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# A-plus hunting for antelope

If you came to Weston County in the hopes of bagging a trophy pronghorn antelope this fall, your chances are better than they've been in the past decade.

"Antelope numbers may be down just a little bit, but they're still excellent, and horn quality is really good this year. It's a pretty good year to get a buck antelope, probably the best since 1998 at least," Wyoming Game and Fish Wildlife Biologist Joe Sandrini boasted.

His WGF counterpart on the enforcement side agreed with the assessment.

"It's all good. It should be good on public land, and it should be good on private," Game Warden Dustin Shorma confirmed.

Successful antelope hunts, whether on public or private land, are nothing new for this part of the country, especially for hunters who are willing to put a little effort into it.

"The folks who actually want to get out and walk in the walk-in areas have had pretty good success the past few years," Sandrini mentioned.

Antelope horn growth has benefitted from this area's emergence from a seven-year drought, but increased moisture in

the winter and spring months can take a toll on the number of young antelope who survive.

"We had some antelope dying this spring. I think we had some intestinal stuff going on, and antelope don't store fat like those other animals, so when you get to spring they can be drawn down, and if you get some rough weather, it can tip them over, or make them susceptible to something else," Sandrini reported.

It doesn't appear that those losses will have much impact on hunting this season however.

"Reproduction last year was well below average, and it was again this year, but we're still over the number we would like to have on the ground, and even though numbers dropped a little bit, seasons are still liberalized," Sandrini explained.

"It is going to be good antelope hunting this year. Total tag numbers are the same as last year, we just jockeyed some things around," Shorma agreed.

That jockeying may be a bit confusing to some hunters, though, and both men

— Continued

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