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FALL / WINTER

HUNTING GUIDE

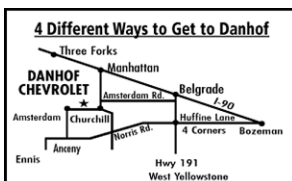
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\$246/mo* WAS \$23,995
 NOW **\$21,869**
 #401353A

2013
FORD F-150



\$417/mo* WAS \$39,830
 NOW **\$37,521**
 #B90565

2016
NISSAN TITAN XD DIESEL



\$517/mo* WAS \$52,869
 NOW **\$46,600**
 #503151

2014
DODGE RAM 2500



\$519/mo* WAS \$51,259
 NOW **\$46,821**
 #318936

2012
NISSAN XTERRA



\$247/mo* WAS \$24,888
 NOW **\$21,999**
 #513758

2013
FORD F-150



\$284/mo* WAS \$27,521
 NOW **\$25,350**
 #A54913

2015
DODGE RAM 2500



\$502/mo* WAS \$47,269
 NOW **\$45,288**
 #697210

2015
NISSAN TITAN



\$367/mo* WAS \$33,421
 NOW **\$32,928**
 #512132

2014
DODGE RAM 2500



\$433/mo* WAS \$40,225
 NOW **\$38,938**
 #120981

2014
FORD F-150



\$378/mo* WAS \$35,298
 NOW **\$33,943**
 #B90230

2014
FORD F-150



\$611/mo* WAS \$56,897
 NOW **\$55,376**
 #C71541

2012
FORD F-150



\$289/mo* WAS \$27,888
 NOW **\$25,796**
 #A90939

2004
DODGE RAM 1500



\$158/mo* WAS \$13,469
 NOW **\$11,995**
 #228265

2005
GMC 1500



\$179/mo* WAS \$29,434
 NOW **\$13,688**
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Hunters' time to shine, we hope

It's fall. If you are a hunter, this is your time. Your time to enjoy crisp mornings on a ridge as dawn breaks, to take in evenings at camp around a fire under a shimmering night sky, to put meat on the table.

This is your time to shine, to use the privilege that allows us to hunt. It's also the season when we wear our ethics on our sleeve for the world to see.

Ethics? What, you might say, does ethics have to do with hunting.

Plenty.

Ethics is our moral compass to what's right and what's wrong; even if something is legal it can sometimes be wrong.

Take, for example, fair chase, the idea that we give animals a chance, that in fair chase there's a fair chance the hunter sometimes kills his prey but often doesn't. If you doubt that, you are either lucky or a nonhunter.

Each generation of hunters has developed greater technology and, as a result, had to recalibrate their ethical compass.

Once upon time it wasn't considered fair to use scopes on rifles. Now, not only does nearly everyone use rifle scopes, now there are scopes that read out the distance to the target.

Range finders and global positioning satellite (GPS) systems are available. They are all advantages and legal. But each hunter must decide what is too much of an advantage.

Our pockets fill with gadgets as our pocketbooks empty. And to what purpose? Does the venison taste better?

Hunters need to be able to look at themselves in the

mirror without hesitation each morning.

Of course if something is illegal, we don't even have to cross the Bridge Ethical.

Remember that property that was open last year and closed this year? Maybe, as the Bard once wrote, the fault lies not in our stars but in ourselves.

Sometimes posted land comes from problems like gates left open and cattle out. Other times land is closed because of bullet holes in irrigation pivots or water tanks.

It doesn't happen everywhere or with every landowner but it does happen occasionally. And as grandma said, a few bad apples ruin everything.

We hunters need to remember that we have been given a great gift by our ancestors; publicly entrusted wildlife that often inhabits private property. How we use, or abuse, that gift will say a lot about whether our grandchildren continue to enjoy our hunting tradition.

And speaking of gifts, we are taught to say thank you when someone gives us something. If it's been awhile since you thanked a landowner, perhaps this is the year.

How about thanking the spirit of that animal laying at your feet for giving up its life so you may have something to eat?

Think about this as fall deepens and we enjoy the privileges of an American hunter. And perhaps ask yourself, what will you do as a member of our collective hunting community to encourage the future of hunting?

