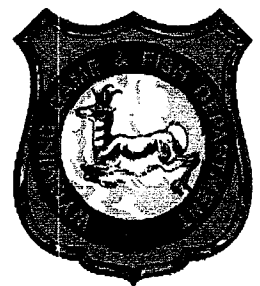


Shed Antler Hunting in Wyoming
Background and Current Issues



Updated August 2015
Wildlife Division

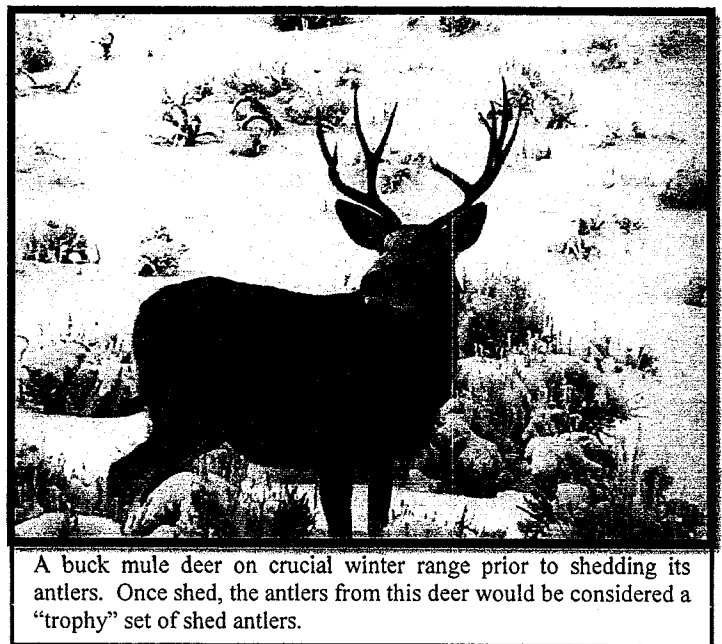
BACKGROUND

Starting in the late 1990s, Wyoming Game and Fish Department (Department) wildlife managers and the public began to observe an increase in big game harassment on crucial winter ranges primarily by wildlife photographers and shed antler hunters. The majority of this big game harassment was occurring in Carbon, Sublette, Teton, Lincoln, Sweetwater, Uinta and Park Counties. The winter of 1996-97 was severe with deep snow and cold temperatures, which forced wintering big game animals to concentrate on open south facing slopes and wind-blown ridge tops. At that time, the antler market was very strong, resulting in an increase in shed antler hunting activity.

It was also during the late 1990s when some people began "shed hunting" earlier in the year (mid-to-late winter/early spring) during and immediately after antlers were shed in an effort to collect the larger antlers ahead of other hunters. Antler hunters primarily frequent bare ridge tops in January and February and force big game animals off bare slopes into deep snow conditions. Big game disturbance was occurring daily beginning in November when photographers were most active and ending in late April with antler hunters. By May 1st, most of the antlers had been collected. The general public began complaining some antler hunters were collecting all of the sheds earlier in the year (January - March) and not many antlers could be found on or after May 1st, which was considered the traditional beginning date for shed antler hunting.

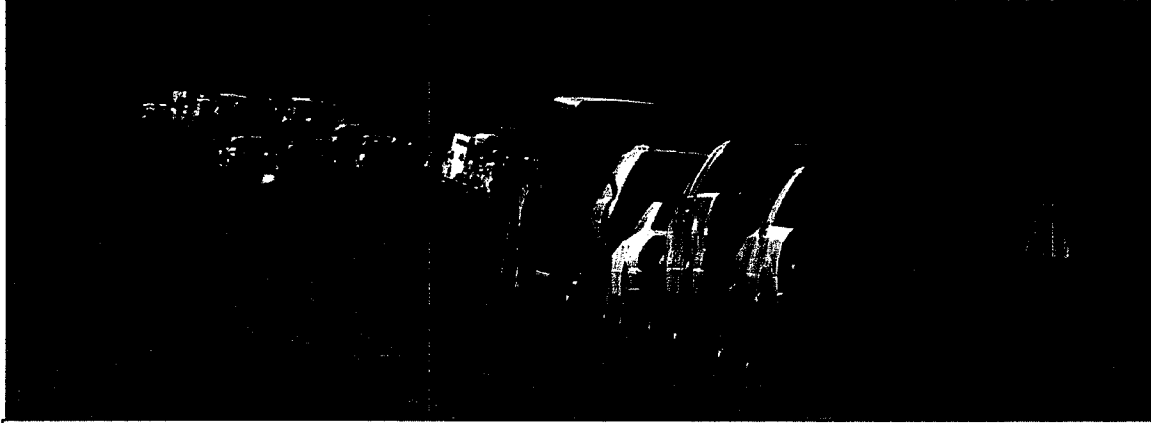
After the severe winter of 1996-97, wildlife managers began to observe an increase in the number of deer dying on crucial winter ranges in western Wyoming. The deep, crusted snow certainly contributed to this, but wildlife managers also felt if deer hadn't been displaced from open ridges and south facing slopes into deep snow conditions for the majority of the winter survival rates would have been higher.

