

In this issue:

Archery deer hunting ideas
Highly prized permits
Big game hunting ideas for 2011

Statewide Deer Archery Hunting Could Happen Again in 2010

The facts are in, and the findings are clear—based on the acres of public land that have deer habitat, the Southern Region doesn't have any more archery hunters in it than any other region in the state.

In fact, based on the number of acres per archery hunter, the Southern Region is actually the least crowded region in Utah.

For that reason, the Division of Wildlife Resources is proposing that general archery deer hunters be allowed to hunt anywhere in Utah that's open to general-season hunting.

(In 2009, archery hunters had to choose one region to hunt in during the first two weeks of the hunt. After the first two weeks, they could hunt anywhere in Utah that was open to general-season hunting.)

All of the DWR's recommendations for Utah's 2010 big game seasons are available at www.wildlife.utah.gov/public_meetings.

Learn more, share your ideas

Once you've read the proposals, you can share your thoughts and ideas one of two ways:

RAC meetings

Five Regional Advisory Council meetings will be held across Utah. Citizens representing the RACs will take the input received at the meetings to the Utah Wildlife Board. Board members will use the input to help them set rules for Utah's 2010 big game hunts. They'll set those rules at their Dec. 3 meeting in Salt Lake City.

You can participate and provide your input at any of the following meetings (**two notes: the Southern Region meeting begins at 5 p.m. The Central Region meeting will be held on a Thursday.**):

(more)

page 2

Southern Region

Nov. 3
5 p.m.
Richfield High School
510 W. 100 S.
Richfield

Northern Region

Nov. 10
6 p.m.
Brigham City Community Center
24 N. 300 W.
Brigham City

Southeastern Region

Nov. 4
6:30 p.m.
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main St.
Green River

Central Region

Nov. 12
6:30 p.m.
Springville Junior High
165 S. 700 E.
Springville

Northeastern Region

Nov. 5
6:30 p.m.
Western Park, Room #1
302 E. 200 S.
Vernal

E-mail

You can also provide your comments to your RAC via e-mail. E-mail addresses for your RAC members are available at www.wildlife.utah.gov/public_meetings.

The group each RAC member represents (sportsman, non-consumptive, etc.) is listed under each person's e-mail address. You should direct your e-mail to the people on the RAC who represent your interest.

Acres of land per hunter

"The data is clear—archery hunters are not the only reason some people feel the Southern Region is crowded during the first part of the archery hunt," says Anis Aoude, big game coordinator for the DWR.

Aoude bases his finding on two statistics:

- the acres of public land in the region that have deer habitat
- the number of archers who hunt in the region.

You can see the statistics at www.wildlife.utah.gov/public_meetings/info/09-11-08.pdf.

(more)

Crowding—what’s causing it?

Even though the Southern Region has more acres of public land per hunter than any region in Utah, that doesn’t mean certain parts of the region aren’t crowded from mid August to mid September.

“Southern Utah is a very popular place to camp and hike. And that’s what’s causing most of the crowding,” Aoude says. “We don’t feel we should restrict and penalize archery hunters because other people enjoy being in the woods too.”

Aoude says archers can also be part of the crowding challenge, but that situation isn’t unique to the Southern Region—it happens in every region in the state. “There are certain areas in every region that are popular and draw a lot of hunters,” he says.

Archery committee

A committee helped the DWR draft the statewide proposal for 2010. The committee included three archery hunters from southern Utah, two members of the Utah Bowhunter’s Association, two members of Bowhunters of Utah and Bill Fenimore, a member of the Utah Wildlife Board.

“The data helped the committee see that archers aren’t the only reason the Southern Region gets crowded during the first part of the archery hunt,” Aoude says. “The committee took the data, looked through it and then recommended to us that Utah return to a statewide hunt for the entire general archery season.”

###

Contact: Mark Hadley, DWR Relations with the Public Specialist (801) 538-4737

Apply for a 2010 Sportsman Permit

Applications for Utah’s most prized hunting permits accepted soon

Applications for next year’s most prized Utah hunting permits—2010 sportsman permits—will be available by Nov. 2.