Bruce Auchly is the Region 4 information officer for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. This column was originally published in 2013.



Bruce Auchly

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Montana deer populations TRENDING UP

TOM KUGLIN

tom.kuglin@helenair.com

Whether it's glassing timberline for the telltale white rump of a mule deer or silently watching a river bottom for a whitetail to emerge, deer hunting in Montana is opportunity rich.

Hunters struggled in most areas last hunting season, faced with above-average temperatures and little snow. Then the weather took a nasty turn in December, dumping heavy snow across much of western Montana with temperatures plummeting far below zero.

Despite a brutal winter, deer populations came through largely unscathed, except for northwest Montana.

"In most of the state the winterkill was minimal, really not bad," said John Vore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks game management bureau chief. "But in the northwest part of the state, the snow really lasted a long time so we do have some concerns about that. But for the rest of the state it was really good for deer and antelope."

Deer are largely on an upward trend statewide, Vore said, with northwest Montana being the notable exception. That trend has come with a bump in antlerless licenses for some areas.

Mule deer estimates for Montana in 2016 put populations well above the 10-year average. Based on modeling using surveys and harvest, biologists estimate more than 363,000 mule deer roam the state, compared to an average of just under 283,000.

Mule deer are coming out of population lows in many parts of western Montana. Concerns about trends led to cuts in tags and requiring validation for some areas, meaning a hunter can only hunt buck mule deer in a chosen district.

Trophy districts in the Bitterroot Valley remain some of the most sought-after tags of any species in the state, while many hunters prefer the easier access of central and eastern Montana, particularly for the late-season rut when bucks seem to appear from their hiding places.

Broken down by region, more than 41,000 mule deer occupy Region 3, which requires validation by district to hunt them. The higher populations in eastern Montana and the rolling agricultural land of north-central Montana can be hunted over-the-counter.

"We're seeing abundant numbers of mule deer on private land," said Adam Grove, wildlife biologist for an area that includes the Elkhorns and Big Belts along Canyon Ferry Reservoir. That has allowed a bump in antlerless tags valid off of national forest land, he said.

Although in many areas both mule deer and whitetails share territory, the latter is known as a low-country species mostly occupying river bottoms and agricultural land, although some fine whitetail hunting can be had in the pines and spruce forests of western Montana.



BRETT FRENCH, *Billings Gazette*

Mule deer numbers have rebounded in many parts of Montana. Based on modeling using surveys and harvest, biologists estimate more than 363,000 mule deer now roam the state, compared to an average of just under 283,000.

The latest statewide estimates for whitetail deer are also above the long-term average. The 2016 estimate based on surveys and harvest put Montana's whitetail population at nearly 221,000, compared to the 10-year average of about 204,000.

More than 24,000 whitetails occupy southwestern Montana with bucks hunted on a general tag. The highest statewide populations are in regions 1 and 2 with more than 115,000 whitetails, but Region 1 was the hardest hit for winterkill due to heavy and lasting snow.

"Whitetails continue to be robust," Grove said of his area, which includes both river bottoms and foothills.

Often known as a wilier species than their muley cousins, many whitetails are hunted with tried and true methods such as stands or posting. Attempting to stalk a buck in his bed can be an exercise in futility, as he flushes like a pheasant and offers only a glimpse before a shot can be fired.

Montana's lengthy archery and general seasons could not be more different when it comes to hunting either species.

Hot and buggy archery hunting can yield opportunities for unhunted animals, including the possibility of a velvet buck in the first week or so of the season. Before they wise up or go nocturnal, spending some time scouting to pattern deer and then intercepting them when the time is right can pay major dividends.

Just ahead of the general season, youth have a special opportunity with a two-day deer only hunt for 12 to 15-year-olds. This year the youth hunt falls on Oct. 19 and 20.

Once the general season rolls around, those first shots can cause older bucks to disappear. But rest assured as soon as the rut kicks in, they will return in search of does and may slip up just long enough for hunters to capitalize.

