

EVALUATION OF MONTANA'S
BLOCK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

by

Kelvin Ray Johnson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Masters of Science

in

Fish and Wildlife Management

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

March, 2006

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Chair of Committee: Dr. Robert Garrott

Approved for the Department of Ecology

Department Head: Dr. David Roberts

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

Graduate Dean: Dr. Joeseeph J. Fedock

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Evaluating Montana's Block Management Program depended upon the dedication and work from several people. For these efforts, I owe a great deal of thanks. First, I'd like to thank Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, who provided the funding and allowed me to pursue this opportunity while maintaining my employment with them. To Alan Charles, Glenn Erickson, and Paul Sihler, who initiated the project and then provided support and information throughout the project duration. To Ron Uchytel, Coleen O'Rourke, and Richard Morgan, the block management coordinators who accepted additional workloads required to amass the landowner and hunter information I needed for developing the survey samples. To Rob Brooks, Mike Lewis, and Zoe King, (and the senior citizen volunteer groups who helped stuff envelopes,) who provided technical guidance, and made accommodations to conduct and tabulate the surveys at their office. I'd like to thank my graduate committee, including my advisor, Dr. Robert Garrott, for taking on this project in the first place, for challenging me, paying attention to detail, and always providing the sound advice and guidance I needed. To Dr. Dean Lueck, for persevering throughout the lengthy timeline of the project, for providing many helpful strategies, and for providing incite from his area of expertise. To Dr. James Satterfield, for being instrumental in developing this project, and for working with me through the many challenges I faced when off campus. To each and everyone one of you, my sincere thanks. And finally, to my Leila and Oak, who were beside me since day one, you are my heroes.

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ABSTRACT

The Block Management Program, initiated in 1985, was implemented to encourage private landowners to provide free public hunting access. Currently, the program has over 1,200 landowners enrolling 8.8 million acres, and provides over 400,000 hunter days of free public hunting. Surveys were sent to 423 landowners (303 returned) and 1,636 hunters (976 returned) to evaluate current perceptions of block management area (BMA) users. Observations, expectations, and satisfaction levels were determined by calculating frequencies and means using SAS 8.2, and then comparisons between permission method strategies and between geographic regions were evaluated. Landowners were satisfied with permission methods used, numbers of hunters received annually, and with hunter limit and travel restriction rules utilized, but satisfaction levels regarding relative game abundance and harvest success were higher in Eastern Montana than in Western Montana. Hunters were very successful in gaining permission to BMAs, and were satisfied with travel restrictions encountered, but satisfaction levels regarding amounts of other hunters seen were higher on Type 2 and on Eastern Montana BMAs. Satisfaction with game abundance was higher on Eastern Montana BMAs, and was higher with harvest success on Type 2 and Eastern Montana BMAs. Program success was evident by levels of satisfaction with the various hunter management tools evaluated by this study, but some areas needed improvement, such as increased efforts to sign BMAs, improve maps, and provide refuse receptacles to further decrease hunter violations. This study also provided insight for designing strategies that meet specific preferences and expectations of program users when developing new BMAs, including permission method, hunter number management, and travel management strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Wildlife is considered a public resource in the United States, and government agencies are responsible for wildlife management and regulation of hunting. However, habitat associated with wildlife is often located on private land where private landowners control hunting access rights (Lueck 1991). As a result, landowner attitudes towards wildlife impact the quality and quantity of existing wildlife habitat (Conover 1994). Landowners that believe benefits of agricultural production outweigh benefits of having wildlife seek to reduce or eliminate wildlife habitat on their property, so they will no longer have to deal with wildlife depredation, or assume the liabilities associated with allowing hunting (Wright and Fresenmaier 1988, Rasker et. al. 1992). Changes in landownership also affect hunting access on private lands (Hansen and Winchell 1999). The probability that landowners allow access to their private land is not affected by size of property, or numbers of big game reported on their land, but increases with relative importance of agriculture with their total income (Lacey et. al. 1993). Therefore, as more agricultural land is purchased by non-traditional landowners for aesthetic values, the supply of private lands available for public hunting decreases.

Landowner-hunter relationships also impact the quality and quantity of existing public access to private lands. Historically, strong relationships between landowners and hunters have been integral parts of both hunting and rural traditions. Respect, trust, and understanding developed from years of interactions between landowners and hunters. However, these traditional relationships between landowners and hunters have become more difficult to initiate and maintain (Hansen and Winchell 1999), resulting in

increasing amounts of private land closed to public hunting (Elliot 1991). Although the closure of private land to hunters is increasing more in the United States and Canada, studies from both countries show the primary reason for these closures is not socioeconomic or land-use related, but are results of whether or not landowners have encountered bad experiences with hunters on their land (Brown, et. al. 1984, Wright and Kaiser 1986, Elliot 1991, Hansen and Marshall 1996). Landowner concerns regarding trespass, road hunting, property damage, vandalism, liability issues, and other problems associated with public access are critical threats to the privilege of public access to private lands, as these problems are chronic and are growing worse (Wright and Kaiser 1986, Wigley and Melchiors 1987, Elliot 1991, Hansen and Winchell 1999,). Unethical hunter behavior can be deterred by increased enforcement and consistent prosecution of offenders (Hansen and Marshall 1996), as well as programs designed to promote ethical hunter behavior (Elliot 1991).

Throughout the United States, hunter access to private lands is decreasing rapidly. Wildlife agency administrators have reported access for hunting has decreased by 45%. Demands for public access to private lands and the habitat value of private lands are increasing thus creating a market for fee hunting in the United States (Wigley and Melchiors 1987, Messmer et. al. 1998). As a result, private lands leased for hunting has increased between 55% and 69% (Benson 2001), and many ranches have closed to hunting, been leased by outfitters, hunting clubs, or specific individuals, or allow fee hunting only. Therefore, it is important to motivate landowners to maintain or improve wildlife habitat on their property, or develop ways to maintain hunting access to private lands (Conover 1994) in order to deter landowners from

looking towards commercialization of wildlife to attempt to regain agricultural business losses they incur from the presence of wildlife (Rasker et. al. 1992).

In Montana, approximately 65% of the land base is privately owned and primarily used for agricultural purposes. Between 80 to 90% of Montana ranchers reported allowing hunting on more than half of their land holdings while 12% did not allow public access. Only 4% of ranchers were charging a fee to hunt in 1993, but that number had increased to 12% by 1996 (Lacey et. al. 1993, Swensson 1996, Saltiel and Irby 1998). Most landowners having their land closed indicated previous damage caused by hunters and conflicts with hunters as their reasons to close (Saltiel and Faulkner 1993, Swensson and Knight 2001). Hunting pressure in the state has increased, and more landowners are restricting access by posting land, effectively decreasing hunting and recreational opportunities (Swensson and Knight 1998, Gunderson 2000, Swensson and Knight 2001). Studies show that land access availability has a direct influence on hunter behavior, as negative effects on hunter behavior increase as crowding increases on decreasing amounts of land (Elliot 1991, Hansen and Marshall 1996). Consistent with those findings, Montana landowner-hunter relations have become increasingly strained over the past several years (Swensson and Knight 1998). Although landowners often report having positive perceptions of hunters as a whole, many landowners and hunters believe that poor hunter behavior is a result of a few “bad apples” and not the hunting populations as a whole (Hansen and Winchell 1999). Currently, landowners and hunters report that trespassing, driving off roads, and too many hunters or not enough access are the major hunting problems in Montana (Swensson and Knight 1998).

Access to private lands is important to wildlife agency objectives (Benson 2001). When private lands are closed to hunting, wildlife agency harvest objectives for herd units may not be met, which, in turn, may bring about increased game damage (Messmer et. al. 1998). Restricted access not only limits wildlife management benefits, but also limits hunting opportunities (Brown, et. al. 1984). When the public's ability to use the wildlife resource is diminished, demand for license sales decreases, thus decreasing funds for future programs (Swenson 1983). Therefore, many states have developed, or are in the process of developing various programs designed to provide incentives to landowners that encourage maintenance or development of wildlife habitat, or encourage landowners to allow public hunting access to their land (Hansen and Winchell 1999). State programs designed to encourage landowners to allow public hunting access to their lands vary from state to state.

Some state programs work with private landowners to open their lands to public hunting by developing generalized walk-in only areas. Colorado's Walk-In Access Program is geared towards hunting small game, migratory birds, and furbearers on lands in Eastern Colorado. The program targets diverse habitat types, including cropland and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and places emphasis on smaller blocks of habitat including sprinkler corners, weedy wheat stubble, and creek bottoms. All enrolled properties have the same rules, and maps of enrolled land are placed in a hunter access atlas and are coded by primary habitat cover type. Hunters can access these lands by purchasing a \$20 Walk-In Stamp in addition to their hunting licenses (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2005).

Kansas developed the Walk-In Hunting Access Program to enhance hunting heritage in the state by providing hunting access to private property, by providing landowners with modest incentives to allow public hunting access. Payments vary by amount of acres enrolled and by length of contract period. Primarily CRP, native rangeland, stubble, and riparian areas are targeted, and most areas provide upland game bird hunting, although some opportunities for deer, waterfowl, and squirrel hunting are provided. Areas are posted with signs, and are patrolled periodically. Enrolled lands are published in a detailed county map, and hunters are encouraged not to contact landowners. It is funded by a combination of hunting license fees and Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration funds, and currently, over 400,000 hectares are enrolled (Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks 2005).

North Dakota developed the Private Lands Open To Sportsmen Program, which was designed to provide cost-sharing incentives to landowners interested in development and conservation of wildlife habitat, while providing public hunting access opportunities to private land. Landowners can participate in different aspects of the program, which include development and improvement of habitat plots, food plots, forest conservation, CRP, wetland reserves, tree planting, working lands, and coverlots. Participating lands are published in statewide maps, signed, and hunters can access these lands without permission on a walk-in only basis (North Dakota Game and Fish Department 2005).

Wyoming's Walk-In Area Hunting Program leases hunting rights from landowners for public use. Walk-In Areas allow public access to participating lands by foot travel only, unless otherwise designated. Qualified lands must meet minimum size and habitat

requirements, and landowners can receive up to \$1,200 per year. However, landowners can sign for up to 5 years at a time, and receive additional incentives of increased annual payments by 5% for each additional year contracted (Wyoming Game & Fish Department 2005).

Some state programs promote public hunting access by leasing hunting rights from private landowners on a per acre basis. Kentucky developed the Dove Field Lease Program to expand public hunting opportunities and to generate additional income to Kentucky farmers. Landowners sign an agreement with the state to plant fields to dove friendly crops, and then manage their fields as prescribed in the agreement. Fields are inspected in mid-August, and landowners are reimbursed based on the number of acres enrolled and by crop type, as well as crop success or failure, and can receive up to \$2,500 (Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife 2005).

Nebraska developed the CRP-Management Access Program, where landowners are paid \$1 - \$5 per acre for their entire CRP tracts for improving habitat on 10% of their CRP, and for providing walk-in only hunting access to the general public. The program is funded jointly from Nebraska Habitat Stamp funds and grants from Pheasants Forever chapters, and hunters who purchase a Nebraska Habitat Stamp can use enrolled CRP (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 2005).

South Dakota developed the Walk-In Area Program to promote public access to quality hunting opportunities on private lands, improve landowner-hunter relations, and improve hunter ethics. The state provides landowners with financial benefits and liability assurances for allowing unlimited public hunting. Qualifying landowners must have at

least 80 continuous acres having quality permanent cover, primarily CRP, or wetlands and woodlands, and are paid \$1/acre base access payment plus \$5/acre for permanent habitat left undisturbed throughout the contract year. Program funding includes a \$5 surcharge on adult hunting licenses and also comes from Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds, and hunters may access enrolled lands by walk-in only hunting. Current program budgets are \$2 million for 2005, and their goal is to have over 400,000 hectares enrolled by 2007 (South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks 2005).

Some state programs promote fee-hunting access by creating private wildlife management strategy agreements with landowners. Agreements allow landowners to charge fees for access to, or allow landowners to sell and distribute licenses and permits obtained through management agreements. California's Private Lands Management Program was developed to encourage landowners to maintain wildlife resources on their property without economic loss. Participating landowners consult with wildlife biologists for wildlife habitat improvements, and in return, are allowed to charge fees for wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing. Currently, there are 76 PLM properties composed of 345,000 hectares of wildlife habitat (California Department of Fish & Game 2005).

The Deer Management Assistance Program was initiated in Louisiana to provide people who control more than 500 acres of property, additional opportunities to manage deer populations on their land. Participants are charged a \$25 dollar fee and \$0.05/acre to enroll in the program. Biologists develop harvest quotas and provide antlerless and buck tags to participants. In turn, participants must collect extensive physical data from

harvested game so biologists can evaluate herd health (Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries 2005).

New Mexico's Antelope Landowner Signup System was developed to manage antelope numbers and provide public hunting opportunities for antelope hunters on private land. Landowners must apply to be considered for the program. Qualified landowners are allocated antelope authorization certificates for the upcoming season, and hunters negotiate to obtain a certificate from a landowner. Currently, 1,100 landowners are signed up and participate in the program (New Mexico Game and Fish 2005).

Oklahoma utilizes their Deer Management Assistance Program to assist landowners with intensive management of deer herds on their lands. Landowners set their own management goals, which range from producing large numbers of harvestable deer, to producing trophy class bucks. Enrolled lands must be at least 1,000 acres in size, and participants must pay \$200 for lands 1,000 to 4,999 acres and \$400 for lands 5,000 acres or larger. Although landowners are encouraged to allow public hunting on their property, they are not required to do so (Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation 2005).

Texas uses the Landowner Assisted Management Permitting System (LAMPS) that allow antlerless deer to be taken on private lands that are in buck only hunting areas. Participating ranches must meet minimum size and habitat requirements, and numbers of antlerless permits issued to landowners are based on size and quality of their property. Landowners must then report numbers of deer hunters that used their property, and number of deer seen and harvested during the season. Texas also uses the Managed Lands Deer Permit Program, which is similar to LAMPS, but involves formal wildlife

management plans submitted by landowners, and permits, for both antlerless and buck deer are issued to landowners based on submitted management plans. Landowners must report deer harvest data, and also document progress of prescribed habitat management practices on their ranch (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department 2005).

Cooperative Wildlife Management Units (CWMUs) are hunting areas in Utah composed primarily of private lands for the purpose of managing big game. The program provides additional income for landowners, creates hunting opportunities, increases wildlife habitat, and provides trespass protection to participants. Participants receive hunting permits, of which 15% are made available to the public through a drawing, and the rest can be assigned privately. Landowners must develop and maintain management plans, and complete harvest report forms. Currently almost 300 landowners have enrolled more than a 400,000 hectares into 85 CWMUs, and the median income received from the program per participant is \$27,750 (McCoy, N. H., D. Reiter and J Briem 2003).

Some state programs are developed to promote free public hunting on private lands by providing landowners with financial incentives as well as other tangible benefits. Arizona developed the Landowner Respect Program, in which the state works with landowners to install various informative and regulatory signs, as well as sign in boxes, fence ladders, gates, and kiosks. The materials are supplied to landowners free of charge, and participating landowners are not obligated to permit access to all hunters. There are more than 300 cooperating ranches that have enrolled more than 4.3 million hectares (Arizona Game and Fish Department 2005).

In Georgia, legal liability is the reason why many landowners have stopped allowing hunter access to their properties. Therefore, the state encouraged landowners to avail their lands to the general public for recreational purposes, including hunting and fishing, by shielding landowners from civil liability should hunters, who have been granted permission to recreate on their land without charge, become injured. However, landowners can be held liable if they willfully or maliciously fail to warn against dangerous conditions on their property (Georgia Department of Natural Resources 2005).

Idaho's Access Yes! Program was designed to improve sportsman access to private lands, or provide access to public ground through private lands, by providing compensation to landowners who provide access. The program is funded by voluntary donations from hunters and anglers, as well as from revenue generated from their Super Hunt drawing, which if drawn, hunters have the privilege of participating in any open hunt in the state for the species drawn, including general hunts and controlled hunts. Maps and rules of participating landowners are provided to hunters on the Internet. Currently 85 properties have enrolled more than 137,000 hectares of private land and over 172,000 hectares of public land (Idaho Fish and Game 2005).

Michigan's Hunter Access Program provides payment to landowners for opening their land to free public hunting. Landowners agree to a prescribed number of hunter permits allowed per day, and must allow hunting on a first come first serve basis. Hunters must obtain a permit when gaining permission, and must return the permit when leaving the property (Michigan Department of Natural Resources 2005).

Oregon's Access and Habitat Program was designed to improve wildlife habitat and public access to private lands. Qualifying projects improve wildlife habitat and/or increase public access to private lands. Special auctioned licenses, portions of hunting licenses, and deer restoration programs fund the program. Since inception, the program has completed 292 projects, which have provided access to more than 2.4 million hectares, and have improved over 200,000 hectares of deer habitat (Bloom, J. D. 2004, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 2005).

Montana addressed this issue by developing the Block Management Program, administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, which was developed to maintain and enhance hunter access on private land.

Program Description

The Block Management Program is a cooperative effort between private landowners, public land agencies, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) to help manage wildlife resources and the impacts that incur on landowners from allowing public hunting, by providing incentives to landowners to encourage public access to their private land (Internal BMP Review Committee 1998, Seacat 1999,).

Prior to the creation of the Block Management Program in 1985 (Seacat 1999), FWP had developed some informal cooperative agreements with landowners to promote public access to private lands. Such agreements were established as early as the mid 1970's and addressed current hunting problems by developing walk-in areas, travel plans, and providing signs and permission slips to landowners (Charles 2001).

In 1991, legally accessible state school trust lands were opened to recreation for

hunters and anglers who purchased a \$5.00 state lands use recreation license. Expansion of recreational use of legally accessible state lands caused a contentious legislative session in 1993 that resulted in the passage of House Joint Resolution 24, which asked the Governor to appoint a council to address private lands and public wildlife issues. The first Private Land/Public Wildlife Council (PL/PW) was appointed in 1993 to make recommendations to the Governor regarding issues related to private land and public wildlife, with respect to: 1) achieving optimum hunter access; 2) protecting wildlife habitat; 3) minimizing impacts on, and inconveniences to landowners; 4) encouraging the continuance of a viable hunting outfitting industry; and 5) providing additional tangible benefits to landowners who allow hunter access (Private Lands Public Wildlife Council, 1994). In 1995, the PL/PW presented its recommendations to the Governor. These recommendations resulted in passage of House Bill 195, which gave FWP the authority to develop an enhanced hunting access program. The enhanced Block Management Hunting Access Program was passed into law in 1996 (Charles 2001).

The enhanced program is funded by non-residents who purchase guaranteed outfitter sponsored deer and elk licenses and non-residents who purchase upland game bird licenses. The program is also funded from earmarked portions of various resident and non-resident conservation and license fees, which have provided resources needed for expanding the size of the program, including number of landowners, and it provided more tangible benefits for landowners, than had been previously available before 1996. Currently, these funding sources produce an annual budget of over \$5 million, which is used for contracting with landowners and operating expenses. Although wildlife

biologists and game wardens are involved with the contracting process and patrolling BMA lands, legislative bills have also given authority to fund several personnel needed for program administration and implementation. Currently, 6 full time program coordinators manage the program in FWP's 7 administrative regions, and portions of 13 full time positions that are shared with other FWP program duties, along with 45 seasonal technician positions maintain and patrol BMAs during hunting seasons.

Block Management Area (BMA) landowners grant permission to hunters on a first come, first serve basis, with the permission slips being turned in to FWP as a basis for monetary payment. They are eligible to receive payments up to \$10 per hunter day with a statutory cap of \$12,000 per hunting season, based on the number of hunter days generated on their property (Private Lands Public Wildlife Council 2001). Landowners are also eligible to receive non-monetary compensation including a complimentary sportsman's license, recreational liability protection, and livestock loss insurance. FWP also provides maps, signs, permission slips, and patrol to assist program users.

BMAs are located in all of FWP's seven administrative regions. Number, size, and hunter use of BMAs varies widely among regions. They vary in size from 20 hectares to more than 40,500 hectares, with the average size being 3,600 hectares in 2003. BMAs vary in annual hunter use, from very few hunter days (HDs) to as many as several thousand. Since the enhanced program went into effect, the number of ranches and acres enrolled in the program increased from 882 ranches enrolling 2.9 million hectares in 1996, to 1,245 ranches enrolling 3.6 million hectares in 2003, representing a 41% increase in number of participating landowners and an 24% increase in enrolled land.

The number of hunter days generated from the program increased from 346,000 in 1996, to 408,000 HDs for the 2003 hunting season (Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks 2003). Besides wide variations in size and levels of hunting pressure, BMAs also vary in habitat composition, ranging from river bottoms and associated riparian areas, to open rangelands and croplands, to mountainous regions. Each BMA has specific rules, with some BMAs intensively managing hunting activities, and others having few hunting restrictions. These differences provide a wide range of hunting opportunities.

Even though BMAs vary widely, all can be placed into two general classifications. Type 1 BMAs allow hunters to administer their own permission by using daily sign in boxes, or include areas that specify no permission required. Typically, these BMAs do not limit hunter numbers. Type 2 BMAs are administered by landowners or by FWP employees that grant permission to hunters. Typically, Type 2 BMAs use hunter management systems that limit hunter numbers, require reservations, or assign designated hunting areas (Charles 2001).

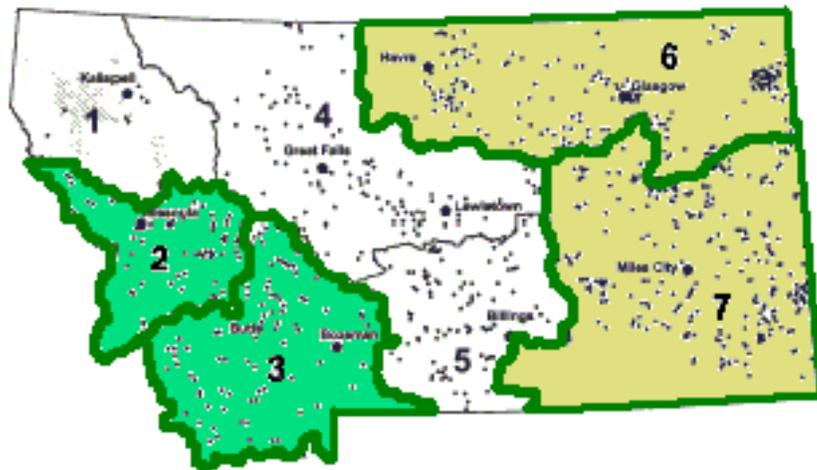
Under current program policy, the program provides benefits to landowners for allowing hunting of legal game species during fall hunting seasons. The primary species targeted are big game; (elk, *Cervus elephus*; mule deer, *Odocoileus hemionus*; white-tailed deer, *Odocoileus virginianus*; and pronghorn, *Antilocapra Americana*), and game birds, (ring-necked pheasants, *Phasianus colchicus*; sharptail grouse, *Tympanuchus phasianellus*; sage grouse, *Centrocercus urophasianus*; wild turkeys, *Meleagris gallopavo*; and waterfowl, Anatidae family).

The Block Management Program is a high profile program that receives interest from multiple entities, including the state legislature, state conservation departments, landowners, hunters, and outfitters. Since the enhanced program went into effect in 1996, there have been lists of landowners wanting to enroll, and the program has gained popularity with hunters as well. Because permission methods vary amongst BMAs (Type 1 and Type 2), information needs to be collected to identify which permission method provides the best balance of landowner and hunter needs. Because BMAs are located throughout Montana, information needs to be collected to identify needs and expectations of landowners and hunters within geographic areas. Measures of landowner and hunter observations, expectations, and satisfaction levels, can help FWP identify program success and can provide information needed for program improvement. The objectives of this study were to determine if differences occur between Type 1 and Type 2 BMAs, or between Eastern Montana and Western Montana BMAs, with respect to landowner and hunter observations, expectations, and satisfaction levels regarding; 1) management of hunting activities on BMAs; 2) hunting pressure on BMAs; and 3) relative abundance and harvest of game species on lands enrolled into block management, to identify which hunter management strategies meet the needs of program users, and to provide data that would enable FWP to improve the Block Management Program. This study did not include evaluations of landowners and hunters that utilized other hunting opportunities on private land, whether it be free public hunting, fee hunting, or outfitted hunting. Therefore, this study was limited to the landowners and hunters who used the Block Management Program.

METHODS

The study area included the geographic areas from FWP administrative Regions 2, 3, 6, and 7. Region 1 was not included because of minimal amounts of BMAs in the region, and Regions 4 and 5 were not included because both regions possess landscape and human population characteristics of both Eastern and Western Montana. Because Regions 4 and 5 are located geographically in between Regions 2 and 3, and Regions 6 and 7, they provided a natural separation that allowed more distinguishable definitions between Eastern and Western Montana BMA comparisons. Therefore, only Regions 2, 3, 6, and 7 were included in this study, and thus provided data from Eastern and Western Montana (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Administrative Regions considered when drawing random samples of landowners participating in the Block Management Program, and hunters that used those Block Management Areas.



Regions 2 and 3 are located in Western Montana, which are generally mountainous areas that have high populations levels, including cities such as Missoula, Butte, Helena, and

Bozeman. In 2003, these regions had a total of 227 landowners that enrolled 450,000 hectares and provided 77,000 HDs. There were 132 ranches classified as Type 1, and 95 classified as Type 2. Regions 6 and 7 are located in Eastern Montana, which are generally prairie areas having low populations levels, with much smaller urban areas such as Havre, Glasgow, Sidney, Glendive, and Miles City. In 2003, these regions had a total of 617 landowners that enrolled 1.8 million hectares, and provided 170,000 HDs. There were 261 ranches classified as Type 1, and 356 classified as Type 2.

