

EXHIBIT 9
DATE 4/9/2013
SB 397

Ravalli County Fish & Wildlife Association

P.O. BOX 238 • HAMILTON, MONTANA 59840-0238

To the House Fish & Game Committee:

RE: SB-397 Establishing provisional hunting seasons for certain large predators

POSITION: Ravalli County Fish & Wildlife Association hereby goes on record OPPOSING this bill based on the following reasons:

- Running hounds in Grizzly country, which is most of Western Montana will result in Grizzly bear, dog encounters. Grizzly bears don't tree and the result will lead to dead dogs, and mad houndsman. Dogs can't tell the difference in bear types.
- The real problem lies with a HB 42 passed in 2003 that set artificial elk objectives. (attachment) Hunting pressure accounted for 5900+ elk harvested in 5 years in the upper Bitterroot Valley. (See attached)
- Takes away biological management of our wildlife, and legislates it.
- Our Department already has many programs just in place to control predators without this legislation. Lions are going to be reduced by 30% in region 2. Wolf seasons have been liberalized, and bears seasons extended, increasing harvest by 30% (e-mail rswood.msa.treasurer@gmail.com for the 18 page file) 544 lions harvested statewide so far this season, only 6 other years were higher.
- This bill re-writes Montana's wolf management plan. Idaho's is not the same. We could open the door to litigation. There's issues that have not been addressed in court.
- Snares are light weight, and cheap to produce and use. There would be pet, people conflicts that could help anti trapping groups ban trapping on public lands.
- There's no scientific proof that these declines are attributed solely to predators.

Once again we would like to state our **OPPOSITION** for HB-397

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ravalli County Fish & Wildlife Ass.
Robert Wood Legislative Chairman
Hamilton, Mt
406-531-5043

The result of HB 42 passed in 2003

87-1-322. Calculation of available habitat. When determining the total acreage that serves as habitat for elk, deer, and antelope, the commission shall consider public land and private land for wildlife management or habitat enhancement purposes. This calculation must be reconsidered and provided to the public by October 1 of each odd-numbered year.

87-1-323. Viable elk, deer, and antelope populations based on habitat acreage – reduction of populations as necessary. (1) Based on the habitat acreage that is determined pursuant to 87-1-322, the commission shall determine the appropriate elk, deer, and antelope numbers that can be viably sustained. The department shall consider the specific concerns of private landowners when determining sustainable numbers pursuant to this section. (*Even in areas without conflicts and high in public lands*).

(2) Once the sustainable population numbers are determined as provided in subsection (1), **the department shall implement, through existing wildlife management programs, necessary actions with the objective that the population of elk, deer, and antelope remains at or below the sustainable population**. The programs may include but are not limited to:

- (a) liberalized harvests;
- (b) game damage hunts;
- (c) landowner permits; or
- (d) animal relocation.

(3) The department shall:

- (a) manage with the objective that populations of elk, deer, and antelope are at or below the sustainable population number by January 1, 2009; and
- (b) evaluate the elk, deer, and antelope populations on an annual basis and provide that information to the public.

Elk harvest from Hunting District 250 through the Darby Check Station, 2002-2012.

Elk Class	Year										
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Antlered	58	71	45	67	46	42	24	35	23	8	10
Cow	15	71	153	134	128	46	42	36	2	2	2
Calf	3	5	25	27	21	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total	76	147	223	229	195	89	66	72	25	10	12

Elk harvest from Hunting District 270 through the Darby Check Station, 2002-2012.

Elk Class	Year										
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Antlered	54	246	94	239	117	136	70	83	120	110	83
Cow	49	178	118	289	218	316	99	82	56	60	45
Calf	8	32	28	56	37	68	24	7	6	7	2
Total	111	456	250	584	372	520	193	172	182	177	130

Elk harvest from Hunting District 321 through the Darby Check Station, 2002-2012.

Elk Class	Year										
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Antlered	39	61	47	54	40	36	42	71	31	11	20
Cow	39	48	33	62	65	45	77	44	124	91	56
Calf	10	11	16	114	22	9	20	14	22	23	14
Total	88	120	96	230	127	90	139	129	178	125	90

Elk harvest from Hunting District 334 through the Darby Check Station, 2002-2012. (HD 334 was split from HD 321 in 2011.)