Reporter Tom Kuglin can be reached at 447-4076
@IR_TomKuglin

Elk hunting a product of the seasons

TOM KUGLIN

tom.kuglin@helenair.com

The anticipation of pursuing elk in Montana's backcountry is enough to keep even the most seasoned hunter awake at night.

Images of calling in a bugling bull with flaring eyes and nostrils or settling the crosshairs behind the shoulder amid spitting snow makes the sweat and blisters well worth the effort. And a year's supply of fresh elk steaks and burger isn't bad either.

Last hunting season saw below average harvest primarily due to a warm and dry fall. Then a torrent of winter weather made access difficult in districts with so-called "shoulder seasons" which offer extended hunting for antlerless elk.



Montana Standard

Montana's elk population is estimated at more the 176,000, ranging from the dense spruce forests of northwest Montana to the badlands of the east.

"Hunting especially for elk is weather dependent, and last year was a prime example of what happens when you

have a hot and dry fall," said John Vore, game management bureau chief with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. "It's

too nice during the general season so there wasn't much of a harvest, and then the snow and cold made it really difficult for hunters to get around."

Hunters did harvest a third more elk across all the shoulder hunts but still did not quite meet objectives in many districts. FWP conducts the hunt off of three-year averages, and the more than 40 districts open last season are expected to reopen this year.

Montana's elk population is estimated at more the 176,000, ranging from the dense spruce forests of northwest Montana to the badlands of the east.

Region 3 in southwest Montana holds by far the highest populations in the state with more than 71,000

More ELK, page 6

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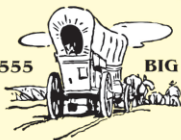
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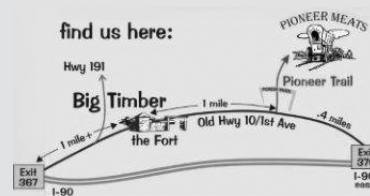
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Elk

continued from Page 4

animals roaming the Big Belts, Elkhorns, Pioneers and Tobacco Roots and Gallatin/Madison and other areas.

"For elk the harvest was down quite a bit from average, which is true locally but consistent throughout the state," said Adam Grove, biologist for an area including the Big Belts and Elkhorns.

Last year's low harvest and the elk population's ability to survive the winter could mean even more opportunities for hunters this fall.

Vore says experience hunting an area could count more than high populations.

"If we have decent hunting weather, then hunters will stand a pretty good chance," he said.

The majority of southwest Montana districts are at or above population objectives with some well above targets.

The Tendoy, Fleecer, Tobacco Roots and much of the Big Belts along Canyon Ferry Reservoir are hovering around double population objectives while Hunting District 393 is nearly triple the target number.

FWP has pushed for higher antlerless harvest near Canyon Ferry, liberalizing licenses and offering damage hunts. A lack of access to elk on certain private lands continues to be a major contributor to



Kurt Wilson, Missoulian

Once the general season starts the bugles die down, bigger bulls split off and the majority of hunters hit the field.

the high numbers, Grove said.

Hunter access will also be a little better this season with a few small additions to the Block Management program, he said.

Hunting district 332 and 329 in the Pioneers are also above objectives while 331 is below.

Hunting district 335 near Deer Lodge, the Elkhorns and

the Gravelly Range are within objectives.

For hunters looking to branch out across the state, virtually every hunting district in regions 4, 5, 6 and 7 are at or over objectives.

Region 2 is a bit more hit or miss when it comes to populations, and Region 1 tough winter is mostly below objective and coming off a tough winter.

Hunting elk is truly a product of the seasons.

Early archery can be a tough time, although being the first to call can give hunters an incentive to get out. In hotter areas, water sources are key to supporting elk in any numbers.

As archery season gets into mid and late September, the rut typically heats up, calling becomes more effective and the bigger bulls emerge. It is also the time of year most archers are hitting the hills the hardest, so getting back in a little farther can cut down on the competition.

Once the general season starts the bugles die down, bigger bulls split off and the majority of hunters hit the field. While early opportunities are a great time to harvest an elk, it is the snow and the cold that many hunters relish, bringing the great herds down from the high country and improving tracking.

