

District 1

Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille Counties

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District 1, in the northeastern corner of Washington, is comprised of seven game management units (GMUs), including GMU 101 (Sherman), 105 (Kelly Hill), 108 (Douglas), 111 (Aladdin), 113 (Selkirk), 117 (49 Degrees North), and 121 (Huckleberry) (Figures 1 and 2). The topography is dominated by four mountain ranges that run generally north and south, the Kettle, Huckleberry, Calispell and Selkirk Ranges. There are broad valleys in between these ranges that are drained by the Kettle, Columbia, Colville, and Pend Oreille Rivers, all within the Columbia River watershed.

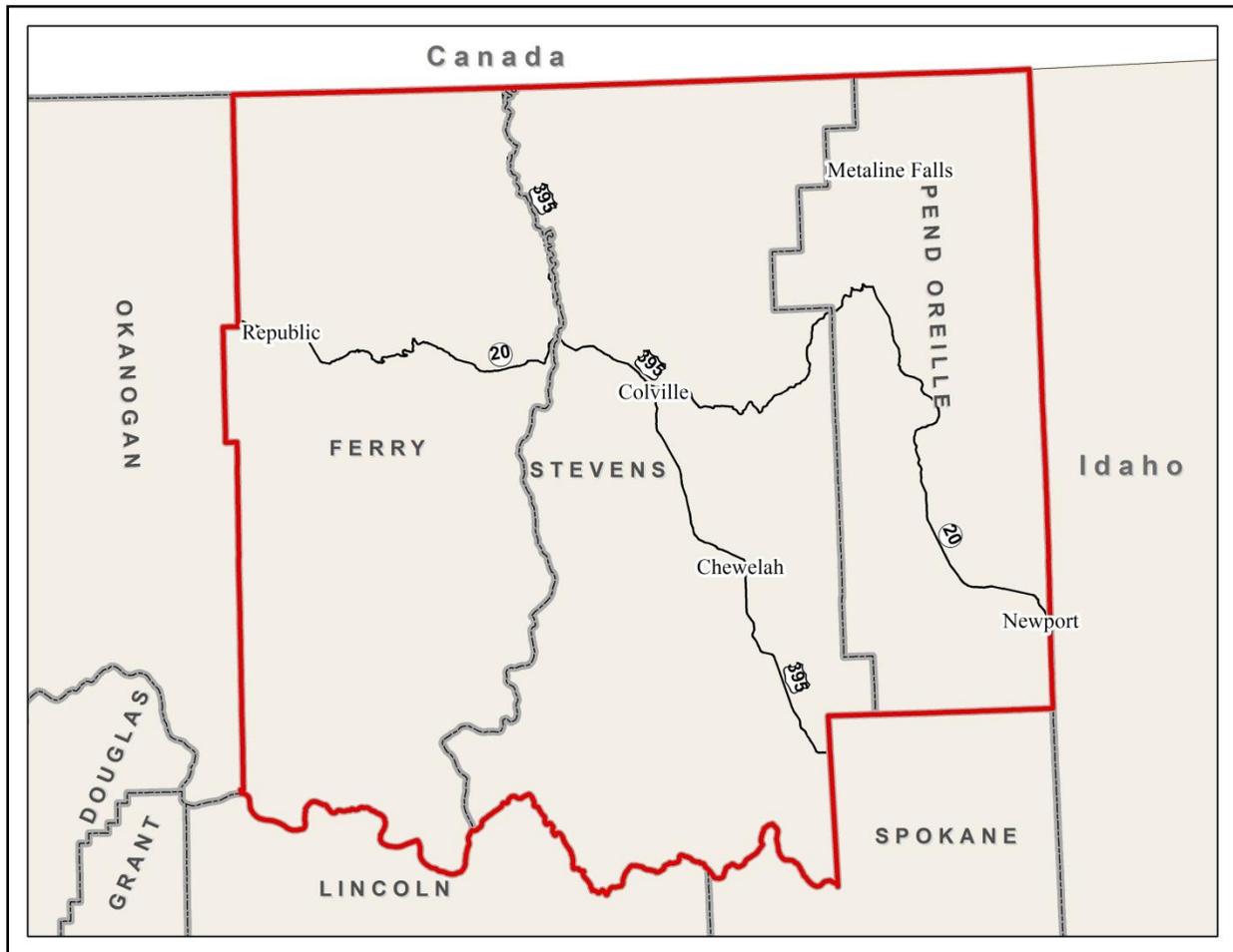


Figure 1. District 1 in NE Washington includes Ferry, Stevens, & Pend Oreille Counties.