Only Utah residents may apply for sportsman permits. One sportsman permit is offered for each of the following species: Desert bighorn ram, Rocky Mountain bighorn ram, buck deer, buck pronghorn, bull elk, bull moose, hunter’s choice bison, hunter’s choice Rocky Mountain goat, black bear, cougar, sandhill crane and wild turkey.

If you draw a sportsman permit, the dates you can hunt vary. But in most cases, they’re longer than the regular season dates. You can also hunt on almost any unit in Utah that’s open to hunting the species you drew a permit for.

(more)

Highly prized

“Sportsman permits are highly prized,” says Judi Tutorow, wildlife licensing coordinator for the Division of Wildlife Resources. “If you’re one of the lucky hunters who draw one, you’ll have plenty of days—and plenty of areas—to hunt.”

You can apply for a sportsman permit starting Nov. 2 at www.wildlife.utah.gov. Applications must be submitted no later than 11 p.m. on Nov. 19 to be entered in the draw for permits.

Draw results will be posted by Dec. 10. If you draw a permit, you’ll also receive a letter in the mail. “Not many hunters draw these permits,” Tutorow says. “If you receive a letter in the mail, it wouldn’t surprise me if you frame it!”

For more information, see pages 23 and 24 of the 2009 Utah Big Game Guidebook (www.wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks) or call the nearest Division of Wildlife Resources office. You can also call the DWR’s Salt Lake City office at (801) 538-4700.

###

Contact: Mark Hadley, DWR Relations with the Public Specialist (801) 538-4737

Major Big Game Hunting Changes Could Happen in 2011

The time of year when you can hunt deer and elk in Utah might change in 2011. Several months ago, the Utah Wildlife Board directed the state’s wildlife agency to:

- give big game hunters more hunting options to choose from
- reduce crowding among hunters who are in the field.

The ideas the Division of Wildlife Resources has come up with wouldn’t be implemented until the 2011 hunts. But the changes are big enough that the DWR wants to get the ideas out now so there’s plenty of time for you to comment.

Rules for the 2011 hunts will not be approved until November 2010.

“The ideas we’ve come up with would give hunters some new options,” says Anis Aoude, big game coordinator for the DWR.

(more)

Learn more, share your ideas

You can learn more about the DWR's ideas—and provide your input and suggestions—at five Regional Advisory Council meetings held across Utah.

Citizens representing the RACs will share with the Utah Wildlife Board the input received at the meetings.

You can participate and provide your input at any of the following meetings (**two notes: the Southern Region meeting begins at 5 p.m. The Central Region meeting will be held on a Thursday.**):

Southern Region

Nov. 3
5 p.m.
Richfield High School
510 W. 100 S.
Richfield

Northern Region

Nov. 10
6 p.m.
Brigham City Community Center
24 N. 300 W.
Brigham City

Southeastern Region

Nov. 4
6:30 p.m.
John Wesley Powell Museum
1765 E. Main St.
Green River

Central Region

Nov. 12
6:30 p.m.
Springville Junior High
165 S. 700 E.
Springville

Northeastern Region

Nov. 5
6:30 p.m.
Western Park, Room #1
302 E. 200 S.
Vernal

E-mail

You can also provide your comments to your RAC via e-mail. E-mail addresses for your RAC members are available at www.wildlife.utah.gov/public_meetings.

The group each RAC member represents (sportsman, non-consumptive, etc.) is listed under each person's e-mail address. You should direct your e-mail to the people on the RAC who represent your interest.

Big Game Ideas for 2011

The following are among the ideas the DWR is considering. A calendar that shows when the proposed seasons would be held is available at www.wildlife.utah.gov/public_meetings/info/09-11-03.pdf :

(more)

General Deer and Elk Hunts

Four major general-season deer and elk changes could occur in 2011:

Two general rifle deer hunts

The first idea would keep the number of general rifle buck deer permits the same as it is now (no more than 97,000 permits), but it would split Utah's general rifle deer hunt into two hunts.