Game wardens continued to document increasing human disturbance to big game animals, primarily mule deer, on crucial winter ranges. Antler hunters were observed operating off-road vehicles (ORVs) and snowmobiles off established roads and onto open ridges and south facing slopes searching for antlers; chasing mule deer over fences hoping antlers would fall off when they jumped the fence. In some cases, dogs trained to collect shed antlers were observed chasing large herds of mule deer and picking up antlers that fell off as they were running. Wildlife managers began hearing more and more complaints with corresponding requests for the Department to take action to decrease the level of human presence and wildlife harassment on crucial winter ranges.



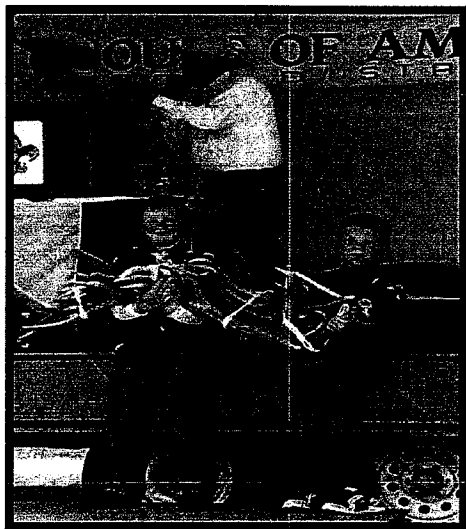
A buck mule deer on crucial winter range prior to shedding its antlers. Once shed, the antlers from this deer would be considered a "trophy" set of shed antlers.

Shed antler hunting is a very popular activity in many portions of Wyoming. The National Elk Refuge (NER) opens to the public for shed antler hunting annually on May 1st at 8:00 AM. This has become a very popular event and draws many new and tenured shed antler hunters. Shed antler hunters arrive each spring with mountain bikes, horses, and pack mules to aid them in getting a head start on the competition.

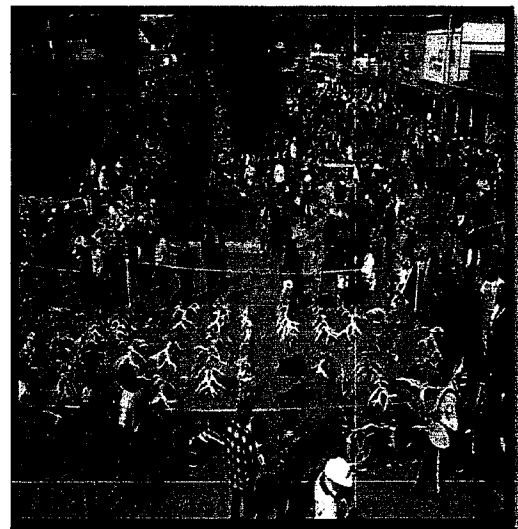


The picture below illustrates the number of shed antler hunters that show up to antler hunt on the NER and surrounding public lands on the May 1st opener.

The NER, the town of Jackson, and the Boy Scouts hold a public auction during the 3rd Saturday in May to sell elk antlers the scouts collected on the NER. This event attracts antler collectors from all over the country. They come to buy, sell, and trade their antlers to other vendors. The money from the NER antler sale is used to offset the expense of purchasing supplemental elk feed for the NER and is also a fund raiser for the Jackson Boy Scouts. The majority of the antlers are sold in large lots with some lots weighing 1,000 pounds or more. These large lots of elk antlers typically bring the current market value, generally between \$7 and \$14/pound. The larger trophy elk antlers are sold in individual lots at a higher price. A trophy class set of elk antlers or a large non-typical set of elk antlers can bring as much as \$20-30 per/lb. A large set of elk antlers can easily weigh over 30 lbs.



Boy Scouts holding a bundle of shed elk antlers being auctioned.



Matched sets of shed elk antlers waiting to be auctioned.

DEPARTMENT ACTIONS

In 2001, a Department Wildlife Harassment Committee (WHC) was formed and included Cokeville Game Warden Neil Hymas, Feedground Supervisor Scott Werbelow, Powell Game Warden Mac Black, Pinedale/Jackson Region Information and Education Specialist Mark Gocke, and Green River Information and Education Specialist Lucy Diggins. The committee was directed to address the following issues:

- Better define the problem and consequences of not addressing the issue.
- Develop recommendations on how Department personnel can better document the problem.
- Meet with individuals or groups across Wyoming who may oppose antler hunting and determine if common ground exists to address antler hunting through regulatory or statutory changes.
- Meet with state and federal land management agencies in an effort to develop potential solutions.
- Develop realistic time frames for implementation of the Citizen Participation Process (CPP).
- Carry out implementation of the CPP in accordance with established time frames.
- Following the CPP, provide a written report and recommendations to Wildlife and Services Division Administration regarding regulatory or statutory changes needed to address shed antler hunting.

