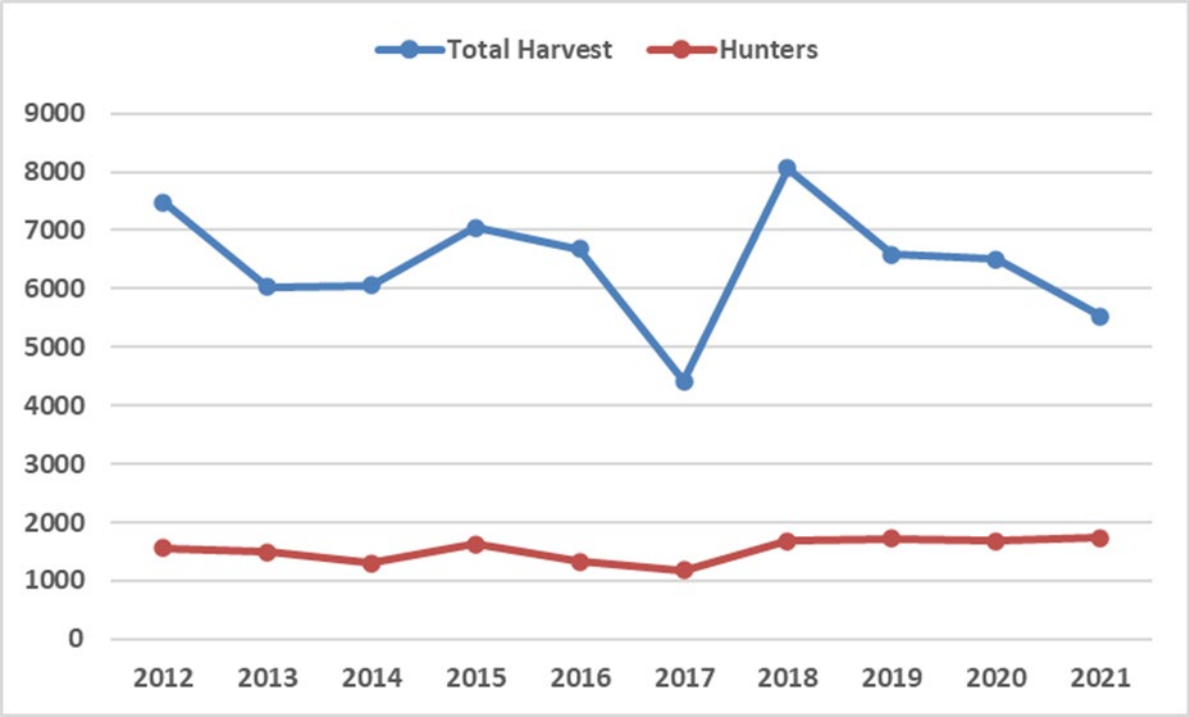
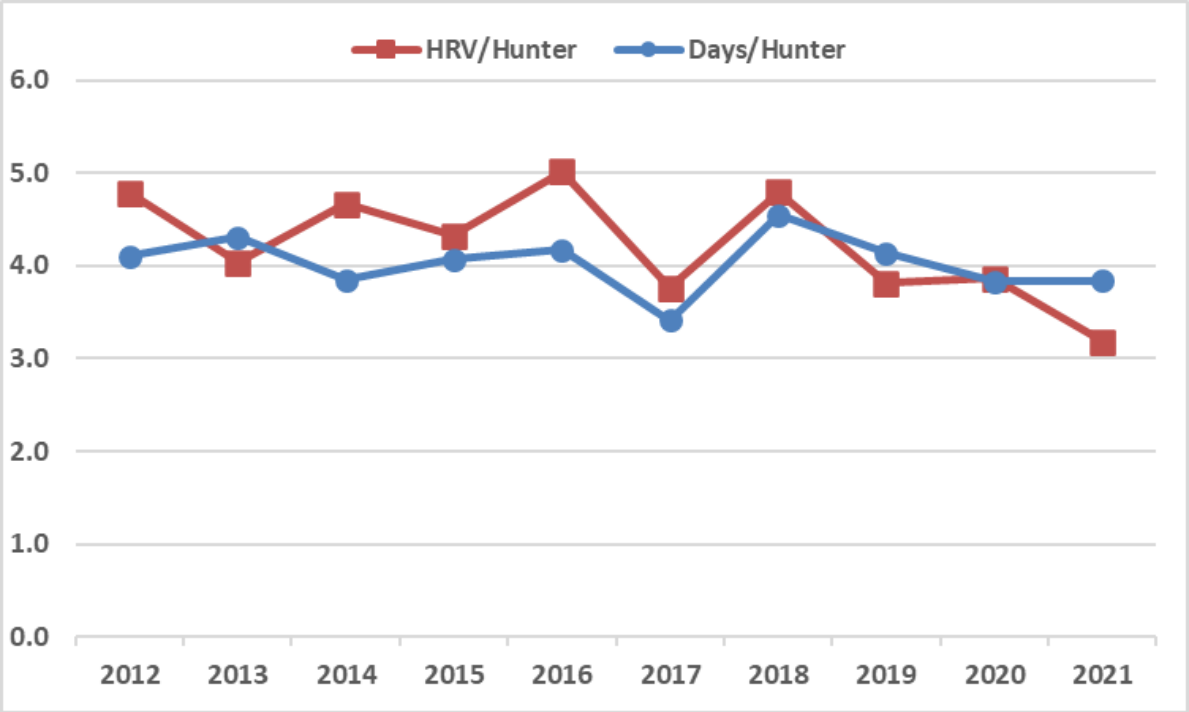


