

NMWF Sportsman Survey How did you do in the Big Game Draw?

New Mexico hunters were not exactly thrilled with the most recent Big Game Draw. The online survey conducted in July by NMWF found 60 percent were disappointed in the results, and 32 percent said neither they nor their immediate family drew a single hunt. At the other end of the spectrum, 10 percent said they drew a license for every application they submitted.

The survey, published in the July issue of the NMWF Sportsman's News Roundup, drew 231 responses (only one respondent is allowed from each computer). The vast majority – 98 percent – said they applied for one or more hunts in the Big Game Draw, but fewer than half said they were satisfied with the results:

Very satisfied: 17 percent
Somewhat satisfied: 23 percent
Disappointed: 60 percent

The full fee up-front payment didn't seem like much of an impediment. Only 20 percent of respondents said they applied for fewer hunts than usual because of the payment requirement.

Hunters were split on the policy, but from their written comments it seemed more supported the up-front payment than opposed it. "I think is great," said one, "it culls out people who are not serious."

When asked specifically how successful were they and their immediate family, here's how they answered:

Drew licenses for each application: 10 percent
Drew for most applications submitted: 16 percent
Drew for very few applications submitted: 42 percent
Did not draw a single license: 32 percent

Regardless of their luck in the Big Game Draw, exactly 50 percent of our survey respondents said they planned to hunt outside New Mexico and the other half said they would not. But their written comments show that they don't hunt elsewhere out of choice. Here are some of their responses:

- "NM has too many obstacles for state residents to hunt here. I'm going to TX."
- "I am not planning on it but most definitely will look into it in the future if this continues."
- "I can't ever draw in NM so I have to go out of state to actually draw a tag."
- "Already planned an out-of-state hunt because I thought my chances in NM were slim."

- “Unfortunately I am not in a position to afford the luxury of hunting out of state at this point in my life. Otherwise I would definitely travel out of state for more hunting opportunities.”
- “I think the system in NM is both broken and totally corrupt. No more for me! I’ll hunt in other states, even at the much higher cost and spend my ‘visitor’ money up there. Hence I did not both to apply for any draw tag for any species this year. I’m fed up!”
- “Yes, I have to apply in Arizona and Colorado along with New Mexico just to get hopefully one hunt somewhere.”
- “I feel the state of New Mexico has robbed and my family of a heritage of hunting together that was long standing and beneficial to the development of new, young hunters. If it doesn’t get its act together soon, hunting as we knew it growing up will be lost forever to the almighty dollar.”
- “Looking into it.”
- “[No], but you can be sure that we will next year. What a pain to have to leave your own state and pay more to hunt.”
- “Will use my big game hunt money to hunt pheasant in Kansas.”