

2025-2029 Big Game Season Structure Public Involvement Summary



CPW Commission Meeting
August 25, 2023

General Overview of BGSS Process



- BGSS guides annual big game hunting regulations.
- Sets the timing, length, and number of seasons for hunting big game in Colorado.
- CPW's BGSS framework covers 5 years.
 - *Current BGSS expires at the end of **2024**.*



Big Game Attitude Survey

- ~**2,200** respondents (evenly split between residents/nonresidents)
- **Random sample survey**; asked hunters about various big game hunting season structures/preferences
- Helped to inform the selection of BGSS topics for the 2025-2029 BGSS cycle

Big Game License Distribution
Big Game Attitude Survey Summary Report
8/25/2022



Photo Credit: Wayne Lewis (CPW)

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Acknowledgements

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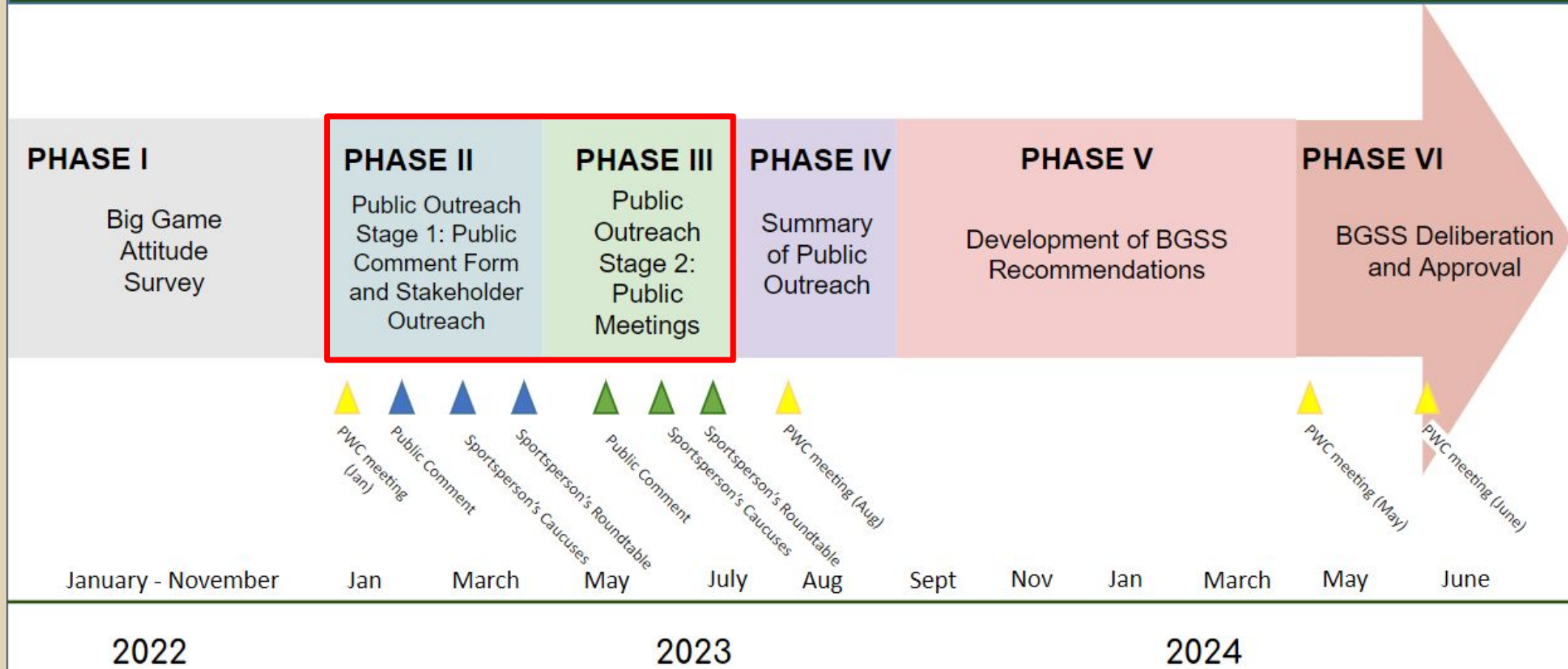
Primary Topics for the 2025-2029 BGSS



