



ABA Proposal

(originally presented AGMAG 2014 - updated and resubmitted March 2016)

Archery Season Draw Regime



“Archery Season Draw” Proposal
(updated Feb 25, 2016)

Bowhunting has seen a marked increase in popularity since 1999 with the number of resident bowhunters almost doubling to 22435 and getting close to 20% of the total number of big game hunters. With that increase in popularity has come an increase in bowhunter success and harvest. AEP has limited current bowhunter harvest at 15% of the total resident harvest. When bowhunters reach that level on a consistent basis in any specific WMU and/or a specific species, bowhunters must have the appropriate Special License (through the general draw) to bowhunt in the archery season.

As more WMUs and species become affected by this, bowhunters have seen a marked decrease in opportunity. Feedback suggests bowhunters would favor going to separate draws for the archery season and the general season when bowhunters are required to have the draw to bowhunt the archery season for certain species.

This would:

- increase the total number of hunters in the field over the current system – calculations in the 52 WMUs with the new antlered mule deer draw (starting in 2013) show a 30% increase.
- increase the number of bowhunters/opportunity in the "draw required" WMUs in the archery season. Very, very few bowhunters getting drawn in these units with this system.
- allow more bowhunting opportunity for new bowhunters/youth hunters who did not have priority built in the draw system prior to these WMUs going to draw.
- lower wait times for those hunters wanting to draw/bowhunt in these archery seasons.
- not affect the chances of hunters getting drawn in the general draw. Numbers indicate the odds would actually be very close or even better over what they were in 2012 before the current archery draw was implemented for 2013.
- still maintain bowhunter harvest levels at the determined harvest share.
- better meet management goals as tags issued for each draw would be more accurate in reflecting archery/general draw success rates rather than a combination that would fluctuate dramatically depending on which segment gets drawn more in that particular year.

Supporting information for the "Archery Season Draw" Proposal

(For the purpose of this exercise, the Antlered Mule Deer draw scenario has been used)
(data updated Feb 25, 2016)

1) Feedback to support this proposal has come from response to numerous emails to the "ABA Email List", a survey (Aug 19 2013) through Vertical Response to our "ABA Email List" (sent to 1611 email addresses with 320 responses (19.9%) and a 71.8% YES vote), response to reports in the ABA quarterly newsletter and on the ABA website, discussions at ABA AGMs and executive meetings, conversations with bowhunters across the province, canvassing various archery shops across the province for their customer feedback (Jim Bows and Calgary Archery Center in Calgary, Lane Archery in Lethbridge, Big Timber Archery in Grande Prairie, Stony Creek Outfitters in Whitecourt (since closed), Jim Bows Edmonton, Trophy Book Archery in Spruce Grove, Sherwood Park Archery Lanes in Sherwood Park (since closed).

2) When determining the draw tags that will be issued for any particular species in any particular WMU for the resident hunter, AEP calculates what they want the total resident harvest to be (based on the overall population trends and numbers in each WMU and region), what the success rate is for that particular species (25% for bowhunters and 75% for general draw antlered mule deer hunters – Rob C of AEP), take into account that app 10% of the hunters drawn do not purchase the tag. They then determine that "XX" number of tags will be issued that will then meet the harvest goal.

In the calculations, the chance to draw is determined by dividing the number of tags available by the number of applicants.

The harvest goal was determined by multiplying the tags issued for that particular WMU in that specific year by a factor of .75 (reflects the 75% success rate in the general draw season).

To then calculate the split between the proposed archery season draw and the general draw, 15% of that harvest goal would be dedicated to the archery season draw with the remainder of the harvest then in the general draw.

Based on a success rate of 25%, the tags for the archery season draw would then be adjusted (x 4) to meet that harvest goal and the general season draw tags adjusted to reflect the 75% success rate (x 1.33). Adding the tag allotment of the two draws together would give you the total tags allotted and thus, potential hunters in the field.

The chance to draw in the general draw is calculated by dividing the new total of general draw tags by the new general applicants (total previous applicants minus the bowhunting applicants). Subtracting the old tag numbers from these new calculated tags of the archery season draw and the general draw, gives you a difference. Taking this difference and dividing by the old tag number gives you the % increase in tags issued and the increase of "Hunters in the field."