Each hunt would be nine days long, just like the hunt is now, but hunters could choose to participate in an early hunt or a late hunt.

The early hunt would be held at the start of October. The late hunt would happen at the end of October.

Having two rifle deer hunts would reduce by half the number of hunters in the field at any one time.

"You'd still be able to hunt the same number of days you can hunt now, but you'd have fewer hunters in the field with you," Aoude says. "We think this change would make your rifle hunt even better."

Hunting deer and elk at the same time

Another idea would let you hunt deer and elk at the same time. The DWR is considering holding the general rifle buck deer hunt and the general rifle bull elk hunt on the same days.

"This change would allow you to hunt deer and elk at the same time," Aoude says. "But you wouldn't have to do that. If you wanted, you could obtain a deer permit to hunt during either the early or the late season, and also obtain an elk permit to hunt during the season when you're not hunting deer.

"This change wouldn't take anything away from you. But it would give you another option you could take advantage of, if you wanted to."

Hold muzzleloader deer and elk hunts at the same time

In addition to holding the rifle deer and elk hunts at the same time, the DWR is considering holding Utah's general muzzleloader deer and muzzleloader elk hunts at the same time too. The general muzzleloader deer and elk season would be held in the middle of October, between the two rifle hunts.

The DWR is also considering adding a second muzzleloader elk hunt—a general any-bull elk hunt. That hunt would happen in mid November.

Same start dates every year

A third idea is to start all of Utah's big game hunts on the same calendar days every year. For example, if Aug. 21 was chosen as the day to start the general archery elk hunt, the season would start on Aug. 21 every year, even if Aug. 21 didn't fall on a Saturday.

(more)

The only exception would be if a start date fell on a Sunday. Then the season would probably begin on the preceding Saturday.

"This idea would keep the season dates consistent from year to year," Aoude says.

Limited-entry Deer and Elk Hunts

The DWR also has two ideas for Utah's limited-entry deer and elk hunts:

Dates for limited-entry elk hunts

One idea would change the dates of the limited-entry elk hunts. It would also give archers first chance at the elk.

Starting in 2011, biologists would like to start the limited-entry archery elk hunt in early September and end it in mid September. That's when the elk are at the peak of their breeding season.

(The breeding season is also known as the rut. During the rut, elk are less wary because they're focused on breeding. That makes it easier for hunters to take them.)

After the limited-entry archery hunt ended in mid September, the limited-entry muzzleloader elk hunt would start the next day. Muzzleloader elk hunters would have the elk to themselves for four days. Then the limited-entry rifle hunt would also begin. Both the muzzleloader hunt and the rifle hunt would end on the same day in early October.

"Because they use rifles, rifle hunters have a better chance at taking an elk than archery or muzzleloader hunters do," Aoude says.

"Even if we move limited-entry rifle hunters to the latter part of the rut, they're still going to be successful," he says. "But allowing archery hunters to hunt during the rut would really increase their success. And their success rate would probably still be lower than the success rate rifle hunters find during the rut."

Hold the general and limited-entry rifle deer hunts at the same time

An additional idea is to hold the limited-entry rifle buck deer hunt at the same time the general-season rifle buck deer hunt is held.

The hunt on some limited-entry deer units would happen at the start of October. The hunt on other units would happen at the end of October.

"Limited-entry deer hunts and general-season deer hunts are held on completely different units," Aoude says. "Holding the hunts at the same time shouldn't create any conflicts between limited-entry hunters and general-season hunters. They'd be hunting on separate units."

(more)

Once-In-a-Lifetime Hunts

Bull moose season

Utah's bull moose season is currently split into two hunts. The DWR is considering combining the two hunts into one hunt. The hunt would be held from late September to mid October.

The bull moose change is the only once-in-a-lifetime species change the DWR is considering for 2011.

"The ideas we have right now are a starting point to get our biologists and sportsmen talking about possible changes for 2011," Aoude says. "We're wide open to the suggestions hunters and other folks have."

###

Contact: Mark Hadley, DWR Relations with the Public Specialist (801) 538-4737