The WHC began working on these topics and decided it would be paramount that an effective CPP be implemented to ensure success in addressing the problem. Three primary methods were used to gather feedback on this issue:

1. Complete an internal census of Department personnel to gauge the extent of the problem.
2. Send out a public questionnaire to all potentially affected interest (PAI) groups.
3. Conduct open house public meetings in key communities and record all comments including written, verbal, and phone comments.

The purpose of the information gathering process was to learn if the public perceived a problem with the harassment of big game and, if so, to determine the underlying cause(s).

The feedback from the public generally reflected that of Department personnel. The majority of people who responded believed there was a detrimental level of disturbance occurring on big game winter ranges. As for the cause of the disturbance, most people believed it was related to shed antler hunting and/or ORV/snowmobile activity and, to a lesser extent, wildlife photography and filming.

Solutions to the problem varied. There was support for improving the existing wildlife harassment statute (Wyoming Statute §23-3-306) to restrict harassment of wildlife by activities other than those involving a motor vehicle. There was support to empower Department game wardens to enforce federal winter travel regulations. Finally, support for a shed antler hunting season in the Green River, Jackson/Pinedale, and Laramie Regions was expressed. There was little support for a shed antler hunting season in the Cody Region.

The CPP began in 2002 and was a large scale Department effort to contact and survey as many PAI groups as possible. The key to success in the CPP was to begin the effort with a message of:

1. This is a serious problem.
2. We are the right agency to address the problem.
3. The approach we are taking is reasonable, sensible and responsible.
4. We ARE listening and we do care about the associated costs and hardships additional regulation could create.

During 2002, the WHC worked to document the problem. Game wardens were issued wildlife harassment forms to document any big game harassment activities on winter ranges. The WHC also worked to define the problem, inform the public, and develop a complete list of PAI groups. Surveys were sent out internally to Department personnel and externally to a host of PAIs. Public meetings were held in the Pinedale, Green River, Jackson, Lander, and Cody Regions. Surveys, questionnaires and public comments were compiled and evaluated. Because there was some level of public support in most Department regions for a shed antler hunting season, the Department began looking at the possibilities of implementation. During this process it was determined through an Attorney General's opinion, the Department did not have statutory authority to regulate shed antler collection and, therefore, the Department temporarily abandoned plans to create an antler hunting regulation.

Big game harassment by shed antler hunters on crucial winter ranges continued to be a serious problem from 2002-2009. The general public continued to complain about the increase in big game disturbance caused from shed antler hunters being on crucial winter ranges from January-April. Simultaneously, Department personnel began receiving comments from the public requesting implementation of a regulated antler hunting season.

In 2008, the Wyoming Legislature amended Wyoming Statute §23-1-302(a) by adding subsection (xxxi), thus giving the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (Commission) the authority to regulate antler collection west of the Continental Divide on public lands. Wyoming Statute 23-1-302 (a)(xxxi) reads as follows:

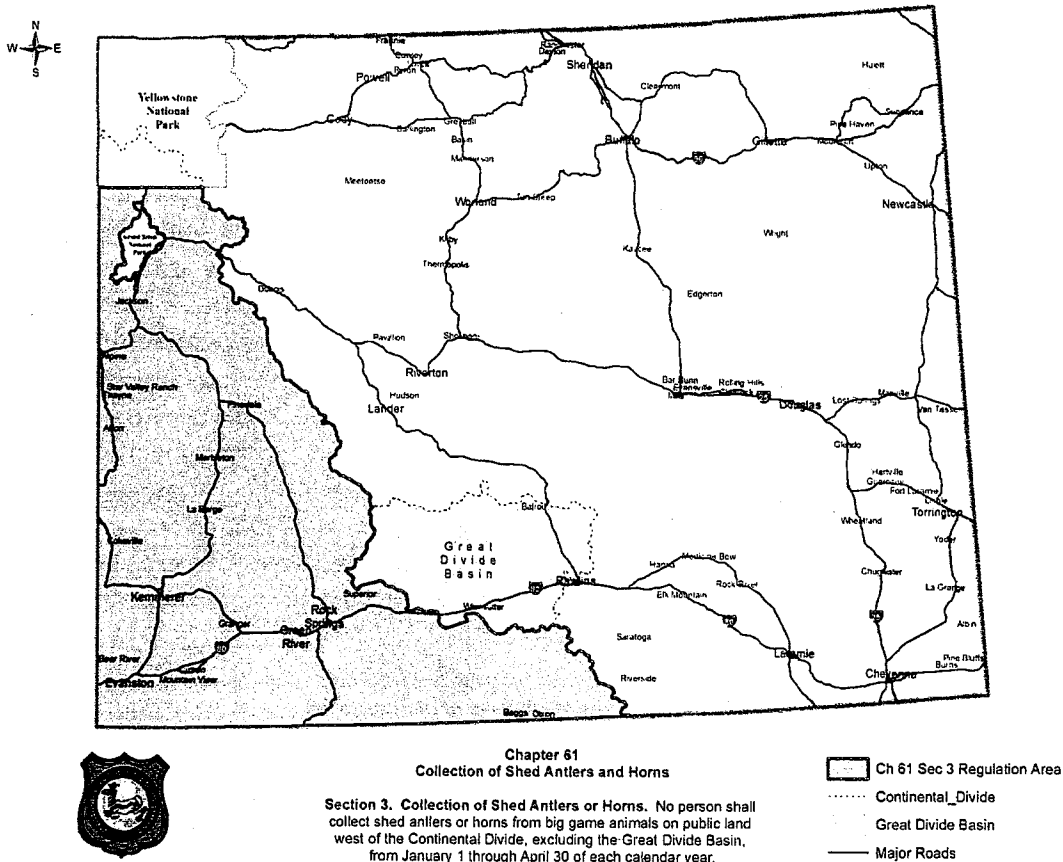
To regulate and control the collection of shed antlers and horns of big game animals for the purpose of minimizing the harassment or disturbance of big game populations on public lands west of the Continental Divide any time between January 1 and May 1 of each year.