Figure 20. Quail harvest and days hunted per hunter for District 2 from 2012-2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.



Turkey

Opportunistic observations during fieldwork, public reports, and damage claims all indicate that the turkey population is doing well in GMUs 124–133 and stable in GMUs 136–142. Spring harvest decreased slightly in 2023 after two consecutive years of record harvest (Figure 21). However, the number of spring turkey hunters also decreased in 2023 which could explain some of this reduction in harvest (Figure 21). Fall hunter participation was the lowest recorded in the past 10 years and fall turkey harvest was also down 15.5% from the previous 10-year average of 814 birds.

Hunter effort during the spring season in 2023 was ten days/kill which is only slightly above the previous 5-year average of nine days/kill. There was also an increase in effort per success during the fall 2023 season as hunters averaged 13 days/kill and the previous 5-year average was 10 days/kill. The decrease in fall hunter numbers from 2021 (Figure 21) is likely associated with lower deer populations after the large hemorrhagic disease outbreak because fall turkey harvest is often more opportunistic in nature while hunters pursue other game species (i.e., fewer deer means fewer hunters and therefore less opportunity to harvest fall turkeys).

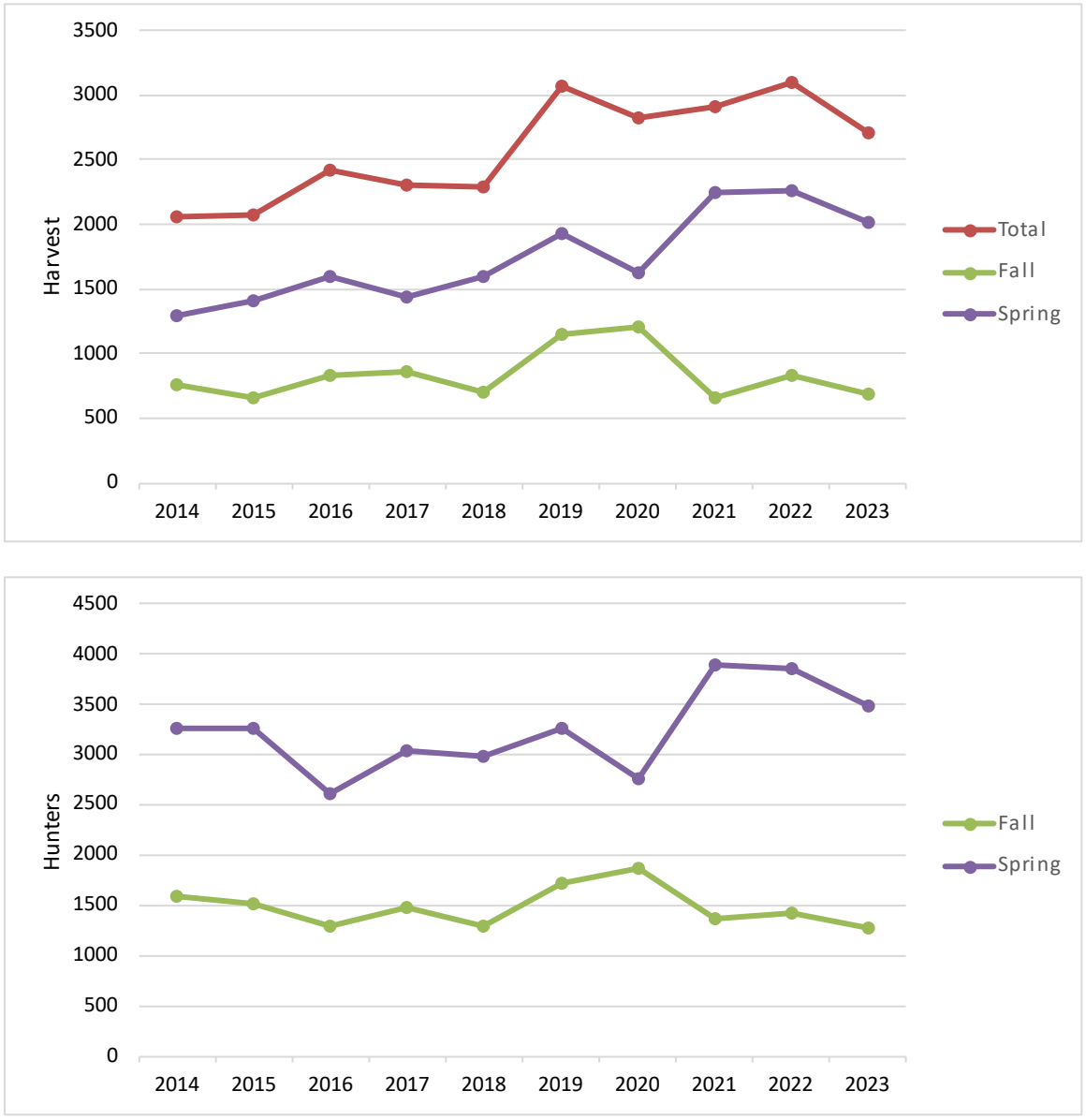
GMU 124 has the most turkeys and the most turkeys harvested (1461 on average for the past five years), but with this comes the most hunters (average of 1582 in spring and 708 in fall for the past 5 years). GMUs 130 and 133 come in a distant second for turkey harvest (581 and 529, respectively for 5-year averages) followed by GMU 127 (199 on average). GMUs 136, 139, and 142 have relatively few turkeys (less than 100 harvested in each) compared to these other units, but hunting can be very good in some areas within these GMUs.

Again, the district is predominantly private land and securing access to private land will likely increase odds of success. Access during the spring hunt can be competitive but should be easier to acquire in GMU 124 for the fall “either sex” season, given the extensive turkey damage complaints the Department has received from this area. Many private landowners have enrolled in WDFW Hunter Access programs recently in southeast Washington. Refer to the Private Lands Program section for access program acres by GMU, and the Hunt Planner map for mapped locations.