If the split season draw had been implemented in 2013, we would have increased the hunters in the field in these 52 WMUs by 30% (an average of 1117 hunters) for each of the three years from 2013 - 2015 and maintaining the desired harvest goal.

3) We would see a significant increase of bowhunters in the archery season over what there is now after the draw system for 2013 in these 52 WMUs was implemented. Getting lots of feedback about how few bowhunters get drawn with the current draw system and are able to bowhunt the archery seasons; the low success and harvest rate by bowhunters as shown by feedback, the

entries in the ABA Game Awards program/Alberta Record Book and interviews with eighteen Alberta Pope & Young measurers.

- 4) Figures/calculations show the odds of getting drawn for the general draw in 2013-2015 would be very similar to what it was in the general draw in 2012 when bowhunters did not require a Special License to bowhunt the archery season in these WMUs/for this species. Information from AEP suggests the tag increases for years 2013-2015 reflected the fact bowhunters could no longer bowhunt antlered mule deer on a general license and their past harvest rates were factored into the new tag increases for the general draw. Current population trends also likely played a factor.

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Tags (B)	3447	4253	3304	3687
Applicants (D)	23802	24265	23956	23196
Chance to draw	14.48	17.53%	13.79%	15.89%
harvest goal E (B X .75)	2585	3190	2478	2765
Calc 15% Bhtr harvest share F (E x .15)		478	372	415
Calc Bhtr tags G (Share F X 4)		1912	1488	1660
Calc Gen share H (E - F)		2712	2106	2350
Calc Gen tags I (H x 1.33)		3607	2801	3126
Calc New Gen draw appl K (D - G)		22353	22468	21536
Calc New chance to draw in gen draw L (I / K)		16.14%	12.47%	14.52%
Calc Total New tags/Hunters in the field J (G + I)	3447	5519	4289	4786
Calc Tag increases N (J - B)		1266	985	1099
Calc % increase O (N / B)		29.77%	29.81%	29.81%

- 5) Even though there are still lots of hunting opportunities in Alberta and lots of bowhunting opportunities, bowhunters have seen a marked decrease in opportunity in some cases over the years as they became more successful, hit the 15% harvest goal, are subject to having the draw to bowhunt the archery season for certain species. Feedback indicates that most bowhunters travel very little to bowhunt unless it is a species that is not in their home local (antelope, sheep, bison, mountain goat). Most like to hunt around home because of time constraints and the high costs of traveling to other areas. Thus, bowhunting opportunities for a certain species in other areas away from home that have an open archery season are not taken advantage of by the majority of bowhunters. Creating an archery season draw would allow local bowhunters a chance of bowhunting in their home locale in these cases.

- 6) When the draw for bowhunters hunting in the archery season for antlered mule deer was instituted in 2013, draw tag numbers in many of these WMUs were increased significantly. Possibly to reflect the previous bow harvest, but the increase was much more substantial than that (??) and with a higher success rate, it would mean more antlered mule deer would actually be taken than before the need to put bowhunters on a draw.

examples: WMU 156 - 2012 tags 138/2013 tags 172

WMU 357 - 2012 tags 23/2013 tags 86
WMU 521 - 2012 tags 93/2013 tags 196

A further example using moose in WMU 504 shows that in 2014 (prior to bowhunters needing any draw) that there were 41 bull tags and 74 cow tags in the general season. Because bowhunter harvest was too high, bowhunters were required to have a draw to bowhunt the archery season and in 2015, 126 bull tags and 96 cow tags were issued. Bowhunters are killing too many moose and need to be on a draw but then the tags for bulls are tripled (??).

Creating the archery season draw would better meet management goals, reflect respective harvest rates and would put back into a bowhunting opportunity without affecting general hunter draw opportunity and harvest goals.

