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## **Duck Hunt Areas Might Close This Fall**

### *Biologists need to burn phragmites*

If you like to hunt ducks and geese at Ogden Bay or Farmington Bay, there's a Web site you need to visit this fall—[wildlife.utah.gov/burn](http://wildlife.utah.gov/burn).

If the conditions are right, biologists will burn plants called phragmites at both of the waterfowl management areas this fall.

The WMAs will be closed on the days the burns occur.

Information about when the burns will happen will be posted at [wildlife.utah.gov/burn](http://wildlife.utah.gov/burn) as soon as it's available.

In addition to the Web site, you can also receive Twitter updates about the burns. You can receive the updates by signing up at [www.twitter.com/DWRburn](http://www.twitter.com/DWRburn).

### **Improving the marsh**

Division of Wildlife Resources biologists would like to burn phragmites at the Ogden Bay WMA two times this fall. They'd also like to do one burn at the Farmington Bay WMA.

Both WMAs are in northern Utah.

The burns would happen on weekdays. The WMA supervisor would close the gates to the WMA the night before the burn occurred.

The gates would remain closed on the day of the burn. The public would not be allowed to enter the WMA.

"To keep people safe, we need to close the WMAs on the days the burns occur," says Randy Berger, wetlands coordinator for the DWR.

"We wish we didn't have to burn during the hunting season, but the weather threw several curveballs at us this year."

### **Conditions must be just right**

Every fall, DWR biologists spray phragmites on the state's WMAs.

Phragmites is an aggressive, nonnative plant that's taken over parts of many of Utah's marsh areas. Phragmites crowd out the native marsh plants that provide birds with food and places to nest.

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After spraying phragmites in the fall, the biologists give the chemicals time to work. Then in the spring, they return to the areas they sprayed and burn them.

Several weather, wind and air-quality factors have to be just right before a burn can happen. Unfortunately, those conditions didn't come together this past spring or this past summer. The only alternative biologists have now is to try to burn the areas during the hunting season this fall.

"If we don't burn the areas this fall, the phragmites will recover from the spraying we did last fall," Berger says.

Biologists usually know about 12 hours before a burn whether conditions will allow it to occur. However, the conditions can change, and a burn can be cancelled at the last minute. "That's why it's important to sign up for the Twitter updates and to visit [wildlife.utah.gov/burn](http://wildlife.utah.gov/burn) regularly," Berger says.

For more information, call the DWR's Northern Region office at (801) 476-2740.

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

## **Apply for a Cougar Hunting Permit**

*Applications accepted until Oct. 12*

You have until Oct. 12 to apply for a permit to hunt cougars on limited-entry units in Utah this season.

You can start applying on Sept. 21. Applications will be accepted at [www.wildlife.utah.gov](http://www.wildlife.utah.gov) until 11 p.m. on Oct. 12.

As you're completing your application, if you have questions or need help, call the nearest Division of Wildlife Resources office or (801) 538-4700 no later than 6 p.m. on Oct. 12.

You'll be applying for a limited-entry cougar permit. Permits to hunt on Utah's harvest objective units go on sale Nov. 8.

"If you draw a limited-entry permit, you cannot buy a permit to hunt on a harvest-objective unit," says Judi Tutorow, wildlife licensing coordinator for the DWR. "Before you apply for a permit to hunt on a limited-entry unit, make sure a limited-entry hunt is the hunt you want to participate in."

More information about the two permits is available in the 2009 – 2010 Utah Cougar Guidebook. The free guidebook is available at [www.wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks](http://www.wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks). You can also get a copy at DWR offices and from hunting license agents across Utah.

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**Apply for a bonus point**

If you won't be hunting cougars during the 2009 – 2010 season, you can still apply for a bonus point that will increase the chance that you draw a permit in the future.

If you'd like to apply for a bonus point, make sure you submit your application at [www.wildlife.utah.gov](http://www.wildlife.utah.gov) no later than 11 p.m. on Oct. 12.

**Questions**

If you have questions about hunting cougars in Utah, please call the nearest Division of Wildlife Resources office. You can also call the DWR's Salt Lake City office at (801) 538-4700.

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