To obtain sample populations, landowners were stratified by FWP Region and by permission granting method (Type 1 or Type 2). According to Dillman (2000), a minimum sample size needed to obtain a 95% confidence interval for the 844 landowners enrolled in the program in 2003 was 264. Assuming there would be a minimum of 60% to 65% return rate from surveyed landowners, 423 landowners were selected to receive a mail survey. Hunters surveyed were those who hunted on ranches whose landowners were also selected for the survey. This allowed results from the hunter survey and landowner survey to be compared directly, as both landowners and hunters recorded their experiences regarding the same BMA ranches. After the completion of the hunting season (post December 15, 2003), permission slips from the BMAs belonging to surveyed landowners were collected and approximately 93,000 HDs were tabulated from Western Montana and approximately 115,000 HD were tabulated from Eastern Montana. According to Dillman (2000), a minimum sample size needed to obtain a 95% confidence interval for the tabulated permission slips was 766. Assuming there would be a minimum of 40% to 50% return rate from surveyed hunters, 1,636 hunters, who were stratified by

FWP Region and by the permission granting method employed on the BMA where they hunted, were randomly selected to receive a survey (Dillman and Salant 1994).

It is important to note that this study did not include evaluations of landowners and hunters that utilize other hunting strategies on private land, whether it be free public hunting, fee hunting, or outfitted hunting. Therefore, this study was limited to the landowners and hunters who used the Block Management Program, and inferences made from this study may not be applicable for landowners and hunters using other hunting strategies. This study included only landowners and hunters who used the program in Regions 2, 3, 6, and 7, and not program users from Regions 1, 4, and 5. Therefore, this study was unable to identify potential characteristics that may be particular to these areas. This study also only included landowners who were successful in being enrolled into the program, and hunters who were successful in gaining access to a particular BMA. Therefore, this study was not able to measure perceptions of landowners who have tried to enroll into block management, but have not been successful, nor perceptions of landowners who have chosen to no longer utilize block management. Nor was this study able to measure perceptions of hunters who may have tried, but failed to gain access to a BMA, or measure perceptions of hunters who have chosen to no longer hunt on BMAs. As a result, potential selection bias must be considered when making inferences from this study.

The survey instruments were developed in conjunction with the FWP Responsive Management Unit. Questions were developed based on my knowledge, gained as a regional coordinator for FWP's Block Management Program, and then evaluated

cooperatively with MSU faculty and FWP staff, prior to being mailed to selected landowners and hunters. The landowner and hunter survey instruments (Appendix C and D) consisted of multiple questions for each of 5 areas of interest: personal profile, experiences with the Block Management Program in general, hunter management strategies, hunting activities, and game abundance and harvest. Landowners were asked how often they grant permission, how long they spend with hunters when doing so, and to rate their satisfaction levels with frequency and amount of time they spent granting permission to hunters. Hunters were asked which permission method they preferred, how often they expected to gain permission to hunt, how often they were successful in doing so, and how satisfied they were with the permission method used. Landowners were asked whether or not hunter numbers were limited on their BMA, how their choice of rule affected hunter management on their BMA, and to what degree the rule had met expectations. Travel management restrictions varied from ranch to ranch, so hunters were asked what kind of vehicle restrictions they encountered on their BMA. To learn more about hunter compliance with rules on BMAs, landowners were asked what best described why hunters fail to follow BMA rules, how often hunters failed to follow rules when hunting on their ranch, and which type of rules were most commonly violated on their BMA. To find out how much hunting pressure occurs on BMAs, landowners were questioned about the amount of hunter use that occurred on their ranch before and since program enrollment to measure their opinions regarding their current levels of hunter pressure. Hunters were asked how many days they spent on that particular BMA, how it compared to how long they had planned on spending there, and were asked about

numbers of other hunters they encountered while hunting their BMA. To learn about relative game abundance and harvest success on BMAs, landowners were asked to indicate what game was most commonly seen on their BMA. Hunters were asked to indicate which type of game animals they hunted when using BMAs, and were asked what best described their harvest success.

Questions were grouped to compare observations and experiences with expectations, and to compare levels of satisfaction related to the observations and experiences.

Observations, expectations, and satisfaction levels were measured by using questions having: yes – no, check which best applies, check all that apply, and 5 point (1 – 5) scalar type responses. It was assumed that landowners and hunters that use the Block Management Program had a working knowledge and/or had perceptions about the BMA they used, and they would report their observations, preferences, expectations, and satisfaction levels honestly because responses remained anonymous. It was also assumed that landowners and hunters surveyed would answer questions equally. For example, if they were all very satisfied regarding a question, they would all indicate “very satisfied,” and not rather some answering “very satisfied” and others answering “neutral,” even though they were actually very satisfied also. Therefore, statistical analysis and hence, inferences from this study were limited to those assumptions.

Dillman’s Tailored Design Method (2000) was used for contacting selected landowners and hunters. Packets containing a cover letter (Appendix A and B), questionnaire (Appendix C and D), and a self-addressed stamped envelope were mailed to the selected landowners and hunters in the winter of 2004. All surveys were coded by

region and by an identification number to aid with tracking responses and necessary follow-up efforts. Follow-up post cards (Appendix E) were sent 10 days later. To check for potential non-response bias, a second packet consisting of follow-up letter and replacement survey were sent to landowners and hunters who did not respond previously.

Data were collected from landowner and hunter surveys returned in the mail. Identification numbers used to aid with tracking responses and necessary follow-up efforts were removed from the coded data spreadsheets to keep individual responses anonymous. All survey questions left blank were coded as missing values. Responses were summarized by calculating frequencies and means using SAS. Landowner and hunter data were then analyzed using two-sample t-tests for means. Comparisons were made between Type 1 and Type 2 BMAs, and between BMAs located in Eastern and Western Montana. It is important to note this study used a comparison of means when comparing Type 1 to Type 2 BMAs, and then when comparing Eastern Montana to Western Montana BMAs. The comparison t-tests did not account for other factors, which could have possibly influenced the outcome of the determined relationships. Therefore, inferences made from these tests were limited to the results of the comparisons only, and did not account for other factors that could have potentially affected determined relationships.

RESULTS

Respondent Profiles

Seventy-two percent (303) of the landowners responded to the survey. The ratio of Eastern to Western Montana landowner respondents was 64% to 36%, and the ratio of respondents that utilized Type 1 permission methods to Type 2 permission methods was 57% to 43%. The majority of landowners were male (88%) and average age was 57 years. The length of time the majority of landowners owned or operated their property was between 26-40 years (36%) and 10-25 years (36%). Most (85%) reported that farming and/or ranching was their primary occupation. Ranching (80%) was by far the primary land use of BMAs as compared to farming (20%). Greater than 60% of landowners surveyed had participated in the program for 5 years or more.

Sixty percent (976) of the hunters responded to the survey. The ratio of Eastern to Western Montana BMA hunter respondents was 53% to 47%, and the ratio of respondents that utilized Type 1 BMAs to Type 2 BMAs was 49% to 51%. Most hunters were male (94%) and average age was 45 years. The majority of hunters reported they had been hunting for 10-25 years (28%), 26-40 years (29%), and 41-60 years (28%). Over half (52%) said they spend between 10-25 days, and slightly more than one quarter (27%) spend between 26-40 days hunting per year. Eighty percent reported they had hunted BMAs between 2-12 years. The majority of hunters traveled less than 322 kilometers, with 44% traveling less than 80 kilometers, and 20% traveling between 80 – 322 kilometers. It is notable that average distance traveled by hunters to BMAs in

Eastern Montana (Mean = 726 kilometers) was much greater than distance traveled to BMAs in Western Montana (Mean = 177 kilometers), ($t = -12.47$, $P = <0.001$).

Permission Methods

Twenty-four percent of landowners indicated they granted permission zero to a few times per month, 28% granted permission one to a few times per week, and 49% granted permission daily. Landowners that spent fewest days granting permission had highest satisfaction levels, followed by those who grant permission daily, and those who grant permission one to a few times per week, (Table 1). Type 2 landowners had higher satisfaction ratings than Type 1 landowners for those who granted permission one to a few times per week, ($t = -2.68$). Eastern Montana landowners also had higher satisfaction ratings than Western Montana landowners in two categories. Eastern Montana landowners were satisfied with the frequency of granting permission to hunters one to a few times per week, whereas Western Montana landowners were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, ($t = -3.94$). There was also a difference between Eastern Montana landowner satisfaction ratings with granting permission daily compared to Western Montana landowner ratings ($t = -1.99$), (Table 2).

Thirty-five percent of landowners indicated they spent < 5 minutes when granting permission to hunters, 50% of landowners responding said they spend between 5 and 15 minutes, and only 15% of landowners spent > 15 minutes when granting permission to hunters. While landowners spending < 5 minutes when granting permission rated satisfaction levels the highest, all landowners were satisfied with the amount of time spent granting permission to hunters, (Table 1). Eastern Montana landowners reported

higher satisfaction ratings than Western Montanan's when spending < 5 minutes granting permission to hunters, ($t = -2.22$). They rated higher satisfaction ratings than Western Montanan's when spending between 5 and 15 minutes granting permission to hunters, ($t = -2.02$), and those who spent more than 15 minutes granting permission to hunters had higher satisfaction ratings than Western landowners ($t = -3.63$).

Table 1: Satisfaction, frequency, and amount of time landowners spend granting permission to hunters.

Permission	Percent	Mean	SD
0 – few times per month	24	4.15	1.05
1 – few times per week	28	3.89	0.82
Daily	49	3.92	1.09
Less than 5 minutes	35	4.19	1.09
5 – 15 minutes	50	3.66	1.05
Greater than 15 minutes	15	3.56	1.27

Scale based upon: Very Unsatisfied (1-1.49), Unsatisfied (1.5-2.49), Neither Unsatisfied nor Satisfied (2.5-3.49), Satisfied (3.5-4.49), Very Satisfied (4.5-5).

Table 2: A comparison of landowner satisfaction with frequency and amount of time spent granting permission to hunters.

Frequency and Duration of Landowner-Hunter Interactions	Permission Type					Geographic Region				
	Type 1		Type 2		P value	Eastern Montana		Western Montana		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P value
0 – few times per month	4.18	1.03	3.80	1.30	0.44	4.13	1.04	4.17	1.09	0.91
1 – few times per week	3.64	0.72	4.12	0.84	0.009*	4.14	0.78	3.42	0.70	<0.001*
Daily	3.77	1.09	4.05	1.09	0.14	4.05	1.06	3.66	1.14	0.05*
< 5 minutes per interaction	4.13	1.15	4.47	0.74	0.29	4.40	1.05	3.89	1.10	0.03*
5 – 15 minutes per interaction	3.49	1.07	3.78	1.03	0.10	3.78	1.03	3.40	1.07	0.05*
> 15 minutes per interaction	3.45	1.57	3.60	1.16	0.75	3.97	1.05	2.58	1.24	<0.001*

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

Scale based upon: Very Unsatisfied (1-1.49), Unsatisfied (1.5-2.49), Neither Unsatisfied nor Satisfied (2.5-3.49), Satisfied (3.5-4.49), Very Satisfied (4.5-5).

A large majority of hunters indicated preference for Type 1 (71%) BMAs. Many hunters provided additional comments regarding Type 1 and Type 2 BMAs and are detailed in Appendix J. Hunters indicated they often expected to gain permission, and they always gained permission to hunt. They were also very satisfied with the method used to obtain permission to hunt the BMA. Hunters expected to get permission on Type 1 BMAs more than they did on Type 2 BMAs, ($t = 2.51$), they gained permission to Type 1 BMAs more than they did on Type 2 BMAs, ($t = 2.44$), and they reported higher satisfaction levels with the methods used to obtain permission on Type 1 BMAs ($t = 2.81$), (Table 3).

Table 3: A comparison between Type 1 and Type 2 BMAs and hunters regarding gaining permission on BMAs.

	Type 1		Type 2		P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Expectation to gain permission ¹	4.48	0.99	4.32	0.99	0.01*
Success at gaining permission ¹	4.71	0.79	4.58	0.86	0.02*
Satisfaction with permission method ²	4.72	0.72	4.58	0.85	0.01*

*Significant at $p < .05$

¹Scale based upon: Never (1-1.49), Seldom (1.5-2.49), Neither Seldom nor Often (2.5-3.49), Often (3.5-4.49), Always (4.5-5).

²Scale based upon: Very Unsatisfied (1-1.49), Unsatisfied (1.5-2.49), Neither Unsatisfied nor Satisfied (2.5-3.49), Satisfied (3.5-4.49), Very Satisfied (4.5-5).

Hunter Number Rules

Twenty-nine percent of landowners responded they limit numbers of hunters. Regardless of choice to limit or not limit numbers of hunters, landowners reported that it was easier to manage hunters. However, landowners that limit hunter numbers (Mean = 4.25, SD = 0.87) had higher satisfaction ratings than landowners that did not limit hunter

numbers, (Mean = 3.91, SD = 1.05), ($t = 2.67$, $P = 0.01$).

Hunters indicated that BMAs having hunter number limits made those ranches more desirable (Mean = 3.93, SD = 1.09) to hunt. Hunters responded that it made no difference (Mean = 3.17, SD = 1.08) in their desire to hunt BMAs when hunter numbers were not limited. Hunters knowing hunter numbers were limited indicated their choices to hunt Type 2 BMAs (Mean = 4.06, SD = 1.07) were more desirable than those choosing to hunt Type 1 BMAs (Mean = 3.77, SD = 1.11), ($t = -2.62$, $P = 0.01$). Respondents knowing that hunter numbers were not limited found Type 2 BMAs (Mean = 2.97, SD = 0.96) to be less desirable than Type 1 BMAs (Mean = 3.34, SD = 1.16), ($t = 2.15$, $P = 0.03$).

Vehicle Travel Rules

Landowners can also specify rules for their BMA to help with vehicular travel management. Forty-five percent of landowners responded they limit travel to walk-in only, 48% had limited vehicle use, and only 7% had no vehicle restrictions on their BMA. Two travel management strategies decreased problems associated with vehicles on BMAs, with the largest decrease found on BMAs having walk-in only policies (Mean = 4.46, SD = 0.79), followed by BMAs having limited vehicle use (Mean = 3.84, SD = 0.94). BMAs having no travel management restrictions (Mean = 3.40, SD = 1.23) neither increased nor decreased problems.

Eighty-four percent of hunters knew what types of travel management restrictions were in place on the BMA hunted. Knowledge about whether travel restrictions were in place also made BMAs more desirable to hunt (Mean = 4.09, SD = 1.04). Those not knowing responded it made no difference (Mean = 3.05, SD = 0.91) in their desire to

hunt the BMA. Almost all reported they encountered some type of vehicle restriction, with 48% encountering vehicle restriction rules, and 45% encountering walk-in only rules. Only 7% reported no vehicle restrictions. Regardless of what type of travel restriction encountered, hunters were satisfied with the travel management rules utilized on their BMA (Table 4). However, hunters reported higher rates of satisfaction on Type 2 BMAs (Mean = 4.44, SD = 0.84) than on Type 1 BMAs (Mean = 4.22, SD = 0.95) where limited vehicle use restrictions were utilized ($t = -2.65$, $P = 0.01$).

Table 4: Satisfaction with travel restrictions encountered by hunters on BMAs.

Category	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Walk-in only	4.28	1.14
Vehicle use restricted	4.34	0.90
No vehicle restrictions	4.08	1.26

Scale based upon: Very Unsatisfied (1-1.49), Unsatisfied (1.5-2.49), Neither Unsatisfied nor Satisfied (2.5-3.49), Satisfied (3.5-4.49), Very Satisfied (4.5-5).

Hunter Behavior

To the best of their knowledge, landowners believed the majority of violations occurred because hunters made honest mistakes or miss-interpreted BMA rules (58%). Intentional violations occurred 31% of the time, and only 11% of violations occurred because hunters did not know the rules. Comparisons between Type 1 and Type 2 landowners and between Eastern and Western Montana landowners showed this same trend, but there were notable differences between Eastern and Western landowners. Western landowners (17%) reported hunters didn't know the rules twice as often as Eastern landowners (8%), and over one-third (37%) of violations occurring were intentional compared to slightly more than one-fourth (28%) in Eastern Montana.

However, almost two-thirds (64%) of Eastern Montana landowners compared to less than half (47%) of Western Montana landowners reported hunters made honest mistakes or miss-interpreted rules.

Landowners indicated that hunters seldom fail to follow rules and that numbers of violations had decreased significantly since their ranch was enrolled in the program, ($t = -6.67$). Eastern Montana landowners saw a greater decrease in hunter violations than Western Montana landowners, ($t = 3.76$). Type 2 landowners reported that intentional hunter violations occur less often than Type 1 landowners, ($t = 2.44$), (Table 5).

The majority of violations involved vehicle travel rules (64%). Hunting without permission (41%) and littering (27%) continued to be problems. Hunting violations (12%), violations of specific BMA rules (11%), and “Other” violations (12%) (See Appendix G for written comments describing “Other”) occurred at more infrequent levels. Type 2 BMA landowners reported more hunting without permission violations than did Type 1 BMA landowners, ($t = 2.23$). Littering ($t = -2.11$) and hunting violations ($t = -2.43$) were greater on Western Montana BMAs than in Eastern Montana.

Table 5: A comparison of landowner satisfaction and frequency of hunter violations on their BMAs.

Frequency and Types of Violations	Permission Type					Geographic Location				
	Type 1		Type 2		P value	Eastern Montana		Western Montana		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P value
How often hunters fail to follow rules ¹	2.61	1.07	2.40	0.98	0.08	2.45	1.04	2.64	1.01	0.13
Change in violations since enrollment ²	2.13	1.08	1.99	0.97	0.26	1.90	0.99	2.38	1.06	<0.001*
How often hunters don't know rules ¹	2.89	0.83	2.33	0.98	0.11	2.67	1.05	2.67	0.82	1.00
How often hunters make honest mistakes or miss-interpret rules ¹	2.33	1.15	2.42	0.98	0.62	2.31	1.05	2.56	1.12	0.19
How often hunters intentionally violate rules ¹	2.98	0.80	2.46	1.07	0.02*	2.77	0.95	2.79	0.96	0.94
Hunting without permission violations ³	1.65	0.48	1.51	0.50	0.03*	1.56	0.50	1.64	0.48	0.23
Vehicle travel rule violations ³	1.36	0.48	1.35	0.48	0.90	1.36	0.48	1.35	0.48	0.95
Specific BMA rule violations ³	1.91	0.28	1.86	0.35	0.15	1.91	0.28	1.84	0.37	0.08
Hunting violations ³	1.87	0.34	1.89	0.31	0.55	1.91	0.28	1.81	0.39	0.02*
Littering violations ³	1.72	0.45	1.75	0.44	0.61	1.77	0.42	1.66	0.48	0.04*
Other violations ³	1.89	0.34	1.88	0.32	0.91	1.88	0.32	1.89	0.35	0.96

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

¹Scale based upon: Never (1-1.49), Seldom (1.5-2.49), Neither Seldom nor Often (2.5-3.49), Often (3.5-4.49), Always (4.5-5).

²Scale based upon: Decreased Problems (1-1.49), Somewhat Decreased Problems (1.5-2.49), Neither Increased or Decreased Problems (2.5-3.49), Somewhat Increased Problems (3.5-4.49), Increased Problems (4.5-5).

³Scale based upon: Yes (1), No (2).

Hunting Pressure on BMAs

Landowners rated their hunter use to be moderately heavy (Mean = 3.70, SD = 1.00) before they enrolled in block management, and continued to be moderately heavy use (Mean = 4.07, SD = 0.76) although higher, ($t = -5.76$, $P = < 0.001$) since program enrollment. Before enrollment, Type 2 landowners had lower levels of hunting pressure (Mean = 3.56, SD = 1.08) than Type 1 landowners (Mean = 3.81, SD = 0.92), ($t = 2.13$, $P = 0.03$), but both types had almost identical amounts of use since enrollment. Regardless of BMA type or geographic location, landowners responded that they received about the right amount of hunter use (Mean = 3.33, SD = 0.72). This rating is nearly identical with expected levels of hunter use (Mean = 3.32, SD = 0.72). However, landowners in Eastern Montana received more use than expected (Mean = 3.39, SD = 0.75), compared to those in Western Montana (M = 3.21, SD = 0.79), ($t = -2.01$, $P = 0.05$). Landowners were satisfied with amount of hunter use, but Eastern Montana landowners (Mean = 3.93, SD = 0.95) had higher ratings with amount of hunter use than Western Montana landowners (M = 3.69, SD = 0.99), ($t = -2.08$, $P = 0.04$).

Eighty percent of hunters responded they spent < 7 days hunting their BMA. Thirteen percent spent 7 to 12 days, and 7% spent > 12 days. Hunters in the Western portion of the state hunted longer on BMAs than hunters in Eastern Montana ($t = 3.62$), (Table 6). When compared to how many days hunters had planned to hunt, the majority (70%) indicated they spent the same amount of days as planned, followed by those who spent less days than planned (21%), and those who spent more days than planned (9%). Explanations from hunters who spent more or less days than planned are listed in

Appendix K. Those who indicated they hunted fewer days than planned hunted 3.05 days, those who hunted the same amount of days as planned hunted 5.45 days, and those who hunted more days than planned hunted 6.64 days. However, hunters reporting they had hunted the same amount of days as planned, hunted more days in Western Montana ($t = 2.51$). Hunters reporting they hunted more days than planned hunted more days in Eastern Montana ($t = 4.05$), (Table 6). It is interesting to note that hunters reporting they hunted more days than planned actually hunted fewer days than those who reported hunting the same number of days as planned.

Table 6: Days hunted on BMAs by Eastern and Western Montana hunter respondents.

	Eastern Montana		Western Montana		P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Days hunted on BMA	4.43	5.13	5.73	5.8	< 0.001*
Days hunted compared to days expected to hunt BMA ¹	1.90	0.52	1.87	0.57	0.49
Days hunted when less than planned	2.69	2.45	3.38	3.22	0.09
Days hunted when the same as planned	4.93	5.73	6.11	6.18	0.01*
Days hunted when more than planned	4.29	3.17	4.05	6.48	< 0.001*

¹Scale based upon: Less (1-1.49), Same (1.5-2.49), More (2.5-3).

The majority of hunters (57%) saw < 4 hunters, 26% saw 4 to 9 hunters, 10% of respondents saw 10 to 15 hunters, and another 7.0% saw > 15 hunters. It is notable that 30% of respondents reported encountering no other hunters. Overall, hunters reported seeing an average of 5.73 hunters. Hunters on Type 1 BMAs (Mean = 7.07, SD = 19.28) saw more hunters than hunters on Type 2 BMAs (Mean = 4.56, SD = 6.99), ($t = 2.63$, $P = 0.009$), and hunters on Western Montana BMAs (Mean = 6.85, SD = 11.90) saw more

hunters than those who hunted on Eastern Montana BMAs (Mean = 4.80, SD = 15.70), ($t = 2.15$, $P = 0.03$). In general, hunters saw about the same number of hunters as expected. However, hunters from Eastern Montana BMAs (Mean = 2.72, SD = 1.13) saw fewer hunters than expected than hunters from Western BMAs (Mean = 2.98, SD = 1.13), ($t = 3.65$, $P < 0.001$). When comparing numbers encountered with numbers hunters expected to see, hunters indicating they saw fewer hunters than expected saw < 3 hunters, those seeing as many hunters as expected encountered up to 7 hunters, and those who encountered more hunters than expected saw > 9 hunters. When hunters reported seeing as many hunters as expected, nearly twice as many other hunters were seen on Type 1 BMAs as were seen on Type 2 BMAs ($t = 1.98$), (Table 7).

Hunter numbers encountered had no effect on hunting experiences, as hunters indicated it neither detracted nor enhanced their hunt. However, Eastern Montana hunter responses (Mean = 3.18, SD = 1.13) were more positive than Western Montana hunter responses (Mean = 2.91, SD = 1.20), ($t = -3.63$, $P < 0.001$). Overall, respondents indicated they were satisfied with numbers of other hunters encountered. Hunters that were satisfied or very satisfied with numbers of other hunters seen encountered < 5 hunters, those reporting neutral satisfaction ratings saw 8 other hunters, and those that were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with numbers of other hunters seen reported seeing > 10 hunters. Type 2 BMA hunters (Mean = 3.60, SD = 1.29) were more satisfied with numbers of other hunters encountered than Type 1 BMA hunters (Mean = 3.39, SD = 1.28), ($t = -2.53$, $P = 0.01$), and Eastern Montana hunters (Mean = 3.66, SD = 1.29) were more satisfied with numbers of other hunters encountered than hunters from Western

Montana (Mean = 3.32, SD = 1.27), ($t = -4.10$, $P = < 0.001$). However, when comparing satisfaction and numbers of hunters seen, hunters satisfied with hunters encountered tolerated more hunters in the West than in the East ($t = 2.11$), (Table 8).

Table 7: A comparison of hunter expectations and satisfaction levels regarding hunter numbers seen by permission type.