1. **Over-the-counter** archery/rifle elk limitation
2. **Season structure** (dates and timing) for regular deer/elk rifle seasons and early seasons
3. **Additional seasons** (optional deer in first rifle/optional second pronghorn rifle)

2025-2029 BGSS Timeline

Big Game Season Structure Timeline



Stage 1 Public Outreach

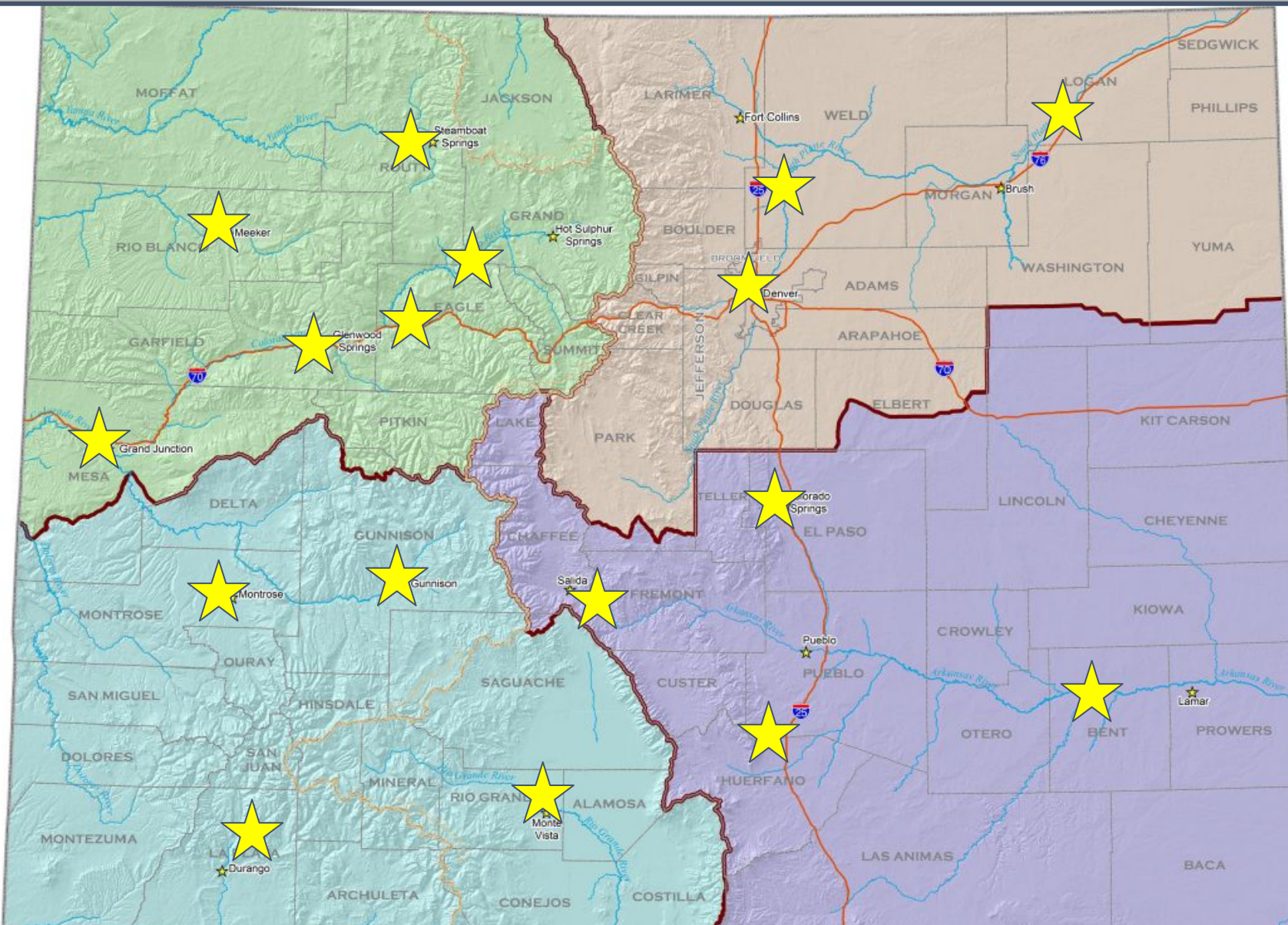
**Sportsperson's
Roundtable/Regional
Caucus Meetings**