Reporter Tom Kuglin can be reached at 447-4076 @IR_TomKuglin

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Obtain A License Or Permit

- Only one license or permit of any type may be purchased each year, unless otherwise specified and allowed in the regulations, such as a hunter may purchase more than one deer B license.
- Many licenses or permits may be purchased from license providers or online licensing. Some licenses and permits are available only through a drawing.
- Refer to the Licenses Available Chart for a complete list of resident and nonresident licenses and application or purchase deadlines.

Online Licensing

- You may apply for permits and/or licenses and purchase many general hunting licenses from FWP Online Licensing between approximately 5:15 a.m. and 11:45 p.m., MST, 7 days a week within applicable sales dates.
- Go to <https://app.mt.gov/als/index/index.html> and follow the instructions.
- Online purchases must be made by using a MasterCard, Visa, American Express or debit card.
- Montana residents must have purchased a conservation license through the automated licensing system (ALS) in a previous license year and have an ALS number to buy licenses online.
- Don't wait until the last minute to buy your hunting license online as carcass tags are mailed to you within 10 business days of your purchase.
- All online license purchases and applications are final and cannot be changed or withdrawn.

Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact (IWVC)

Montana is a member of the IWVC. Under the compact, member states recognize suspensions of hunting, fishing or trapping privileges. It is illegal for a violator whose privilege to hunt, fish or trap is suspended to obtain or attempt to obtain a license, tag or permit in a member state. For more information, call 406-444-2452.

Residency

- It is illegal to swear to or to affirm a false statement in order to obtain an original or duplicate resident hunting and/or fishing license OR to assist an unqualified applicant in obtaining a resident license.

Resident

- To be a legal Montana resident and eligible to purchase any Montana resident fishing, hunting, and trapping licenses, as per MCA 87-2-102, you must:
 - have been physically living in Montana for at least 180 consecutive days immediately prior to purchasing a resident license;
 - register your vehicle(s) in Montana;
 - be registered to vote in Montana if you're registered to vote at all;
 - not possess (or have applied for any) current resident hunting, fishing, or trapping privileges in another state or country;
 - file Montana state income tax returns as a resident, if you are required to file.

- Once you have established your residency, you must continue to meet all these requirements and physically reside in Montana as your principal or primary place of abode for not less than 120 days per year (days need not be consecutive).
- A person is NOT considered a resident for the purposes of this section if the person:
 - claims residence in any other state or country for any purpose; or
 - is an absentee property owner paying property tax on property in Montana.
- To purchase an annual resident conservation license you will be required to show a valid Montana Driver's License (MDL), a valid Montana Identification Card (MIC), or a valid Tribal Identification Card.
- If your MDL or MIC was issued less than six months ago, you may be required to show additional proof of residency. An out-of-state driver's license is NOT an acceptable form of ID for resident license purchases. Contact your local FWP office for specifics.

Nonresident

- Montana's nonresident guests are eligible to purchase or apply for most Montana fishing, hunting, and trapping licenses. By state law, nonresidents are limited to, but not guaranteed, 10 percent of the license and/or permit quota for a district. The "Licenses Available Chart" provides details.
- Nonresident unmarried minors, at least 12 (by Jan 16, 2018) but not older than 17 years of age, can hunt in Montana as a resident if the minor's parents, legal guardian, or parent with joint custody, sole custody, or visitation rights is a legal resident of Montana. See "Youth Hunter" chart for details.

Armed Forces

- A member of the regular armed forces of the United States, a member's dependent who resides in the member's Montana household, or a member of the armed forces of a foreign government attached to the regular armed forces of the United States is considered a resident for Montana hunting, fishing and trapping licenses if:
 - the member was a resident of Montana under the provisions listed under residency at the time the member entered the armed forces and continues to meet these residency criteria; or
 - the member is currently stationed in and assigned to active duty in Montana, has resided in Montana for at least 30 days, and presents official assignment orders and a certificate verifying successful completion of an approved hunter safety course from any state or province.

Prerequisites

Base Hunting License

This is an annual fee and will be charged at the time the hunter purchases or applies for his/her first hunting license (including upland and migratory bird).