Numbers of Other Hunters Seen	Type 1		Type 2		P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Much less than expected	1.48	2.56	1.82	3.32	0.49
Less than expected	2.89	3.23	2.20	5.15	0.36
Same as expected	8.33	24.27	4.95	6.91	0.05*
More than expected	11.43	19.34	7.25	8.21	0.15
Much more than expected	15.16	22.12	10.08	9.99	0.22
Very Unsatisfied	8.58	14.33	10.68	9.47	0.49
Unsatisfied	12.09	12.19	10.02	10.15	0.38
Neither Satisfied nor Unsatisfied	10.05	28.07	5.66	7.52	0.09
Satisfied	5.35	6.94	3.91	3.69	0.14
Very Satisfied	2.57	9.42	1.44	2.73	0.13

*Significant at $p < .05$

Table 8: A comparison of hunter expectations and satisfaction levels regarding hunter numbers seen by geographic location.

Numbers of Other Hunters Seen	Eastern Montana		Western Montana		P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Much less than expected	1.31	2.17	2.23	3.91	0.07
Less than expected	2.58	5.10	2.42	2.85	0.84
Same as expected	5.47	20.89	7.61	12.55	0.21
More than expected	6.74	8.11	11.69	18.78	0.09
Much more than expected	15.6	23.15	9.86	8.36	0.17
Very Unsatisfied	8.83	9.61	10.30	14.65	0.63
Unsatisfied	9.84	10.50	11.62	11.36	0.44
Neither Satisfied nor Unsatisfied	7.57	27.86	8.42	13.50	0.75
Satisfied	3.73	3.75	5.76	7.13	0.04*
Very Satisfied	1.56	3.04	2.47	9.70	0.24

*Significant at $p < .05$

Relative Game Abundance

According to landowners, deer were the most common game seen (86%), antelope and upland birds occurred on 44% of BMAs, followed by pheasants (39%), elk (32%), and waterfowl (20%). Big game, including elk, deer, and antelope, occurred on 89% BMAs, and birds, including pheasants, upland birds, and waterfowl, occurred on 59% BMAs. Seventy-two percent of hunters indicated they preferred hunting deer, 51% indicated antelope, and 51% indicated elk. Pheasants (41%) were preferred slightly over upland birds (40%), followed by waterfowl (13%) preference. However, when asked what game species hunters primarily hunted on their BMA, responses were lower in each category. Deer (44%) were the most common species hunted, followed by elk (30%) and antelope (20%). Upland birds accounted for 18%, pheasants accounted for 15%, and waterfowl accounted for only 1% of the game hunted. Many differences were found when comparing BMA types (Table 9) and comparing geographic locations (Table 10). The majority of all hunting on BMAs in Western Montana was for elk ($t = -25.30$) whereas antelope ($t = 9.38$), pheasants ($t = 10.11$), and upland game birds other than pheasants ($t = 6.01$), were primarily hunted on BMAs in Eastern Montana. Elk ($t = -6.79$), pheasants ($t = -6.13$), and upland game birds other than pheasants ($t = -2.02$), were hunted more often on Type 1 BMAs than on Type 2 BMAs, and more deer hunting occurred on Type 2 BMAs than on Type 1 BMAs ($t = 3.74$).

Table 9: A comparison of hunter responses regarding game most commonly hunted on Type 1 and Type 2 BMAs.

Game Species Hunted	Type 1		Type 2		P value
	Mean ¹	SD	Mean ¹	SD	
Elk	1.60	0.49	1.80	0.40	< 0.001*
Deer	1.62	0.49	1.50	0.50	< 0.001*
Antelope	1.91	0.28	1.69	0.46	< 0.001*
Pheasants	1.78	0.42	1.91	0.28	< 0.001*
Upland Game Birds	1.80	0.40	1.85	0.36	0.04*
Waterfowl	1.99	0.12	1.99	0.09	0.32

*Significant at $p < .05$

¹Scale: (1) = Yes, (2) = No.

Table 10: A comparison of hunter responses regarding game most commonly hunted on Eastern and Western Montana BMAs.

Game Species Hunted	Eastern Montana		Western Montana		P value
	Mean ¹	SD	Mean ¹	SD	
Elk	1.97	0.16	1.39	0.49	< 0.001*
Deer	1.54	0.49	1.58	0.49	0.18
Antelope	1.69	0.46	1.92	0.27	< 0.001*
Pheasants	1.74	0.44	1.97	0.18	< 0.001*
Upland Game Birds	1.76	0.43	1.90	0.30	< 0.001*
Waterfowl	2.00	0.04	1.98	0.15	0.003*

*Significant at $p < .05$

¹Scale: (1) = Yes, (2) = No.

When asked how they would rate relative abundance of game animals on their properties before enrolling in block management, landowners indicated that game numbers were abundant (Mean = 3.91, SD = 0.80). Since enrollment, relative abundance of game remained abundant, though slightly lower than before enrollment (Mean = 3.77, SD = 0.85). Relative abundance of game dropped lower (Mean = 3.72, SD = 0.92) on Western Montana BMAs than before enrollment (Mean = 3.92, SD = 0.81), although it was still rated abundant, ($t = -2.42$, $P = 0.02$). Overall, satisfaction levels of current game abundance were neutral (Mean = 3.40, SD = 1.11). However, Eastern Montana

landowners were more satisfied (Mean = 3.68, SD = 1.02), than Western Montana (Mean = 2.89, SD = 1.08), ($t = -6.26$, $P = < 0.001$).

Overall, hunters found abundance levels of game species hunted to be moderate (Mean = 2.89, SD = 1.32), which was very similar to the amount of game animals they expected to see (Mean = 2.82, SD = 1.17). The number of game animals seen neither detracted nor enhanced their hunt (Mean = 3.07, SD = 1.34), and hunters indicated they were neither unsatisfied nor satisfied (Mean = 3.17, SD = 1.40) with the amount of game animals encountered. However, respondents from Eastern Montana BMAs reported higher abundance levels of game species hunted than hunters from Western Montana BMAs ($t = -6.96$), and Western Montana hunters saw less game than expected whereas Eastern Montana hunters observed game numbers as expected ($t = -4.07$). Accordingly, numbers of game seen by Eastern Montana hunters had greater positive effects on their hunt than did numbers of game seen by Western Montana hunters ($t = -4.84$). Satisfaction ratings regarding amount of game seen among Eastern Montana hunters was higher than satisfaction ratings among Western Montana hunters ($t = -5.77$), (Table 11).

Table 11: A comparison of hunter perceptions regarding game species hunted on Western and Eastern Montana BMAs.

Game Species Seen	Eastern Montana		Western Montana		P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Abundance level of game species hunted ¹	3.16	1.27	2.58	1.31	< 0.001*
How numbers compared with expectations ²	2.97	1.12	2.66	1.20	< 0.001*
How game numbers affected hunting experience ³	3.27	1.28	2.85	1.38	< 0.001*
Satisfaction with game numbers encountered ⁴	3.42	1.35	2.90	1.41	< 0.001*

*Significant at $p < .05$

¹Scale based upon: Very Low (1-1.49), Low (1.5-2.49), Moderate (2.5-3.49), High (3.5-4.49), Very High (4.5-5).

²Scale based upon: Much Less (1-1.49), Less (1.5-2.49), The Same (2.5-3.49), More (3.5-4.49), Much More (4.5-5).

³Scale based upon: Detracted (1-1.49), Somewhat Detracted (1.5-2.49), Neither Detracted nor Enhanced (2.5-3.49), Somewhat Enhanced (3.5-4.49), Enhanced (4.5-5).

⁴Scale based upon: Very Unsatisfied (1-1.49), Unsatisfied (1.5-2.49), Neither Unsatisfied nor Satisfied (2.5-3.49), Satisfied (3.5-4.49), Very Satisfied (4.5-5)

Harvest Success

Overall, 34% of big game hunters experienced harvest success, with 20% harvesting bull elk or buck deer, and 14% harvesting antlerless elk or deer. In Western Montana, 23% of big game hunters harvested big game compared to 44% in Eastern Montana. Hunters were more successful in harvesting antlerless game on Eastern Montana BMAs (17%) and Type 2 BMAs (17%) than on BMAs in Western Montana (11%) and on Type 1 BMAs (13%), and were twice as successful in harvesting antlered game on Eastern Montana BMAs (28%) and Type 2 BMAs (25%) than on BMAs in Western Montana (12%) and on Type 1 BMAs (13%).

For bird hunters, 50% of the hunters experienced harvest success. Thirty-nine percent of the hunters harvested 1 or more birds but bagged less than their limit, and 12%

harvested their limit. In Western Montana, 29% of bird hunters harvested birds compared to 64% in Eastern Montana. Twenty-seven percent of hunters in Western Montana harvested 1 or more birds but less than their limit compared to 46% in Eastern Montana. Only 2% of Western Montana BMA hunters harvested their limit compared to 18% that limited out on BMAs in the eastern portion of the state.

When asked how their harvest success compared with harvest expectations, hunters indicated that success was slightly less than expected (Mean = 2.67, SD = 1.29). A difference was found between hunters on Eastern Montana BMAs (Mean = 2.99, SD = 1.27) whose harvest success met their expectations and hunters on Western Montana BMAs (Mean = 2.30, SD = 1.22), whose harvest success was less than their expectations, ($t = -8.47$, $P = < 0.001$). Differences were found when comparing BMA types also. Harvest success compared to harvest expectations on Type 2 BMAs (Mean = 2.80, SD = 1.45) were higher than on Type 1 BMAs (Mean = 2.55, SD = 1.44), ($t = -2.99$, $P = 0.003$). When asked how satisfied they were with harvest success, hunters indicated they were neither unsatisfied nor satisfied (Mean = 2.98, SD = 1.47) with harvest success on their BMA hunt. Hunters in Eastern Montana (Mean = 3.35, SD = 1.39) were more satisfied with their harvest success than Western Montana hunters (Mean = 2.55, SD = 1.44), ($t = -8.55$, $P = < 0.001$). Type 2 BMA hunters (Mean = 3.14, SD = 1.47) also reported higher satisfaction rates with harvest success than Type 1 BMA hunters (Mean = 2.80, SD = 1.45), ($t = -3.58$, $P = < 0.001$).

Hunters not harvesting big game were unsatisfied (Mean = 2.20, SD = 1.24) with harvest success. When no big game were harvested, hunter satisfaction rates were lower

on Type 1 BMAs than on Type 2 BMAs ($t = -2.57$), and were lower on Western Montana BMAs than on Eastern Montana BMAs ($t = -5.70$). Hunters harvesting antlered (Mean = 3.98, SD = 1.08) or antlerless (Mean = 3.74, SD = 1.28) big game were satisfied. Type 1 hunters reported higher satisfaction rates than Type 2 hunters when harvesting a bull or buck, ($t = 2.68$), (Table 12).

Hunters not harvesting birds were unsatisfied (Mean = 2.45, SD = 1.37). When hunters did not harvest birds, Type 2 bird hunters were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied but Type 1 bird hunters were unsatisfied, ($t = -2.31$). Eastern Montana hunters reported they were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied when failing to harvest birds, but Western Montana hunters reported they were unsatisfied, ($t = -2.25$). Hunters harvesting 1 or more birds (Mean = 3.46, SD = 1.19), or harvesting their limit (Mean = 4.58, SD = 0.82) were satisfied and very satisfied. A difference was found between Eastern Montana bird hunters who were very satisfied with harvesting their limit of birds, and Western Montana bird hunters who were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied when they harvested their limit, ($t = -2.862$), (Table 13).

Table 12: A comparison of hunter responses regarding harvest success and satisfaction on Type 1 and Type 2 BMAs.

Satisfaction	Type 1		Type 2		P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Big Game – Harvested none	2.07	1.17	2.35	1.31	0.01*
Big Game – Harvested Cow/calf or Doe/fawn	3.74	1.14	3.74	1.35	0.98
Big Game – Harvested Bull/Buck	4.33	0.83	3.83	1.14	0.008*
Big Game – Did not hunt	3.69	1.21	3.57	1.42	0.64
Birds – Harvested none	2.26	1.32	2.67	1.39	0.02*
Birds – Harvested 1 or more but less than limit	3.53	1.17	3.36	1.21	0.33
Birds – Harvested limit	4.74	0.51	4.38	1.06	0.10
Birds – Did not hunt	2.40	1.33	3.12	1.52	< 0.001*

*Significant at $p < .05$

²Scale based upon: Very Unsatisfied (1-1.49), Unsatisfied (1.5-2.49), Neither Unsatisfied nor Satisfied (2.5-3.49), Satisfied (3.5-4.49), Very Satisfied (4.5-5).

Table 13: A comparison of hunter responses regarding harvest success and satisfaction on Eastern and Western Montana BMAs.

Satisfaction	Eastern Montana		Western Montana		P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Big Game – Harvested none	2.58	1.35	1.94	1.09	< 0.001*
Big Game – Harvested Cow/calf or Doe/fawn	3.63	1.23	3.90	1.34	0.28
Big Game – Harvested Bull/Buck	3.94	1.10	4.06	1.04	0.52
Big Game – Did not hunt	3.73	1.30	3.35	1.13	0.17
Birds – Harvested none	2.67	1.32	2.27	1.39	0.03*
Birds – Harvested 1 or more but less than limit	3.41	1.21	3.61	1.12	0.30
Birds – Harvested limit	4.65	0.68	3.33	2.08	0.006*
Birds – Did not hunt	3.28	1.44	2.45	1.42	< 0.001*

*Significant at $p < .05$

²Scale based upon: Very Unsatisfied (1-1.49), Unsatisfied (1.5-2.49), Neither Unsatisfied nor Satisfied (2.5-3.49), Satisfied (3.5-4.49), Very Satisfied (4.5-5).

When asked how the number of game animals harvested compared with harvest expectations, landowners indicated that harvest rates were what they expected (Mean = 2.99, SD = 0.81), and they were neither unsatisfied nor satisfied (Mean = 3.18, SD = 0.96) with the typical game harvest on their BMA. Harvest levels of game were lower than expectations with Western Montana landowners (Mean = 2.67, SD = 0.82) compared to Eastern Montana landowners (Mean = 3.17, SD = 0.76), ($t = -5.28$, $P < 0.001$). Though both geographic regions rated levels of satisfaction as neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, Eastern Montana landowners (Mean = 3.33, SD = 0.94) rated satisfaction levels higher than Western Montana landowners (Mean = 2.93, SD = 0.96), ($t = -3.40$, $P = < 0.001$).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate observations, expectations, and satisfaction levels of landowners enrolled in Montana's Block Management Program, and by hunters that hunt on their farms and ranches. In addition, this study determined levels of program success regarding permission methods and hunting activity restrictions used on BMAs, as well as hunting pressure, relative game abundance, and harvest success rates by hunters on BMAs. This study found the Block Management Program generally meets the needs and expectations of participating landowners, hunters, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, but also identified areas where the program could be improved. This study did not include previous program landowners and hunters, who have chosen to no longer use the program, and therefore was unable to identify potential program shortcomings which caused these past users to no longer participate. Therefore, inferences from this study are limited to landowners and hunters who chose to use the program during the time this study was conducted.

Landowners participate in cooperative access programs mainly to have help managing hunter access issues (Messmer et. al.1998). This study demonstrates that permission methods used by the Block Management Program reduces hunter access management issues for landowners. Landowners are satisfied regardless of how they grant permission and manage hunters on their BMAs, and hunters have very high success rates gaining access to, and are very satisfied with gaining access to BMAs. Hansen and Marshall (1996) reported that hunters find private lands to be more desirable, but indicated they are frustrated with the difficulty of obtaining permission to hunt private land. This study

demonstrates the Block Management Program appears to be alleviating this issue, as hunters using BMAs are reporting desired levels of access to the private lands enrolled in the program.

Many landowners choose to limit hunting access to their property to ensure quality hunting on their farms and ranches (Hansen and Winchell 1999), and this study also found hunter number limitations to be important to block management landowners and hunters. However, landowners report that managing hunters is easier, and they are satisfied with methods used to manage hunting access, regardless if they choose to limit, or not limit hunter numbers on their BMA. Hunters also report that BMAs are more desirable to hunt when hunter limits are in place, and this study found that when hunters go through the extra effort to gain permission from a landowner in person, they prefer to have relatively exclusive hunting privileges. However, if they will be hunting on a BMA without any restrictions on hunter numbers, they would rather not have to contact a landowner. High satisfaction ratings reported by hunters regarding hunter limit rules on both types of BMAs suggest that hunters are educated about hunter limit rules utilized on specific BMAs, and are thus targeting BMAs that utilize hunter limit rules that meet their preference.

Landowners, hunters, and wildlife managers agree that one of the greatest problems associated with allowing public access on private lands is road hunting, or improper use of vehicles (Elliot 1991, Swensson and Knight 1998, Benson 2001). The Block Management Program is effective in addressing such vehicular problems. Landowners report that the walk-in only rule has the greatest effect for decreasing travel problems on BMAs, and landowners are very satisfied with the strategy. Limited vehicle use rules also help

decrease travel problems on BMAs, and landowners also report being satisfied with this strategy. Vehicle rules are also important to hunters. Eighty-four percent of hunters are aware what types of vehicle rules are in place on BMAs they hunt. Those knowing what vehicle restrictions are in place find a BMA much more desirable to hunt, and are much more satisfied with travel restrictions encountered than hunters not knowing what restrictions are in place. These satisfaction ratings indicate they target BMAs with vehicle rules of their preference.

The main reason why the supply of private lands is being reduced to public hunting is declining relationships between landowners and hunters, particularly caused by hunter behavior. Studies have shown that trespass, road hunting, and littering are consistently among the most common violations occurring on private lands (Wright and Kaiser 1986, Elliot 1991, Hansen and Winchell 1999). BMA landowners report violations consistent with these studies, as vehicle rules, hunting without permission, and littering violations were rated as most common. Elliot (1991) and Hansen and Marshall (1996) found that significant factors causing hunting violations are that game laws do not make sense to hunters or they do not consider them to be “real laws.” Therefore, better education measures need to take place to help hunters understand game laws and respect landowners. According to Elliot (1991), the 3 most common reasons hunting violations occur are ignorance, frustration, and willful defiance. In this study, landowners report hunter violations have decreased on their property since enrolling into block management, and violations now occur seldom. This suggests that hunters using BMAs have improved awareness for BMA rules and regulations, and therefore are less likely to violate them.

Increased enforcement and consistent prosecution of offenders are also ways to deter unethical behavior (Hansen and Winchell 1996). Bromley et. al. (1989) suggests that if hunters know they may be under observation, they may not behave normally, and Hansen and Marshall (1996) reported that a major influence persuading hunters to behave ethically is the fear of getting caught. This suggests that another possibility for decreased violations is FWP enforcement presence on BMAs, as game wardens frequent BMAs and block management patrollers maintain and patrol specific BMAs.

In general, landowners that allow public access on their properties believe they allow the maximum number of hunters they can support on their land (Hansen and Winchell 1999). Landowners from this study reported they typically received moderately heavy use on their properties before enrolling into block management, and hunting pressure on their land increased significantly after enrolling in the program. Despite this increase in hunting activity, landowners were satisfied with the number of hunters access their property annually. This suggests landowner tolerance for hunters increases when they become involved with cooperative access programs with wildlife agencies, such as block management. This also suggests that block management has the ability to offset impacts hunters have on landowners, by providing tangible benefits landowners need to deal with the problems associated with allowing public access.

A common perception of hunters is that increased numbers of hunters and inter-hunting party contacts always has negative influences on hunting quality (Herberlein and Kuentzel 2002). Contrary to these perceptions, this study demonstrates that although BMA hunters encountered significantly more hunters on Type 1 BMAs and BMAs in Western Montana,

hunters report encountering as many hunters as expected, and numbers of other hunters encountered do not enhance or detract from their hunt. However, hunters encountering fewer hunters report higher satisfaction levels regarding hunter density. Herberlein and Kuentzel (2002) found satisfaction levels to increase or decrease as hunter density increases, depending on hunter motives. If hunters desired an aesthetic hunting experience, satisfaction increased as hunter density decreased to low levels. However, if hunters desired to harvest game, satisfaction increased as hunter density increased to moderate levels because game animals were pushed around. Consistent with Herberlein and Kuentzel's findings, this study suggests BMA hunters desire an aesthetic hunting experience with minimal encounters with other hunters, as hunters using BMAs with hunter limits or lower hunter density levels report highest satisfaction levels regarding hunter density on these ranches.

Landowners receive many non-economic benefits from having wildlife on their property, including enjoyment of watching big game animals, aesthetics of sharing their land with wildlife, as well as the opportunity to hunt. However, when wildlife numbers become excessive, the ensuing impacts on their agricultural business reduce profitability (Lacey et. al. 1993, Conover 1994). When landowners are exposed to high big game populations, their tolerance for wildlife becomes much less than landowners who have only been exposed to low big game populations (Lacey et. al. 1993). Therefore, it is important that wildlife populations be maintained at densities that do not significantly impair a landowner's income (Craven et. al.1992). Block management landowners report the amounts of game on their properties were abundant before they enrolled in the program,

and although they continue to have abundant game populations on their lands, relative abundance has diminished in Western Montana. It is possible the reported decrease could be related to the recent widespread drought in this part of the state. Like the majority of Montana landowners who state that big game abundance is near optimal (Irby et. al. 1997, Saltiel and Irby 1998), block management landowners report neutral and satisfied ratings with current levels of relative game abundance on their ranches. This suggests that wildlife populations are managed at near optimal levels, and that Eastern Montana landowners tolerate abundant levels of wildlife on their ranches. This also suggests that wildlife populations are being managed within tolerance levels of BMA landowners, which is significant because landowner perceptions about the effects wildlife have on private property are important, because they influence their attitudes towards wildlife (Conover 1994, 1998).

Observing, shooting, and harvesting game increase hunter satisfaction ratings, yet having abundant game does not ensure that hunters will observe, shoot, and harvest game (Herberlein and Kuentzel 2002). Although they encountered different amounts of game, satisfaction levels with game numbers encountered by BMA hunters from both geographic locations were similar. However, on BMAs where harvest rates met hunter expectations, satisfaction was higher than on BMAs where harvest rates were less than expected. As Messmer et. al. (1998) found, these findings suggest that in general, hunter satisfaction on BMAs is driven by harvest success. However, other factors effecting hunter satisfaction, termed the “multiple satisfaction approach,” consider hunter motives (Hansen and Marshall 1996, Herberlein and Kuentzel 2002). Motives include being outdoors, seeing game in a

natural setting, solitude, or socializing, and importance of harvest success is rated very low (Brooks 1992, Gigliotti 2003). This study demonstrates that satisfaction ranges with harvest success between BMA hunters who did not harvest game and those that did, is more extreme for Type 1 than for Type 2 BMAs, and is more extreme for Western Montana than for Eastern Montana BMAs. This suggests that Type 1 BMA hunters are more harvest success driven, whereas the “multiple satisfaction approach” seems to play into effect with Type 2 BMA hunters, as Type 2 BMAs typically limit hunter numbers and receive less hunting pressure, and therefore may provide an additional aesthetic atmosphere. This also suggests that Western Montana hunters are more harvest success driven, whereas the “multiple satisfaction approach” seems to play into effect with hunters on Eastern Montana BMAs, as many birds are hunted on Eastern Montana BMAs, and as Brooks (1992) reported, the most important reasons for bird hunting in Montana were related to being outdoors, and importance of harvest success was rated very low. For hunters, the emphasis on the kill or the “trophy” has created a common belief that harvest success and hunter satisfaction are equivalent. This study has shown that in fact, hunter success generally drives hunter satisfaction with BMA hunters. However, the “multiple satisfaction approach” seems to also play a role in hunter satisfaction.

Landowner attitudes towards their past experiences with hunters is related closely with their decisions to provide access. Landowners with positive experiences with hunters typically allow access to their ranches more often than landowners that have had negative experiences (Wright and Fesenmaier 1988). As demand for quality hunting opportunities on private lands have increased, the supply of available private property for public hunting

has decreased, having negative effects on hunter behavior. As a result, relationships between landowners and hunters have become strained, and the amount of private land open to hunting is decreasing. Landowners and hunters agree that better communication, consideration, and appreciation for each other could help solve landowner-hunter conflicts, which could result in increased quality and availability of hunting opportunities on private lands. However, landowners and hunters also believe that more involvement by state and federal agencies had no potential for improving landowner-hunter relations (Swennson and Knight 1998, Hansen and Winchell 1999).

Part of the Block Management Program's mission statement is to improve landowner-hunter relations, by promoting partnerships between landowners, hunters, and the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (Internal Review Committee 1998). While landowners reported having a positive relationship with FWP before becoming involved with block management, they indicated this relationship improved significantly as a result of their participation in the program. Landowners enrolled in block management reported their relationships with hunters also improved significantly from a relatively neutral attitude prior to program enrollment, to a positive one as a consequence of the program. This suggests that landowners and hunters have a better understanding and appreciation for each other, and hunter behavior improves when landowners enroll into block management. Contrary to Swennson and Knight's (1998) findings, it appears that state agency involvement has facilitated improvement regarding landowner-hunter conflicts.

Recommendations

When developing BMAs, FWP should continue to discuss characteristics associated with utilizing Type 1 and Type 2 permission methods and landowners should be encouraged to choose which option best fits their needs. Landowners should then be encouraged to set up their permission method strategies on their BMAs as to minimize frequency and length of time it takes to grant permission to hunters. Where appropriate, FWP should consider developing permission methods that grant permission to hunters on a weekly or even seasonal basis.