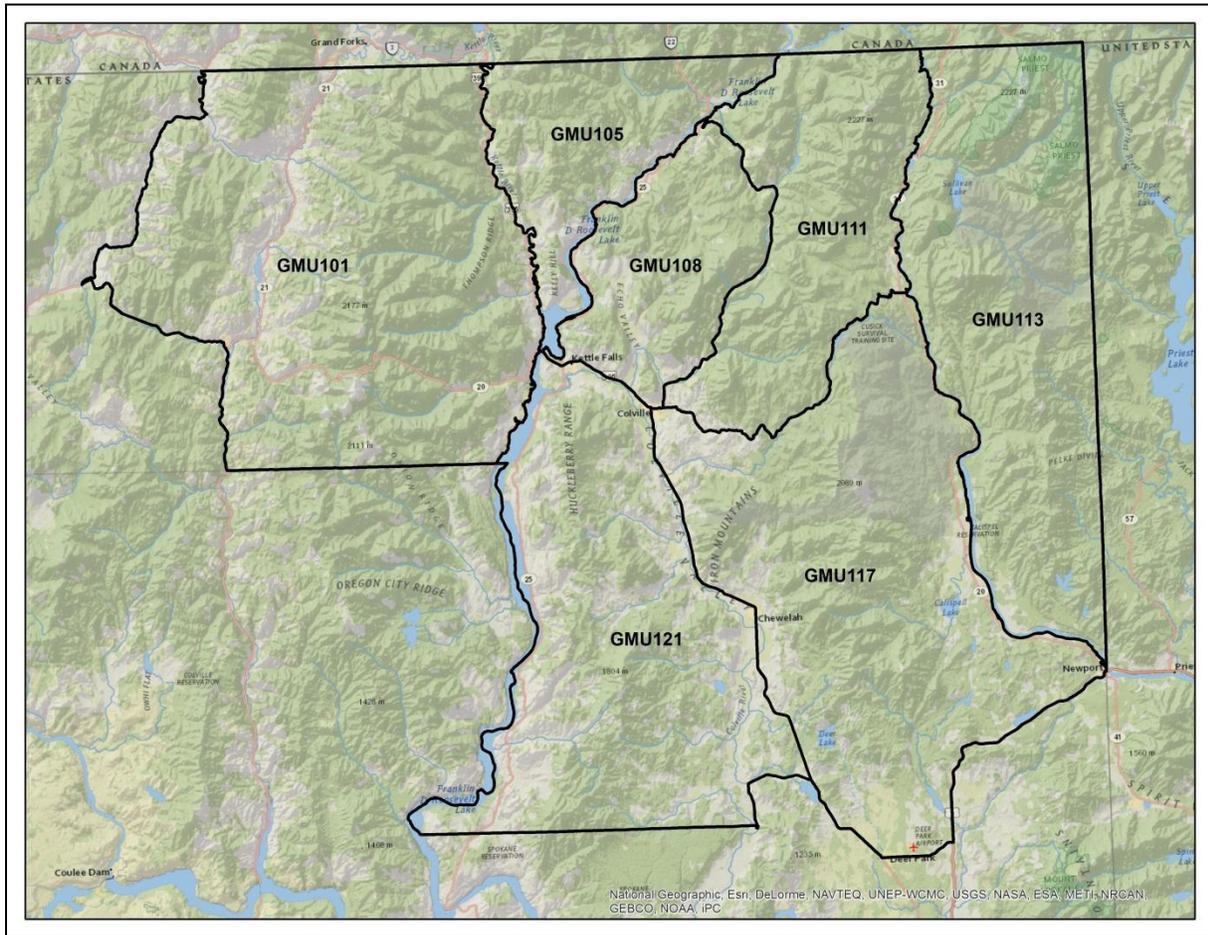


Figure 2. Game Management Units (GMUs) within District 1.