Conservation License

- Each new license year, a new Conservation License is required to purchase any fishing, trapping or hunting license(s), or to apply

for licenses/permits. Most licenses can be purchased from any FWP License Provider beginning in February. The Montana license year begins on March 1 and runs through the last day of February of the following year.

- In compliance with the Federal Welfare Reform Laws, Montana law requires each resident and nonresident hunter, including youth, to provide the last four digits of his/her Social Security number when purchasing a Conservation License or obtaining a Conservation License through a drawing.

Game Damage Hunt Roster Rules

- The game damage hunt roster is a randomized list of hunters' names. If FWP identifies a need to implement a game damage hunt, the game damage hunt roster will be used to select hunters. Selected hunters will be contacted by FWP.
- Sign up for the game damage hunt roster is from June 15–July 15, 2017, and only on the FWP website through MyFWP.

12-hour Closure

- In Administrative Region 4, elk HD 424 and HD 442 may be subject to a 12-hour closure for the antlerless portion of the general brow-tined bull or antlerless elk season.
- If the elk quota is reached, the general season will revert to only the brow-tined bull regulation until the end of the general season.
- Contact Region 4 Headquarters or the Augusta Check Station for updates (406-562-3467).

Hunter Education

Hunter Education Requirements

If you were born after January 1, 1985, you are required to show proof of completing a Montana hunter safety and education course or an approved hunter safety course from any other state or province prior to applying for or purchasing a hunting license, whether the hunting license is for the rifle or archery season.

Bowhunter Education Requirements

To purchase a Montana bow and arrow license, a hunter must:

- provide a certificate of completing the National Bowhunter Education Foundation course, or
- provide any prior year's bowhunting/archery stamp, tag, permit, or license from any state or province. If you can no longer produce this license, for a \$5 fee you may sign an affidavit stating that you previously held such a license. The affidavit is available at all FWP License Providers. The affidavit entitles you to purchase a current year's Montana bow and arrow license.

Duplicate Certificates

Bowhunter or Hunter Education certificates of completion for the Montana hunter education and/or bowhunter education courses may be obtained from FWP's website at:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/education/hunter>.

License and Permit Types

Base Hunting License

A required prerequisite for hunting or applying for a permit or license. This is an annual fee and will be charged at the time the hunter purchases or applies for his/her first hunting license (including upland and migratory bird).

Bow and Arrow License

A bow and arrow license, plus the proper hunting license is required during: (1) the deer, elk and/or antelope Archery Only Season; or (2) to archery hunt in an Arch-Equip only area or hunting district.

Conservation License

Prerequisite for all resident and nonresident licenses. It includes the state lands recreation license which is required for hunting, fishing and trapping purposes on State School Trust Lands.

Deer License

General Deer License

- The general deer license is Montana's license valid for one deer. Hunters may hold only one general deer license. It can be used for deer as indicated under the "General Deer License" heading on the deer and elk hunting district pages of these regulations.
- Residents may purchase only one general deer and/or one general elk license each year. Licenses may be purchased from license providers or online licensing beginning mid February. Each license year, a new Conservation License is required in order to purchase any fishing, trapping or hunting license(s), or to apply for any license or permit.
- Resident hunters may purchase a general Deer license over the counter at FWP offices and other license providers. Residents may also buy a sportsman's license, which includes a general deer license. Some disabled, youth, and senior hunters may qualify for discounted licenses.
- Nonresidents cannot buy their general deer license over the counter. They must obtain what's known as a "deer combination" license, which includes a general deer license as well as several other licenses. Montana makes 4,600 general drawing and 2,000 landowner sponsored licenses available each year. Demand is greater than supply, so to get a deer combination license, you need to apply in a random lottery drawing by March 15 for either a:
 - Big game (deer and elk) combination license, which is also good for fishing and upland bird hunting, or a
 - Deer combination license, which is also good for fishing and upland bird hunting.
 - You can apply for only one of these licenses each year.

Deer B License

- Valid for one deer during a specific time period, or for a certain species and sex, and in a particular hunting district or group of districts. May be offered through a drawing or over-the-counter.
- A deer B license is usually a license for antlerless mule deer or white-tailed deer, depending on the license type and hunting district.
- The deer B license allows you to kill a deer in

addition to the deer you could harvest with your general deer license.