Hunters are targeting BMAs having hunter number limit rules and vehicle limit rules of their preference. FWP advertises limit rules for BMAs in hunter guides and on map rules. These practices should be continued so hunters can continue to seek out and target BMAs having limit rules of their preference. This study demonstrates that hunters prefer Type 2 BMAs when hunter number limits are in place, but their preference reverse towards Type 1 BMAs when hunter number limits are not in place. Landowners who choose Type 2 permission methods should be encouraged to set daily or weekly limits on hunter numbers. During this study, hunters commented several times about preferring to drive in a vehicle to some extent, and many voiced concerns about not being able to retrieve harvested game with a vehicle in walk-in only areas. Where appropriate, walk-in only BMAs should be reviewed to see if vehicular game retrieval options would be acceptable. When developing new BMAs, landowners should be encouraged to set forth some type of travel management plan, and be made aware that walk-in only strategies, even when game retrieval options are

included, decrease problems the most, and have highest satisfaction ratings among current landowners.

When landowners enroll into block management, they should expect hunter use to increase significantly, but on the other hand, they should expect hunter violations to decrease, especially on BMAs in Eastern Montana. Landowners believe most violations occur because hunters make honest mistakes or misinterpret BMA rules, but believe nearly a third of hunter violations are intentional. FWP should increase efforts to identify BMA boundaries, access trails, clarify BMA maps and rules, and provide refuse receptacles where appropriate, in an effort to diminish numbers of honest mistakes made by hunters. The overall decreased level of violations, along with the percentage of intentional violations reported by landowners indicates that FWP enforcement presence improves hunter behavior on BMAs. FWP should continue to patrol BMAs to keep current violations levels suppressed.

When enrolling into block management, landowners should be made aware that overall, hunters successfully harvest game as often as landowners expect. However, this study indicates there are two separate ideals driving hunters in the field, having harvest success and also having aesthetic hunting experiences. Hunters desiring aesthetic hunting experiences should be directed towards Type 2 BMAs that have hunter number limits.

Summary

Wildlife agencies interested in increasing public access to private lands need to coordinate and implement large-scale programs to open up or help maintain private lands, by fostering relationships between landowners and hunters concerned about impacts

associated with allowing public hunting. Such programs need strategies that recognize the wishes of landowners, and facilitate, rather than restrict landowner authority to regulate access on their lands (Hansen and Winchell 1999). As a result, wildlife on private lands can be managed, public access can be permitted, and good relations can be developed between landowners and hunters (Wigley and Melchior 1986). This in turn, can encourage appreciation of wildlife and also broad public use of wildlife, which can result in high degrees of public pride in, and awareness of wildlife resources (Swenson 1983).

The Block Management Program has opened land previously closed to public hunting, and is maintaining hunting access on private property. More than 1,200 landowners have enrolled 3.6 million hectares of land, and provide 400,000 hunter days of free public hunting annually. Currently, there are long waiting lists of landowners wanting to participate, creating the potential for even more success if additional resources are put into the program. Although 75% of BMA landowners allowed public hunting before enrollment, only 32% of BMA landowners would continue to allow public access if their land was not currently enrolled in the program. Landowners charging fees for access would increase from 1% to 21%, and the amount of landowners outfitting or leasing hunting rights would increase from 3% to 15%. It is possible these increases point to facilitation of fee hunting by the Block Management Program, even though the program is designed to promote free public hunting. However, as the literature points out, landowner tolerance towards hunter behavior and hunting pressure is a driving force for closing their lands to public hunting, and it appears the Block Management Program could be providing an avenue needed to bridge the intolerance that has been built up between landowners and

hunters. Overall, the program meets the needs and expectations of program users. It is important to landowners for managing hunter activities and wildlife on their properties, yet hunters using BMAs are reporting desired levels of access. It is effective in addressing hunter behavior problems that have strained relationships between landowners and hunters, and is significantly improving working relationships between Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, landowners, and hunters. The vast majority of block management landowners and hunters are very satisfied with the program, and as a result, 98% of landowners and 97% of hunters plan to continue using the Block Management Program in the future. Ultimately, the Block Management Program is providing the incentives needed to encourage landowners to allow public hunting, and is playing a critical role in developing and maintaining public access to private lands in Montana.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING SURVEY TO LANDOWNER
POPULATION

FWP Region: 2 3 6 7

Survey No. _____

RR1-4210
Glasgow, MT 59230
Kjohnsn@nemontel.net

February 17, 2004

Dear Block Management Landowner:

Montana State University in Bozeman (in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks) is conducting a research project to evaluate the Block Management Program.

This research project is assessing specific elements of FWP's current Block Management Program. It also hopes to identify strategies for improving and expanding the Block Management Program based on those surveyed. This assessment will include resident and non-resident hunters, and Block Management Cooperators such as yourself.

You have been selected to participate in this evaluation through a random selection process of Block Management Area users. A questionnaire has been enclosed in this packet and has been designed to take only 10 minutes of your time. **PLEASE NOTE: Earlier you may have already received another questionnaire from FWP related to the Block Management Program. THIS SURVEY IS VERY MUCH DIFFERENT FROM THAT SURVEY, and we would greatly appreciate your help in completing this survey as well.**

The questionnaire is completely voluntary, and your responses will remain completely anonymous. The information you provide as a block management landowner is very important as part of this analysis. Please complete the questionnaire and mail it back to us **as soon as possible.** A self-addressed stamped envelope has been included to aid you in this process.

If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact me at the address listed above, or call me at **406-228-3708**, and I will be happy to visit with you.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Kelvin Johnson
Graduate Research Assistant
Block Management Research Project

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING SURVEY TO HUNTER POPULATION

FWP Region: 2 3 6 7

Survey No. _____

RR1-4210
Glasgow, MT 59230
Kjohnsn@nemontel.net

March, 2004

Dear Block Management Hunter:

Montana State University in Bozeman (in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks) is conducting a research project to evaluate the Block Management Program.

This research project is assessing specific elements of FWP's current Block Management Program. It also hopes to identify strategies for improving and expanding its Block Management Program based on those surveyed. This assessment will include Block Management Cooperators and hunters such as yourself.

You have been selected to participate in this evaluation through a random selection process of Block Management Area hunters! A questionnaire has been enclosed in this packet and has been designed to take only 10 minutes of your time.

The questionnaire is completely voluntary, and your responses will remain completely anonymous. The information you provide as a block management hunter is very important as part of this analysis. Please complete the questionnaire and mail it back to us **as soon as possible**. A self-addressed stamped envelope has been included to aid you in this process.

If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact me at the address listed above, or call me at **406-228-3708**, and I will be happy to visit with you.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Kelvin Johnson
Graduate Research Assistant
Montana State University

APPENDIX C

SURVEY TO LANDOWNER POPULATION

BLOCK MANAGEMENT LANDOWNER SURVEY

The questions in this survey relate to your experience as a cooperator in the Block Management Program. Please fill in the blank or check which answer best describes your experience.

Questions 1 – 6 are about hunter management strategies you have utilized on your BMA.

1.) Do you limit hunter numbers on your BMA?

_____ Yes
_____ No

2.) How does this rule affect hunter management on your BMA?

Harder to Manage 1 2 3 4 5 Easier to Manage

3.) To what degree has this rule met your expectations/needs?

Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

4.) What kind of travel management strategy do you utilize on your BMA? Please check only one.

_____ Walk in only
_____ Vehicle use limited
_____ No vehicle restrictions

5.) How does this rule address vehicle management on your BMA?

Increased Problems 1 2 3 4 5 Decreased Problems

6.) To what degree has this rule met your expectations/needs?

Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

Questions 7 - 19 are about hunter activities on your BMA.

7.) Before you enrolled in Block Management, how much hunter use did you typically have on your property annually?

No Use 1 2 3 4 5 Heavy Use

8.) Since you enrolled in Block Management, how much hunter use do you typically have on your BMA annually?

No Use 1 2 3 4 5 Heavy Use

9.) How would you rate your current level of annual hunter use?

Too Few 1 2 3 4 5 Too Many

10.) How does the level of annual hunter use compare with what you expected?

Much Less 1 2 3 4 5 Much More

11.) How satisfied are you with your current level of annual hunter use?

Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

12.) How frequently do you grant permission to hunters?

_____ 0 to a few times per month
_____ 1 to a few times per week
_____ Daily

13.) How satisfied are you with the frequency with which you grant permission to hunters?

Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

14.) How much time do you spend when granting permission to a hunter/hunting party?

_____ Less than 5 minutes
_____ 6 – 15 minutes
_____ Greater than 15 minutes

15.) How satisfied are you with the amount of time it takes to grant permission to a hunter/hunting party?
Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

16.) How often do hunters fail to follow the BMA rules?
Never 1 2 3 4 5 Always

17.) To the best of your knowledge, what best describes why hunters fail to follow BMA rules?

- _____ Hunters don't know the rules
 _____ Hunters make an honest mistake or misinterpret the rules
 _____ Hunters intentionally violate the rules

18.) To the best of your knowledge, which types of rules are most commonly violated on your BMA? Check all that apply.

- _____ No permission
 _____ Vehicle travel rule
 _____ Specific BMA rule
 _____ Hunting violation
 _____ Littering
 _____ Other: _____

19.) To the best of your knowledge, do you think the number of violations have decreased or increased since you enrolled in Block Management?

Decreased 1 2 3 4 5 Increased

Questions 20 – 27 are about game management on your BMA.

20.) How would you rate the relative abundance of game animals on your property *before you enrolled* in Block Management?

Rare 1 2 3 4 5 Very Abundant

21.) How would you rate the relative abundance of game animals on your property *since you enrolled* in Block Management?

Rare 1 2 3 4 5 Very Abundant

22.) How satisfied are you with the current level of wildlife abundance on your BMA?

Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

23.) What kind of game animals do hunters typically hunt on your BMA?

- _____ Elk
 _____ Deer
 _____ Antelope
 _____ Pheasants
 _____ Upland Game Birds other than Pheasants
 _____ Waterfowl

24.) Which choice best describes the type of Big Game animals harvested by most hunters on your BMA?

- _____ None harvested
 _____ Cow/calf, Doe/fawn
 _____ Bull/Buck
 _____ Not Applicable

25.) Which choice best describes the amount of Birds per hunter harvested on your BMA?

- _____ None harvested
 _____ Harvested 1 or more but less than the limit
 _____ Harvested the limit
 _____ Not Applicable

26.) How does the number of game animals, or birds harvested compare with your harvest expectations?

Less than Expected 1 2 3 4 5 More than Expected

27.) How satisfied are you with the number of game animals, or birds harvested on your BMA?

Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

General Information: In order to more fully understand the needs of BMA cooperators, it is important to have a clear picture of who is using the program.

Please fill in the blank or check which answer best describes your experience.

Questions 28 – 33 are about your personal profile.

28.) Male ___ Female ___

29.) Age: _____

30.) Number of years you have owned or operated your land: _____

31.) Is your primary occupation farming or ranching your land? _____ Yes _____ No

32.) Which category best describes the primary land use of your property? _____ Farming _____ Ranching

33.) Game animals most commonly seen on your BMA: Elk Deer Antelope Pheasants Upland Game Birds Waterfowl

Questions 34 – 42 are about your experiences with the Block Management Program in general.

34.) How important were the following issues to you regarding your involvement in the Block Management Program?

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1. Hunter management issues | Not Important | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Very Important |
| 2. Game management issues | Not Important | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Very Important |
| 3. Method for granting permission | Not Important | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Very Important |

35.) How many years have you been enrolled in Block Management: _____

36.) What was the hunting access status of your property before you were enrolled in Block Management?

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| _____ Closed | _____ Open to family and friends |
| _____ Fee hunting | _____ Open to general public |
| _____ Outfitted/Leased | |

37.) What would be the hunting access status of your property if you were no longer enrolled in Block Management?

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| _____ Closed | _____ Open to family and friends |
| _____ Fee hunting | _____ Open to general public |
| _____ Outfitted/Leased | |

38.) What best describes your relationship with FWP before you enrolled in Block Management?

Negative 1 2 3 4 5 Positive

39.) How has your relationship with FWP changed since you've been involved with the program?

Worsened 1 2 3 4 5 Improved

40.) What best describes your relationship with hunters before you enrolled in Block Management?

Negative 1 2 3 4 5 Positive

41.) How has your relationship with hunters changed since you enrolled in Block Management?

Worsened 1 2 3 4 5 Improved

42.) Based on your experience with the Block Management Program, do you plan to continue to enroll your land in the program in the future?

- _____ Yes
 _____ No *explain:* _____

Other Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. I hope you found it to be interesting, and your responses are greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX D

SURVEY TO HUNTER POPULATION

BLOCK MANAGEMENT HUNTER SURVEY

During the 2003 hunting season, our data indicates that you hunted on the _____ BMA located _____ miles _____ of _____, Montana. The following questions in this survey relate to your experience hunting on that BMA. Please fill in the blank or check which answer best describes your experience.

Questions 1-5 are about how you obtained information and permission to the specific BMA.

- 1.) How did you obtain information about hunting this BMA?
 Hunted there before Drove by and stopped
 Contacted FWP Used regional hunting guide
 Other: _____
- 2.) When selecting this BMA, how often do you expect to gain permission to hunt?
 Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 Always
- 3.) How often are you successful in gaining permission to this BMA?
 Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 Always
- 4.) How satisfied were you with the method used to obtain permission to hunt this BMA?
 Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied
- 5.) How many miles did you travel from home to reach this BMA? _____

Questions 6-11 are about the kinds of BMA rules you encountered and how they affected your choice to hunt here.

- 6.) Did you know if hunter numbers were limited or not limited when you hunted this BMA?
 Yes
 No
 Didn't know *(If you checked this answer, skip to question #8.)*
- 7.) How did this rule affect your choice to hunt here?
 Less Desirable 1 2 3 4 5 More Desirable
- 8.) Did you know what type of travel management restrictions were used on this BMA?
 Yes
 No
 Didn't know *(If you checked this answer, skip to question #10.)*
- 9.) How did this rule affect your choice to hunt here?
 Less Desirable 1 2 3 4 5 More Desirable
- 10.) What kind of travel management restrictions did you encounter on this BMA?
 Walk in only
 Vehicle use restricted
 No vehicle restrictions
- 11.) How satisfied were you with the travel restrictions you encountered on this BMA?
 Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

Questions 12 – 27 are about your actual experience on the BMA compared to your expectations and how that affected your hunt.

- 12.) How many days did you hunt on this BMA? _____
- 13.) How did this compare with the amount of days you expected to hunt on this BMA?
 _____ Less than planned _____ Same as planned _____ More than planned
- 14.) If you spent more or less days than planned, explain why: _____

- 15.) How many other hunters (*not yourself or members of your party*) did you encounter while hunting this BMA?

- 16.) How did this compare with the amount of hunters you expected to see?
Much less 1 2 3 4 5 Much more
- 17.) How did hunter numbers you encountered affect your hunting experience?
Detracted 1 2 3 4 5 Enhanced
- 18.) How satisfied were you with the number of hunters you encountered?
Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied
- 19.) What was the abundance level of the game species you were hunting?
Very Low 1 2 3 4 5 Very High
- 20.) How did this compare with the amount of this game species you expected to see?
Much less 1 2 3 4 5 Much more
- 21.) How did the number of game animals you encountered affect your hunt?
Detracted 1 2 3 4 5 Enhanced
- 22.) How satisfied were you with the number of game animals you encountered?
Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied
- 23.) What kind of game species did you primarily hunt on this BMA? Please check one.
 _____ Elk _____ Pheasants
 _____ Deer _____ Upland Game Birds other than Pheasants
 _____ Antelope _____ Waterfowl
- 24.) What best describes your harvest success of a Big Game animal on this BMA?
 _____ Harvested None
 _____ Harvested a Cow/calf or Doe/fawn
 _____ Harvested a Bull/Buck
 _____ Did not hunt Big Game
- 25.) What best describes your harvest success of Birds on this BMA?
 _____ Harvested None
 _____ Harvested 1 or more but less than my limit
 _____ Harvested my limit
 _____ Did not hunt Birds
- 26.) How did your harvest success meet your expectations?
Less Than Expected 1 2 3 4 5 Greater Than Expected
- 27.) How satisfied were you with your harvest success?
Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 Very Satisfied

General Information: In order to more fully understand the needs of BMA users, it is important to have a clear picture of who is using the program.

Please fill in the blank or check which answer best describes your experience.

Questions 28– 32 are about your personal profile.

28.) Male ___ Female ___

29.) Age: _____

30.) Where do you live? *Town:* _____, *State/Province:* _____

31.) Number of years you have hunted: _____

32.) Number of days per year that you hunt: _____

Questions 33 – 37 are about your preferences and experiences with the Block Management Program in general.

33.) Please state the number of years you have hunted on Block Management Areas: _____

34.) Which type of BMA do you prefer?

_____ Type 1: where hunters administer their own permission

_____ Type 2: where someone other than the hunter administers permission

35.) Which type of game animals do you prefer to hunt when using BMAs?

_____ Elk _____ Pheasants

_____ Deer _____ Upland Game Birds other than Pheasants

_____ Antelope _____ Waterfowl

36.) How important are the following types of rules when using BMAs?

1. Hunter number limitations **Not Important** **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **Very Important**

2. Travel management rules **Not Important** **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **Very Important**

3. Method for obtaining permission **Not Important** **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **Very Important**

37.) Based on your hunting experiences using the Block Management Program, do you plan to continue to use the program in the future?

_____ Yes

_____ No *explain:* _____

Other Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. I hope you found it to be interesting, and your responses are greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX E

FOLLOW-UP POST CARD REMINDER TO LANDOWNER POPULATION

Dear Landowner:

A week or so ago you received a survey questionnaire from Montana State University (MSU) asking you to assess specific elements of the Block Management Program. If you have completed this questionnaire and returned it to us, *thank you* for your cooperation!

If you have not had the opportunity to complete this questionnaire, please do so at your earliest convenience. Completion of this questionnaire is crucial to the success of this project. **PLEASE NOTE: Earlier you may have already completed and returned another questionnaire from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks related to the Block Management Program. THIS SURVEY IS VERY MUCH DIFFERENT FROM THAT SURVEY,** and we would greatly appreciate your help in completing this survey as well.

If you have misplaced your questionnaire, please give me a call (406) 228-3708. We will send you another one.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Kelvin Johnson
Graduate Research Assistant, Montana State University

APPENDIX F

FOLLOW-UP POST CARD REMINDER TO HUNTER POPULATION

Dear Hunter:

A week or so ago you received a survey questionnaire from Montana State University (MSU) asking you to assess specific elements of the Block Management Program. If you have completed this questionnaire and returned it to us, *thank you* for your cooperation!

If you have not had the opportunity to complete this questionnaire, please do so at your earliest convenience. Completion of this questionnaire is crucial to the success of this project.

If you have misplaced your questionnaire, please give me a call (406) 228-3708. We will send you another one.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Kelvin Johnson
Graduate Research Assistant, Montana State University

APPENDIX G

LANDOWNER RESPONSES AND COMMENTS QUESTION 18

LANDOWNER SURVEY, QUESTION 18: To the best of your knowledge, which types of rules are most commonly violated on your BMA? Other:

- Cut Fences.
- In the wrong pasture.
- Getting off our property.
- Retrieving animals.
- Obeying the boundaries.
- Can't read a map.
- Boundary violations.
- Leave gates open.
- Not going where told.
- Neighbor boundary crossing.
- Unknown, not enough time in block management to know.
- Gates.
- Taking things that don't belong to them.
- Using no shooting areas.
- Can't read maps.
- Had hard time reading maps.
- Boundary-stray to neighbors.
- Knowing BMA boundaries.
- Reading the map.
- Hunting adjoining closed land.
- Crossing fence lines.
- May enter other property next to mine-possibly by mistake.
- Shooting signs.
- Map reading.
- Can't read the maps-they are confusing.
- Do not go on neighbors land!
- Trespass on neighbor.
- Hunters do not know where BMA boundaries are located.
- Not good mapping.
- Weeds.
- Property damage.
- Times when permission slips are issued.
- Removing signs.
- Some don't sign in.
- Violations are most often with those without permission.
- Border lines.
- Crossing over boundary fence.

APPENDIX H

LANDOWNER RESPONSES AND COMMENTS QUESTION 42

LANDOWNER SURVEY, QUESTION 42: Based on your experience with the Block Management Program, do you plan to continue to enroll your land in the program in the future? *Explain:*

- Yes. We appreciate hunters having to register to be here and have had mostly positive results from that system. It creates a greater sense of responsibility to the landholder and to the program that has been very beneficial to us. Most of those who hunt here have expressed appreciation for having a place open for public hunting.
- No. I would if I still owned, but we sold.
- No. I sold the ranch.
- Yes. We may have sold some of the ranch and that will be closed.
- NA. Very undecided.
- No. FWP is too difficult.
- Yes. Same deal as last year.
- No. Retiring from farming in '04
- Yes. It is a good plan
- Yes. Until there is a better offer.
- NA. Maybe
- No. Compensation inadequate.
- Yes. We have elk in large no's in Aug., Sept., Oct., and need some sort of management.
- Yes. As long as you don't cut payment anymore.
- Yes. I should get more money.
- Undecided. The combination license – not given to rancher – may withdraw because of that.
- NA. If I can cash lease it each year to BMP so I don't have to count hunters I will enroll. If I have to keep a tally to try to get what I think it is worth I will lease it out.
- NA. Do not know right now.
- Yes. Enjoy visits with hunters and also like the money.
- NA. Don't know.
- No. Outfitting in near future.
- Yes. But less land each year. Continued threats by some of public to claims right of access on our private land because we are in Block Management or have been. Causes us to consider total closure of all private land to public access. (Fee)
- NA. Unsure!
- No. State land access to neighbors.
- Yes. I like this better than "fee hunting." This is more fair to everyone, not just the "highest bidder."
- Yes. Probably, at age 81, I don't know.
- No. Economically not feasible.
- Yes. Good income and control of hunters.
- Yes. If adequately compensated.
- No. Not at this time. We're taking a break from the hunting.

APPENDIX I

LANDOWNER RESPONSES TO OTHER COMMENTS

LANDOWNER SURVEY: OTHER COMMENTS

- We love being in block management – we have made many good friends over the years + it has made it easier to manage the hunters.
- Will continue with Block Mgmt but have been investigating fee hunting. Right now BMP seems the best return for the amount of work involved, but fee hunting could eventually become worth the extra hassle.
- Thanks to Block Management – The money helps. Thanks to – Richard Morgan + his staff – They know they can come anytime + enjoy our place + also hated to see JD Douglas leave – enjoyed him being here to hunt – visit and a real good game warden. They should be happy in anywhere he was going.
- Hunter numbers are difficult to control because we use a sign in box. Hunter numbers are very inconsistent and unpredictable, however granting permission to each hunter is not feasible.
- People think that because it is a block management they can do as they please and don't need permission from landowner.
- Thank you
- Thanks
- Expansion of elk hers with a less than commensurate compensation for BM is analogous to the protection racketeering by organized crime on small business in the Eastern United States.
- I still don't like the idea that more hunters equals greater compensation. It tends to get quite hectic around here on opening weekends – and should be shut down a bit, but what the hell, we're getting paid so keep your head down and grin and bear it!
- Scott Denson has been a very good P.R. man for Region 7.
- We have our ranch divided into five areas so there is only one party on each area. We have one person issuing permits so we know who is on each area.
- I think there is too many different types of BMP. Should refine about 2 or 3 types of BMP. Then it wouldn't be confusing to hunters from east Montana to West
- Need a couple more sign in boxes. Need a little more money.
- This questionnaire does not address block management where hunters sign themselves in; therefore a lot of the questions can not be answered.
- I participate in BMA in our ranch operation. We keep part of our ranch for family/friends only. We have created an archery only BMA for whitetail which is well utilized. The flexibility of this program allows it to work for us. I support hunting opportunities for the public and the program helps provide controls. Our game warden is very helpful.
- Great Program
- Very good program
- Kill more deer

- This program so far is good, the one way we can fund spraying weeds, that wildlife helps spread. I like to see our native Montanan's have a place to hunt and recreate. Outfitting would eliminate most Montanan's.
- Smaller properties, hunters write own permission, seldom get to property due to walking distance.
- Smaller properties – hunters write own permission.
- Enjoyed. Sorry this is late. Got miss-laid in the paper shuffle.
- I would like to continue Block Management, but this man is going to purchase for hunting. I will try to help him but I believe we can work something that works for both. I would still like to keep some public hunting on the ground I am keeping. Will contact you after the sale. Thanks.
- Find a better way to make reservations for hunting so that hunters cancel reservations instead of just not showing. This would allow other hunters to make reservations.
- We have way too many deer – don't need any.
- We are happy with Block Management. The only think I asked when we started would you try to keep the people on the road. It is somewhat bearish.
- Questions 12 – 15 will not be accurate as we use a self sign in box.
- I believe strongly in the program
- I feel Block Mgt to be a better use of available funds, opposed to MT acquiring property for game mgt purposes. We are well-pleased with all aspects of the program.
- Thanks for supper and parks.
- Some questions in survey are not black + white. Without Block Management dollars – we would look at family + friends being able to hunt as always – plus fee hunting.
- In District 315 there were relatively few elk compared to present numbers. Thus, despite successful hunting, the numbers continue to increase. I wish you would have asked about satisfaction with the amount we are paid. For those who put in a lot of work to help hunters have a good experience, it is much too low.
- We have met some good people/hunters through this. But in us being flexible with hunters they have taken advantage of us. Very few hunters came for permission slips within the time set forth. I was on call for hunters all day.
- Use sign in boxes questions 12 – 15.
- When ranching is a business, FWP needs to run Block Mgt for \$.
- We limit the numbers of hunters per day. We don't want them crowded. Now then we have complaint that we are in BMA and they have the right to hunt. Even if we are full.
- The Block Management Program makes hunters more aware of private land and aware of the fact they need permission to hunt on private land.
- The hunters have no respect for private property – ours is a walk in area and they drive their trucks, 4-wheelers and snowmobiles all over – spreading noxious weeds and vandalizing our property.