In 2009, the Commission adopted Chapter 61, Collection of Shed Antlers and Horns regulation (Appendix 1). Chapter 61 is a simple and broad regulation that prohibits antler collection activities on federal lands and lands owned or administered by the Commission west of the Continental Divide, excluding the Great Divide Basin (Figure 1). The purpose and focus of the regulation is to minimize disturbance of big game animals associated with antler hunting. It important to note, there is no license or other permit required by the Commission to hunt or collect shed antlers.

On January 1, 2010, the antler hunting regulation became effective west of the Continental Divide. Game wardens took this regulation very seriously and made every effort to educate the public and apprehend those in violation of the new regulation. Between the Green River, Jackson, Pinedale, and Lander Regions, compliance was good the first year, with nine citations and nine warnings issued to individuals who violated the antler hunting season closure. The regulation appeared to be working very well as human activity on crucial winter ranges decreased significantly. Compliance and support increased over time. Several flagrant cases were successfully prosecuted resulting in defendants receiving large fines. One individual convicted of violating the antler hunting statute and Chapter 61 lost his hunting privileges for one year, was fined and ordered to pay restitution for the fair market value of the antlers he illegally collected.

Even the most serious and dedicated shed antler hunters began to support Chapter 61 because of the “level playing field” it created and they recognized the Department’s efforts to enforce the regulation fairly. Many shed antler hunters reported violations and cooperated with game wardens to protect wildlife.

Figure 1. The portions of Wyoming that currently have a shed antler hunting season in effect from January 1 through April 30.



PROBLEMS/CONCERNS

Chapter 61 does not prohibit individuals from being present on crucial winter ranges for other purposes (i.e. hunting cottontails, predators or mountain lions, hiking, etc.) other than shed antler hunting. The Department decided against proposing any type of human presence type closures to avoid regulating users who weren't part of the problem. Shed antler hunters soon began looking for "loopholes" in Chapter 61. Department personnel suspected some shed antler hunters were in the field caching antlers while presenting themselves as predatory animal or rabbit hunters. Some individuals would mark locations of antlers or caches via a global positioning system (GPS) and return on May 1st to pack them out.

There was no regulation addressing shed antler hunting on private lands or State Trust lands (state lands). State lands were not included in the Chapter 61 definition of "public land" as they are not considered public land in the same sense as Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or United States Forest Service (USFS) lands. Therefore, shed antler hunting was legal on state land. As the public became aware of this, shed antler hunting activity significantly increased on state lands resulting in enforcement concerns and harassment and displacement of big game animals from their crucial winter ranges. Shed antler hunters soon began trespassing on private lands, knowing game wardens could not enforce shed antler collection on those lands.

On October 4, 2012, the Wyoming Board of Land Commissioners approved a restriction *prohibiting antler hunting on all parcels of land under the jurisdiction of the Board of Land Commissioners West of the Continental Divide, excluding the Great Divide Basin, from January 1 through April 30 of each calendar year. This restriction will begin on January 1, 2013.* This mirrors the restriction in Chapter 61.

In the early stages of Chapter 61 implementation, shed antler hunters and the general public were concerned that 10% of the illegal antler hunters would pick up 90% of the antlers before the season opened on May 1st and the honest person wouldn't find any antlers. The Department heard comments like "you are only regulating the honest people." The Department took Chapter 61 very seriously and increased law enforcement efforts by conducting various law enforcement task forces in western Wyoming during the 2012-2014 antler collection season. Additional game wardens from around the state were assigned to these task forces and worked specific areas that had been identified as problem areas for illegal shed antler hunting activity. Game wardens used airplanes, ORVs, snowmobiles, and unmarked vehicles to patrol winter ranges and locate illegal antler hunters. In some instances, wardens placed "decoy" antlers in specific problem areas to document illegal antler collecting and apprehend those individuals who were in violation of the Chapter 61 regulation.

