

## **\*\*The Effect of Precipitation Accumulation on Bull Elk Harvest in The Big Hole Area of Montana**

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This study examined the relationship between bull elk harvest in southwestern Montana and precipitation during Montana's general big game hunting season. My hypothesis was that increased precipitation during November would correlate to higher bull elk harvest. I used harvest data gathered from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' hunter check stations located to intercept hunters from several hunting districts surrounding the upper Big Hole Valley from Jackson to Divide, MT. I censored the harvest data to only include bull elk aged  $\geq 2.5$  years old since bulls younger than this are often still associated with cow-calf groups and not with bachelor herds. This study provides insight into the intricate relationship between weather patterns and bull elk harvest and suggests that factors beyond precipitation influence elk harvest in the Big Hole area.