**CPW Regional Staff
Outreach/Information
Sharing**

**Engage CPW Online
Public Comment Form
(~1,000 respondents)**

Stage 2 Public Outreach

Total respondents from Stage 2 public outreach:
~640



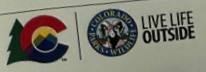
Total attendees for all public meetings:
~300

Do you think Over-The-Counter (OTC) elk licenses should be limited?

Yes, limit both OTC rifle and archery licenses	10 dots
No, do not limit either OTC rifle or archery licenses	5 dots
Limit just OTC archery licenses	4 dots
Limit just OTC rifle licenses	5 dots

If OTC elk licenses are completely limited, how do you most prefer license distribution method?

1: Limited licenses issued through the draw with applicable residency allocation rules	15 dots
2: Limited licenses available as OTC with caps, residency allocation rules do not apply	0 dots



How strongly do you support or oppose adding rifle deer hunting opportunities to the first regular rifle season, which is currently elk only?

Strongly Oppose	Somewhat Oppose	Neither Support Nor Oppose	Somewhat Support	Strongly Support
3 dots	4 dots	1 dot	5 dots	2 dots

How strongly do you support or oppose adding a 2nd regular rifle buck and doe pronghorn season [10/25-10/31]?

Strongly Oppose	Somewhat Oppose	Neither Support Nor Oppose	Somewhat Support	Strongly Support
3 dots	2 dots	1 dot	5 dots	4 dots



Keeping in mind the implications associated with the alternatives to limit OTC licenses below, which alternative for archery OTC are you most likely to support?

1: Statewide limitation; limited for residents and non-residents; according to relevant land allocation	8 dots
2: Statewide limitation; limited for residents only	6 dots
3: Private land only	2 dots
4: Continue to evaluate alternatives; CPW has evaluated DAUs in the last 3 years	0 dots

Which alternative for rifle OTC are you most likely to support?

1: Statewide limitation; limited for residents and non-residents; according to relevant land allocation	5 dots
2: Statewide limitation; limited for residents only	7 dots
3: Private land only	2 dots
4: Continue to evaluate alternatives; CPW has evaluated DAUs in the last 3 years	0 dots



2025-2029 BGSS Preferred Regular Rifle Seasons

Current BGSS structure (2020-2024) shown below

October 2025

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
					1 st Rifle	1 st Rifle
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1 st Rifle	1 st Rifle	1 st Rifle	_____			X
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
					2 nd Rifle	2 nd Rifle
27	28	29	30	31		
2 nd Rifle	2 nd Rifle	2 nd Rifle	2 nd Rifle	2 nd Rifle		

November 2025

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
					1	2
					2 nd Rifle	2 nd Rifle
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
					3 rd Rifle	3 rd Rifle
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
3 rd Rifle	3 rd Rifle	3 rd Rifle	3 rd Rifle	3 rd Rifle	X	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		4 th Rifle	4 th Rifle	4 th Rifle	4 th Rifle	4 th Rifle
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
_____						X

2025-2029 BGSS Preferred Season Dates for Archery and Muzzleloader

Check off your preferred choice of season structure

PREVIOUS BGSS structure (2015-2019) for archery and muzzleloader shown below as they would be in 2025.

CURRENT BGSS structure (2020-2024) for archery and muzzleloader shown below as they would be in 2025.