Elevation varies from about 1,290 feet at the normal pool level of Lake Roosevelt (Reservoir) to 7,309 feet on Gypsy Peak in the north Selkirk Range. Coniferous forest covers about 68 percent of the district’s landscape. Agricultural land, range land, and water features cover most of the balance.

Approximately 37 percent of the land mass is public, mostly national forest, but also state DNR, federal BLM, USFWS, WDFW, and a few other government agencies. Most of these lands outside of Indian reservations are open to public hunting. In addition, there are large timber company lands, also open to public hunting, although not necessarily open to private motorized vehicle access. The public lands tend to be at higher elevations with a shorter growing season, much less agriculture, and in general have a lower density of game animals, especially deer and turkey.

Big game resources in District 1 include white-tailed deer—the most abundant species—mule deer, elk, moose, black bear and cougar. White-tailed deer densities are highest in the valleys and foothill benches bordering the valleys, especially in the farm-forest mosaic within GMUs 105, 108, 117, and 121. GMUs 101, 111, and 113 also have white-tailed deer, but with more localized distributions. More detailed information on white-tailed deer in Washington can be

found in the Washington State Deer Management Plan (2010). The plan includes a section on the Selkirk Zone which is largely comprised of WDFW District 1. The plan is available for download in *pdf* format from the WDFW website at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/white-tailed-deer/>.

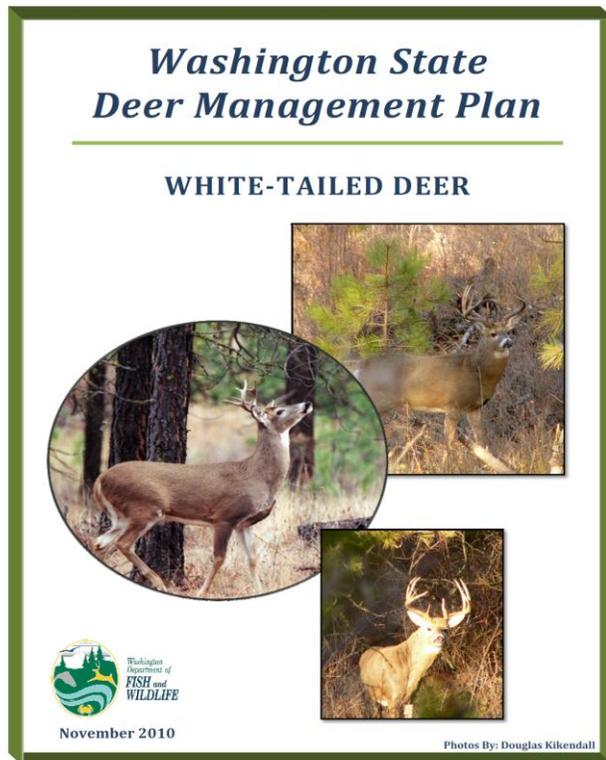


Figure 3. White-tailed Deer Management Plan.

Mule deer also occur within District 1, but in lesser abundance than white-tailed deer, especially east of the Columbia River. Although mule deer occur within every District 1 GMU, the highest density is in GMU 101. Since 2001, hunter harvest of all deer within the Selkirk Zone peaked in 2006. After a steady decline, largely as a result of 2 severe winters, the harvest rebounded to a substantial degree last year, 2012 (Figure 4).

