

NEW MEXICO STATE GAME COMMISSION
Western New Mexico University - Global Resource Center Auditorium
Corner of 12th Street/Kentucky Street
Silver City, NM 88061
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12:27:40 PM

Lawrence McDaniel:

Thank you, Commissioners. My comment is a general comment about elk hunting for residents of the state of New Mexico. I was excited on June 9th to look and see my draw results on the computer. I woke up really early, and I was disappointed. It was the third year in a row that I hadn't gotten an elk tag. I emailed my local commissioner, Dutch Salmon. I asked him if I could increase my chances by moving to El Paso, getting a license to hunt elk in the state of New Mexico.

Commissioner Salopek:

[inaudible at first] A few friends I have haven't drawn in 10 years out of state. Just food for thought.

Lawrence McDaniel:

I took two Texans hunting last year, both of whom got licenses. I didn't. So anyway it's the luck of the draw. And no sane person is voluntarily going to move from New Mexico to Texas anyway, right? So that's not the solution.

The solution, I think, is to bring New Mexico in line with other western states. And we are currently way out of whack with other western states. I lived in Montana for 15 years. I hunted elk. I had the opportunity to hunt elk every year. I wasn't successful every year, but I had a chance every year. That's not the case in New Mexico. 22 percent come off the top with outfitters and out of state hunters. 10 percent of Montana licenses go to out of state hunters, too. But the big kahuna is the over 40 percent that go to private landowners. So my...

Chairman McClintic:

That's not an accurate number, sir.

Lawrence McDaniel:

It's not?

Chairman McClintic:

No, we can get...Pat, you want to address that, that number?

Lawrence McDaniel:

You want me to finish my comment?

Chairman McClintic:

Well, we will get to your comment. You can have all the time you want. Pat, we've discussed that. Is that 40 percent an accurate number?

Pat Block:

Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, I believe that's a little bit on the high side. When you look at the licenses, it's about a third; when you look at the total number authorized, it does get closer to that 40 but it's probably on the high side. Over the last ten years, it's never hit 40 percent, either, with either measure. But if you look at the hunters, it's about a third and two-thirds on average.

Chairman McClintic:

Okay, so it's closer to between 33 and 36 percent?

Pat Block:

That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman McClintic:

Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Arvas:

Also, Mr. Chairman...

Lawrence McDaniel [at the same time Commissioner Arvas begins speaking]:

Okay, so if you add those...

Chairman McClintic:

Hold on a second.

Commissioner Arvas:

Pat, you might want to answer this now, of the land authorization permits, is every single land authorization permit that is issued filled? [inaudible] of a license?

Pat Block:

Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Arvas, no. Some of those are not converted. And I suppose the other point worth mentioning is that anybody can buy landowner authorizations. Those are not reserved for resident or nonresident hunters. It is between the landowner and whoever they want to sell those licenses to. They are not restricted from purchase by a resident. In fact, many are purchased by residents, but the majority are purchased by folks from other states.

Commissioner Arvas:

And then the final comment, I saw a number today, and I may not be 100 percent accurate but I'm sure you can give me the right number, there were 139,000 resident applications, somewhere in that area. And then about...

[inaudible]

Chairman McClintic:

All applications were 150. Go ahead and continue, sir.

Lawrence McDaniel:

So I think, regardless of whether the number is 36 or 40, my chances are less than 50 percent as a resident hunter in the state of New Mexico of getting an elk license in any given year. And I don't think that's right. No other state does that. Montana doesn't do that...

Chairman McClintic:

What do you suggest we do?

Lawrence McDaniel:

I suggest that you look at the other states and bring New Mexico...

Chairman McClintic:

I'm asking for a solution from you.

Lawrence McDaniel:

I would say that you limit the...

Chairman McClintic:

We've got 150,000 people applying for 47,000 licenses. What do you want us to do to where you get your permit drawn? I drew an elk tag, the first time in 19 years. Everybody, there's 100,000 people every year in this state that don't draw. We are trying everything we possibly can do to give hunters more opportunity, increased almost 700 elk tags here. But we want solid solutions stuff, rather than. We have one of the most popular destinations in the entire United States, with probably the best trophy class as far as antelope, mule deer and elk in the entire western United States. So we have such a high demand for these hunts. We want to get people more opportunity. We want to get the residents a better opportunity.

Lawrence McDaniel:

Then my suggestion would be to look at what other states do. And using Montana as a model. No other state that I know of subsidizes private landowners through giving them a certain amount of elk licenses that they can then in turn resell.

Chairman McClintic:

Well I don't know how much private land's in Montana, but I know their population is, what, half of ours. I know their population of antelope is 137 times more than ours. So if you want to deal with elk and you want to deal with other species rather than just lumping them altogether, I mean, I agree with you. But it's awful tough for us to go to another state and model something that, you know, we've got a fine balance of a budget. We've got people we have to pay for. We have to create money. Everybody gives us all these suggestions. And you know if we want to increase the license \$5, people come after us with guns.

[inaudible due to crowd noise.]

If we take away the nonresident fees and the money we achieve from that, you know, it puts us in a financial burden. Along with putting us in the same thing as a burden. We're, believe me, we're all on your side. Everybody in this room, whether they're an outfitter, whether they're a hunter. They all want more opportunity and they want to be able to hunt more.

Lawrence McDaniel:

You know, I hear you saying that, but then I think your words contradict what you're saying...

Chairman McClintic:

My words never contradict what I'm saying.

Lawrence McDaniel:

You've admitted that getting more out of state licenses generates more money for you. I would gladly pay an extra \$5...

Chairman McClintic:

I didn't say, I said we have a fine balance. That is a state law, the 12 percent. We have a fine balance.

Lawrence McDaniel:

I think the balance in the state of New Mexico is out of whack compared to other states. I would ask the Commission to do what they can to increase the chances for resident hunters to draw a tag in the state of New Mexico.

Chairman McClintic:

We just did that, we had 30,000 less applications this year.

Lawrence McDaniel:

I think you need to do a lot more. I'd like my chances to be better than less than 50 percent.

Chairman McClintic:

Well, if you've only applied three years, you're doing better than most people for not drawing.

Lawrence McDaniel:

That's not a very good answer.

Chairman McClintic:

That's my answer.