I prefer this season structure:

I prefer this season structure:

August/September 2025

September 2025

on	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
					Archery	Archery
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery
Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery
Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader	Muzzle-loader
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery	Archery
29	30					
Archery	Archery					



Stage 2 - Sportsman's Roundtable and Caucus Meetings

- Statewide roundtable held in July 2023
- CPW also hosted several regional caucus meetings where BGSS was discussed

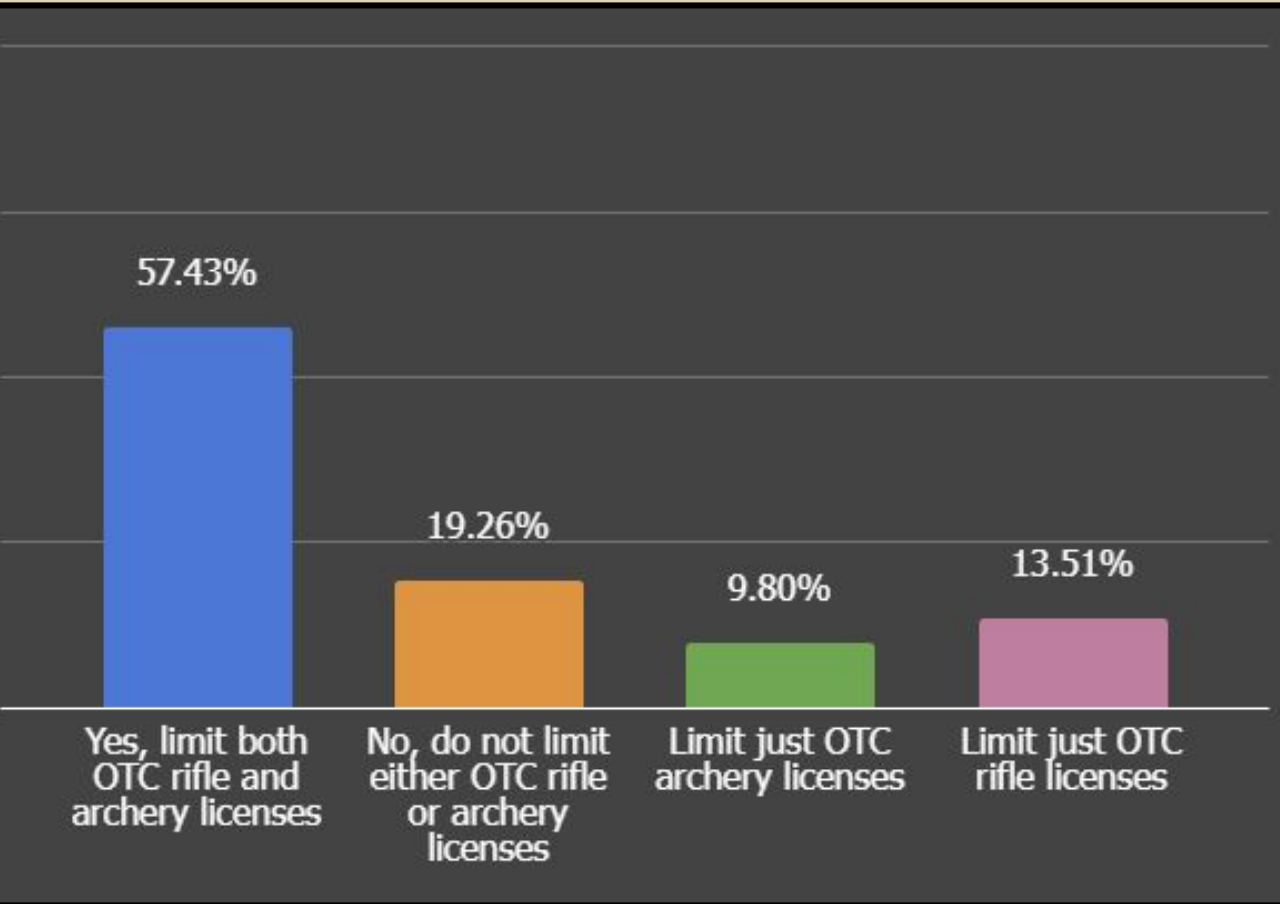


OTC Limitation - Public Input

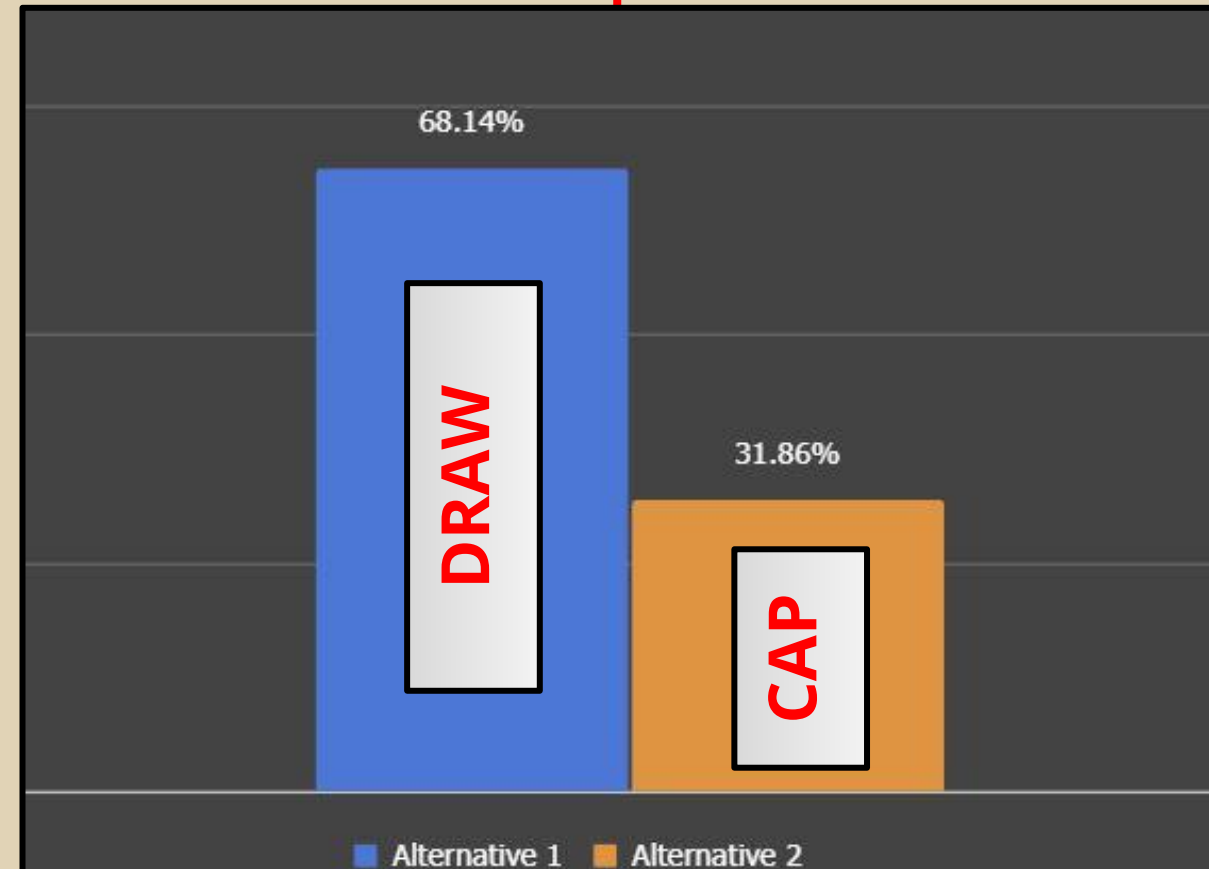
Key Findings/Takeaways

- Majority of residents prefer some form of OTC limitation rather than status quo; **many want OTC elk licenses (archery AND rifle) for residents only.**
- **Nonresidents prefer status quo.**
- Debate over limiting OTC through a **cap** or through the **draw.**
- **Crowding** concerns.