For more information on turkey harvest in Washington, refer to the Turkey Game Harvest Statistics and the most recent Game Status and Trend Report.

For more information and tips on hunting turkey in Washington check out “The Basics of Turkey Hunting in Washington” publication from WDFW.

Figure 21. Top graph: Turkey harvest (spring, fall, & total) for District 2 for the past 10 years. Bottom graph: Turkey hunters (spring & fall) for District 2 for the past 10 years.



Dove

A mourning dove perched on a branch. Photo by WDFW.

Doves in District 2 occur at low population densities relative to the Columbia Basin and similar regions. As often as not, cool temperatures just prior to or during the dove season push many doves further south out of the district. Hunter harvest metrics have been variable (Figure 22), but prior to 2022, harvest averaged about 3,200 birds a year by about 400 hunters. Hunter effort (days per hunter) has not changed much over the past ten years, although harvest per hunter spiked in 2020, to 10 birds, then dropped to 4.6 in 2021, a new ten year low (Figure 23). Harvest estimates were calculated using different analyses in 2022 so the numbers from 2022 and 2023 should not be compared directly with previous seasons. Hunters in District 2 in 2022 averaged 1.8 days of effort which resulted in an average of 6.8 birds killed per hunter. Hunter effort increased in 2023 to 2.7 days per hunter, but success decreased to 5.9 birds killed per hunter. As expected, these numbers are lower than the statewide averages of 4.3 and 3.6 days of effort per hunter and success rates of 15.5 and 14.5 birds per hunter in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

It is important to note that eastside hunters have an additional dove opportunity – the Eurasian collared dove. This dove is an exotic dove that has invaded most of eastern Washington. It can be hunted and trapped with a license year-round. Eurasian collared doves are commonly found in and around towns and around grain elevators.

For more information on doves, refer to the Statewide Small Game Harvest Statistics: Statewide and by County, and the most recent Game Status and Trend Report.

Figure 22. Dove harvest and hunter numbers for District 2 from 2011–2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.