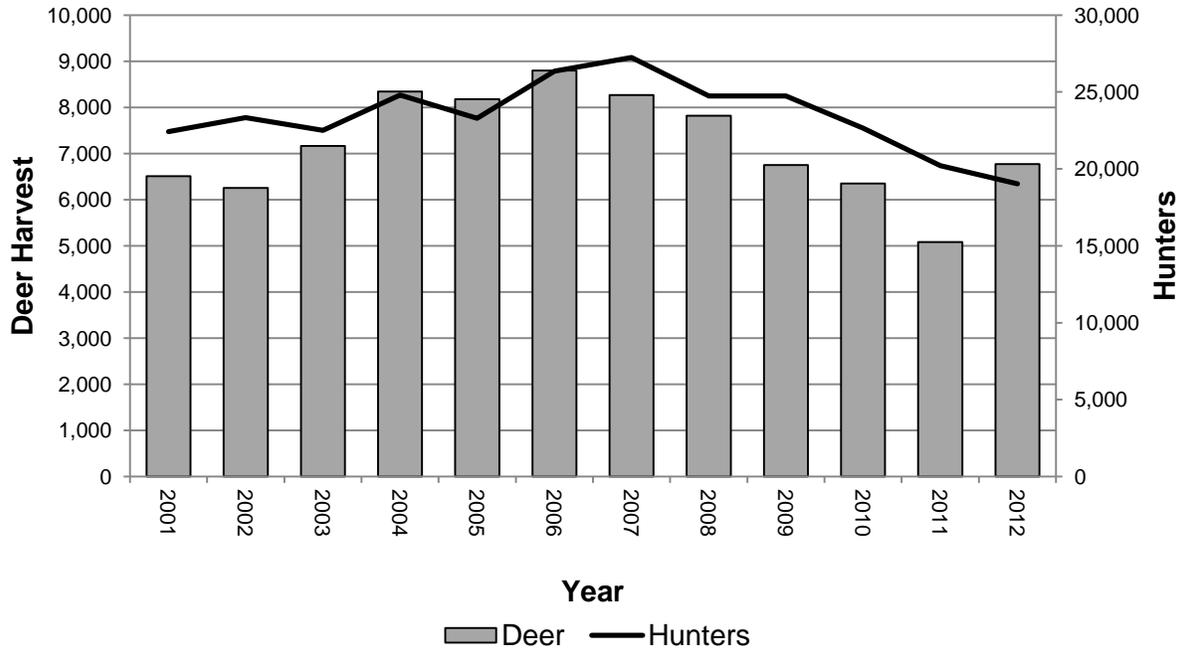


Figure 4. Hunter numbers and harvest of white-tailed and mule deer combined, 2001-2012.

Northeastern Washington is snow country. The severity of the winters drives population trends for many, if not most species of wildlife that occur here, and deer are no exception (Figure 5).

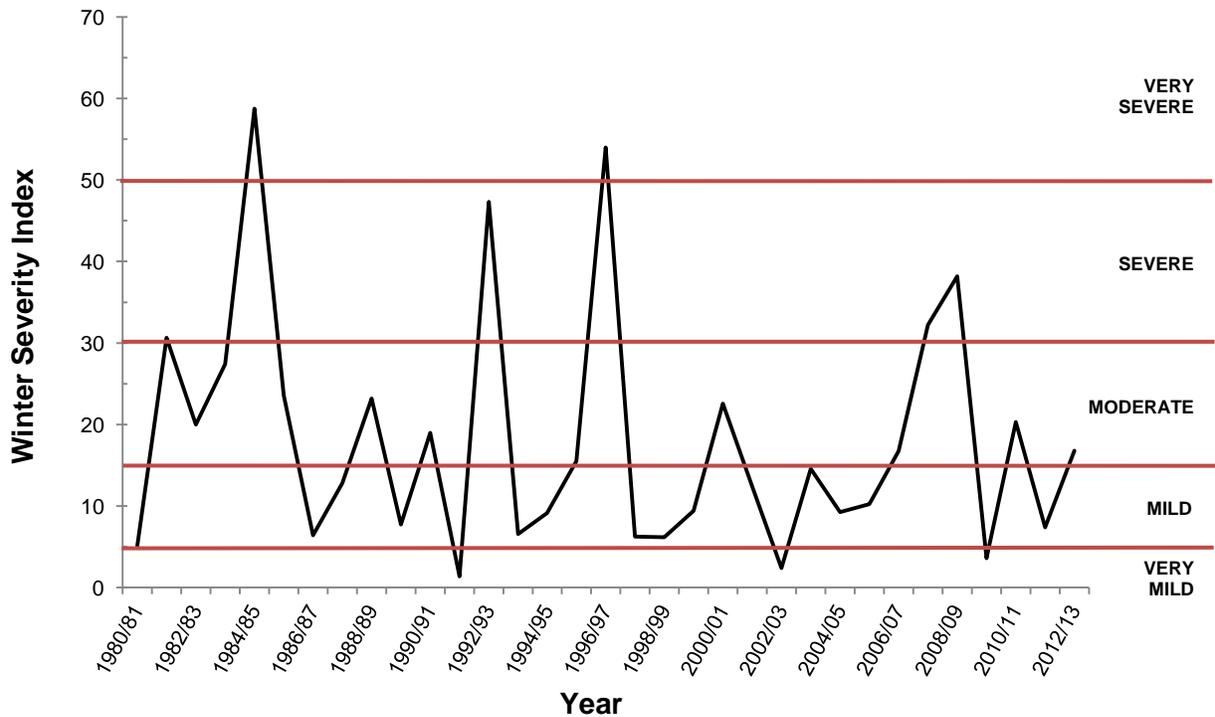


Figure 5. Winter Severity in NE Washington based on weather data reported from 6 weather stations at or near valley bottom locations within District 1, 1980 - 2012.

