

2009 Game Animal Population and Hunting Information

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District/Wildlife Area: District Eleven

Black-tailed Deer: Overall deer hunting throughout the district should improve this year based on recent surveys. Branched antler, spike, doe and fawn increased significantly over previous years in our study unit with fawn recruitment similar to 2008. Commercial and state timberlands continue to provide the best availability for deer hunting. Warm weather over the past two hunting seasons, in particular over weekends, has resulted in lower harvest than expected.

Elk: Elk hunting in 2009 will be similar in the district to 2008. Antlerless restriction combined with permit hunt in GMU 653 continues to benefit herd recovery in that unit. Hunters are reporting a quality hunt. Elk are slowly making migrations down from Mt Rainier National Park into lowland winter range; public lands and private commercial timberlands bordering the park are good prospects. Elk continue to be available on private farmlands in GMUs 654 and 666, especially around Graham, Buckley, and on the foothills of Capitol State Forest. However, hunters must request access permission to private lands and are encouraged to obtain permission weeks in advance of the season from the landowner (e.g. visit property and ask for permission).

Waterfowl: Waterfowl hunting should be similar or slightly higher than 2008. Warmer than normal temperatures throughout western Washington resulted in higher broods seen. However, late winter counts were comparable to 2008. Hunting violations remain a concern on small water bodies with housing surrounding; hunters are urged to obey all hunting regulations at such sites to avoid potential future closures. The greatest factor influencing brood production in the district continues to be loss of habitat to development at water bodies and human presence.

Band-tailed Pigeon: Opportunity should be similar to 2008; no net increase in numbers was apparent during surveys over previous years in District 11. Bandtails are most prevalent in the district along marine shorelines near mineral locations.

Mountain Goat: Mountain goat hunting should improve in 2009. All age and sex classes increased in the district over 2008 counts. However, goat herds in the Naches/Corral Pass area transverse both sides of the Cascade crest and thus could be in either District 11 or Region 3 GMUs. Mountain goats are hunted under permit only. An emergency closure in 2007 is an example of how quickly we can change from open permit season to closure due to yearly over-harvest.