- There is no particular order in which the general deer and deer B licenses must be purchased or used.
- Most deer B licenses are available through the **June 1** drawing but some are available for purchase at License Providers, including FWP Online Licensing.
- A hunter may possess a total of seven deer B licenses in any combination.

Single-Region Deer B Licenses for White-tailed Deer

- A hunter may purchase only one single-region deer B license for white-tailed deer per year.
- The single-region deer B license for white-tailed deer is in addition to other deer B licenses a person may obtain through a drawing or purchase at License Providers. You must designate the region in which you will use the single-region deer B license for white-tailed deer at the time of purchase. Check the hunting district in which you will hunt for specific regulations and valid dates for the single-region license.
- Licenses are available beginning August 7 from License Providers, including FWP Online Licensing.
- Check the hunting district in which you will hunt for specific regulations and valid dates for the single-region license.
- The following Single-Region White-tailed Deer B License opportunities for residents and/or nonresidents are offered for the 2017 hunting season.

Single-Region Resident/Nonresident White-tailed Deer B Licenses

R3	003-00. All Region 3 HDs, except Canyon Ferry WMA and Lake Helena WMA
R6	006-00. All Region 6 HDs.
R7	007-00. All Region 7 HDs.

Single-Region Resident Only Whitetailed Deer B Licenses

R7	007-01. 2nd WT B License. All Region 7 HDs.
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Deer Permit

- Permits are valid for hunting the specified sex-age class during the time period(s) listed.
- Hunters who receive a deer permit must use it with a current general deer license. A deer permit does not allow you to take a second deer.
- Hunters who receive a deer permit valid for taking an antlered buck mule deer (with their general deer license) are restricted to taking an antlered buck mule deer only in the district or portion of district specified on the permit. They may not hunt antlered buck mule deer anywhere else in Montana even if the General Season or Archery

Only Season is open to mule deer buck hunting with a general deer license. This applies to all deer permit areas, whether limited or unlimited, for antlered buck mule deer.

- Deer permits are available through the March 15 drawing to Residents and Nonresidents. Be sure to check individual hunting district regulations for specific deer permit details. By state law, nonresidents are limited to, but not guaranteed, 10 percent of the license/permit quota.
- Residents must hold a general deer license before applying for a deer permit.
- Nonresidents must hold a Big Game Elk/Deer or Deer Combination License before applying for a deer permit.
- The following White-tailed and Mule Deer Permit opportunities are offered for the 2017 hunting season.

Deer Permits Resident/Nonresident

R1	109-50, 130-50
R2	202-50, 204-50, 210-50, 212-50, 213-50, 214-50, 215-50, 217-50, 240-50, 240-51, 250-50, 261-50, 270-50, 281-50, 291-50, 291-51, 292-50
R3	300-50, 312-50, 318-50, 319-50, 324-50, 329-50, 335-50, 339-50, 343-50, 380-50, 390-50, 391-50, 392-50
R4	441-50, 455-60 (either sex MD or WT)
R5	510-50, 530-50
R6	630-20 (either sex WT deer, Residents with Disability Conservation License), 652-50

Over-the-Counter (OTC) B License

- Certain deer B licenses with unlimited quotas are available for purchase over-the-counter from License Providers beginning August 7.
- The following over-the-counter Deer B License opportunities are offered for the 2017 hunting season. See individual hunting district regulations for specifics.

OTC Deer B Licenses

R1	170-00
R2	212-20, 260-01, 262-01, 262-02, 290-00
R3	003-00, 317-00, 388-00, 398-00, 399-00
R6	006-00
R7	007-00, 007-01

Elk License

General Elk License

A general elk license is the basic license for hunting elk. Montana's general elk-hunting license is valid for one elk. Hunters may hold only one General Elk License. It can be used only according to the specific regulations of the hunting district in which you hunt.

Resident hunters may purchase this license over the counter at FWP offices and other license vendors for \$20 plus the required conservation license (\$8) and base hunting license (\$10). Residents may also buy a sportsman's license (prices vary), which includes a General Elk License. Some disabled, youth, and senior hunters may qualify for discounted licenses.