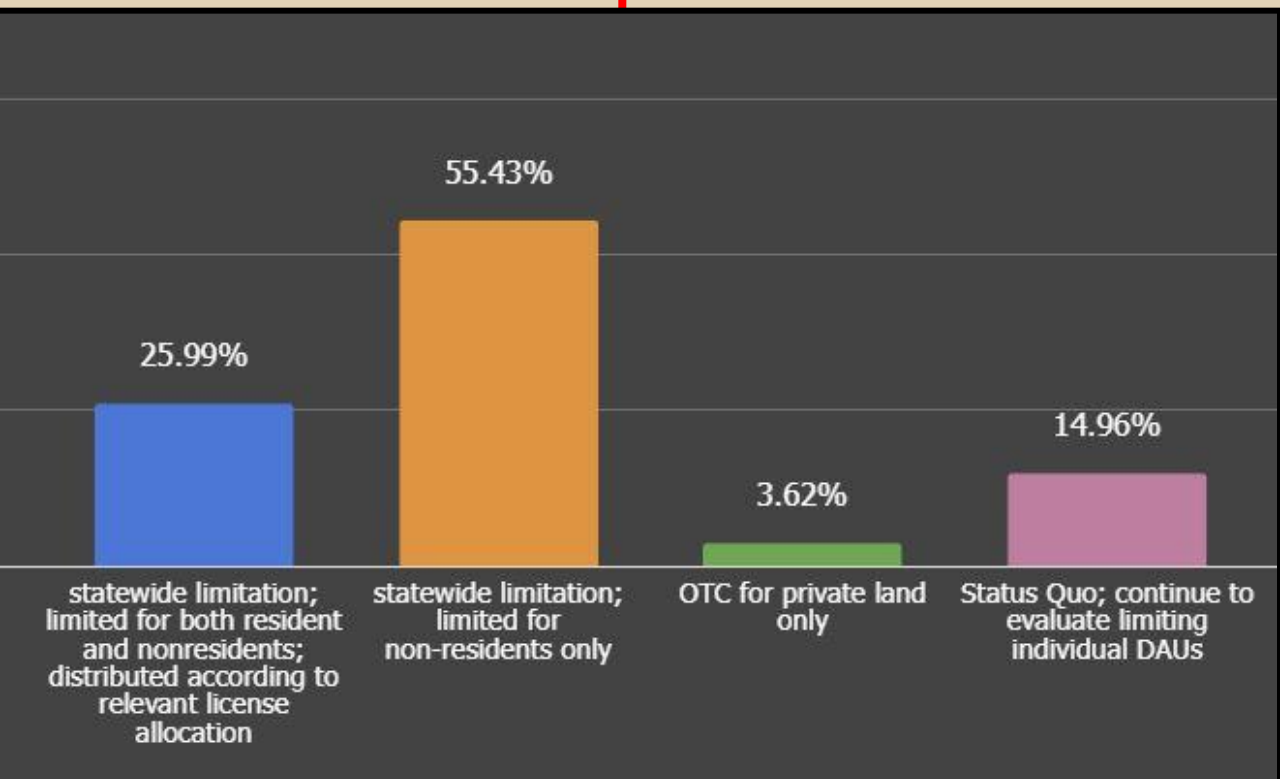
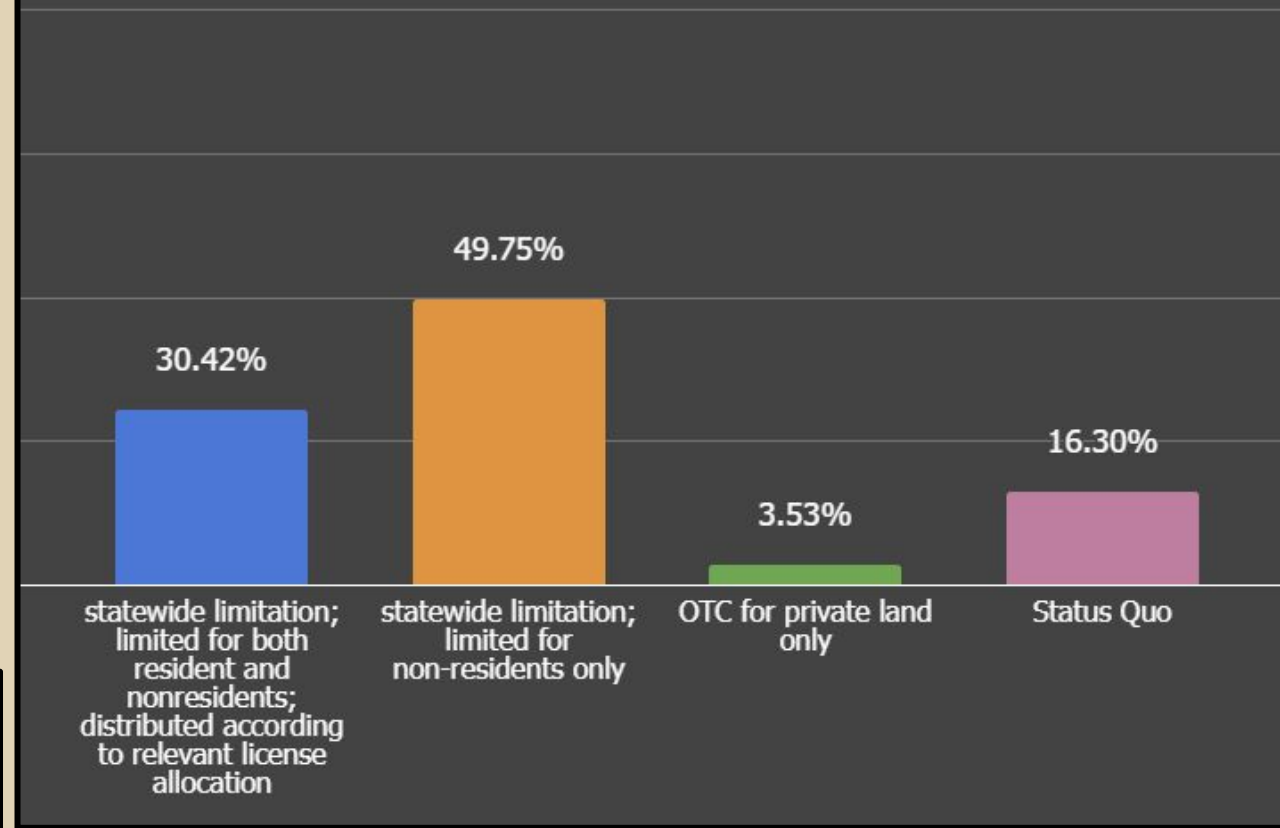
Question 2: If OTC Elk goes limited, which **license distribution method** do you most prefer?