- On your maps could the BMP rules be printed on the back for the Out-of-Staters and the local people.
- Due to the amount of public lands intertwined with our deeded land we have now way of controlling the hunting access. This program gives money to maintain fences and gates that was otherwise difficult to come up with.
- Would like the landowners to receive higher compensation.
- Sign in boxes might be too far apart + sometimes there are no pencils in the boxes.
- I think the block management is the best thing that has happened to hunting in over 30 years I have farmed and ranched. The walk-in hunting has been very effective in improving the hunting and ranch-hunter relations
- I really can't answer these questions – the land is uninhabited and I live 30 miles away so have no idea as to amount of use etc.
- My BMA has been very appreciated by older hunters – lots of spring fed open water also fairly level terrain – easy to walk.
- BMP is an asset. Our only trouble is neighbor doesn't let in hunters and game tends to go there when hunted on our land.
- I would like a report on the number of hunters and their take.
- Most hunters want trophy bull elk but the taking of so many bulls makes it difficult. Out of State hunters are the best to deal with – the older the better – they have respect for the land and the laws.
- My problem now is bad winters and birds and deer destroy my feed which is my living.
- As a hunter myself, I have appreciated the friendly feeling I get when I see the Block Management signs around the country. I feel Block Management has done a lot to build relations between FWP, landowners & Sportsmen. As the program went on more sportsmen wanted to use it, being we limit the hunters, we have had to turn more hunters away which takes extra time and disappoints more hunters. With the increase number of hunters using the program we are finding it hard to have an open spot for family. As we have more family that hunt – down the road we may have to look at saving our hunting for family and friends.
- The \$ come in handy.
- Good program – may have to raise payments to compete with the increasing amounts outfitters + private hunters are offering.
- Some days we have so many hunters flock in we have to turn some of them away. Some we let go out when there is already too many hunters out there. Then they don't like if they don't get their game.
- As a Out of State landowner I receive a hunting license in trade for block management program which is very important to me. Thank you.
- Mike Ottman is fair to all hunters & is very caring of landowners.
- Our experience has been positive. We plan to continue with block management.
- The last couple years we have not had very many antelope, so we have had to turn some hunters away. It would be nice if more mule deer does could be harvested.

We have always let people hunt when they asked permission, but it is great to get reimbursed for helping raise the game.

- We need to take a good hard look at the management of deer as a whole, so we don't kill 1,800 or so deer in one area + then not offer a tag in that area for 3 years because of no game. In other words, I couldn't even hunt my own land!!
- The financial aspect of Block Mgt Progr. Is very important to offset the damage done to the hayfields by elk and deer.
- Hunting is necessary for responsible game management but hunters cause problems – one example some hunters leave garbage – I would rather not have to pick up garbage then to be paid to pick it up.
- You cannot have unlimited access + expect a good hunting experience.
- Elk are entering our property in early August. We graze cattle (not our own) and this early entry makes any management options unworkable. When these elk leave about Nov. 1, there is poor hunter access and there is not a suitable harvest then. There is considerable development in our area and if the elk stay in the fields they are in a sizable herd and there just aren't many taken. They aren't stupid you know. (Joke)
- We like to work with hunters as well as FWP. People need a place to hunt, build relations with ranchers. Young kids love to come with their parents, that means a lot to me. I also have state land that is controlled.
- This is a very good program. We need to keep it going. We need to get more landowners involved.
- A appreciate the FWP people checking my ranch occasionally. This has cut back hunting violations considerably as compared before I was in Block Management. I try to use the money I receive to improve roads, gates, fences in my area.
- Fish and Game need to address the problems with too many elk. More either sex elk licenses, lots more. The elk numbers are getting out of hand.
- Block Management has helped me control hunters. Gives you a chance to meet them and they seem to try harder to do the right thing. Some have become good friends. Also the money I receive helps a lot.
- My biggest complaint is the excessive amount of does harvested on our ranch. Region 7 is too big to issue blanket doe tags. Doe hunters should be directed where does need to be harvested. We could have more game gladly if we didn't kill every female in sight every year. KEEP Block Management SIMPLE.
- I really like the Pheasant Release Program to re-populate our county with pheasants!! We also like Richard Morgan + Howard Burt.
- Due to the tough winter the mule deer got to the destructive stage around the yard. Response and help from the local FWP was good – just too damn many deer.
- Sir: I have always been a hunter or sportsman, + like the outdoors. I have had hunters get lost, lock themselves out of pickups, lose gun + binoculars, sight in gun for them, even help them hang up their game, all for a box of apples. Thank you.

- As a general rule we get a very nice bunch of hunters – my wife filled this out – you couldn't read my writing.
- We have more requests every year from hunters who want a place to camp. We allow camping, but would like to have some additional compensation for doing so.
- We were more or less forced to go with block management as part of our ranch was surrounded on four sides by BLM lands and our ranch was a handy way to get to the bigger units. Also we had to give permission to go thru' + also state no hunting on us.
- If BMA dollar amount goes down because of lack of sign in or lack of permits, I will go to fee hunting. I feel too much info is required of hunter causes some not to sign in.
- Hunters just have to sign the permission slips before crossing my property. Some feel it is not necessary to stop at sign in box.
- If you would come look at our haystacks you would find a fair amount of damage done by deer. I don't mind feeding them as long as they produce me income. I would promote a flat fee of so much per acre up to a maximum fee. This way no one takes advantage of the program and if you have more game to hunt it should be worth more.
- I have another 960 acres to enroll into BMA for this fall. Please call and let me know more about the enrollment.
- Hunter success and access to game animals needs to be improved so herd size can be reduced, especially elk numbers.
- A potential problem may evolve with the archery season + early cow season open @ the same time or open during the time.
- The payment is a lifesaver. Thank you.
- This is a very successful program + well managed. There would be drastic changes if this program ends.
- Quite a few of these questions do not pertain to our situation. We have a sign in box and very seldom have contact with the hunters. We had a big problem with gates this year + I feel a lot of the hunters did not sign in because of confusion over the boundaries + only a joint sign in box at the front of the property. Access is available at 3 different sides.
- The Block Management program is a great idea and works very well. I feel that if the program were not in place, much more land would be closed to public hunting. I do think that a trophy management approach should be taken so that the young bucks don't get slaughtered in the rut.
- Our property is close to population so it does get heavy use – many of hunters drive up road + back. Have had very few problems.
- Dad passed away this winter. As he was the one actually living on the ranch, he would have been the one to answer this survey.
- We need a more equitable method of payment – we have large acres and others have small amount of acres but we all get the same payment. Its not fair but I

don't know how to make it the same dollars per acre. Also maps should be consistent and very readable from block to block so hunters don't get so confused.

- Since enrolling in Block Management, the local hunters are hesitant to sign up and usually trespass if they hunt.
- I would like to see hunters treat a farmer or ranch as any other business. We have lives and jobs like anyone else. They should make an appointment instead of "just show up because they are out for a drive."
- Once again the Morrison Pk. Walk-in area was very heavily used during the rifle season. To my knowledge hunter success rate for elk was low and yet a # of hunters were issued a second elk permit. This district is a relatively small geographic area with only a moderate number of elk. The lack of 1st choice applicants for this area I feel is a direct indication of poor success in the past, and therefore, question why the persistence by FWP to issue its quota of permits for this area that obviously doesn't have the number of elk to warrant them.
- Great program for our region.
- Has been a good program for both hunters and me. More hands on. Much easier to keep track of hunters.
- Could maybe make more by fee hunting or lease.
- BMA place the hunters on closer relationship with the landowner. Thank you.
- Metal gates installed. Combination locks. Makes access to property difficult. Don't know who put gates in. Guess it is FWP.
- FWP has done a good job with nature's help increasing the number of game animals. I support late hunts and landowners. Ease in controlling predators + crop damage.
- I am not familiar with who manages the numbers – me or FWP.
- We leased the property 3 years ago. It had previously been under BMA, thus we continued with the program.
- I would like to see BMA cooperators reimbursed for extreme game damage. (I.E. this winter) in exchange for granting unlimited hunter access. Generally, I am very pleased with the BMA program.
- My opinion is that hunting season needs to be split or extended. I have property that is not adjacent in two counties, with the same problems. That problem is the elk are not on our ranches during hunting season, but are present the rest of the year, yet we put up with the problems of people driving around our ranches. The elk numbers are overwhelming. Block Management alone is not controlling the number of elk.
- The hunters talk to you more freely. They are not where they are not wanted.
- FWP has got to wake up to the fact that there are way too many mule deer does.
- I had hoped this would decrease the game damage we have in the summer months, but it has not. I don't think private property is given the credit it should receive for sustaining big game numbers.

- Have noticed a large decrease in hunter numbers in last 2 years. Have had many comments from hunters that turkey tags cost too much. Very few turkeys have been harvested and turkey damage to cattle feed supplies is high.
- We can lease for 10X the dollar amount that BM pays plus not have the hassles of multiple hunters. If BM can't come up with a competitive rate, the only land left will be poor hunting.
- Need to increase compensation for being in the program to keep land open to the public.
- The deer during season leave my place in the day and come back in the night. They do like the alfalfa fields. My neighbors are either shut down to hunting or leased. Very frustrating to put up with 100 to 120 deer for 8 months of the year but then it's their property and their business. Yes I would like to see more deer harvested.
- We like the help to get spray to control weeds.
- The FWP representative Howard Burt was very helpful in explaining + enrollment process of the Block Mgmt. Program. Hunters have a variety of game to hunt and very easy access.
- I live 100 miles from this property and there are three other landowners between my property and the county road and they more or less control how many people go in there.
- The basic change for us is that we no longer have to worry about the permission process. It used to take a lot of time as hunters would stop in at all hours to ask permission.
- The Fish and Game patrol my place. Saves me a lot of time.
- I feel we should receive more compensation as neighbors get a lot more income from fee hunting. Also should rate quality of the BMA for payment. We currently have over 300 whitetail in our hay yards.
- Surveys like this are what will drive me out of the program.
- We would like to see more antelope harvested but due to weather conditions we had several cancellations. We would like to see this program continued.
- The hunters schedule the hunts now. We like the program and have very good hunters. They have a very good success rate and we enjoy their friendships. I don't have any complaints.
- We have great hunters. It is recreation for them and although they buy their licenses, I think they could pay \$10 or so to the landowners when they hunt. When I golf, bowl, or go to a movie or a play, I don't get in free, and they are out all day. This along with the payment from Block Management would be more rewarding for the landowner and not cost Block Management a dime either.
- Frankly I feel that the questions were fine but the choices of answers were not applicable in my case. We are more an access to land where the actual "hunting" occurs. Hunters are not required to stop at my home to ask permission – though many do.

- I feel the block management program benefits landowners, sportsmen, outfitters & FWP. I think that any program that is managed by any government agency should be fine tuned to run as efficiently as possible.
- I hope you find funding to continue post 2006.
- The block management program is a financial help to us and also limits the numbers of deer in haystacks.

APPENDIX J

HUNTER RESPONSES TO QUESTION 1

HUNTER SURVEY, QUESTION 1: How did you obtain information about hunting this BMA? Other:

- Friend.
- BMA personnel at FWP suggested it.
- Friend.
- Friend.
- Some friends of mine hunt there.
- Arthur Ranch-uncles.
- Live next to it.
- Heard from friends about BMA.
- Hunting in the area and seen the boxes.
- Friend told about it.
- Hunted the land before it was in BMA
- Hunted in the area and knew about it.
- His uncle Bill W. in the area is also BMA.
- Asked owners, personal friend of mine.
- Heard of BMA from another hunter.
- Reference by other rancher.
- Owner is a friend.
- Son of landowner.
- Fellow hunter.
- Bob Cosgriff is an old buddy from the Army.
- A friend told us about it.
- Companion had hunted there before.
- Word-of-mouth two years ago.
- Relatives.
- From a friend who knew about the ranch/ranchers.
- Local rancher told me about Schweigert Property in BMA.
- Husband hunts there.
- Have known Ruffatos for many years.
- We live next to it.
- My boyfriend told me about it.
- Friend.
- My brother.
- Passed through McCartney Mt. BMA to hunt, did not hunt on the BMA.
- Friend of a friend.
- Used FWP and Hunting guide a couple of years ago and have gone back.
- Was with friend that hunted there before.
- Referred by a friend.
- Friend hunted before.

- Knew the owner.
- Don Burke and I have been friends for over 30 years.
- Friend in Nashua knew of BMA.
- Referred by local merchant.
- Hunters who knew of area.
- Shown by a friend.
- Family friend.
- Local resident friend.
- Others in group hunted there before.
- By friend.
- Through another hunter.
- From a farmer I met in Canada.
- Hunted with friend who lived in the area.
- Hunted with friend who lived in the area.
- Friends at work.
- Relative who lives in area.
- Friend/other hunter.
- Friend in Bozeman.
- My dad and friends had hunted there before.
- Friends who hunted there.
- Other person I hunted with, hunted northwest of there.
- Heard from a friend.
- With friend that hunted there before.
- Hunted there for 20 years, before BMA.
- Information from a friend.
- Went with my wonderful boyfriend.
- Friends family.
- X A Friend told me about it.
- With friend who hunted before.
- Own ranch there.
- FWP sent me name and phone number.
- A neighbor of Baums told me about Baum Ranch Hunting.
- My dad.
- Friend of family.
- He is my uncle.
- A friend told me about it.
- Neighbor told me about him.
- Friend in Havre.
- Friend showed me.
- Contacted landowners.
- Found it 2 years ago, hunted since.

- From a friend.
- Party that I hunted with has hunted there before.
- A friend had hunted prior year.
- A friend told me about it.
- Went with friends.
- Friend.
- Friends landowner.
- Friend told me.
- Brother.
- Talked to landowner.
- Hunted with a friend who had a local knowledge of the area.
- Another hunter informed me of Froze To Death.
- I hunted the land before it was in the BMA program.
- Friend.
- Friend informed me.
- Neighbor.
- Hunted with landowner.
- Ask others who have hunted there.
- I've known Larry Pippin for 20 years. Hunted his land since early '80s.
- Friends.
- Have known the family for many years.
- A friend.
- Friend hunted there before.
- Became personal friends earlier last year.
- Word of mouth of friends.
- A friend suggested it.
- Relative suggested area.
- Friend.
- Told about it by local hunters.
- Scouting by friends.
- Local business person.
- Son-in-law lived at Fort Keogh.
- Info brochure I picked up at a sporting goods store.
- Friend who lives close by.
- Hunting partner.
- Friend lives in Boulder. He has hunted there before.
- Website.
- Referred by friend.
- .COM
- Referred by gas station employee from small town nearby.
- Hunted with a friend and his father-father hunted spot before.

- Know for 20 years.
- Friend.
- From friend.
- Legends For Lights hunt.
- Relative rented house from Browns.
- And from another landowner.
- Friend told me.
- Relative.
- I saw the Block Management signs on the land.
- With some who knew where to go.
- I work for the Chevallier Ranch.
- Hunted with persons who knew area.
- From a friend.
- Local advise.
- Friend had hunted there before.
- Stopped at Miles City FWP one year.
- Referred by local sporting goods store.
- Personal acquaintance.
- FWP contacted me.
- Noticed sign with phone number.
- Friend of Mr. Hamilton.
- Hunting store in Dillon.
- Friends hunted there last year.
- Originally a friend from MN told us to go there.
- Family ranch.
- My son works there.
- Friend.
- Shown by another hunter.
- Am a relative of Chevalliers.
- Ada Velding other BMA nearby.
- Sign-in box.
- Family friend new of the place.
- I have hunted there for 37 years.
- Friend.
- Friend hunted there.
- Local friend.
- Local friend.
- Friend.
- Uncle lives in Boxelder.
- Friends hunted.
- My Uncle told us about this and then we hunted.

- Someone told me about it.
- From a friend.
- Had no info.
- My wife's family works the ranch.
- Asked landowner previous to season.
- Friend of his son.
- Know owner.
- Friend.
- Through a friend.
- Local friends told me about it.
- Neighbor of Hustads told us.
- Call BMA.
- Hunting partners had hunted it.
- Know the Arthuns.
- Found out through friends.
- Was hunting area before BMA.

APPENDIX K

HUNTER RESPONSES TO QUESTION 14

HUNTER SURVEY, QUESTION 14: If you spent more or less days than planned, explain why:

- Less. Did not have the time.
- Same. Had antelope tags for 600 + 630 areas.
- NA. Got my elk on forest service land.
- More. My son was home from the Navy and I hunted more.
- NA. Was successful early.
- Less. Filled out doe tag and lack of whitetail bucks to hunt on A tag.
- More. It was successful bird hunting.
- Less. Hunted other areas.
- Less. Harvested animal on first day.
- More. We were filled up.
- Less. Foreman of ranch said no game had been seen lately, we found no sign.
- The Willow Glen area is close to where I live + its one of my favorite spots to hunt. I've been hunting this area prior to any type of BMA program.
- Less. Moved north to Plentywood area sooner
- Less. Family went to different area for walk/ride in only hunting to visit friends.
- Less. Filled my tag.
- Less. Land had very little cover and game.
- Less. Filled tags sooner than planned.
- Less. Where I was camped at was long distance to area.
- Less. Less days because I had real good luck.
- More. Could not find the right deer.
- Same. Desire to harvest a quality buck.
- Less. Did not get time off work due to unexpected conflicts.
- Less. Successful
- Same. Being choosy about size of animal harvested.
- Less. Harvested the deer.
- Same. 2 days only.
- More. Good success.
- Less. Killed antelope 1st day.
- More. Good bird contact.
- More. Found plenty of birds.
- Less. No game.
- Less. Ended up hunting elsewhere; also had to work on a couple of the days planned to hunt the 320.
- Same. Our party hunted the area 3 days. I was done on the 1st day.
- Less. Filled tag.
- Less. Would have hunted more on this BMA but filled lic's.
- Less. Rained cats & dogs.
- More. Other areas.

- Less. Other time demands.
- Less. Low # of animals so spent less time.
- Same. I hunt on many BMAs. This area is on the route travel to other areas.
- More. Because I know there are big whitetail buck there, and that is what I was after.
- Less. Too many hunters on this BMA.
- Less. Didn't get back.
- Same. Got deer on 1st day and 3rd day.
- More. Hunting was poor in the area we planned to hunt.
- Less. Weather conditions.
- Less. Didn't get back as often as I wanted to.
- Less. We had a week but tagged on day 4.
- Same. I liked the area.
- More. A lot of elk spotted.
- Less. No wildlife.
- More. Easy access + a lot of game. Also, perfect cover to work dogs.
- Less. Time conflicts
- More. Because there were more hunters this year than ever. It made it hard to find the deer.
- Less. Not available.
- Less. Not many elk in the area at that time.
- Less. My own time availability to hunt.
- Less. Couldn't hunt as I wished.
- More. Good hunting, very nice landowner.
- Less. No time from work.
- Less. All the deer were on the closed ranch next to it.
- Less. No birds present.
- Less. I got my game sooner than I expected.
- Same. Time go home.
- Less. Got the goat! (somewhere else)
- More. Further from town and less hunters.
- More. Less game.
- Less. Building home – work
- Less. I personally didn't have the time off to hunt like I wanted to.
- Less. Very dry + dusty. Lots of hunters + not many antelope. Fair birds.
- Less. Landowner wouldn't allow hunting in certain areas.
- Less. Very dusty. Not many antelope.
- Less. Weather.
- Less. I had two days reserved but was successful on the 1st.
- Less. No elk tag.
- Same. Weather was not the best.

- Less. No game, no sign
- Less. No pheasants.
- More. Didn't get anything.
- More. Closest BMA with wheat crops.
- Less. Less days. Because my great uncle died around there 2 yrs ago, so it was hard for me and my father to hunt still.
- Less. Job.
- Less. Goy my game sooner than thought on other BMA (Ueland/Cradock)
- Less. Weather, lack of game.
- Less. Lack of deer.
- Less. I didn't get time.
- Less. Had to work.
- More. Did not see any wildlife the first few times.
- Less. Hunting was poor.
- More. Off work because of medical reasons.
- Same. It is not what I expected to hunt.
- Less. No game found. Changed hunting areas.
- Same. I hunt all different ares.
- Less. Tagged out other ares.
- Same. Shot my antelope on another BMA.
- Same. Sometimes I go just to get out. Really not much hunting involved.
- Less. Because they were booked over the weekend.
- More. Game was hard to find.
- Less. Filled tags.
- More. Easy access, friendly landowners. Lots of birds.
- Less. Too few antelope. Mid-Late season.
- Less. No game at all.
- More. Just happened to stop when driving to another area.
- Less. There were other hunters.
- Less. There weren't many deer or if there was, they ran off.
- More. One more than planned because we had tougher hunting on other BMA areas and a hard time gaining permission on private land.
- Less. Camped elsewhere this visit (CMR). Weather changed, had to leave early.
- More. There were hunters where we had planned to hunt.
- More. Very few bucks.
- Same. Only had permission to access national forest thru Hanson Land. Did not have permission to hunt.
- More. We didn't plan to hunt the BMA, but went to take a look at it.
- Less. Because I couldn't drive in to retrieve game if I spent a lot of time hiking back in.
- Less. Had to spend too much time at work.

- Same. Game restrictions in area.
- More. Saw several animals.
- More. Good hunting.
- More. Our party had good success the first day so we decided to return.
- More. I had a lot of good land and we saw 30 head of elk on the hill after legal shooting time.
- Less. Just didn't get around to going back- but will this year.
- Less. The SG Miller Ranches (all 3 of them) are completely overgrazed by cattle. I hunted all day long for upland birds with two bird dogs + never saw anything! Not even a crow!
- Less. Was successful the first day.
- Less. Because I had to work.
- Less. Shot antelope.
- Less. Didn't want to wound a antelope as it was windy + rainy a couple days.
- Less. Filled my A7 elk tag on 4th hunt.
- Less. Shot a deer early.
- Less. Everyone in our party had filled their tags. Antelope.
- Less. There were too many other hunters on this BMA. The land seems very over hunted. I am very concerned with how over hunted this land is.
- Less. Personal schedule.
- More. I spent more because it looked like a nice area for good deer.
- Less. Gets used a lot the 1st two weeks of antelope season.
- More. Not successful first day.
- More. The drought has drove animals to greener pastures.
- Less. I used this BMA to retrieve an elk harvested on adjacent forest service land.
- Less. Didn't see nothin' to shoot.
- More. Saw elk on adjacent property (not part of BMA) & hoped they would move onto BMA.
- More. Saw elk on adjacent property (not BMA!). Hoped they'd X fence!!
- Less. Because of number of hunters.
- More. Kept seeing game.
- Less. Harvested game on first day of hunt.
- More. Because hunting was good on Dan and Uncle Bill's BMA
- Less. Filled my tag earlier than expected.
- Less. People were walking right past us, as we waited for deer to come out. The crossed out field of fire rudly – then drove in & picked up the deer they shot – ruining our hunt.
- More. Didn't see the # of animals expected.
- Less. Generally spent less than time than planned as there were more hunters than game.
- Less. Large group moved in area and did not use hunter ediquet as to travel and letting one hunt even if you were there first.

- Less. Work got in the way.
- Less. Found a good buck.
- Less. Tagged out first morning.
- Less. Because the elk numbers were down on this BMA. For some reason, the elk weren't there.
- Less. Didn't see many animals so why hunt there.
- Less. Daughter shot deer early in season.
- Less. Successful
- Less. Elk weren't where we had scouted
- More. Elk weren't there early and were very spooky.
- More. Spent one more day because we really enjoyed the property.
- Less. Did not draw when called in.
- More. Harder hunt than expected.
- More. Usually don't hunt BMA's in that area.
- Less. Didn't have many free weekends.
- Less. Hunted other areas since game was scarce on this BMA.
- More. Just happened to be where I was.
- More. The whitetail population seemed to have been down in numbers from previous years.
- Less. Very hard to secure reservations.
- More. I spent more time than I probably should have, the elk were more elusive than first thought.
- More. Didn't fill all permits first day.
- Less. Didn't see much the first day + just never came back.
- More. Well we would head up there and no one would be using it so we get in there.
- Less. No game seen.
- Less. Too much snow in the late season.
- More. Didn't plan on hunting this BMA at all – ended up being the elk were hanging in this area so I got permission to hunt it.
- Less. Work always gets in the way.
- More. I feel it's too over hunted, too many people drive around where they shouldn't.
- Less. Had to have someone drive for me.
- Less. Wildlife wasn't there.
- Less. Filled tag.
- Less. I was limited to a certain amount of time. Fortunately, my group and I limited out quick.
- Less. Didn't see any elk so we hunted other places.
- Less. Lack of game.
- Less. Personal time constraints.
- Less. Didn't make it back to hunt again.