Elk are scattered at relatively low densities throughout District 1, but are most abundant in GMUs 113 and 117, which typically have the highest annual harvest among the district’s seven management units. The total hunter harvest of elk in District 1 is low compared to other WDFW districts, hovering around 250-300 animals a year since 2009 (Figure 6).

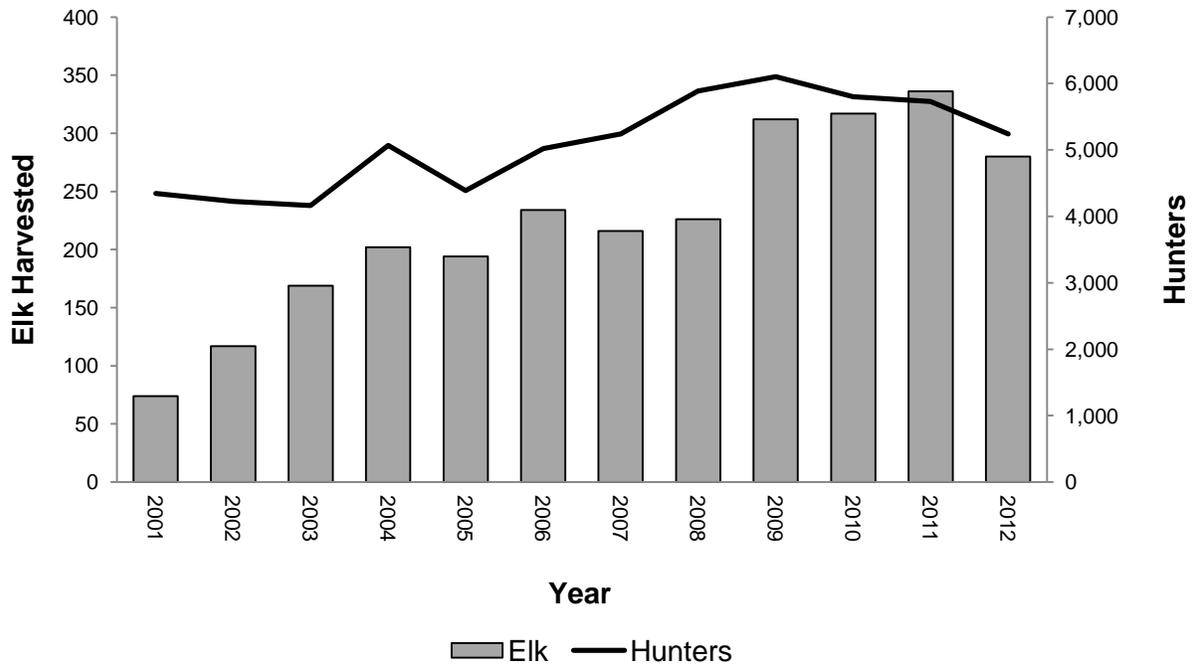


Figure 6. Number of elk harvested and number of elk hunters within District 1, 2001 - 2012.

Moose are relatively common and can be found almost anywhere in the district, but are typically most abundant above 3,000 feet elevation on the eastern slopes of each mountain range, which receive more precipitation than the west slopes. Moose can only be harvested by special permit hunt. Both the number of permits allocated and the annual hunter harvest of moose have increased substantially since the 1990's (Figure 7). District 1 has the greatest number of moose and highest harvest in the state.