- Nonresidents cannot buy their general elk license over the counter. They must obtain what's known as an "elk combination" license, which includes a general elk license as well as several other licenses. Montana makes 17,000 of these General Drawing licenses available each year. Demand is greater than supply, so to get a combination license, you need to apply in a random lottery drawing by March 15 for either a:
 - Big game (deer and elk) combination license, which is also good for fishing and upland bird hunting, or a
 - Elk combination license, which is also good for fishing and upland bird hunting.
 - You can apply for only one of these licenses each year.

Elk B License

- The elk B license is valid for taking an antlerless elk during a specific time period and in a particular hunting district or group of districts.
- The elk B licenses are designed to control elk numbers and many are only valid on private land.
- A limited elk B license is obtained only through the drawing and has an application deadline date of June 1.
- Unlimited elk B licenses have no limit on the number of licenses sold and are available from License Providers, including FWP Online Licensing. See individual hunting districts for details.
- The only prerequisite for the elk B license is a conservation license and base hunting license. Each hunter may possess only one elk B license per license year in addition to a General Elk License.
- Elk B license hunting opportunities may be restricted to portions of individual hunting districts. See individual hunting districts for specific details.
- The following limited and unlimited Elk B License opportunities are offered for the 2017 hunting season.

Elk B Licenses	
R2	204-00, 210-03, 210-05, 215-02, 217-00, 217-01, 240-00, 260-00, 261-00, 261-01, 262-01, 281-00, 282-00, 283-00, 283-02, 285-01, 290-00, 291-01, 292-00, 296-00, 299-00
R3	311-00, 314-00, 315-01, 317-00, 319-00, 321-00, 323-00, 329-00, 334-00, 339-00, 341-00, 343-00, 361-00, 380-00, 380-01, 380-02, 391-00, 392-00, 395-00, 397-00, 398-00, 399-00, 399-01
R4	004-00, 410-00, 410-01, 411-00, 422-00, 425-00, 425-01, 425-02, 425-03, 425-04, 425-05, 442-00, 448-00, 455-00
R5	005-00, 502-00, 520-00, 520-01, 540-00, 560-00, 570-00, 575-00, 580-00, 590-00
R6	620-00, 621-00, 621-01, 622-00, 631-00, 631-01, 632-00, 690-00, 696-00, 690-01, 699-00
R7	007-00, 700-00, 798-01, 799-00

Elk Permit

- Elk permits are allotted by drawing only. The application deadline is March 15. Residents must hold a general elk license before applying for an elk permit. Nonresidents must hold a Big Game Elk/Deer or Big Game Elk Combination license before applying for an elk permit. Check individual hunting district for specific details. By state law, nonresidents are limited to, but not guaranteed, 10 percent of the license/permit quota.
- Elk permits must be used with a general license. They do not allow a hunter to harvest an additional elk. A permit allows you to hunt in a restricted area or time period where harvest restrictions exist for General Elk License holders.
- Elk permits may be for antlered or antlerless elk. In most instances, holding an antlerless elk permit prohibits harvesting an antlered elk in the same hunting district. Permit holders are not restricted to hunting elk in another hunting district, provided they still hold a valid General Elk License.
- Learn about the hunting district you wish to hunt before applying for a permit. For instance, do not apply for a backcountry area if you aren't willing and prepared to backpack in. And do not apply in hunting districts that are mostly private land if you aren't certain you can get permission.
- In all or a portion of many hunting districts, a hunter is required to have successfully drawn a special permit before hunting a bull elk, brown-tinted bull elk, or antlerless elk in all or a portion of the hunting seasons. See individual hunting districts for specific regulations.
- **In the districts 100, 101, 103, 104, 109, 110, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 130, 132 and 140 the following restriction applies: Hunters who receive an antlerless elk permit to hunt antlerless elk during all or any portion of the General Archery and/or Firearm Seasons may not take an antlered elk in the district for which the permit is valid. This restriction applies for the entire season even if the permit is valid for only a portion of the season.**
- The following limited and unlimited Bull Elk Permit opportunities are offered for the 2017 hunting season.