- 7) Creating an archery season draw would allow more bowhunting opportunity for new bowhunters/youth bowhunters. Since the broad changes requiring bowhunters to have the draw to bowhunt the archery season, many bowhunters do not have any priority built up and the priority wait times can be substantial.
- 8) Starting a draw for the archery season will have all bowhunters start at zero priority. Built up priority in the general draw would stay in the general draw.
- 9) The current proposal based on feedback suggests that hunters make a choice as to which draw they put in for but not both. The present antelope draw would change to also have hunters make a choice as to which of the three antelope options they put in for. This would align things with other draw restrictions (sheep, elk, moose).

For general information:

Bowhunting Licenses sold:

1999 – 11516 residents
2012 – 18590 residents/300 non res/1084 non res aliens
2013 - 19083 residents/325 non res/1079 non res aliens
2014 - 21447 residents/324 non res/1072 non res aliens
2015 - 22435 residents/ 300 non res/1095 non res aliens

ABA Survey on archery season draw regime proposal

Once resident bowhunter harvest reaches 15% of the total resident harvest for a specific species in a specific WMU, hunters are required to have the special license draw in order to bowhunt that species/WMU in the archery season. ESRD makes this decision based on a continuous trend of three – five years of harvest data from hunter surveys. The last three years this has been from the online harvest survey.

Creating a separate draw regime for the archery season in these situations would fairly address the issue of over harvest by bowhunters. It would require them to have the draw to bowhunt these archery seasons and would allow bowhunters to compete with their peers for the available tags. To clarify – this archery season draw regime would ONLY apply to those species/WMUs where ESRD determines the resident bowhunter harvest exceeds the 15% on a continuous basis. It would NOT be applied to every species/WMU where we now have archery seasons.

Archery and bowhunting have seen a huge jump in popularity and with it has come a corresponding jump in bowhunter numbers (from 11000 ten years ago to 18600 in 2012). This increase in bowhunter numbers equates to more people in the field in the archery season and the harvest rates have gone up – leading to more species going on draw to bowhunt in specific archery seasons/WMUs to keep bowhunter harvest at 15% of the total resident harvest. Evidence suggests this increase in bowhunter numbers will continue. An archery season draw regime will allow bowhunters to apply in this archery season draw and not have to compete with the rest of the general hunter group. Draw wait times could likely be less as well for both groups but this would have to be confirmed after a period of time.

ESRD has informed the stakeholders (Dec 2012 AGMAG meeting) that no new draw codes can be implemented until the new upgrades are done to the licensing system. This gives us app 12-18 months to create a system that fairly addresses the issues of bowhunter harvest and restrictions/loss of opportunity for bowhunters, especially in the archery seasons.

RECOMMENDED CHANGE --- Currently, in order to bowhunt in the archery season for some species in some WMUs, hunters are required to have the special license draw. This allows them to hunt both the archery season AND the general season.

The *ABA Proposal* is to create an archery draw regime for those species/WMUs that now require a special license draw to bowhunt them in the archery season. The number of tags allocated to the specific draws would be based on the success rate to get to the 15% allowed of the total resident harvest. An example would be – if ESRD wants 100 antlered mule deer harvested, 15 would be allocated to this archery season draw and based on the bowhunter success rate; this number would be extrapolated to arrive at the total tags available in the draw. If the success rate is 25% then 60 tags would be issued for the archery season draw for that WMU

Hunters would have to choose between putting in for the archery season draw or the general season draw (not both).

Priorities would all start at 0 for these new archery draws – archery antelope would carry on as is but without the option of putting in for all three antelope draws.

The ABA would like to know if you are in favor of this proposal. ABA representatives will be attending various ESRD and stakeholder meetings to pitch this idea and would like to know what the membership think.

1. Are you in favor of ESRD (Fish & Wildlife) creating an archery season draw regime for those species/WMUs that require bowhunters to have the special license draw in order to bowhunt in the archery season?

YES

NO

Provide additional comments below:

* *Required*

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Survey was emailed Aug 19, 2013 to our "ABA Email List". We had 1611 email addresses in this data base at that time. Not all are ABA members.

As of Dec 27 2013, there were 320 responses from the 1611 surveys sent (a 19.9% response rate). 230 voted YES (71.8%) in favor of this proposal and 90 voted NO (28.1%).

