

# **Baiting Deer and Elk**

**Jerry Nelson**

**Deer and Elk Section Manager  
Game Division, Wildlife Program**

# Background

- **Commission requested deer and elk baiting be part of the 3-year package discussion**
- **The topic was presented before the public at public meetings last summer**
- **Input received through variety of sources as part of the 3-year package process**

# Sources of Input

- Scoping and public meetings
- Comments via the web site
- Random telephone survey
- Comments on rule filing (over 1,500)
- Enforcement Program
- GMAC
- Testimony at March Commission meeting

# Against Baiting

**In the public meeting setting and the written public comment received, those not in favor of using bait to hunt deer and elk cited:**

- **Reasons of fair chase**
- **Unfair advantages over hunters that don't use bait**
- **Concentrating animals in places where neighbors don't want them**
- **Luring animals away from land that was formerly perceived as better hunting**
- **The potential for spreading disease**
- **The potential for negative impacts to habitat by congregating animals**

# In Favor of Baiting

Those in favor of using bait to hunt deer and elk cited:

- Being more selective in their harvest
- The ability to lure animals out of security cover that is impossible to move through
- Being able to hunt smaller acreages successfully
- Improving the probability of a clean kill
- Reducing their risk of wounding or losing animals
- Enhancing the hunting experience of a youth hunter or first-time hunter
- Facilitating a hunting experience for a senior hunter or hunter with disability that would otherwise be unable to hunt
- Don't unnecessarily restrict my hunting

# Rules

## Policy options for Commission's consideration:

- **No change, status quo**
- **A limit on the amount of bait that can be used to hunt deer and elk; new WAC 232-12-079**
  - **Final recommended adjustment volume=30 gallons**
- **A restriction on baiting with exceptions for youth, senior, disabled, and urban interface lands with landowner permission with an additional limit on amount of bait allowed; new WAC 232-12-088**
  - **Final recommended adjustment volume=30 gallons**
- **A complete ban on baiting for hunting deer and elk not including agricultural operations; new WAC 232-12-078**

# Questions?