- Less. Not much sign.
- Less. Game not found.
- Less. Not as many birds as expected, hunted a different BMA, trying to explore more options for future hunting opportunities in this area.
- Less. Hunted other block management area.
- Less. Severe snow.
- Less. I was lucky deer hunting 1st day, I had planned to spend 3.
- More. Excellent hunting opportunity + nice owners.
- More. Could not sort a spike out of the herd without wounding others.
- Less. We harvested our game early, left 3 days early.
- Less. Very popular with local hunters who have permission well before season starts.
- Less. Elk were in Sieben BMA to the west. Deer on top of the wide open.
- Less. It was booked the first two weeks of hunting.
- More. Didn't really expect to gain permission.
- Less. Time restraints.
- More. Didn't have to go to work.
- Less. Filled tag.
- Less. Filled tag elsewhere.
- More. We found more game than expected.
- Less. Changed plans.
- Less. Because of tagging out right away. On the first day.
- Less. Driving through and didn't see any game.
- More. They let me.
- Less. Hunted on other BMA.
- Less. Had to go.
- More. Found additional areas to explore.
- More. Found add'n'l areas to explore.
- Less. Hunting buddy had West Nile Virus and we couldn't go.
- Less. No game.
- Less. No sign. Didn't go back.
- Less. Harvested animals I was hunting.
- Less. My own time constraints.
- Less. Not as many pheasants as I had hoped for.
- Less. I killed my elk the 1 and only time this year.
- More. Couldn't work into my schedule.
- More. Great access, great hunting, great hospitality by owners.
- More. Encountered considerable game.
- Less. Not enough time.
- More. Didn't plan to hunt on that piece of land.
- Less. Too many hunters driving around.

- More. Hadn't planned on hunting at all on this BMA but it bordered another I was hunting on.
- Less. Too many people have found this BMA limiting the quality of the hunt. Plus landowner has built a cabin directly in the location where some of the best hunting is.
- Less. Not enough animals. (antelope)
- Less. I usually hunt the reservation.
- More. Work load.
- Less. No elk.
- Less. I did not have enough time to hunt more days.
- Less. Weather & other plans.
- Less. Minimal game sign – hot weather.
- Less. Finished season early – filled all tags.
- Less. They were booked up.
- More. Real good area.
- Less. Harvested animal early.
- Less. Weather conditions and animal movement.
- More. Didn't know about block management.
- Less. No cover to hold game I was after.
- Less. My kids got their deer early.
- Less. Just hunted other areas.
- Less. I harvested the first day.
- More. Not successful right away.
- Less. Successful 1st day.
- More. The walk-in only restriction keeps a lot of hunters out. They are LAZY!!
- Less. Didn't find it till later in season.
- More. Didn't fill out first day.
- Less. Got distracted by other game elsewhere and went after them.
- Less. Because some BMA's have waiting lists. As I understand a year in advance.
- Less. Got into elk elsewhere.
- Less. Go to school in Dillon.
- More. Hunt lasted longer than I would have hoped.
- Less. Fresh people tracks in snow.
- More. Sometimes I would drive by and decide to stop and hunt.
- Less. Because there were too many out of state hunters there.
- Less. Other hunters, less game.
- More. I spent more because I believe that it is an opportunity that should not be passed up.
- More. Didn't find the elk, knew they passed through area.
- Less. Other opportunity came up.
- Less. Drawn for more days than I could hunt due to conflict w/ work.

- Less. Found an adjacent ranch that was not in BMA, charged \$100/day per hunter but the quality of mule deer bucks and antelope was unbelievably better than BMA lands.
- Less. Shot a deer 1st morning.
- Less. Hunting was spotty and was bored with that area.
- Less. We have a new baby and I got sick with the flu on the Antelope opener.
- Less. School.
- Less. Work
- Less. Hunting partner had to go home earlier than expected.
- Less. Used earlier reservation. Area restricted because I round up & didn't know ahead of time.
- Less. At least twice the BMA was already at it's limit of hunters.
- Less. Habitat for upland birds mainly Hungarian Partridge and pheasant, was not as good as other ranches I hunted.
- Less. Access not available due to number of hunters using this BMA.
- Less. Weather was bad.
- Less. Did not find the moose I wanted.
- Less. No game.
- Less. Work.
- More. Got to know area – liked it.
- Less. Too damn many out of state hunters in Eastern Montana.
- Less. I never seem to spend as much time hunting as I would like.
- Less. Too many hunters.

APPENDIX L

HUNTER RESPONSES AND COMMENTS TO QUESTION 37

HUNTER SURVEY, QUESTION 37: Based on your hunting experiences using the Block Management Program, do you plan to continue to use the program in the future?

Explain:

- Yes. Gives hunters more areas to hunt.
- Yes. I have to because the private lands I use to hunt are now leased out to outfitters. Deer is my #1 animal and most are on private land.
- Yes. Worked great. Met a lot of nice people.
- Yes. Pheasants + other birds are good. Most BMAs.
- Yes. Great program
- Yes. I will if they allow HCP. Persons to drive in like Mr. Compton was very good to me.
- Yes. We plan an antelope hunt every year and really appreciate the BMP.
- No. Non residence license have gotten to expensive.
- Yes. It keeps private land open to the public without being commercialized.
- No. Too many out of state hunters.
- Yes. The number of hunters + game can be controlled fairly well.
- Yes. I love it.
- Yes. I utilize BMA areas throughout the state.
- Yes. It is a good program.
- Yes. I hunt block management almost exclusively, and have had excellent success.
- It worked fine. I was impressed.
- Yes. Because of handicapped access.
- Yes. This is where I hunted all my life.
- Yes. Very good program.
- Yes. It provides me with a place to hunt.
- Yes. Provides more access to more land.
- Yes. Will go to Alvin's and the surrounding areas.
- Yes. It is becoming our only option.
- Yes. I love it!!!
- Maybe. Depending on size of herd.
- Yes. It's places to hunt.
- Yes. It's a nice way to hunt private lands.
- Yes. I have to where I hunt.
- Yes. Because I want to get an elk there.
- No. Worst bird hunting experience I've ever had.
- Yes. Almost guaranteed access.
- Yes. It fits my physical abilities and provides places with game to hunt.
- No. I don't plan to use BMA that I find over hunted.
- Yes. Has allowed us to hunt on land that would not be available otherwise.
- Yes. I hunt a small amount on Gray's and Vincent Ranch land – works very well.

- Yes. Unless I can afford to lease it may be my only option.
- Yes. I like the area & most people won't walk where I do.
- No. I have better places to hunt with more game + less hunters.
- Yes. It got us what we wanted.
- Yes. So I can access private land.
- No. BMA areas get hunted too heavily.
- Yes. If you can manage it better.
- Yes. Because it was very easy to register in the box and less time to get out there and enjoy the environment.
- No. N. Blaine. If the number of hunters were limited and (you +I) knew that, that we couldn't get on, it would be better.
- Yes. To hunt deer in the 300 District and antelope in the 200 District.
- Yes. It's the best alternative to the access we used to have to public/private land.
- Yes. There is not always public land to hunt in some areas.
- No. Too far from home. Too expensive. Poor lodging.
- Yes. Very successful + well taken care of.
- Yes. Good program.
- Yes. I am new to Montana and it is the best way to gain access to hunt.
- No. Not if I can continue to hunt on land that is not in block management.
- No. Not my type of hunting.
- Yes. Definitely – I enjoy the self-administered type.
- Yes. Easier than driving and asking the owner.
- No. Moving out of state.
- No. Walk in rule.
- Yes. If helps both the hunter and the landowner.
- Yes. It makes hunting more enjoyable.
- Yes. I don't see as many other hunters.
- No. The walking miles and dragging big game out.
- Yes. BMA will be the future if common folk want to hunt.
- Yes. Not a lot of other choices close to home.
- Yes. So we can have more than one place to hunt.
- Yes. I think there are more animals on the BMA land.
- Yes. Because this area we hunt in now has some great bulls that use BMA lands.
- Yes. But in years to come, there will be too many out of staters.
- Yes. It's good for hunters and landowners.

APPENDIX M

HUNTER RESPONSES TO OTHER COMMENTS

HUNTER SURVEY, OTHER COMMENTS:

- Close more roads and trails to motorized vehicles during archery season but maybe have it open for game retrieval at reasonable hours.
- Fish + Game should check land that is open for block management. Some of the areas north of Malta don't have any game on land and shouldn't be in block management. People are getting paid for opening their land that is not productive.
- Think the area chosen as block management benefited only that rancher. We hunted unsuccessfully on it last year. I only hunted the late hunt (both last year and this year). Got a nice cow this year – saw 2 last year on FS land. None on Block Mgmt. Wasn't impressed.
- Where I hunted needs a sign in box at the top also.
- The only reason it was good hunting is that there was not a lot of hunters. If there was the sign in boxes would not be a good thing. Also the way the bird population is now it probably won't be that good for awhile. It was the best bird hunting I have seen.
- The Block Management Program should not be funded by outfitter sponsored guaranteed licenses. There should not be any non-resident guaranteed licenses. The program should be funded by residents and non-residents equally. Guaranteed licenses are destroying hunting in Montana.
- I hunt BMA's in 700 area where you have to ask permission and have never been turned down.
- Thanks for making your property available to hunt. With this property and the BLM, there were wonderful opportunities to hunt. No one should ever complain about lack of hunting area with this block management available.
- When we pre-hunted, elk were plenty. But the ranch worker said about a dozen wolves came in. The elk were gone. But I seen 3 wolves and did a lot of walking. I sill think Block Management is the best thing that came along in my lifetime. Thanks.
- Penalties for violations committed on BMA's should be much stiffer ie: litter, poaching, illegal travel usage etc. Violators tend to think committing crimes on BMA's are more tolerated than on public lands.
- Sometimes it was very difficult. Due to distance to get written permission from ranch. In one instance, had to drive 60 miles from block management sign on road to get permission slip. (not very convenient)
- I wish that the retrieving of killed animals would be changed. So that you could drive to nearest ridge to retrieve downed animal. Thanks.
- I generally like the program.
- I have hunted on the same ranch for 29 years. I believe in getting permission and doing what the owner tells me. Some times we see people we don't know. We always tell the owner. To me permission is a must.
- Block management helps both parties. Landowners seem to appreciate the fees and the hunters and I as a hunter really appreciate the ability to hunt thousands of

acres that could normally not be hunted or would be impossible to find the rancher that owns the property.

- BM provides opportunity – opportunity is key w/ more and more land being “locked up.”
- One of the things I would like to see done (especially for Antelope) is if you draw a permit that along with the permit you would also get permission through the mail (automatically) this would save on a trip to the area to get permission prior to the hunt + it would also be less of a bother to the landowner. Chances are good if you hunt Antelope it will be on private land. Also along with permission it would be good to get a map of the property you would be hunting along with any special conditions ie. Walk in, limited travel, etc. Also a phone number of property owners (in case of questions) + the best time to call.
- It is a good program that allows the average person to obtain permission easily to hunt on private land. It also helps prevent private land from becoming leased up to the point that it limits hunting access.
- The only problem my hunting partner and I encountered with the use of block management areas was that there were no block management books/maps available for area six (6), not at Fish + Wildlife, not at sporting goods store – we finally located one store with a store copy and paid to have it photo-copied.
- Block management opens a lot of continuous country where I don't have to worry about where I am because I know I'm not trespassing. Whenever I would move to a new area in a few years, I'd have no idea who to ask for permission. Dad said the permission slips that ranchers sign for us on the Bull Mtn BMA are so we can hunt the land below the BMA. It is private land + sometimes the elk go down to it. The sign in box gives us a place for BMA permission.
- If travel management results in walk in only it will tend to limit some older hunters like myself. Driving on ranch roads or two tracks helps that aspect while still keeping hunters from running all over.
- While reading through the questionnaire I felt many of my answers would be qualified. For instance, on question 34 I selected Type 1, but if hunter density went up I would select Type 2. The same would apply to Q36, #2. If there was higher use, travel restrictions would be very important. Overall, I really appreciate the hunting opportunity this program creates and I anticipate returning to enjoy it in the future.
- Outfitters have leased so much land that without BMAs and public land, I wouldn't have anywhere to hunt. Expanded BMAs for elk and bowhunting would be helpful.
- Had good experiences on other units.
- I think its an excellent program. Should be continued. Other states should look at this program. Many states you have a problem trying to find a place to hunt after purchasing a non-resident license. Will be back next year for sure.
- Enjoy hunting in Montana and enjoy visiting with the ranchers.

- I really appreciate the Block Management Program, both locally and in North Central Montana.
- Would like to see more unsponsored non-resident license's available.
- Hunting the Meccage Ranch was very enjoyable. It was obvious that this family had a real concern for their ranch environment and were interested in providing a safe/enjoyable experience. Special thanks from the Wisconsin "Cheeseheads."
- I think the BMP is an excellent program and believe other states should take a good hard look at implementing similar programs of their own.
- In another BMA, it was obvious the landowner did not have hunters on his property and he did not let people on his land. He said he had his limit signed up. It seemed he had a side business, like an outfitter. Maybe he was charging people or maybe he was holding a donations dish out. It was obvious he was abusing the program.
- All of the ranches I have talked to like this program, and they usually complement the out of state hunters on respect and courtesy of their ranch.
- Had better success than expected. Landowners were very cooperative.
- Re: #36 part 1 – I have not encountered many hunters while hunting upland birds on BMA's, and thus my "not important" response. Should crowding become a problem, I would favor some kind of limitations. The BMA program is great and I hope it will continue and expand. It seems to me that it is a win-win situation for hunters and landowners.
- I think the BMP is a win/win! The method for distribution of antelope is another question. Why allow 3 tags for a successful buck app. While many hunters can't get a single doe. I know this is not the thrust of this questionnaire but hopefully this comment can be passed along to anybody that cares. Thanks, I really enjoy hunting MT.
- I feel the block management program is good. I have met some really nice landowners. I feel the "walk ins" travel is the best – make for a good hunt. This also stops the less ethical hunters.
- I believe the rancher has the right to who and how many people he lets on his land. He does not need the state to tell him.
- In my opinion, I thank the Montana FW&P in starting up a program like the BMA. Without it, it would severely limit the nonresident with a place to hunt & enjoy. Thank you.
- BM is a very good program. I would like to be able to spend the night at the McCabe and other BMA.
- Good program! Try to get more landowners involved.
- I always have had positive experiences on block management lands probably because landowner-hunter relations are very important to me.
- Getting permission one time for the entire season is better than daily permission because it limits where and when you can get permission to hunt. It is inconvenient to get it daily because you might be hunting a distance away from the 2nd location.

- Had problems of untrue & misleading information on adjoining state land status and our rights from a local rancher/guide/adjoining property caretaker.
- Block Management is the best system I have ever used. It opens land that I would never had known about and greatly improves my hunting experience in Montana.
- Satisfied – moving to the boxes makes it easier to get permission – sometimes hard to catch at home – would like to see Michigan to a better job of this.
- I had a great time wouldn't change an thing. I just wish I had planned to hunt longer for birds. It would have been nice to thank the landowner in person, but we didn't know who it was.
- Wonderful program. Please continue to provide this excellent opportunity in the future. I believe many resident Montanan's do not realize what great program this is. I hope I can come back someday soon.
- We probably hunt ½ the time on BMA's and the other half on non BMA's. The BMA's get you into an area and it opens up so many other opportunities. I don't like it when the BMA landowner tries to convince me to put down more days than I might actually use the property.
- The block mgmt. Program is the best thing which has happened to the little Joe Hunter in many years – because it gives us a place to hunt where we don't have to hunt down the landowner and do not have to pay.
- My time in Montana is spent with my brother. It is thus only a bonus when I succeed in the hunt. My deer hunt on average has been great. I have yet to get an elk. Boy is that meat going to be valuable.
- We have met very outstanding friendly people in the block management program.
- When traveling as far as we do, it's discouraging to have to drive another hour to get permission, self check in is very helpful.
- I hunted for a buck deer. Saw only small ones. Nothing large enough to get. So I couldn't fill my big buck tag.
- It would be nice to block up larger areas or areas adjacent to public land. The smaller sections are hard to hunt w/ game occasionally passing through.
- It seems that many areas claim to be full when family members or friends are using the ranch. Not this particular area but others do not let the public in claiming to be full. This applies to Type 2 areas. Some Type 1 areas do not have enough slips supplied in boxes. Type 1 areas should be available for 3 day sign ups as well instead of only 1 day slips.
- Absolutely the best hunting program in U.S.A. (without question) Limiting number of hunters in some areas that are hunted very heavy would make a more enjoyable experience for those selected.
- I am disabled and find it quite easy to tag out even with vehicle restrictions.
- EXCELLENT PROGRAM!! The ONLY reason I hunt Montana for pheasants the state people involved are and were terrific. I can't say enough about how courteous and helpful they were.
- Hunted this BMA for upland game after shooting my deer on a different BMA.

- We are pleased not to bother the ranchers as we are also farmers in Minnesota. Number of hunters we see are small as we hunt later in the season.
- 1. Didn't get to hunt some BMA's because they had "friends" coming in. 2. Don't care for walk-in only, too many miles to cover in 3-5 days. 3. Vehicle usage restricted to 2-track is preferred. 4. BMA is a great idea. Wish more states had BMA. Looking forward to 2004 season.
- I think BMP is a very good program for hunters. I wish No. Dak. Would have a program like it.
- Had a good outdoor experience. Beautiful country. Would like to see a few more deer.
- Block Mgmt. Is a great system to provide hunters opportunities to hunt and keep game numbers in check. Prefer to have to only get permission once per season.
- Enjoyed the opportunity to recreate an Open Cross Ranch – 1st time since 48 years ago I rode Howard Anderson's calves, and stayed @ Charlie & Linda Anderson's – grandparents of Cousin Butch Morse.
- BMA helps both the hunter and the landowner – if the hunter takes care of the land.
- I hunt around Miles City – I couldn't believe the amount of hunters – most shooting 3 deer plus their B tag. Hunted one BMA where we only seen a doe and a fawn all day.
- I feel BMA is very important now days. We used to do the farmers a favor now the farmers are doing us a favor.
- Block management is an excellent way to let the general public have access to private land.
- Usually but not always, I use the BMA to access public lands. As in most cases the rancher or farmer controls access to probable about 75% of the public land – just a guess but maybe even more where I hunt.
- There is probably more BMA land up in this area than anywhere in the state. The downside of it is all the hunters than flock up here. I can really notice the lack of good mature deer, especially muley's. They never get a chance to grow up.
- Maps are very poor. Cannot tell when leaving or entering public lands. Landowner owns a few strategic lots, controls large areas of public land.
- In general the block management program has been excellent. I would like to see more emphasis on upland bird hunting.
- It is a great program. I like the limited # of people at a time. The only problem is when landowners leave telephone #'s and never answer the phone. Keep up the good work!
- Great Program. This area has few game animals over the last 3-4 years. Where did they go!! There used to be lots of game in this area.
- I think block management is a good deal for hunters and landowners both. By having to sign in the owner will at least know who is hunting on their land. But still gives hunters access.

- BMAs need to be more closely monitored to avoid paying landowners to hunt on habitat so over-grazed nothing can survive there.
- I enjoy hunting using the BMA plan + will continue to hunt if the rules stay essentially the same.
- Thank you – by signing up to hunt on the web – nothing is open for hunters who just show up + ask to hunt. I wish fill only half from web + rest for drive in hunters.
- Block Mgt is great. Need more ranches in the program to open up more areas. Sometimes ranches right next door to BMA ranches are closed – so game is over there.
- Come teach my retarded state how to manage! PLEASE!!!!
- Thank you.
- I am going to try to go back to Montana. This spot I had a very enjoyable time last year.
- BMA is one of the greatest assets Montana has to offer. Keep up the good work. We, as users, should be able to get other “Regions” packets & maps easier.
- There was a good article in Nature about how fishermen overestimate success a field and how it impacted survey results, might be helpful for your project.
- Thank you for the great hunting! The people of Montana are very kind to hunters.
- I would like to see more sign in BMA’s instead of contacting the landowner. Some time on far away trips, the hunter must make an extra trip in order to gain permission. (Mostly antelope areas). I would like to see more landowners participate in this program.
- I really enjoy this hunting spot and hope it continues to stay open for many years to come.
- If someone else administers permission then that gives the landowner some idea of culpability if rules are broken or land is ruined. It’s important to keep landowners happy to keep their property available, one hunter can encourage or discourage landowners.
- Boundaries are hard to determine from maps provided.
- This particular landowner wrote a statement on the permission slip that states your guns will be confiscated if travel rules are violated. This statement bothers me + my group. Your BMA program is the best overall plan I have ever encountered. Thank you.
- Fitzgerald Ranch owners are very nice people to work with and helpful on being around to obtain permission.
- Mr. Lovaas makes you sign up for 3 days, even if going for one. He also berates you the whole time you are filling out paperwork. I called one evening at 8:45pm (been trying since 6:00pm, with no answer) and he yelled that evening + next morning about assholes that call after 9:00pm. I, on the other hand, would hate to see this land come out of Block Management. My comment on travel, least desirable, deals with the fact he makes you sign a gun forfeiture clause if he catches you driving – but he does not let you know where you can drive into,

park, etc. I park on the road to avoid any conflict. He sells the maps to his area, may show parking, but no one else in the program that I've encountered does this.

- This is a great program for hunters and landowners alike.
- I spend a lot of time hunting for big muley bucks and have had some fantastic experiences hunting on BMA's – primarily on those with limited numbers of hunters. Ironically, I like the ease of use of self-permission but the quality of hunt on the limited entry hunts administered by FWP. I like the concept of rancher administered permission but have found it in application to be a little cumbersome. For example I like to head into an area hours before light but often times can't get permission that morning before 6 or 7 am. Overall however, I think the BMP is a fabulous program in light of continuing decreased access issues.
- Coming into this area to hunt is a great pleasure. We hunt as a family. (Wife, Father, Mother, Brother and I). The BMA land makes it very nice, and through the years have met and made many new friends in Eastern Montana. THANK YOU.
- The Ruffato BMA is excellent. I've enjoyed my hunt there each time. See lots of deer on the Bitterroot bottom. Did mostly archery hunting. Mr. Ruffato is wonderful to work with.
- I have been very satisfied hunting BMA areas but I do look for the more remote places as I am looking for trophy class animals.
- With more ranchers leasing their hunting rights to "hunting clubs" BMP lands become more important each year. Keep up the good work of BMP. Thank you.
- Please make game retrieval easier. Thanks a lot.
- My uncle harvested a bull elk on Settle Ranch this year. I shot but missed at the same bull he later harvested.
- Great program. Best in country. Montana should be proud. Plus for economy.
- I believe Montana's BMP is the finest public hunting program in the country. Please keep it up. I also believe it brings substantial money into MT. from out of state hunters.
- Yes I plan to continue hunting MT. as long as my health permits or until I am priced out. I am on a fixed income, when I 1st came to MT. license was \$55.00. It has increased to \$127.00 little much? More than doubled in 8 yrs.
- Arthritic knees and hips make it hard to take out game in travel restricted areas. The ability to use a vehicle to retrieve game would be helpful though I don't mind walking in.
- I enjoyed it.
- If I'm looking to go on a well planned trophy hunt, I prefer private or state land, but for a good quick spot to chase some birds or sit in a stand I really enjoy hunting Block Management.
- I feel it is a great program.
- The owners of the BMA we hunted were very friendly and helpful.
- I love this program.

- I love the Block Program. The Pfaff Ranch was disappointing this year. We were doe hunting. Only found 2 deer on the edge of the ranch and they ran off on to the next ranch.
- The Campbells are great people. I have hunted them every year since 9/2000. They have great sage grouse numbers. I think the BM Program is super and leaves little room for improvement.
- I really like the walk in only areas. It keeps everyone on an equal playing field and tends to reward those who don't mind a sporting challenge. Its good for the hunter and the game, it makes fair chase the only option and is better for the environment. The "experience" is as important as harvest to me and my family.
- Better maps, the map was hard to read.
- I found that the people who gave me hunting permission were very friendly and helpful in making my hunt a happy experience.
- The BMA's are a great option for those hunters w/out private land to hunt, & those w/out lots of money. Great opportunity ranch owner/hunter relations.
- Can't remember exactly which BMA Dawson is. Think it's not the one where I got my antelope this past fall, but did make an unsuccessful stalk on Dawson.
- Great experience but with BMA maps were available for other areas easier.
- Appears to be an effective program for all parties involved. Thanks!
- Each year I hunt this area, the game numbers are less, noticeably since the Block Mgt. Program has been used. It would be more satisfying if the Lic. Drawing would be held earlier in the year.
- FWP should raise or increase fees on license \$5.00 to \$10.00 to increase BMA's thru out state – very good program.
- I think that it's the best thing hunters have going. Thank you.
- Thank you for introducing BMP to more & more private landowners. It is nice to find quality walk in only areas to hunt. I greatly appreciate the landowners' generosity.
- Need to be greater access to state and other public land that is land locked by private ownership. Is it public land or not!?? Thanks.
- This is a very good program. I wish it were available in Washington State.
- Did not receive permit until just before opening of doe season – too late to get permission for opening days – was bow hunting. Reintz Ranch best & closest BMA for me.
- Some roads were shut down that should have never been shut down. Restricted areas are not marked very well, I know their closed, but many other hunters don't know and go there, this is not right. If they can go there so should I be able to. Not Right.
- Very good program as it helps everyone. Ranches + hunters. Keep it up.
- I was a little disappointed in this particular BMA, because we were told not to go in certain areas but that same day we saw other hunters going into that same area. It seemed that the rules were changing per hunter.
- It helps everyone.