Question 1: Do you think OTC Elk licenses **should be limited?**



Question 3: Which alternative are you most likely to support regarding **OTC Archery Elk?**



Question 4: Which alternative are you most likely to support regarding **OTC Rifle Elk?**

Season Structure for Regular Deer/Elk Rifle Seasons - Public Input

Key Findings/Takeaways

- **General satisfaction** with current BGSS dates (various benefits)
- But **wide variety of opinions** → numerous ideas for how to adjust
- *Main concerns:* **overlap** with Thanksgiving Holiday; hunting **too late** (vulnerable animals and snow closures)

Season Structure for Early Seasons (Archery/Muzzleloader) - Public Input

Key Findings/Takeaways

- **General satisfaction** with current BGSS dates
- Requests to **remove overlap** between seasons to reduce crowding/increase opportunity
- Various other suggestions to improve seasons

Addition of First Rifle Deer Season - Public Input



Key Findings/Takeaways

- **General opposition** from the public across all regions
- Concern with potential **overlap** with elk rifle seasons
- **Biological concerns** for deer herds
- Sportspeople's Roundtable was **generally supportive**

Addition of Second Pronghorn Season - Public Input

Key Findings/Takeaways

- **General support (or ambivalence)**
- Could help **reduce crowding/hunting pressure** on opening day/first weekend
- Some nonsupport due to concerns over **hunting too late** already and **lack of need** for additional season



Extension of BGSS Cycle - Public Input

Maintain Status Quo at 5 years

VERSUS

Lengthen to 7 or 10 years

Key Findings/Takeaways

- Majority of respondents **prefer maintaining 5-year BGSS** to allow for more flexibility and adaptability

Commissioner Questions or Comments?