Elk Class	Year										
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Antlered										4	17
Cow										17	11
Calf										5	0
Total										26	28

Black Bear Harvest Trends in Region Two, 1985 - 2011

Year	Annual Harvest Classification			% Females in Harvest	% Males in Harvest	Seasonal Harvest		Median Age of Harvested Black Bear ^b		
	Unk.	Male	Female			Total	Spring	Fall	Male	Female
1985	2	163	106	271	39	60	117	154	4.0	4.0
1986	3	159	128	290	44	55	159	131	3.0	5.0
1987	0	156	87	243	36	64	100	143	4.0	4.0
1988	0	150	98	248	40	60	131	117	4.0	4.0
1989	1	146	83	230	36	63	80	150	3.0	4.0
1990	0	160	95	255	37	63	112	143	3.0	5.0
1991	1	151	72	224	32	67	97	127	3.0	5.0
1992	1	157	99	257	39	61	105	152	3.0	4.0
1993	0	144	85	229	37	63	99	130	3.0	4.0
1994	1	146	76	223	34	65	72	151	3.0	4.5
1995	0	155	88	243	36	64	70	173	3.0	3.0
1996	0	122	72	194	37	63	72	122	3.0	4.5
1997	1	144	76	221	34	65	57	154	3.0	3.0
1998	0	188	77	265	29	71	69	186	3.0	4.0
1999	0	148	78	226	35	65	80	146	3.0	4.5
2000	0	165	73	238	31	69	100	138	4.0	4.0
2001	1	122	76	199	38	61	88	111	3.0	5.0
2002	0	163	82	245	33	67	74	171	3.0	4.0
2003	0	170	86	256	34	66	100	156	3.0	4.0
2004	1	192	112	305	37	63	104	201	4.0	5.0
2005	0	162	85	247	34	66	120	127	3.0	4.0
2006	0	141	67	208	32	68	85	123	4.0	4.0
2007	0	201	81	282	29	71	90	192	3.0	3.0
2008	0	159	72	231	31	69	84	167	3.0	4.0
2009	0	170	74	244	30	70	73	171	3.0	4.0
2010	0	217	119	336	35	65	136	200	4.0	4.0
2011	0	221	137	358	38	62	158	200	a	a

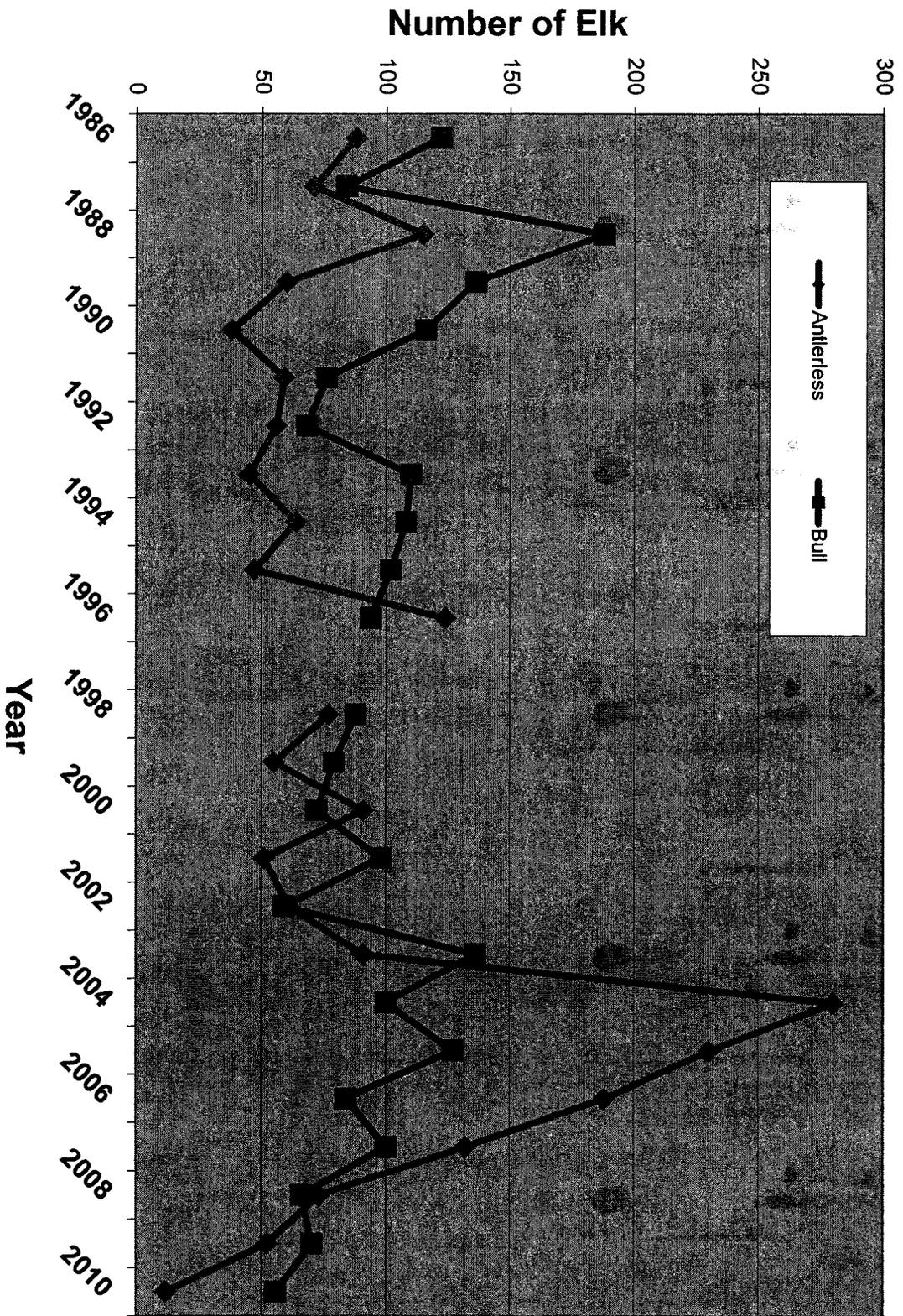
^a Data unavailable.