- On the Cobb Ranch an appointment is required. As the appointed hunter, you can bring others with tags. I believe the appointments for certain days is helpful especially on smaller BMAs such as Cobbs.
- Hunting land is getting scarce and outfitters taking too much of the hunting land. Need better map making for areas that are being hunted.
- I have no complaints. Great people, great fun. I will be back!
- See if you can talk Minnesota into adopting this program.
- Since MT has gone to BM a lot of ranchers have become very friendly to talk to, making permission a lot easier to obtain – I wish North Dakota would adopt a program like this.
- Great Program. Appreciate the people of Montana making it available.
- We hunted the first two weeks on Sept. for sharptail and huns.
- Some hunters may ruin BMA R3-340 (SG Miller) for others due to not adhering to hunter number limitations and method for obtaining permission, but especially for not heeding BMA boundaries. I love the proximity & ease of BMA (SG Miller)
- The simpler and easier the BMA system works the better it is for us hunters. Lucky for me that I utilize the BMA's primarily for upland game and there is little competition. Except on opening day! Be nice to have a couple more in the Bozeman/Livingston area to hunt. Thanks.
- BMA very good. Opens up areas + access for people that don't own land or can't afford outrageously high outfitter + guide fees.
- I very much appreciate the block management. I think it is very nice of the Fish Wildlife and Parks. If not I would not have shot my first Antelope. Thank you very much !!!
- We have come across some 4 wheelers and truck that have gone too far off the road and turned them into FWP. It is also nice to be able to hunt somewhere and not be turned down.
- Although I didn't see any elk there was good sign that they had been in the area. The most important aspect of this BMA is allowing access to public land through private property. So much public land is land locked and inaccessible due to private property.
- I do worry about the quality of bucks on BMA, so many hunters on these pieces, clean out all but the smallest bucks.
- I think you have a good system in place for the BMA. It makes things easier for hunters not from that area. In all I've enjoyed my hunting trips to Montana + plan to continue them in future years.
- BMAs are an excellent way to obtain access to hunting areas. Keep up the good work.
- Hanson Livestock Co. was great to deal with and even gave me some good directions.
- BMP is great program.

- I did not hunt the Williams Ranch. I called for permission to hunt and there was no answer. I left my name + phone # and what I wanted, I never got a call back.
- My self & my group were very pleased w/ the organized area. We plan on hunting there again for the 2004 hunting season. Thank you very much.
- BMAs allow hunting where not allowed before. Good program.
- My husband and I love the BMA system. The wildlife population is abundant and the BMA allows us to enjoy hunting and contribute to wildlife management. We strongly prefer the sign-in boxes.
- I found it a pleasure to hunt.
- Most of hunters encountered were courteous and careful. Occasionally they should have been turned in for HUI.
- I plan to hunt BMA in different areas. I think restrictions should be set on amount of people for size of ranches. Quality + quantity is going down due to over hunting. Money is given for amount of hunters let in no matter amount of animals taken. Region 5 maps include phone numbers and ranches names. Region 7 should do the same.
- While BMA is good for access it also looks to me that these lands are being over hunted and a limit of game should be considered for the amount of game on that specific piece of BMA.
- Need to make it easier to obtain names and numbers of BMAs and make it more clear when you enter or more important, leave an area.
- Maps are lousy, often illegible, frequently incorrect. Boundaries of BMAs are poorly marked, often not at all. Make for very frustrating hunting. Form that we fill out is too damn long. Get the name + vehicle type + tags + license #. Fish & Game should be able to get address & phone # from the names and/or license #. These are the 3 most common complaints I hear from all hunters. 1. Lousy maps. 2. Poorly marked boundaries. 3. Permission slip is too long and detailed.
- Hunted deer-Glendive area – block management. Hunted elk block management Spring Creek area. Landowner Pirrie – very good to get along with.
- I would like to see the Fish & Wildlife stop catering to the outfitters. I believe since I have been hunting (mid 70's) here, your agency is not only catering to outfitters, but guaranteeing them a living. I believe the agency is become like a lot of others, more worried about money than the resource and hunters.
- Primarily use this block to access forest land behind. Very little game on this block. Travel corridor during night time hours.
- I harvest most of my doe/fawn antelope/deer tags on BMAs. I have heard of some hunters having trouble with them, but I have not encountered it.
- BMAs are a good way to access land. Some landowners do allow too many hunters at one time, in which causes law violations & danger to other hunters. (Especially with out-of-state hunters) I do not mind the out-of-state hunters, but sometimes it seems they have no regard for "fair chase" when it comes to hunting antelope. It tends to make the hunt harder on those willing to abide by fair chase rules.

- I have been fortunate to know a ranching family whom are great people and I along with my wife & 3 and 4 others help the ranch a lot. We are all good friends & he gives us permission to hunt. We also thank the family with different tokens of appreciation.
- All the block management we encountered were great. Hats off to all the people of the Havre, Chinook area.!
- Q-34. It is good to go speak with landowner + I can see why they appreciate know who is on their property – sometimes its hard to catch them home other than meal times or family time + I hate to interrupt them!
- I am happy with the block management program as it has opened up more land for me to hunt on in the area I live.
- I had a great first time hunting experience & hope that this coming year this BMA is still available.
- This is a great and commendable program. MT sportsmen are lucky to have this type of access to private land. I would recommend limiting hunter #'s to improve game #'s. Thank you.
- Great Program. It opens up more areas to hunt.
- Each BMA is different. If you were to ask me about different BMA, some of the answers would be very different.
- There needs to be incentive for habitat. Native vegetation is being lost and game birds are not very abundant. If ground is in CRP or other subsidies we should not have to ask permission.
- Also hunted Clint McRae property in Rosebud Co. Very well managed operation with good animal numbers.
- At 57 years of age I don't handle the walk in stipulation as well as I used to and I damn sure am not about to have a heart attack trying to pack an elk out on my back. Game retrieval becomes an important issue after a certain age. If I can't retrieve my elk or deer without risking a heart attack, I will not hunt a BMA. Also all of the non-residents are being directed to BMAs, making it almost impossible for local tax paying residents to be able to hunt there without running into small herds of non-residents.
- BMAs have enhanced hunting for non-resident hunters as without local knowledge, obtaining permission to hunt is zero. Great program. Elk BMAs are too crowded in "Special or Restricted" draw areas, but it is expected so if one wants to hunt deer only, to go a BMA that does not have elk specified.
- I enjoyed hunting on BMA, the upland game birds were more than I could count, and I plan on going to BMA more often. Can you please thank the landowner of the land for me! Thank YOU!
- Block Management is the best program I feel in the United States. Praise to all the landowners who open their land. It gives people the chance to explore and hunt a lot of country that otherwise would not be available.
- The ranch we hunted on was very cooperative to us and told us where to go and how to hunt it. It was a very enjoyable hunt.

- Very good program. Needs more money per hunter day to encourage better quality of big game species. Develop areas for “trophy quality.” Species numbers could still be managed with “B” tags (ie-typcially large # of Non-residents) but trophy quality would be increased with proper standards. BMA could charge \$50 fee for people wanting to use BMA units enlisted in the “trophy areas.”
- Very difficult to remove a downed animal from property. A lot of fences to cross. Publish a calendar of due dates for each species of big game animal that can be hunted. IE: Apply BMA permission by ?
- Although we had access to hunt Hanson Land, we had to adhere to their rules of never shooting into a pasture or land behind an orange colored fence. We did not shoot into any of these, even though we saw a number of nice, mature elk there. Oh well, that’s why it is called HUNTING & not killing.
- I don’t recall exactly where the C&S BMA is. We hunted several BMAs on our trip. I think the BMA program is very good and should be continued and expanded. I believe travel should be restricted to established roads or trails with some exceptions for game retrieval.
- Without Block Management – locating places to hunt, or rather granting permission because about impossible these days.
- Will return again next year with other friends.
- I enjoy your state, and its hunting of upland grouse. Thank you.
- I was disappointed to find that private groups are leasing hunting land from ranchers to serve wealthy hunters.
- Great program. I wonder why some ones are signed up, they are like a biological desert. Thank you.
- Enjoyed the vast land access. Thank you.
- Deer season starts too late anymore. Last 3 times weather turned bad. Had to cut trip short. Came home with unfilled tags. Bonus points don’t add up. I get double applications. I have 2 ALS# (#8, #23 why) get missed on drawings because of ? Why can a out of state person no longer get a antelope tage any longer. (Been years...) One year why is it that I have not gotten tags or money returned?
- As listed in Q#1 I hunted w/ friend so he knew rules about vehicle restrictions and other rules, so just followed his lead. Also, hunted more than 1 BMA and do not remember one name from others, but overall most were similar. Thanks and good luck.
- I have hunted other states that don’t have BMA and sometimes it is very hard to find a place to hunt or very expensive. I think it is very good for a non-resident.
- I never in the past twenty years I’ve hunted Montana every had a problem gaining access. Drawing tags since the guide program is another issue. Manly people are getting to push people out of hunting – few can afford it.

- I do not own a ATV. However I think people should be allowed to retrieve game with motorized vehicles. Just a thought. It would also help older men like my father who would have a hard time packing out his game. Thanks.
- I am very grateful for this particular piece of land being in block management and for the entire program.
- I like the idea of the Block Management Program as it allows the public to hunt private land that would otherwise be leased to outfitters. I would be willing to pay more for a hunting license if it guaranteed more access to private land. However, sometimes I think there needs to be travel plans for game recovery (which is allowed in some BMA areas).
- This is an excellent program and I would like it to be increased! I would prefer that all BMAs be sign in only due to landowners sometimes not being home.
- I think BMA is very important. It helps keep the outfitters and the rich from buying up all the private land. The average income and lower needs to be able to hunt private land also.
- I like how the hunters do not have to obtain permission themselves and how we can just sign up our names in the box, hunt, and record any animals we harvested.
- It so happens that I live on this BMA property and assist the landowner with control measures (ie: sign in box) for this BMA. I know the numbers and for the most part the habits of the hunters on this BMA. I have hunted this property for many years and always enjoy it. However, there are the occasional experiences where the hunting pressure even though limited, was more than a good hunt could tolerate. My comments probably color the results of this survey. Hope they help.
- Great program – we hunt BMA extensively.
- Called Mitch Miller first and he basically discouraged me from hunting on his property + told me to call his brother, Dennis Miller who owns the ranch to the south. Dennis Miller told me not to come by on Saturday because he had 2 guys from Wash. State hunting his property, but told me to come by on Sunday after 12pm and joked around about what I was going to give him for hunting on his property. Giving these guys anything for allowing their properties to be called BMAs is a joke and waste of Montana tax payers money, especially since their properties are overgrazed wastelands.
- Block Management Program is the finest hunting enhancement program I have ever experienced and it keeps getting better.
- There are areas of BMAs that are not managed properly. There was never a way to gain access, due to the owner never being around.
- I like BMA because it gives you a place to hunt and it also helps the farmer or rancher plus it helps you guys too. I wish there would be a way that FWLP could get all the farmers & ranchers to do this.
- Great program. Best one for regular folks who can't compete with lease or fee options. Also good for promoting sportsman landowner relations.
- I think its great that MT. has this block management program. It gives hunters more hope of getting permission to hunt.

- Method of putting slips in boxes makes life easier for hunters and landowners. In this BMA last year several properties were included on same slips. Great idea. The less times a person has to run around getting permission, signing slips, etc., the more enjoyable and less stressful the experience. I don't see why a person should have to sign so many slips to hunt an area.
- Thanks for taking time to examine what I think about Block Mgmt.
- In my opinion I think all Block Management Areas should have sign in boxes so hunters don't have to pick a certain day. Thank you.
- Sign in boxes are esp. great in big areas like NE. MT.
- Great program. Keep it up!!
- Great program for out of state hunters.
- I think your program is excellent!
- Keep up the good 706, thanks to the rancher and farmer.
- Q34. Hunter administration seem to work in areas for hunting upland game and waterfowl. However I feel that hunter administration would work poorly in areas of hunting pheasant, deer, elk, & antelope. I think the programs are working well, with declining access to private lands in the last 10 years, I have lost hunting access to 4 different areas to outfitters. Without the availability & block management, my hunting would be greatly reduced.
- Why does the F&G need to micro-manage the BM system? Publish the ranchers phone number & name with the booklet. Don't make me go in and beg for the info. The F&G will only give out 3/day if you call in but unlimited numbers and names if you go in. What is with that? Another problem is if a ranch/farm doesn't have pheasants then don't list them as such. I encountered numerous places around Sidney that when I would call and ask about upland birds, the owner would say don't bother, we have very few. I think the F&G employees use this system for their own access. They know where the good stuff is and we get the rest.
- I would like to see 3-5\$ added to price of conservation license. And use the money fore more land in block management to ease pressure on existing BMA.
- At some point you always have an unethical hunter "driving" in a "walk in only" place scaring game. I feel this wouldn't happen as often if the major part of the BMA parking areas were closer than the 2 ½ to 3 mile walk a person has to make before engaging any game. Some BMAs don't have a person to retrieve your game and as a person gets older it gets quite a chore to pack your game 2 ½ to 3 miles. Better location of parking areas, less unethical out of state hunters, buy this I mean 2-way radios aren't to be used but a person sure sees a lot of cell-phones used lately while out hunting. Don't get me wrong I love the walk in hunting but the rules should be followed by everyone. A person tends to get a little angry at times after stalking game 2 to 3 miles and then have some "road warrior" ruin a days hunt. BMA is a great tool to acquire hunting privileges, but better rule enforcement is needed.
- Need to limit reservation times to that are not private reserved hunting refuges.

- At 74 years of age I don't hunt as hard or hit the real tough ground where the elk and deer are most plentiful and the best trophies. I still enjoy the hunt and it gives me a chance to hunt on land where game retrieval is easier.
- Great program!
- This was the first year I've hunted in 20 years which has brought a lot of changes. I believe without the BMA program there would be no hunting for the average hunter unless he was willing to pay \$\$\$. It would be nice if the outfitters did not have the clout they seem to have which has changed hunting probably forever.
- The farmer and rancher should administer permission to the hunters. That way if there are questions or restrictions the hunter will be informed and what is expected of them. A lot of this can be done over the phone. (except permission slip) Block Management is a good tool for the hunter and landowner.
- The McCloud Ranch is the ideal way to use the BMA system. I have hunted the McCloud Ranch in Wilsall, and am very happy with the results. They have good harvest numbers. I also hunted other ranches in the area and none seem to be managed as well as the McCloud Ranch. The Arthun Ranch seems devastated by over hunting as far as wildlife goes. I also hunted BMA around Roundup MT and they also seemed over hunted. I found that ranches that have limited hunter #'s increase harvests and animal population. It is my recommendation as an avid hunter and outdoorsman that you use the McCloud Ranch in Wilsall's Crazy Mountains as an example.
- Excellent program, especially for those of us who walk a great deal + do not expect to limit out every time. Also very good for those with less money + for relatives.
- Overall, excellent program!!
- Hunter limitation on valley land is fine, maybe good, but out in the hills around Sidney, finding a landowner takes more time than a person has, and should be or would be better to be sign in boxes.
- Hunted many places (don't even remember this landowner) or ever where he lives – so I stopped doing the survey, because I couldn't complete it accurately for you. Sorry.
- I'm glad that FWP has the BMA program so us common folk get access to places to hunt. And also I've met some great people (landowners) because of this program.
- I found that lot of hunters did not call for permission to hunt before logging in for the day. Some days had more hunters than allowed for the day. I greatly appreciated the Miller Ranch for letting me hunt.
- Block Management in most areas benefits only non-residents and takes away the hunter landowner relationship. This BMA is one exception but most are over hunted. The Adams Ranch should be commended!!!
- BMAs have kept open many areas to public hunting – even though I had hunting rights open to me prior to BMA introduction – they have allowed the landowners to better control access & enlist those people they trust to help police property –

having to sign a slip keeps people more responsible – which is good for our hunting public.

- Need to limit # of hunters per day. Put restriction on size of animals harvested.
- Block Management has done a lot to enhance hunter/landowner relationships as well as to open access to private land. I have heard a rumor some regions (not 7) want to do away with the program. I hope this does not happen.
- Great program! Need to continue to expand, especially opportunity for upland game birds, pheasants.
- Great Program!
- This last year wasn't a very good year because animals were bunched up on areas where it was still greener. Most of those places you could not hunt. It made it harder to get bucks off these areas.
- Great job with Region 6 Block Management. Hunter use seems to be increasing, so program expansion is crucial. Thanks.
- F+G managers need to survey land in the program, to ensure that it even has huntable populations of animals on it. A lot of unproductive acres are enrolled every year that shouldn't be. Don't enroll the land just because the landowner wants to. Make sure it's productive before the contracts are signed.
- When a "block" is pretty much surrounded by closed areas (rented out to guides or "no hunt") the animals figure this out and know where to hide – not in the huntable area. Harvest success is directly relational to the ratio (and geographical configuration of a game area) of area in block management to non huntable area. It's over complicated and at times, so very simple. Resolution is in a management plan for a game area that is specific to the needs of that area in which the participants have ownership in the development and on going management toward an overriding goal. Good luck.
- Type 2 BMA's seem to limit the # of hunters.
- It's a great program. They are doing a nice job.
- The best BMA procedure was the one I didn't have to call & receive a slip of paper & sign in anyway at a specific location. The BMA just east of the Potter BMA, where they had a limit of 6 hunters & you had to check in @ the books (sign in place) 1st to see if it was full or not.
- Great deal, thanks to all the great landowners for participating & FWP for getting the \$ put together.
- Thank you for making BMAs available
- Like to see gopher/coyote hunting included in BMAs when closed to other hunting.
- I'd like to see varmint (ie: coyote gopher) hunting included relative to access closure dates, etc.!! I love to call coyotes!! & would like to do so past 12/15!!
- The landowner is very accommodating and helpful. Please express our thanks. Several seasons ago, my brother and I harvested elk on this BMA – landowner helped with game retrieval. BMAs are a great deal for hunters. Also I greatly

enjoy the BMA at bottom of Kimber Gulch in Elkhorns. Very good elk numbers this year. We had outstanding days in the field. Also saw bighorn rams.

- The way Grady's and Vincent's BMA sign in , works well. These two ranches are very good to the hunters. I hunted in the Big Hole country a number of years back. It was a real pain. Had to go to a bar to sign up. The only areas open to BMA were near the highway and the different owner caused people problems.
- We were told numbers were limited and we could not get on till late on second weekend. When we got there, there were hunters all over the property – with only one sign in at the gate. To start with, they told us we had to have our license number to sign up yet when we got our number they said they had already signed it up the first 10 days with people before they had their license numbers.
- There are other block management areas in our area I won't use because of the way landowners make it hard to gain permission + also use it to give family and friends preference.
- This is a great way to hunt lands that we have never been able to hunt before. I like it.
- I feel there should be a set time that hunters can access the BMA because the lights from vehicles spook the game animals. There should be a limited number of hunters per area.
- I like BMA – I like to sign myself in and out of areas.
- I also hunted elk on Block Mgmt. Near Butte (Elk Park) on John Kountz's land – he was very friendly – appreciated just having to just up once per season – vs – choosing days etc.
- I feel this is a great way to continue the good relationships between the landowners and the sportsmen. It also is a great way to police the private land.
- We need travel access to remote areas/walk in access to smaller total areas. Some sort of plan to allow one hunting party per area @ a time (or time segment) otherwise the owner should stagger the hunters so that there's not too many at one place @ one time.
- Grady BMA. Nice area, close to town. Whitetail bucks a little hard to find.
- I don't use block management very often. Most out of state hunters hunt it and shoot all of the small bucks. They don't get a chance to grow up. BMAs are always over used. The more ranches that BMA, the less chance of taking a trophy buck in that area.
- It would be nice if there were more ways to retrieve game in walk in areas, like a 4 wheeler to retrieve game because I don't think they are hard on the environment and could be used only with landowner permission.
- I will use the Block Management Program, but only under special circumstances. In general, far too many hunters are being allowed on most properties resulting in wasted efforts by hunters. Due to the reduced hunting opportunities I find myself forced to seek out large blocks of public land in order to have a reasonable chance of success. This success is the result of walking in to remote areas.
- It would be nice if you could keep all 4 wheeler + snowmobiles out of the area.

- I do not like having to put in for a buck mule deer permit in any area. Too many mature bull elk in HD 380, cow elk numbers are going down. Too many roads closed on forest service and BLM lands, this will alleviate hunting pressure on private lands. The FWP must get rid of their European and Eastern mentality of the Kings Deer.
- Block Management is a very good program.
- This area needs closed roads blocked better. People travel where even there is two tracks and those who stay in Right Roads and walk elsewhere waste time and money by running into spooked game or often some areas get closed due to not obeying rules.
- I learned the hard way about the difficulty in obtaining permission to hunt BMAs in the 700 Region but this landowner was a delight to deal with. Most others I called were polite but booked.
- I am 34 yr old, and right now I enjoy the road restrictions, but as I get older, the restrictions may force me to hunt in more accessible areas. When competing against other hunters, a large majority are 50 or younger.
- Well I think MT needs a wolf season. And I think age should help in drawing special tags like (sheep, goat, moose) along with the bonus points. In other words, I want to draw some tags before I get too darn old to hunt. Help, help, help.
- I primarily use this BMA as access to Forest Service property. I occasionally hunt on its upper limits. I would like to recommend that hunters not have to write their name on check in (only ALS and address) for privacy reasons. (We seasoned hunters don't like to advertise where we hunt!)
- The BMA program is a good one. I believe it encourages landowners to open their property to responsible hunters due to the registration and subsequent ability to keep track of hunters on the BMA.
- The only problem I have is when rules don't apply to everyone. I hunt an area that is walk in except for friends of the family.
- Block is a great program. I hunt a mixture of Block, State, Private, and WMA's and have a good time every year figuring out where the best habitat, for that year, may be.
- Better info on game damage hunts in/off season would be nice.
- Although we knew at the beginning that our chances of seeing a lot of elk were slim, we enjoyed the experience and I would like to say "Thanks" to FWP and the landowner.
- Thanks for expanding the program. Access opportunities are appreciated.
- It seems anymore if it is not BMA it is privately leased.
- Ranchers are great people – very friendly and totally cooperative with guests. I look forward to hunting them in future years – they have restrictive rules and allocate a specific area for each hunter or group of hunters. Excellent experience!
- I've known these people all my life I grew up in Jordan. Even though I didn't get any game I will probably go back just to visit and hunt again! Thank you.

- Excellent resource to access more than public land. Will definitely continue to use BMAs.
- Would be great if we could retrieve game by use of vehicles. Maybe at certain time of day. BMP is by all means a good thing, thank you, and keep up the good work.
- I used the Weingartner BMA primarily to travel through to BLM land where elk are more plentiful. I see primarily mule deer on the Weingartner property itself. Mr. Weingartner is a very nice friendly person.
- People should make more private land available for hunting.
- Elk were there but not in the numbers that were there in preseason scouting. Very dry conditions.
- Saw a lot small mule deer bucks and a lot of does. Elk were very spooky. Lack of water in usual spots forced elk to move from usual spots.
- My wife and I did not shoot a deer but were completely satisfied with the hunt. Beautiful area, rugged, not easy to hunt, but we saw many deer and 4 real nice bucks – 4 pt +. I had permission to hunt some adjoining property but really like this prop. Best. I called landowner for permission to hunt and was politely informed how to register. Travel restrictions was to stay on established field roads if it was dry – if wet or snow, keep off.
- It seems most BMP's in our area are either poor hunting areas or in need of deer population control. Most hunters seem to be hunting horns so this doesn't help in the long run. More rules would benefit hunters and landowners in some way since it is private property.
- Would help to shut land off to hunting so it won't be over hunted. Animal numbers have decreased over the last 3 years. Limiting size of bucks would also help. 3 point or bigger one year then 3 point or less alternating each year or so.
- Think outfitters and other guides should not be able to use BMA or state lands.
- Some landowners lie about level of game to get you to show up. No regulation on # of hunters ruins the experience for all.
- I think BMA's are a great way to open more hunting to the public. A good program!
- Me and my partners have tried to obtain permission to enter and been denied permission due to # when there was no one obviously there hunting. But were denied on a place where deer + elk tags are for private land only. I have a good friend whom is handicapped. I wish only that he had more access to these places. The Ruffato's have always if I ask given me the keys to the ranch to take him. With all my thanks.
- I'm very happy Block Management is taking place around MT. I'm alarmed at the rate that good hunting ground is disappearing. I believe that outfitting is the biggest problem facing hunting in Montana today. They are using money to buy up hunting area that used to be open to all hunters rather than the rich. All in all, keep up your efforts!
- Excellent program.

- I wasn't aware of the area before I got there. I think I ended up in 2 different Tom Williams units.
- I very much appreciate the BMA programs. Even if I am unsuccessful at times, the experience is great and the hospitality of Compton Ranch is above and beyond. Thank you for asking, keep up the good work.
- I believe this area has many violators, with regard to hunters sneaking on to section 13 from the road to the east.
- Ed and Rod Smith are very hunter friendly and a real joy to hunt with.
- I also tried to hunt Kelly Flynn's ranch. It was very difficult to get permission. I do not like the way he does his block management at all.
- I like having the hunting access, stay on established roads as is most landowners request. Being older and somewhat handicapped, having roads to get through is very important also helps much for game recovery. Thanks.
- They need to quit shutting down roads that access good hunting. People that respect the land get punished for it.
- This block management needs to have limits on how many hunters are allowed and that they cannot discriminate anyone going on this property. Thank you.
- Questions are much too broad. Every BMA is different + answers depend on the species you are hunting.
- I had opportunity to harvest small mule deer buck but chose not to.
- Good program.
- I had encountered 13 bull elk but they were all small rag horns. Never saw a big bull.
- Block Management is good. Most ranchers are nice people, and getting permission isn't a problem. However, ranchers have a right to control hunter numbers on their land. Hunters are responsible to treat the ranchers land with respect, and obey the ranchers and FWP rules.
- I do not actually hunt in this BMA. WE have to park our vehicles on this gentleman's ground to access forest service trails. There are quite a few hunters that do this. I have noticed where the public parks there appears to be some weeds starting to grow.
- Landowners are due some form of monetary compensation as currently in place. However, they should never be allowed a quota of tags. Based on my experience, programs like Colorado's "Ranching for Wildlife" really suck. The Colorado program promotes the privatization of game herds. Montana should avoid any moves to "privatize" game herds. Our current program is working. Leave it as is.
- Hunter # limitations and mgmt rules of travel. More important # of game animals on BMA.
- Only 1 out of approximately 20 hunters bother signing in.
- The drawing is a kind of cool way to hunt places like Shanely Creek. Thanks for sending me this!

