

**Geary, Laura**

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**From:** Furthmyre, Coleen on behalf of FWP Commission  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 07, 2013 10:32 AM  
**To:** Daniel Vermillion - FWP (dan@sweetwatertravel.com); Gary J Wolfe; Larry Wetsit; Matthew Tourtlotte (mtourtlotte@gmail.com); Richard Stuker  
**Cc:** Dockter, Rebecca; Kujala, Quentin; FWP Wildlife  
**Subject:** FW: Elk decline in areas of elk brucellosis management

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**From:** [katqanna@gmail.com](mailto:katqanna@gmail.com) [<mailto:katqanna@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 07, 2013 9:30 AM  
**To:** FWP Commission  
**Subject:** Elk decline in areas of elk brucellosis management

I read something interesting in the Bison EA, pg. 49, I thought I would share, since this pertains to elk and the northern elk herd, specifically elk HD 313, an area that is of concern involving the elk brucellosis management. Take a look at information provided by FWP wildlife biologists. This is an area that kill permits were issued to ranchers this spring, as part of the elk brucellosis management. HD 317, just north of 313 is where the dispersal hunts occurred. Please do not approve the Elk Management in Area With Brucellosis 2014 Proposed Work Plan.

Northern Boundary (HD313):

Hunting District 313 encompasses winter range for the Northern Yellowstone elk herd, a migratory herd that summers primarily within Yellowstone National Park and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. This population peaked during the 1980's and 1990's with a 10-year average of 15,304 during 1986-1995 and **has been in decline since the late 1990's**. The highest number of elk observed during aerial surveys was 19,054 elk in 1994. The winter 2013 count resulted in 3,915 observed elk, **a decline of 74%** from the population average at its peak. The herd is counted cooperatively by Montana and Yellowstone National Park, and the portion of the herd that winters in Montana is managed with an objective of 4,000 elk. The 2013 count resulted in 3,000 elk wintering in Montana. The highest count of elk wintering in Montana was 8,626 in 1996 with a 10-year average of 5,444 during 1989-1998. Within HD 313 from 2004-2012, there has been an average of 1,344 elk hunters and 7,302 elk hunter days annually. **The average number of elk harvested declined from 1,590 (average 2000-2006) to 259 (average 2007-2012). Hunting season structure is restrictive** with antlerless harvest limited to 30 brow-tined bull/antlerless youth-only permits and unlimited permits for brow-tined bulls."

Thank you,  
Kathryn QannaYahu