Extensive education and enforcement efforts have improved compliance with Chapter 61. The Green River, Pinedale and Jackson regions issued 35 citations and 33 written warnings between 2010 and 2014 for violations pertaining to Chapter 61. Game wardens in these regions felt the intent of Chapter 61 was working well and there was much less human activity and big game harassment on crucial winter ranges since creation of Chapter 61. While overall compliance seems to improve each year, flagrant, intentional violators are becoming more difficult to apprehend as they take advantage of the "loopholes" that still exist. Some antler hunters suspect that violators are illegally collecting large quantities of shed antlers resulting in complaints from

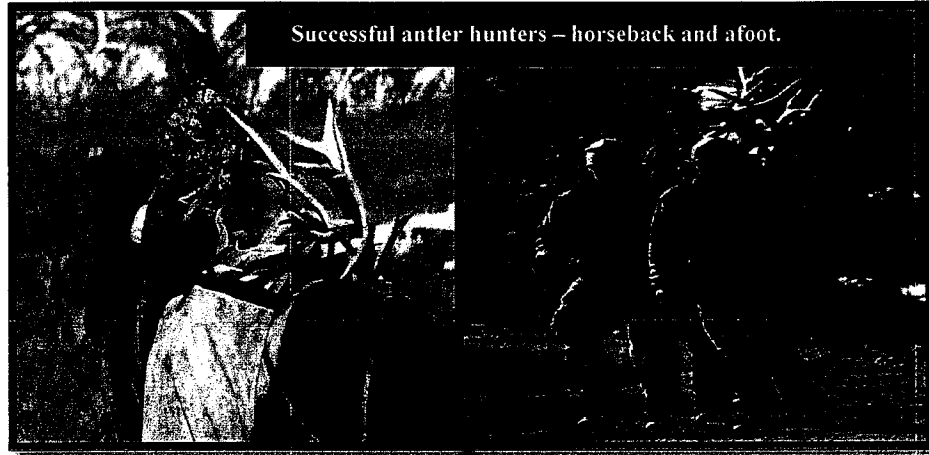
those who don't find antlers during the open season. Game wardens often receive reports of illegal shed antler hunters when suspicious vehicles are parked along roads or if someone is seen walking around on the winter ranges. Often, these reports turn out to be unrelated to shed antler hunting. However, there is a high expectation from the public that game wardens investigate all reports. That part of the state east of the Continental Divide including the Great Divide Basin was not included in the shed antler hunting season legislation and Chapter 61 because shed antler hunting was not deemed a significant concern and there was not as much public support at the time to regulate shed antler hunting activities.

CODY REGION ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Unlike many other outdoor activities, shed antler hunting tends to occur directly on the slopes and habitats where big game animals concentrate during the most critical time of the year. On many deep snow winter ranges, large numbers of mule deer, elk and moose depend on limited available habitat until the spring of the year. Because of the commercial value of shed antlers and the very competitive nature of antler hunting, human disturbance of big game animals is occurring at greater frequencies and earlier in the year than previously observed. The Department has received increased complaints against purportedly "early unethical" antler hunters and their advantage in gather more antlers than the later season "ethical" hunter.

The growing popularity of off-road vehicles (ORVs) and the advanced technology of snowmobiles have dramatically increased the ability of the average shed antler hunter to travel earlier and further over miles of terrain and roads. In the past, travel was often restricted due to lingering snow drifts and muddy roads. Along with the increased ORV use, are the complaints of illegal use/travel of ORVs on public and private lands. A high percentage of these violations during the winter and spring months are reported to be associated with shed antler hunting activity. The nature of shed antler hunting activities leads to cumulative disturbances of big game animals. Although in most cases, disturbances caused by these activities are not intentional harassment, the activity by many different individuals over time results in a continual displacement and harassment of big game on a given area.

Although difficult to quantify, it is widely accepted by wildlife managers that big game disturbance or displacement from preferred habitats during crucial winter months is detrimental to their health and productivity. In many parts of Wyoming, as a result of land status, climate, and big game distribution, shed antler hunting has not resulted in unacceptable levels of big game disturbance on a broad scale. However, this could change as drone technology expands and provides another tool to the shed antler hunter. The current market value of shed deer and elk antlers remains as high as it has ever been. Brown elk antlers are currently worth approximately \$13/pound and brown deer antlers approximately \$10/pound. Some antlers are still being shipped overseas for use as an aphrodisiac and others are used for crafts, chandeliers, etc. One of the largest markets today for shed antlers is dog chews. Regardless of commercial market for shed antlers, there will most likely always be public interest in collecting them for recreational or commercial activities.



In 2002, the Cody Region went through the CPP and held public meetings regarding shed antler hunting issues. At that time, there was significant opposition from the public to implement antler hunting restrictions and Department personnel were concerned about having the capacity to properly enforce Chapter 61 due to the remoteness of the areas where big game disturbance from human activity occurs. The biggest concern was harassment to elk on crucial winter ranges in Park County on the Shoshone National Forest (SNF). This primarily includes Elk Hunt Areas 51, 54, 56, 58, and 61 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Park County elk hunt areas of concern.



