

COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA BRIEFING

Meeting Date: May 28, 2026

Agenda Number: 8

Presenter: Tim Cimbal

Corroborator:

Agenda Title: Reserving Two Elk Licenses for Non-Profit Wish-Granting Organizations

1. Summary of Agenda Item

The Department is recommending that the commission reserve two elk licenses to be distributed through non-profit wish-granting organizations for two individuals with a life-threatening illness. Under 17-3-13.5 NMSA 1978, the State Game Commission is directed to reserve no more than two elk licenses a year for persons under the age of 21 who have been determined by a physician to have a life-threatening illness and who have been qualified through a nonprofit wish-granting organization.

The reservation of two elk licenses will not negatively affect the distribution, abundance or other elk population parameters. It will contribute to local economies wherever the hunters may choose to stay or eat during the hunt selected.

2. Background Information

Currently, there are 6 wish-granting organizations that have been approved by the Commission to provide applicants for hunting licenses. The six organizations are: Hunt of A Lifetime, Outdoor Dream Foundation, Catch-A-Dream, Holy Pursuits Dream Foundation, United Special Sportsman Alliance and SafariWish (SCI).

This year, the Department is recommending that the two elk licenses be reserved for the individuals sponsored by Catch-A-Dream and Outdoor Dream Foundation.

The individuals recommended through these organizations are yet to be determined.

The Department is bringing forward this recommendation for an elk hunt for each applicant:

- September 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026
- Any legal weapon
- Any area open to elk hunting
- ES bag limit for each hunter

This recommendation is being brought forward at this time, as these two organizations are preparing for the upcoming hunting season and need to make the proper arrangements for travel and hunting assistance.

3. Strategic Plan References and Possible Impacts of Agenda Item

This reservation of licenses is statutory (17-3-13.5) and will assist in the selling of hunting licenses (the individuals above must purchase the license reserved).

4. Considerations Regarding Duplications and/or Conflicts with Existing Rules or Statutes

Commission authority is established in 17-3-13.5 and no conflict is known to exist in rules or statutes.

5. Description and Summary of Public Involvement Process and Results

The legislature adopted this law (17-3-13.5) in 2003 and went through several House and Senate committees. The law had public support, passed through the legislature and was signed into law April, 2003. This law continues to receive broad public support from individual sportsmen and sportswomen and citizens.

6. Suggested Motion

The Department respectfully suggests the following motion unless Commission discretion indicates a different course of action:

“Move to accept the Department’s recommendation and reserve two elk licenses for the two applicants to be sponsored by the non-profit wish-granting organizations, or the alternates, should the primary individuals not be able to participate in their elk hunt.”