- It seems to work pretty good. Web access might save you a bunch of money in printing fees and postage. Give it some thought.
- Over in the Chester area, you have to call and reserve to hunt those BMA's, that's how it should be around here.
- I hunted WT does on opening day at early season I was successful. I hunted WT duck on opening day of general season but all of the hunters had moved out. I have hunted this ranch for many years. They do an excellent job of managing the hunt, to reduce conflict with other hunters. We need more BMAs like this in areas 322+333.
- Program is easy to understand and utilize and gives landowners an alternative to leasing hunting privileges. Both my sons took antelope from block management at Hysham, and one son took a mule deer buck on Block Management at Reedpoint. The Salvagni Ranch is close to home with easy sign-in so we can go out and hunt on limited time where we would otherwise have to stay home.
- You need to work on retrieval procedures such as 10:30am to 2:30pm with supervision. Please ask Peterson's to put a nice metal gate up. Check it out and you will see what I'm talking about.
- I congratulate FWP on their ability to get ranchers to sign into this program. It is a boon for all hunters.
- I believe that some Block Management Areas do not have sufficient amount of game (game birds) that they claim to have. I also hope that my license dollars are not spent on these types of places. Most places in Region 3 do not have sufficient game birds to be listed in the block management book. We now travel up north to enjoy hunting on block management areas, and have given up on these local areas!
- I did not hunt on the BMA. Signed in because we passed thru BMA to hunt on BLM land.
- It's a great program. Keep it up. It helps the hunters and the owners.
- Q34. I am split between the two types. There are some BMAs that are almost impossible to get on. There there is Bill's place where it was a zoo. There are plenty of birds until 8:00am opening morning. I have run into two extremes. I like the easy access of walk up self administered BMA's. It is very flexible to mine and many other's work schedules. There is no easy answer. Hope this stuff helps.
- This last season the concentration of non-resident hunters around Froid on opening weekend was VERY high. I don't mind n.r. hunters sharing the resource (my brother hunts form out of state each year), but they overwhelmed the area. Montana cannot support as many pheasant hunters as North or South Dakota and it is a mistake to try and follow them. The resident hunter has been sold down the river once again. That is certainly a big reason I no longer hunt big game. Thank God that there is still superb hunting for sharptail and huns. For whatever reason not nearly as many non-residents hunt them. Please give resident hunters a little more consideration before it is too late.

- I like the idea of BMA. It helps to insure the ability of (?) have a place to hunt.
- It is nice to administer my own permission, yet it is also opens the door to more hunter pressure. I do not know how best to balance. It is nice to know if I travel several hours to hunt that I will have a place reserved. It would also be nice to prioritize Montana residents before out of state hunters.
- For someone coming from out of state, not knowing any landowners, having this permission to hunt already set up is a big benefit.
- Great program. Please expand if you can!
- Landowners who let hunting I am all for them getting assistance and help with game management. People who don't let hunting should not have any help with fencing out deer or elk.
- More blocks should be managed by sign in boxes. Better marking of corners, and parking areas marked.
- BMA it is the best program that you have came up with (thank you)
- Too much public land is being locked up by gates, and by private owners who control access to public land.
- Block Management + MFWP are unprepared for early season bird hunters. Numbers listed to call are often not in service, land not posted. More information desired about opportunities for specific game – need some sort of rating system. Block Management overrun by big game hunters most whom have no respect for land or law + hunt from road.
- Great hunt.
- I try enjoy the BMA program in Eastern Montana. Keep it up! Pass it on!!
- I have hunted Montana since 1965. Never have I seen as many mule deer as the 2003 season.
- I didn't like the wording of this survey. It's confusing...The BMA's are great-they're better when all you need to do is sign-in + walk. I like the fact you're interested in pursuing them & looking for ways to enhance...I just don't understand the reasoning/explanation behind some of your questions.
- I am very pleased with Montana Game Dept. & the whole state in general. Will probably retire there someday. I greatly appreciate your generous hunting privileges.
- After living and hunting in several other states, I find this program to be one of the best for public access to private land. Both parties benefit. Thank you!
- Restrictive hours, no one home or returning calls makes it difficult to get permission sometimes. By far the worst experience we had was with the Pugsley Ranches (#10,5 Marias River BMA) – the answering service system will only work if workers are familiar w/ BMA system. (They did not know if we needed to display a permission such as self-administered card. Once FWP trains us how to use the system, they need to make sure implementation is consistent, not confusing). We spend 85% or more of our time on BMAs – it's a great program and I hope it grows.
- John and MO Potter have been great to work with over the years.

- I think the BMA program is great. In Minnesota we do not have such a program and the limited amount of public land is frequently over hunted.
- We felt this year it was difficult to gain access to many ranches. Is this caused by combination lodging + hunting? Booking way in advance? Since we are in the out of state lottery, it is difficult for us to book in advance.
- I think the block management is the best access to private land that I have seen. I really like the system. Please continue.
- I greatly enjoy hunting in Montana. This is a great program for self guided hunting. This is a very economical way to hunt out West for us. The number of animals is amazing & we have always harvested what we were looking for. Thank you for opportunities to hunt your wonderful state.
- Only unfriendly locals – in bar. Good to see that part of MT. hasn't changed much. Everyone else was very nice. Everybody in my party got muley deer – I was too picky and got skunked – but got about 10 birds – 110 deer, 50 antelope, 0 elk, 1 very large rabbit, 1 porcupine, 200 birds.
- Great program that allows access to otherwise closed lands, also gives the hunter a chance to meet face to face with the landowner which builds trust and relationships and sometimes even friendships.
- I really don't know anything – I follow wherever my dad goes. I am not a decision maker.
- Tell the Claiborne Ranch to get with the program.
- In 2003, 2001, 1999 the wolves were in the area. Had the elk scattered more difficult to find herds of elk. In 2002, herds were left alone, elk were not pushed as much.
- Too many out of states the first day. Would be nice to go back to resident only the first day.
- I was very pleased with the way block management worked. I will use it again. I also like the walk in areas best. It keeps those lazy so called hunters from hunting in there. Keep up the good work!!!
- I like the system and the varying rules. Seems necessary for the variation of circumstances. Keep it up.
- Would like to see more walk-in only BMA's.
- At my age I would like to see some type of game retrieval system – that is the ability to drive to a downed animal.
- This BMA is a really good one. They are very friendly people.
- The BMAs for myself + the party I hunt with, are extremely satisfied w/ game #'s. The program is great and allows hunters opportunities beyond our expectations. Thanks & keep up the great work!
- I think the block management is a very good tool for the hunting public.
- Answers are a combination of archery & rifle seasons. Archery season wasn't too bad, but general season was a mess with tons of rude, irresponsible hunters everywhere. Will hunt this area this year (2004) during archery season, but I won't deer hunt during general season, unless something changes!!

- The owners of Little Indian Cr. are great people, very accommodating and helpful.
- Great program for non-residents as it is possible to gain hunting permission by telephone. Keep up the good work.
- Thank you MTFWP for securing access to Redstone (and ALL the others)
- The block management program around Culbertson and Froid is the best I have encountered. I don't like to "hunt" for a place to hunt. These conglomerates with self administered permission are perfect.
- Hunting is very important to me. Access is also very important.
- Generally have had good experiences on Type 2 BMA. Type 1 can get a little dangerous so I avoid if any one else has signed in.
- We did not hunt but did stop for a permission slip in case we did want to hunt here.
- Most of the block management land we saw didn't have prime habitat. Much of the best habitat for pheasants is found right at the farm yards. I'm not sure how this lack of habitat can be corrected.
- The system is not perfect but much better than prior to the program. Instead of having to contact the specific Regional FWP office is the information about areas available + participating in the program accessible on the internet? If not please consider adding the BMA program to FWP's site. Thanks.
- It was nice that they put their phone number on the BMA sign.
- Block management areas are enjoyable to hunt on. It's just other hunters that don't close gates when needed to do so that makes other hunters look bad.
- When I first started hunting (big game hunting), it was almost impossible to not get permission, then a few people started leasing their hunting rights. Then came along BMA, which was another way to combine money and hunting and greatly increased over hunting. Now we can hunt in one of the following areas: Where no hunting is allowed; where the rights were leased & you still can't hunt; in a BMA, where there are more hunters than animals; or at one of the very few places where landowners never played the money game with BMA or leasing and hunting/landowners. Relations are as pure and good as they used to be in the old days. Hunting gets a little worse every year and will continue to do so.
- BMA is a great way to insure not overcrowding of a hunting area.
- BM is a great program and I would be willing to pay more for the program.
- We mainly use the Chevallier Ranch to access the Sieben Ranch where we hunt elk!
- Thank you folks and the landowners for this wonderful opportunity to access lands that were in the past not accessible for outdoor recreational experiences!!!
- Thank you and the landowners for a wonderful program!!!
- At my age it is hard to walk long distances, trails for ATV to retrieve would help, mostly I hunt by myself.

- I don't like driving to each region to get maps. Publish all the info + maps for the whole state into 1 book just like the hunting regs. Then you can pick it up at the local FWP office + plan you trip.
- Betty Johnson was a very nice person to talk with and very accommodating to hunters. Although we did not hunt there this time, I will definitely ask again next time. It was a very positive experience. We definitely saw game animals on the BMA when scouting before season started.
- Too many people. Too many 4x4 wheelers – with little regulations.
- Although we did not get anything, we were all satisfied with the land. Saw a lot of elk but were looking for a bull.
- Excellent program. Slightly difficult to gain knowledge of BMA program for initial visit. Good work, congratulations Montana!!!!
- Keep expanding program. Conduct more hunter outreach to maintain good conduct & landowner relations/cooperation.
- I believe the block management program to be the salvation of blue collar hunters. I would be happy to pay increased fees to enroll more landowners in the program.
- The past 3 hunting seasons game has been scarce because of the drought in the mountains – the animals come out late in the season to eat hay and stay close to the ranch buildings.
- The reason I prefer type 1 permission is many times landowners are hard to get on the phone even when calling during designated hours and then when you do get through they are full for that day and many times, I felt like they were bothered by my call even when they set the time to call.
- BMA hunting is an outstanding program and should be kept permanently. Access to hunting and fishing is vital to the program of wildlife management. Thank you.
- I like to hunt BM. Thanks.
- Everyone should be able to hunt BMA without making reservations and being denied permission because everyone pay's the fee for BMA. Landowners showing favoritism to local area hunters. Everyone should get the same chance to hunt.
- Our hunting party was directed to move (by outfitter) when we were camping on state land adjacent to BMA. We filed a complaint with MFWP as well as DNRC – the follow up by these two agencies was satisfactory.
- I do support the BMP. Unfortunately, it seems that quite often only marginal land is involved. Additionally, as payment to landowners is at least in part to pay for use/repair of roads, gates, etc., I would like to see more vehicle access for game retrieval in place.
- Due to the unpredictable nature of my job, I find that the sign in method of obtaining permission or hunting on BMAs where no permission needed is much more convenient. Most of my hunts are last minute with no time to obtain permission in advance.

- Would rather be like the old days when a hand shake was good enough, but times are changing. Money talks. Only thing left is to change with it. Would have this problem if we didn't have so many outfitters leasing all the private lands.
- Great program. Great people. I appreciate the landowners letting me use their land.
- Keep up the good work! Block Management is wonderful for a serious bird dog/upland hunter. I'll be back in Plentywood for this coming season.
- Excellent program.
- BMA's are a great land management program and offer upland hunters great opportunities. Hopefully the program will stay intact!
- I've had best luck in walk in BMAs or where hunter numbers are controlled. Type 1 BMAs work well on smaller acreages where you can sign up for several of them in the area then just move to the next if game numbers are low or hunter numbers are high. Type 2 BMAs should control hunter numbers relative to the numbers of game hunted and the acreage. I have noticed over the years that over hunted BMAs have the antelope pushed off by about day 3 of season. They generally always end up on land where hunting isn't allowed. The more controlled BMAs and walk in BMAs tend to have more consistent numbers after the first few days. One way to obtain permission on larger controlled Type 2 BMAs would be for the hunter to apply for a permission slip on line through a lottery type draw. It's not fair that the first phone calls always get the permission. I'm a farmer and am not always around a phone on day 1 of BMA sign ups. The guy that sits at a desk all day with his own secretary is generally the guy that's hunting the best BMA's on opening day every year.
- Hamilton Ranch was an extremely positive experience. The Hamilton's are great folks. Not as positive with the Browning Ranch.
- Hanson Ranch is great during archery but way too over crowded for rifle...I won't even go down there after rifle opens. Love the BMA's though... Keep up the good work and I appreciate you guys working to give us places to hunt.
- Great program. I hunted primarily on Ada Weeding's Ranch to which I was very successful and hope to obtain permission again.
- My experiences with all the hunters came early in the season when customarily more people are out and about. Later in the year maybe the situation got better, but a friend I know who hunts the BMA had a problem with people driving into areas that were off limits to motorized access. They must have come in from over Saddle Mtn to the west he felt.
- One of the problems I encountered while hunting certain BMA's was that it was difficult to know the boundaries. One the BMA that I filled the questionnaire for, there was a serious lack of animals. I noticed very many predator tracks.
- I was wondering how I get chosen to fill out all your surveys whether by phone or mail and for the most part do these surveys and NEVER get chosen for an either sex permit when others have been chosen 2 or more times. I would also like to know why non resident drawings are held before resident drawings. With my

work and the people I hunt with need as much time in advance to put in for vacation and we usually don't get the results back until August. Pretty hard to plan hunting trips on such short notice. Could I please get some answers.

Thanks.

- Really like to hunt this way but the rule where you leave your car and walk in only if you killed a deer pretty hard to drag it out!
- I like the block management program. The owners have been good to deal with.
- I enjoy just getting out to hunt whether I get anything or not! But what is upsetting is to go and check in & there is no map!
- I'm more concerned about road closures the older I get because it is hard for an older person to retrieve game out of walk in areas.
- Nelson Farms provides one of the most pleasant & educational hunting experiences I've ever encountered. They are so knowledgeable about their land & hunting!
- This is a good program, it helps the rancher + the hunter.
- The only problem with the Craddock Ranch is having to deal with the outfitter that hunts there and doesn't let anyone hunt on adjacent land that you have to drive through to get to the north section.
- My son took a spike.
- I enjoy Block Management for its access to private land.
- It is a great program for Montana that will hopefully be maintained and managed in the future hunting years of Montana.
- I wish there was more BMA closer to home.
- Anything the State of Montana can do to enhance the program would be very appreciated. In many other states, fee hunting is the only available means of hunting.
- All experiences I had with BMP has been great. Alvin Clark and wife very nice people. We love MT. Hope you keep this program.
- BMP is good because there is getting to be so many places you can't go.
- Block Management and/or other access management systems will be important tools for the years ahead.
- I don't remember if this survey is for myself or my son Seth – I am his father.
- There is not enough ranches signed up in Madison & Gallatin County.
- Hunted several BMA's in this area. Can't say that I can separate Duck Lake from the others so I answered based on my total experience. BMA's are so important in this time of limited access I would pay more license fee or an additional fee to encourage and expand the program across the state.
- I understand travel rules are primarily for weed control. I respect the desire to control weeds. I wash my truck before I leave California & once I get to Montana before I go off road. I would be willing to participate in a state sponsored weed abatement program, especially if it would reduce travel management rules.
- It's a great resource & wonderful program.
- Block Management is a great program.

- It's great for hunters.
- One of the best programs in providing game bird hunting.
- Some have been very good some are poor. Overall it is a good program, I've made some good contacts. It is definitely worth continuing.
- I like having maps to show where I was and the area.
- Next time make the survey fit the envelope with one fold & it will save you lots of postage.
- Should have game retrieval, the owner or the hunter should be able to drive and get big game out.
- I'd be willing to pay more for a hunting license to obtain more BMA.
- BMA only way to hunt in the future or fish.
- Need to focus on again using hunting as a game management tool, instead of managing it as a sport. 3 yrs ago I was hunting on land adjacent to a ranch that sells trespass rights for Big Bucks (archery & rifle). I heard one rifle discharge no less than 40 times down in the brush over a 3 hour period. I'm willing to bet you didn't sell tags for those does.
- I believe the BMA program is excellent. The downside is there is not enough ground for the number of hunters who want to use it ie: causing a lack of game due to pressure.
- I hunted several areas of BM and if # are not limited to a reasonable # the game is pushed off and the rancher is overwhelmed and then drop the BM program payment should not be paid on # of hunters but of reasonable expectation of # of animals to be harvested. Good habitat receive higher pay. Good game management should be rewarded also not just the # of hunters.
- Great program – keep up the good work! Property that provide access to public property in the program are critical!
- BMA program is very good. The drawback is when adjacent landowners deny hunting access and all of the animals move to the closed property and stay there.
- I strongly believe the BMA program is one of the best programs devised for creating more opportunities for hunting and improving landowner hunter relations.
- I hunt only on BMA where hunter adm. Permission. Other types make access too difficult and complicated.
- The Block Management Program is a great benefit to hunters. I have had problems obtaining permission from some landowners that participate in the program. They often do not answer the phone + very seldom return calls. Walk-in only is the best way of travel management. In the Grady BMA, there are a lot of hunters who never check in at the roster box!!
- BMAs that are self registered are needing a rule that says if someone is hunting in there already come back the next day, or after the ones that are in there leave. To prevent user conflict and enhance your hunting experience.
- Block Management is a very good thing. I praise the landowners and FW&Parks for their efforts.

- On Fort Keogh the number of hunters per day should be limited. A little less hunters.
- This year 03 I was only a spotter – riding along with good friends, but I will hunt again in the same place.
- We enjoyed hunting there and hope to do it again. Thanks.
- Just love the BMA system. I had quit hunting antelope & most upland birds because it was so hard to get permission to hunt. Now I can do so again. Thank you. Last year the Antelope numbers on Pulis property were less than in the past. But in previous years we always saw lots of them. I've heard there were more permits in that area (338) by about 300 additional hunters. This may be why we couldn't find as many animals in the past.
- Some BMA are more desirable/productive than others. To get permission/scheduled on these BMA's. Some are difficult to receive permission unless scheduled months in advance.
- I actually did not hunt what you call hunted this BMA. Looked from the directions of track up Marsh Creek the elk were on forest service so I spent a day hunting that area. Was into the elk. But did not see a legal bull to shoot.
- Quartz Creek Access BMA should keep the gate unlocked all year, not just general hunting season.
- I really enjoy the BMA hunting. I really like the idea that we only have to sign in and not get permission from the owner.
- Block Management is nice. It gives us a place to hunt with all the people shutting down private land everywhere it's hard to find places to hunt anymore.
- I would like to see more designated road maps.
- When hunting this year me and my son got stuck while hunting this area. We encountered about 9 pick-ups and asked if they could help us get out. Some stopped but didn't offer any help. Others seen us standing along side the road and drove by. We were stuck from 3:00pm till 3am. 12 hrs. I called 911 and they sent a county deputy to help us. He came and gave us a ride home. I called my nephew in Poplar and he came down the same night and we went back to my pick-up. With 1 pull and my pick-up came out. What's the matter with these other hunters. Prejudice or scared they might help someone.
- You guys have a great state for nature and game lovers. Keep it that way and don't roll over to gay marriages and all of "civilized" society's ills. Do what you have to manage your animals, and I'll keep coming back to drink a sea of beer and maybe even put a deer in my freezer. I like Block Management and I enjoy hunting in Montana!
- I have lived and hunted in Montana for 3 years, still learning the use of BMAs. I do have high hopes, but I am somewhat skeptic.
- Too many people, hunter #'s on many BMAs need to be lowered. Hunter #'s are nearly always too high. We need more BMAs to counteract the current trend towards leased land. I would be willing to pay much more (50+\$/year) to have more lands enrolled in Block Management, and hunter pressure spread out over a

greater area. If there are further questions, I would be very glad to talk more about the subject. I think that the Block Management Program is wonderful, but needs revision. Thank you.

- Thank you!! But I would like to be shown or have prior knowledge before hunting begins as to where I can go as to new areas and if last year's areas are still open! You are doing a good job!
- I found that most times when there is no hunter limitations that you have too many people. But I do like BM. A few years ago my son had a moose permit for Wisdom, and there was a lot of BM over there. Thanks.
- Love new system of getting permission.
- Too many bird hunters tying up block MA where deer are over abundant. Need certain days for big game hunting only. Some areas don't even get hunted except for birds.
- Having moved to Montana 8 yrs ago, BMA's have been a real plus in accessing hunting lands.
- Was happy when the out of state hunters couldn't hunt for the first week or two of pheasant season. Was disappointed with your decision to buckle under the business owners and only help them out for 2 days. Is it business owners or hunters who pay most of the licenses.
- I can only say that Block Management Program is Great for a hunt like me. It give me a chance to hunt. I love it, thank you.
- The problem with much of the BMA lands where I hunted is the rifle hunters kill nearly all the bucks. Therefore, each year mostly you see 1 ½ yr. Old bucks with their first set of antlers. You should go to point restrictions, and age restrictions to the extent possible, on BMA lands. In a very few years, the quality of your low-cost public access hunting would be improved in a dramatic way. Overall, Montana is doing a wonderful job, particularly with trout. Your hunting-big game- can be a lot better if you go to the rigid kinds of restrictions you have for trout.
- This is a very good system. Wish Minnesota had one. Thank you.
- Great to have a place to hunt and hope to see more BMA open up. But this next year, the bird hunting is going to suck – the winter weather has killed about 80% of our pheasant population. Feel free to call me if you need more info.
- I enjoy hunting Eastern Montana a couple times a season, and it's a long drive. The Type 1 BMA allows me to go on short notice & be assured of having a place to hunt.
- BMA areas need to be watched better for hunters breaking the rules. My biggest concern is hunters driving trucks or ATV's off the roads into restricted areas.
- Limiting the number of people on a BMA is the primary reason I hunt BMA. I usually see game on the BMA, but I usually am very selective and harvest only mature animals ic: 4 pt deer & 5 or 6 pt elk. I like to avoid the crowds and restricted vehicle access usually accomplishes this. I fully support the Block Management Program.

- RE: #37. I will continue to use BMAs, but the ones I have hunted in the past 3-4 years all have very few animals. It seemed the private property next to any BMA is where the animals are going to be, regardless of how many BMA's we have access to.
- I am concerned about game retrieval. Staying on established trails is fine but I like to idea of at least being able to drive on trails to retrieve game – this is true for FS – and state lands also. This is a great program and I like it. Antelope & elk and the only game that is a little crowded but I can go find another spot.
- Overall good, but upset to find out that area was restricted when I arrived. I would have changed my date.
- I recently moved here from Michigan which has a minor program compared to the well organized very functional Montana Block Mgt Program. It enabled me to identify prospective hunting areas holding my target species and easily get permission and feel very welcome in doing so. I also appreciate the follow up being done to be sure that ranches involved are productive. I would be happy to pay more for this program's management and expansion.
- Although the BMA program has shortcomings, the largest of which is arranging for permission slips and dates, the program is an absolute asset to the future of hunting in Montana. The participators in BMA are generally friendly and helpful. Especially in this particular BMA (Spear Lazy U)
- We appreciate BMA and landowner cooperation and support for hunters. Thank you.
- I enjoy the fact that BMA's expand my hunting areas adjacent to public lands and open up some good private land hunting for the average every day hunter.
- I do not mind walking to hunt or mind getting permission to hunt, but game retrieval can be a big pain in the butt.
- I think BMA has opened up a lot of acres to the public that were not always easy to secure permission on. It is an excellent program to incorporate for landowners and hunters alike.
- Would like greater access to more BMA's. Don't like being denied access when my tax dollars support the program.
- Too many areas have too many beaurocratic restrictions. Seems to vary by warden/biologist. Should put money where we have fewest restrictions.
- I was very impressed with the landowners.
- Block Management is a wonderful tool to keep land open to the general public. It needs to be continued to preserve this essential aspect of our heritage!
- I feel it's a good system for hunters so that more land is not leased from farmers to outfitters. I hope more farmers will participate in the future! Some of us cannot afford to pay outfitters.
- This is a good program in that the landowner controls number of hunters and yet you know his land is available for hunting. I don't know how much remuneration he receives but I understand the \$10 access fee that I pay is to pay for block management.

- Please expand BM for us local hunters. In the past 10 years, 75% of my hunting ground has been bought up by rich Minnesota hunters, and it won't be long before it is all gone. Give us the 1st week of season and the last week of season for locals.
- As a new comer to this area I have a few places to hunt private property but not many. Some of these Block Management Areas are almost as good as private. Thanks!
- The reimbursement system needs to be revamped! There are way too many people hunting at one time.
- I would like to thank Ron & Kenny Arthun for their contribution in this type of hunting.
- I would hope that Montana Fish & Game would continue to solicit landowners to participate in the BMA program. It is a very worthwhile endeavor. I also hunted other BMA areas – at least 3 others last year.
- The decrease in expected game does not appear to be the number of hunters but the number of increased wolves in this area. The last two years, the number of game sightings have decreased considerable. In 1995, 96, 97, 98, 99 the elk numbers were much better in this same exact area. Since 2000 it has been decreased some but last 2 years has decreased noticeable, while the hunting pressure has remained about the same. Thank you for the opportunity and for the work on BMA's and all wildlife support.