Harassment is still occurring today and has increased in other areas as well, including the west slope of the Bighorn Mountains. Harassment to elk and mule deer is primarily occurring in Elk Hunt Areas 39, 40, 41, and 45 and Mule Deer Hunt Areas 47, 51, and 52 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Elk and mule deer hunt areas of concern on the west slope of the Bighorn Mountains.



Department personnel have observed increased activity and disturbance in areas without closures by antler hunters displaced from areas where new restrictions have gone into place. Individuals are traveling to Park and Bighorn Counties from other areas in Wyoming where seasonal restrictions are in place, further complicating these issues.

In the Cody Region, the driving issue from the public's perspective is fairness - can the average person go out and have an opportunity to find a shed antler or two during the year or take their son or daughter out in hopes of finding a couple shed antlers? The current USFS SNF policy east of the Continental Divide is more liberal and favorable to those with commercial interests in antler hunting. Listed below are current resource issues identified by USFS-SNF within the Cody Region:

- Wildlife harassment and displacement off key winter ranges.
- Unauthorized and illegal motorized use inside and outside of the wilderness.
- Damage to the USFS trails from use during the spring.
- Damage to camping areas that are utilized during the spring break-up.
- Conflicts with grizzly bears feeding on winter kills occupying the same habitat at the same time where people are shed antler hunting.
- Damage to and creation of new roads during the spring
- Damage to trailheads and corrals during the spring.
- Currently, the USFS does not regulate commercial use on the SNF as it pertains to shed antler hunting; however, many shed antler hunters are picking up sheds and selling them for large sums of money.

It appears there is some level of public support for an antler hunting season in the Cody Region. However, those opposed to Chapter 61 are adamantly opposed. Some concerns from Cody Region field personnel are:

1. Can we adequately enforce a shed antler hunting regulation in the remote backcountry?
2. Workloads will greatly increase by responding to calls of people reporting possible shed antler hunters. Some of the Cody Region is extremely remote and may take all day to respond to one call.
3. If a shed antler hunting season is implemented for all public lands on the west side of the Cody Region in Park County on the SNF, will it force more antler hunters to the Bighorn Mountains. Should the Department consider proposing a shed antler hunting season in the Bighorn Mountains as well?
4. The perspective from some shed antler hunters is that wolves and grizzly bears are harassing wildlife far more than antler hunters.
5. Many shed antler hunters look at the problem more as a fairness issue rather than a wildlife harassment issue.

SHERIDAN REGION ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Johnson County:

In the spring of 2014, south of Buffalo off of the Grueb Road, three men were charged with criminal trespass by the Johnson County Sheriff's Office for trespassing to collect shed antlers on private property without permission. Each subject paid a fine of \$340.00, was sentenced to a 30-day suspended jail sentence and put on probation for 6 months. Since the sheriff's office couldn't determine where the antlers were picked up (private vs. public), the antlers were not confiscated.

There is some public support for Department authority to enforce criminal trespass in Johnson County as it pertains to antler hunting.

Kaycee Game Warden Grant Gerharter reports he had several complaints from landowners this year regarding shed antler hunters committing criminal trespass to collect shed antlers. Some landowners believe that trespassing to collect antlers is a wildlife crime and the Department should be responsible for enforcement, similar to trespassing/crossing private property to hunt on public land. Landowners are frustrated by the Department's lack of authority to address criminal trespass and off-road vehicle use on BLM lands. Warden Gerharter dealt with multiple reports of chains cut on gates accessing private property by shed antler hunters. He received reports of trespassing signs being removed as well. Extensive off-road vehicle use is occurring in the southern Bighorn Mountains by shed antler hunters. Individual antler hunters expressed their concerns of off-road vehicle use, trespassing, wildlife harassment/displacement issues (moving elk and deer from normal antler shedding areas), and the unethical/illegal competition they face each year.

Warden Gerharter believes that both landowners and antler hunters would support an antler season, but only if the Department had the authority to address the current problems and illegal activities. Antler hunters are concerned about fairness issues. Landowners are concerned about trespassing and its' negative effects.

Sheridan County:

In 2013, the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office charged a local man with criminal trespass and larceny for removing shed antlers from private land without permission. He was fined \$690, received a 15 day suspended jail sentence and 6 months unsupervised probation on each count. The antlers were confiscated.

In 2014, the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office charged a local man with criminal trespass and theft for removing antlers from private land without permission. He was fined \$120 for criminal trespass and paid \$125 in restitution to the ranch. The theft charge was dismissed. The antlers were confiscated.

In these cases, the illegal activity associated with shed antler hunting was addressed using existing criminal trespass and larceny statutes investigated by the Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by the county attorney.

