
BACKGROUND

December 10, 2012

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Harvest allocation

Wildlife management priorities:

- Wildlife harvest opportunities in British Columbia are managed according to four pre-established priorities.
- Conservation is the highest priority. If there are concerns for the viability of a wildlife population or for its ability to sustain harvests, then harvest opportunities will be reduced or even suspended.
- If a harvestable surplus exists, the first priority for harvest goes to First Nations exercising their aboriginal rights entitling them to hunt for food, social or ceremonial purposes.
- If the needs of First Nations have been met then harvest opportunities for non-First Nations individuals can be provided.
- Non-First Nations resident hunters (hereafter referred to as 'residents') are the third order of priority.
- Non-residents (people who reside outside B.C.) are the fourth order of priority.
- While resident hunters are a higher priority than non-residents, this does not imply that resident demand must be fully satisfied before non-residents can be granted harvest opportunities. Instead, it means that the share that goes to residents is considerably greater than the share that goes to non-residents.

Harvest Allocation Policy overview:

- The Harvest Allocation Policy is a suite of policies and procedures that guide provincial decision makers in determining the split between the final two priorities noted above: residents and non-residents.
- Non-residents are required to hire the services of a guide outfitter who is licensed to operate in a specified territory.
- The policy is intended to address those species (by region) where resident and non-resident hunting pressure exceeds the number of animals that are available. This might be as a result of low productivity (mountain goats, grizzly bears), high demand (moose) or for a class of animal critical to the productivity of a herd (female elk).
- For relevant species, wildlife professionals calculate an annual allowable harvest (AAH) for populations throughout the province. The AAH is the number of animals (or type of animals) that can be harvested each year by resident and non-resident hunters combined.
- An established procedure is used to calculate the splits of the AAH that are allocated to the resident hunters and to the guided non-resident hunters; it is known as the allocation calculator. The resultant proportions are referred to as 'the allocation', and those splits generally apply for five year periods called allocation periods. Resident hunters usually get 60% or more of the allocation.

- The total number of animals (or type of animals) of a species that can be harvested through a guide in a license year is known as the quota.
- While guidelines do allow annual quotas to exceed an individual guide's share for a given year, they are managed so that over a five year allocation period the cumulative harvest does not exceed the five year harvest share for the territory.
- The policy is designed to be transparent, objective, and consistently applied, and provides resident opportunity and guide outfitter viability. Currently there are 36 hunts in the province that are managed under the policy.
- In many regions highly productive species such as white-tailed deer, mule deer, rocky mountain elk, black bear and wolf are not allocated or on quota and are managed under General Open Seasons for both resident and non-resident hunters. As such they fall outside of the policy.