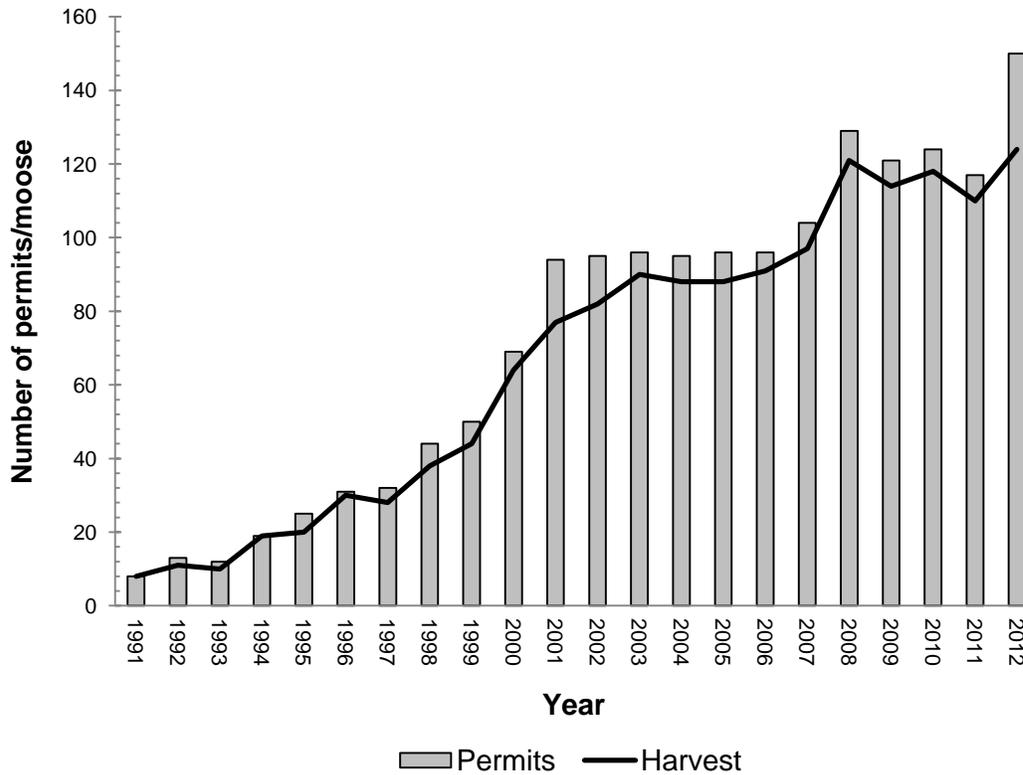


Figure 7. Number of moose hunting permits and moose harvest for Washington, 1991-2012.

Small game in District 1 includes three species of forest grouse, ring-necked pheasant, valley quail, wild turkey (Merriam’s subspecies), a number of migratory game birds including several species of ducks and geese, American coots, Wilson’s snipe, mourning doves, and snowshoe hare. This district has the highest harvest in the state for turkeys, most of which are taken during spring season (Table 1).

Table 1. Hunter harvest of turkeys during the spring season by turkey population unit, 2002 - 2011. P10 is the northeastern turkey population unit (GMUs 101-136) which includes District 1.

PMU	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
P10	3418	3333	3401	3445	3571	3660	2677	2845	2861	3734
P15	533	443	471	480	730	605	578	761	731	827
P20	119	176	209	215	220	258	232	228	412	194
P30	105	123	178	182	169	221	172	245	417	272
P35	300	329	301	345	362	487	370	447	863	464
P40	7	9	15	10	8	9	3	5	13	8
P50	54	52	54	53	77	62	50	65	68	52
Total	4536	4465	4629	4730	5137	5302	4082	4596	5365	5551

Upland Birds: The spring of 2013 within District 1 seemed to be conducive in precipitation and temperature for reasonable survival of nest broods of gallinaceous game birds, including forest grouse, turkeys, and quail. Therefore, the fall hunting season for these birds is expected to be average or better.

Waterfowl: With a moderate winter and enough precipitation to fill most of the ponds and sloughs in northeastern Washington, waterfowl nest production should be good this year. Most waterfowl hunting in District 1 is concentrated in the Pend Oreille River Valley, including the river itself from Newport downstream to about River Bend and Ruby.

