

WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

Issue Date: July 13, 2006

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Policy Number: VII D

SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING OF ELK/WILD BISON

The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (Commission) is granted authority in W. S. §23-1-302(a)(ix) to provide for the feeding of game animals, birds and fish of Wyoming when conditions warrant such feeding as necessary. The purpose of this policy is to define the role of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (Department) in support of the Commission's efforts to fulfill its responsibilities with respect to feeding wildlife.

Under most conditions the Commission discourages the private, intentional feeding of big and trophy game animals. In order to maintain established elk herd unit population objectives in the Jackson/Pinedale region, the Commission directs the Department to provide supplemental feed for elk as provided in this policy.

The Commission recognizes the importance of supplying supplemental feed to elk at the twenty-two (22) existing State feedgrounds and the National Elk Refuge. The Commission also recognizes that without such feeding, the elk populations would have to be decreased significantly to levels that could be supported by the limited native range forage.

The Commission directs the Department to provide adequate supplemental feed to support healthy and productive elk at the twenty-two (22) State operated feedgrounds and work cooperatively with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide adequate feed to support healthy and productive wintering elk/wild bison on the National Elk Refuge. It is recognized that the Commission approved herd unit population objectives exceed established total feedground quotas for each herd unit due to the presence of some elk wintering on native range. Recognizing that elk population objectives for each herd unit exceed the number of elk to be maintained on feedgrounds and the unpredictability of elk distribution considering habitat conditions, weather, and other factors that may influence the distribution of elk on Department operated feedgrounds, the Commission directs the Department to strive to manage feedgrounds for the total feedground elk quotas for each elk herd unit as listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Herd Unit Feedground Elk Quotas

Approximate Herd Unit	Quota	Elk Feedground	Quota Distribution
Afton	1,750	Greys River	1,000
		Forest Park	750
Piney	2,150	Bench Corral	250
		Finnegan	400
		Franz	450
		Jewett	650
		North Piney	400
Fall Creek	3,950	Camp Creek	900
		Horse Creek	1,250
		Dog Creek	800
		South Park	1,000
Green River	1,975	Black Butte	500
		Green River	675
		Soda Lake	800
Hoback	1,000	Dell Creek	400
		McNeel	600
Jackson	2,450	Alkali	800
		Fish Creek	1,000
		Patrol Cabin	650
Pinedale	1,800	Fall Creek	700
		Muddy Creek	600
		Scab Creek	500

The number of elk on the National Elk Refuge is to be maintained in accordance with a mutually agreed upon number established cooperatively by the Commission through the Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Commission directs the Department to not develop and operate any additional feedgrounds without pre-approval by the Commission while in session, except when an emergency occurs. When an emergency is identified, temporary feeding operations may be conducted when agreed upon by the Director and the Commissioner(s) for the area(s) where the emergency exists. The Commission recognizes there may be situations where emergency feeding of wildlife shall be necessary. To the extent that any action taken pursuant to the above-mentioned responsibilities may be more specifically addressed in another Commission policy, the more specific policy should control.