LANDER REGION ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The Lander Region shares many of same general concerns outlined by the Cody Region (1-8 on page 10) in portions of the Lander Region and often hear the same concerns from the public. The region asked questions about shed antler hunting in their Lander/Green Mountain Mule Deer Initiative survey and 51% of the respondents thought shed antler collection is a problem for wintering mule deer in the area and 63% would support the WGFC regulating shed antler collection in the area.

Most Lander Region prime winter ranges (mule deer and elk) are under some sort of protection already, yet there are still blatant violations (off road and human presence) to collect shed antlers prior to these areas opening. However, unlike west of the Continental Divide, the travel and closure regulations apply to everyone regardless of the activity so it makes enforcement less difficult.

CASPER REGION ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Within the Casper Region, shed antler hunters are responsible for more illegal trespassing violations than any other user group. Department personnel have heard numerous landowners (especially those that have shed elk antlers on their property) complain that they have far more trespassing issues in the spring by shed antler hunters than they do in the fall by big game hunters. Some shed antler hunters go as far as to cut fences to trespass utilizing ATVs.

A primary concern regarding shed antler hunting in the region is resource damage due to wet conditions and illegal off-road motorized use and creation of new roads. While there are not any instances with shed antler hunters displacing big game off winter ranges to the point of significantly impacting survival of affected animals, there is significant concern with established and illegal off-road motorized recreation on big game winter ranges.

In the Newcastle and Sundance areas there are illegal off-road travel issues on State Lands due to shed antler hunting. With elk hunting seasons going through January 31 and then turkey hunters hitting the woods the first week of April, it does not leave much of a time frame for a shed antler

hunting closure. A possible shed antler hunting season could be February 1 - March 31. In the northeastern part of the state, it is more of a land and resource damage, ethical, and trespassing issue than a wildlife disturbance/displacement issue.

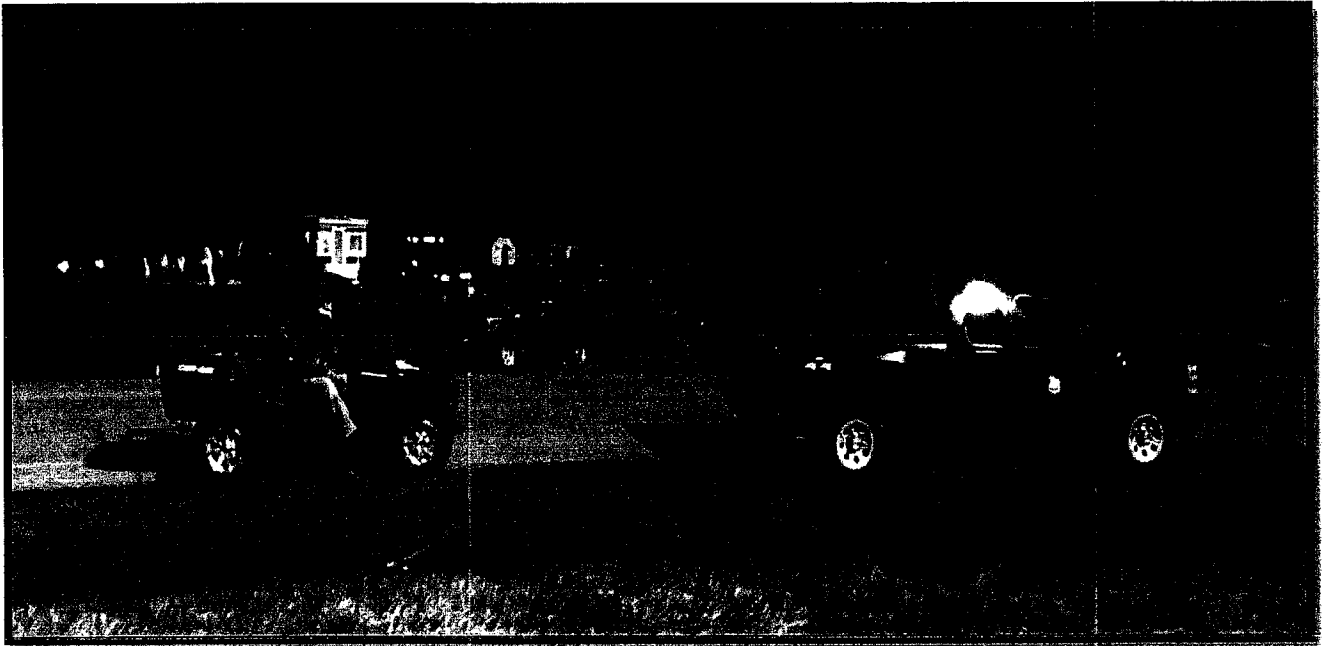
The east slope of the southern end of the Bighorn Mountains within the West Casper Warden District is consistently hit hard by shed antler hunters. As with other areas of the state, there is concern with the movement and harassment of wintering deer and elk, illegal off-road travel, pioneering of new roads and resource damage.