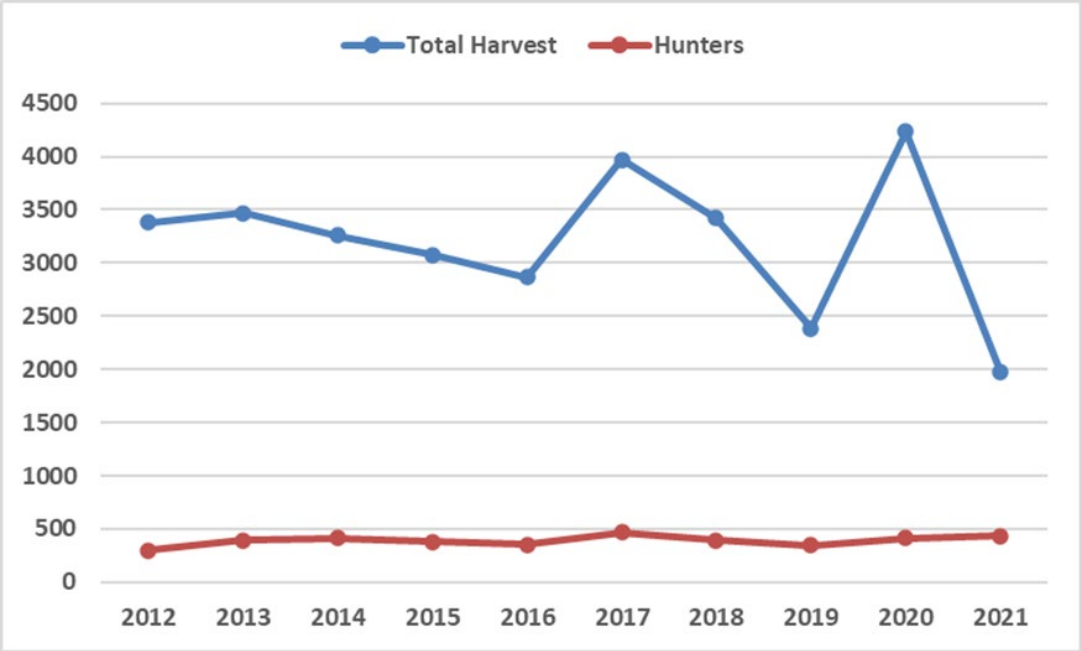
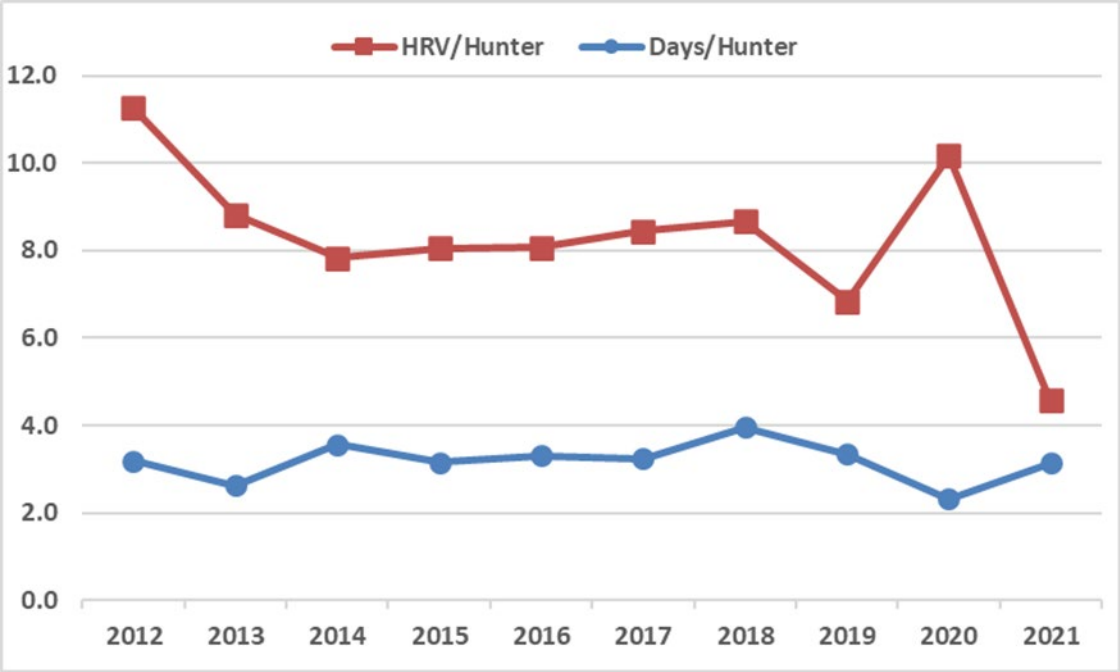


Figure 23. Dove harvest and days hunted per hunter for District 2 from 2011–2021. Data from 2022 and 2023 were not included as WDFW's methods for analyzing small game harvest underwent significant modifications that nullifies direct comparison with previous seasons.



Major public lands

The majority of District 2 is privately owned. However, WDFW and BLM own about 60,000 acres in the center of Lincoln County and about 15,000 acres in northwest Whitman County. For more information on BLM property, or to order maps, please visit the BLM website. To hunt on WDFW Wildlife Areas, you will need to display a WDFW Vehicle Access Pass (free with hunting or fishing license purchase) or a Discover Pass. For more information on WDFW lands, refer to the Wildlife Areas webpage.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) maintains land open to the public for recreational purposes. Visitors to DNR land should be aware that a Discover Pass is required for access. Further information regarding recreational opportunities on DNR land can be found on the DNR website.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains lands associated with the Snake River open to the public for recreational purposes. Not all these lands are open to hunting, so hunters will want to research beforehand.

Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge (TNWR) has a limited entry youth waterfowl hunt (details available through TNWR) and allows elk hunting by permit only (permits allotted via WDFW special permit draw in June). TNWR also allows fall turkey hunting, which is a new program that began in 2023. The turkey hunt is managed through WDFW's Hunt by Reservation program.

Riverside State Park and Mount Spokane State Park, along with all County Parks and Conservation Areas in Spokane County, are open to public access, but NOT to hunting. There is one exception to this; Mica Peak Conservation Area in GMU 127 has special white-tailed deer and turkey hunting opportunities that can be reserved through the Hunt by Reservation system.

Several private timber companies allow hunting in Spokane County. The largest of these is Inland Empire Paper (IEP), which does allow vehicular access but will close gates to full-sized vehicles once there has been enough rain to soften the roads (typically in late October or early November). IEP does charge an access fee, but it is reasonable and comes in daily and annual versions. For more information on IEP and maps of their property please visit their website. Manulife/Hancock is another large timber company in Spokane County that allows free walk-in access to hunters. WDFW Enforcement monitors their property. Please respect the agreement or this access could be lost. Hancock does not supply a map of their property; we recommend hunters use the Spokane County Assessor's online parcel map to identify Hancock ownership (which also includes System Global Timberlands, Golden Pond Timberlands, and Boston Timber) or invest in third-party software (e.g., OnX maps).

Throughout the district there are private landowners enrolled in WDFW hunt access programs (refer to Private Lands Program and visit the WDFW Private Lands Access website).

Private lands

Since 1948, WDFW has worked with private landowners across the state to provide public access through a negotiated agreement. Landowners participating in a WDFW cooperative agreement retain liability protection provided under RCW 4.24.210. Landowners receive technical services, materials for posting (signs and posts), and in some cases, monetary compensation. In addition, lands under the agreement are well known by WDFW Enforcement.

Currently, the private lands access program includes five basic access agreement types: Hunt by Written Permission (HBWP), Feel Free to Hunt (FFTH), Hunt by Reservation (HBR), Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP), and Register to Hunt (RTH). As of July 2024, the total accessible acreage in District 2 is over 154,000 acres. The breakdown of these acres by GMU and access program type are in Table 4. The LHP in GMU 130 is managed by the Columbia Plateau Wildlife Management Association (CPWMA). Access to the LHP is only available through WDFW special permitting and CPWMA raffle permit hunts (refer to WDFW's 2024 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Regulations pamphlet). More information on the other access programs and where these enrolled lands occur can be found at WDFW's Hunt Planner Web map and the WDFW Private Lands Access page.

Stimson and Hancock timber companies have traditionally had MOUs with WDFW to allow for **non-motorized** access for free to hunters, but please check with each company or WDFW to confirm these MOUs are still in place prior to hunting their properties. WDFW Enforcement monitors their properties and will ticket offenders. Please respect the non-motorized access agreement or this access could be lost.

Table 4. Acres of private land enrolled in WDFW access programs by GMU in District 2 as of July 2024: Hunt by Written Permission (HBWP), Feel Free to Hunt (FFTH), Hunt by Reservation (HBR), and Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP).

GMU	HBWP Properties	HBWP Acres	FFTH Properties	FFTH Acres	HBR Properties	HBR Acres	LHP Properties	LHP Acres
124 Mt Spokane	3	179	0	0	1	1,020	0	0
127 Mica Peak	4	2,913	0	0	1	1,821	0	0
130 Cheney	3	5,936	0	0	3	3,603	1	3,800
133 Roosevelt	15	20,992	0	0	0	0	0	0
136 Harrington	13	14,768	6	5,509	0	0	0	0
139 Steptoe	17	13,130	4	3,901	36	32,702	0	0
142 Almota	14	17,581	0	0	23	26,805	0	0
TOTAL	69	75,499	10	9,410	64	65,951	1	3,800