^b Age estimated by analysis of tooth cementum layers. Teeth were not available for every bear harvested.

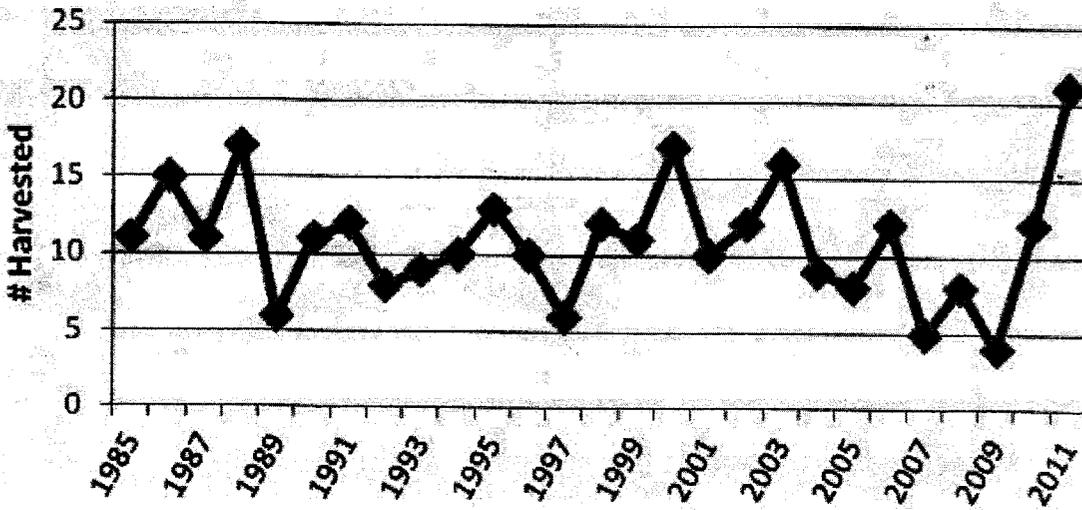
^c Beginning in '94, spring season shortened to 15 April - 15 May for BMUs 108, 280 & 290.

^d Beginning in '10, spring season extended to 31 May for BMUs 200, 280 & 290. BMU 200 established in 2010, previously portion of BMU 108.

HD 250 Elk Harvest 1986-2010



**Spring Black Bear Harvest in BMU 240
1985-2011**



**Spring Black Bear Harvest in BMU 280
1985-2011**