There is a potential problem with any antler hunting season that prohibits shed antler hunting beginning in January in an area that also has an antlerless elk season running through January 31st. Currently the region has elk seasons running through the end of January in several elk hunt areas. If a shed antler hunting season was proposed for the Casper Region, it should start February 1 at the earliest.

LARAMIE REGION ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Within the Laramie Region, both the Sheep Mountain and Platte Valley Mule Deer Initiatives identified shed antler hunting as a significant source of winter range disturbance. Shed antler hunting is very popular in both herd units and the public has expressed an interest in pursuing a statute change regulating shed antler hunting for public lands east of the Continental Divide.

Shed antler hunting is very popular within the region and draws a large crowd in certain areas. The picture below illustrates the shed antler hunting crowd that shows up when the Department opens the Wick Wildlife Habitat Management Area at 12:00 a.m. on May 16 after being closed annually from November 16 - May 15.



WHAT ARE SURROUNDING STATES DOING?

Colorado	Only have a shed antler hunting regulation in the Gunnison Basin. This regulation has been in place since 2007. This regulation reads: <i>All publically owned lands in GMU's 54, 55, 551, 66, and 67 shall be closed to the collection of shed antlers from January 1 through March 14 annually, and shall further be closed to the collection of shed antlers between legal sunset and 10:00 AM from March 15 through May 15 annually, provided further that the Director or his designee may establish additional closures as necessary under the criteria set forth in WCR #020.E.6.</i>
Montana	No seasons currently; however, many of their Wildlife Management Areas are closed to public use through May 15 th , with some opening as late as June 1 st . It is also illegal to pick up or possess any antlers or horns attached to a skull plate.
Nevada	Recently implemented a statewide shed antler hunting season. Collection of shed antlers is prohibited from January 1 through April 15.
Utah	No seasons, but they have instituted an online Antler Gathering Ethics Course. The course must be completed and a certificate printed and in possession prior to collecting antlers during the winter months February 1 through April 15.
Idaho	No season currently, no license requirements. Idaho had a shed antler season in some areas for several years and recently lifted those regulations.
Arizona	No season currently, but they require wildlife officers to inspect skulls (winter kills etc.) if they are found by the public in the field.
Oregon	No season currently, but they have Wildlife Area closures that go through April 15. Some motorized vehicle closures go until April 30.
Washington	No season currently.

CONCLUSION

Under current Wyoming law, the Commission is granted the authority to regulate antler gathering west of the continental divide on public lands. The ability of the Commission to regulate antler hunting in other parts of Wyoming rests with the Wyoming Legislature.

Antler hunting is a contentious issue and the effects, both positive and negative, are regionally based and variable around the state. Public sentiment is equally as variable. There are a variety of problems surrounding the practice of collecting shed antlers on public lands across the state. The Department is primarily concerned with issues related to the disturbance and displacement of big game created by the presence of antler hunters on crucial big game winter ranges. Many shed antler hunters are concerned with fairness issues and conflicts between law abiding antler collectors and those who chose to violate existing law or accepted ethical behaviors. Landowners have expressed concern for wildlife populations and encroachment of private property rights by antler hunters who chose to enter their lands without permission. Additionally, private landowners have experienced problems with property damage consequential to antler hunting activity.

APPENDIX 1

**WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION
CHAPTER 61
COLLECTION OF SHED ANTLERS AND HORNS**

Section 1. Authority. *This regulation is promulgated by authority of W.S. §23-1-103 and §23-1-302.*

Section 2. Definitions. *Definitions shall be as set forth in Title 23, Wyoming Statutes, Commission regulations, and the Commission also adopts the following definitions:*

(a) *“Antlers” mean the bony, deciduous appendages protruding from the heads of members of the deer family (Cervidae), including deer, elk or moose.*

(b) *“Collect” means to search for, locate, stockpile, or possess shed antlers and horns of big game animals on public land or attempt to search for, locate, stockpile, or possess shed antlers and horns of big game animals on public land.*

(c) *“Horns” mean the hard, permanent appendages protruding from the heads of bighorn sheep, mountain goats or pronghorn antelope.*

(d) *“Public land” means federal lands and lands owned or administered by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission.*

(e) *“Shed” means having become naturally separated from the skull.*

Section 3. Collection of Shed Antlers or Horns. *No person shall collect shed antlers or horns from big game animals on public land west of the Continental Divide, excluding the Great Divide Basin, from January 1 through April 30 of each calendar year.*

Section 4. Exceptions. *Department personnel and elk feeders under contract with the Department may take antlers on Department elk feedgrounds during the closed season dates specified in Section 3 only when the taking of such antlers is part of their official duties. All antlers taken by such personnel on Department elk feedgrounds are property of the Department and shall be disposed of in accordance with the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission policy VIII “DISPOSITION OF ELK ANTLERS”, dated December 7, 1999, and which does not include any later amendments or editions of the incorporated matter. This Commission policy can be viewed at regional offices and the Headquarters Office of the Department.*