Deer: The 2013 season will be the third season in which a four-point minimum antler restriction is in place for white-tailed deer within Game Management Units 117 and 121. Any antlered buck is legal for white-tailed deer in the other five GMUs of District 1 during the general seasons. For mule deer, the general three-point minimum on antlered bucks continues district-wide. One of the best opportunities for Youth, Senior, and Disabled modern firearm hunters to take a white-tailed deer, is the 4 day period from October 17-20 ; during this time these hunters can take either an antlerless white-tailed deer or a legal buck.

Elk: The 2013 hunting season will be the second in which only antlered bull elk are legal in the general seasons for all GMUs in District 1. Antlerless elk may still be taken, but only by hunters with special permits. This rule came about by hunter-group request through development of the Selkirk Elk Herd Management Plan.

Drawing a special permit within the quality buck deer and bull elk categories is the ultimate hunting opportunity for Washington big game hunters, and that maxim certainly applies in District 1. The best advice to most hunters who come here is to hunt the general deer and elk seasons opportunistically, but keep applying for special permit hunts and accruing bonus points, so that someday you *may* draw a moose or quality deer permit and already know the country for planning your big hunt.

Cougar: A total of 24 cougars were taken in the general hunt for cougars in District 1 (GMUs 101-121) during the 2012 hunting season, which was the highest harvest of cougars for any district in the state. In recent years, the use of dogs to hunt cougars has become generally prohibited. Consequently, in 2011 WDFW made substantial changes to the season. This recently developed season structure is based upon years of accumulated scientific information, including cougar population dynamics, home ranges, social structure, mortality causes, and mortality rates. With the appropriate licenses and tags, you can hunt cougar from September through December using any weapon. Starting January 1, hunt areas (GMUs) where the harvest guideline is met or exceeded may be closed. If you want to hunt cougars after January 1st, you need to call the cougar hotline at: 1-866-364-4868 or go online at: wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/cougar to determine if the season is still open.

Black bear: District 1 typically supports the highest black bear harvest in the state and we expect ample opportunities to harvest a black bear again this year. The fall general season in this district starts September 1st and the best success is often early in the season when the huckleberry crop is being targeted by bears. There is also a spring season on black bears, however, that is by special permit drawing only. Hunters should be aware that northeastern and north-central Washington supports a small population of grizzly bears which are protected by state and federal law. We strongly encourage all black bear hunters to take an [online identification quiz](#).

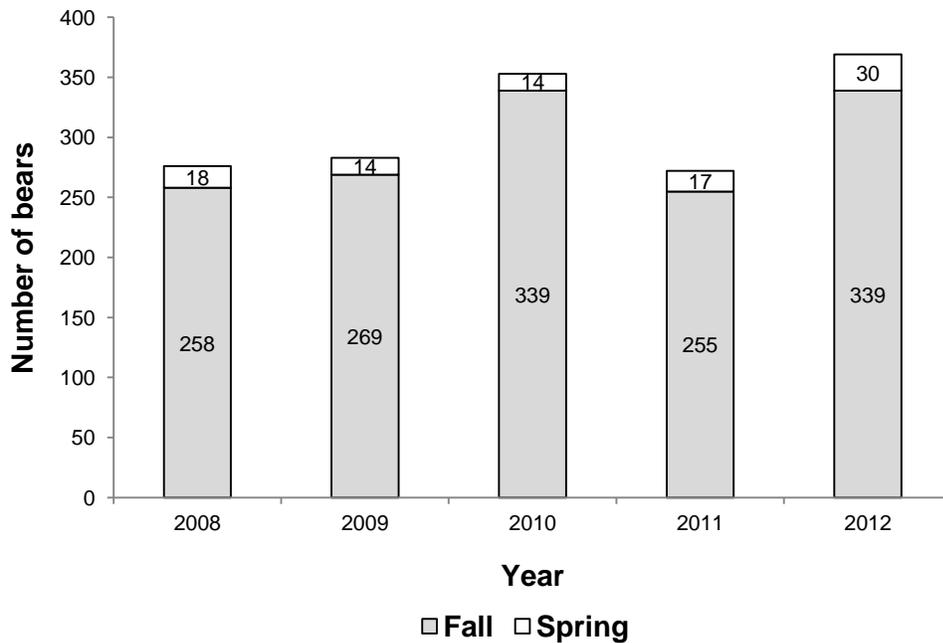


Figure 8. Number of black bears harvested in District 1 in the fall general and spring permit seasons, 2008 - 2012.