Bull Elk Permits	
R2	217-10, 217-11, 250-45, 270-45, 283-10
R3	310-45, 310-46, 313-45, 339-20, 340-10, 380-20
R4	401-20, 410-20, 410-21, 411-20, 412-20, 417-20, 420-20, 425-20, 426-20, 441-20, 445-20, 447-20, 450-20, 455-20, 900-20
R5	411-20, 500-20, 502-20, 520-20, 570-20, 575-20, 580-21, 580-22, 590-20, 590-21, 900-20
R6	620-20, 620-21, 621-20, 622-20, 631-20, 631-21, 632-20, 632-21, 690-20, 690-21
R7	590-20, 798-20, 798-21, 799-20, 900-20

- The following Antlerless Elk Permit opportunities are offered for the 2017 hunting season.

Antlerless Elk Permits	
R1	100-00, 101-00, 101-01, 101-02, 103-00, 104-00, 109-00, 109-02, 110-00, 120-00, 121-00, 121-01, 121-02, 122-00, 123-00, 124-00, 130-00, 132-00, 140-00, 199-00
R2	200-00, 201-00, 201-01, 202-00, 210-02, 211-00, 212-00, 212-01, 213-00, 214-00, 216-00, 270-00, 270-01, 270-02, 270-03, 270-04, 270-05, 281-01, 291-02, 293-00, 394-00
R3	313-00, 313-01, 394-00
R6	697-00, 698-00

Over-the-Counter (OTC) B License

- Certain elk B licenses with unlimited quotas are available for purchase over-the-counter from License Providers beginning August 7.
- The following over-the-counter Elk B License opportunities are offered for the 2017 hunting season. See individual hunting district regulations for specifics.

OTC Elk B Licenses	
R2	215-02, 217-00, 283-03, 290-00, 299-00
R3	397-00

Replacements

Replacements of lost, stolen or destroyed licenses or permits may be purchased at FWP offices and FWP License Providers. A second duplicate license for the same species within a two-year period may only be purchased at an FWP office. A person may not replace a license requiring a carcass tag a third time for the same species within a two-year period. A fee of \$5 per license will be charged for each duplicate license.

It is unlawful to:

- Swear or affirm to a false statement in order to obtain a duplicate.
- Possess an original as well as a duplicate license(s). If the original is found, it must be returned to FWP at any regional office.
- Allow a license of any type to be used by another person.

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SuperTag Lottery

Open to residents and nonresidents.

Species	Deadline to Purchase SuperTag Chances (\$5 each)
Antelope	June 29
Bighorn Sheep	
Bison	
Deer	
Elk	
Moose	
Mountain Goat	
Mountain Lion	

- Resident and nonresident hunters can buy an unlimited number of \$5 chances to win a Montana hunting license for antelope, bighorn sheep, bison, deer, elk, moose, mountain goat and mountain lion.
- An individual may be successful in winning one or a combination of these SuperTags per year.
- Each SuperTag license allows one to hunt in any Montana hunting district valid for that species.
- Moose, bighorn sheep and mountain goat 7-year waiting period does not apply to SuperTags.
- Chances are sold electronically at all FWP License Providers or via the online licensing at <http://fwp.mt.gov>.
- Proceeds from the sale of SuperTag chances will enhance public hunting access and boost FWP enforcement efforts.
- For more information visit FWP's website at <http://fwp.mt.gov>.

Availability of Licenses & Permits

Purchase your fishing license, hunting licenses(s) and apply for drawings online

<https://app.mt.gov/als/index/index.html>

Deadlines and Cost

- A complete list of licenses, cost and deadlines for drawing applications is available on pages 114-115 in the Licenses & Permits Availability Chart.
- Applications, as well as some general licenses, and many licenses and permits awarded through a drawing, have a purchase or application deadline.
- Applications are available at FWP License Providers or may be downloaded from the FWP website. Nonresidents may call 406-444-2950 to request an application through the mail.
- You may have your application entered directly into the system at an FWP office or you may mail in your application. If the application is mailed, it must be postmarked no later than the deadline date. The postmark must be an official U.S. Postal Service mark. A postage meter postmark will not be accepted.
- FWP encourages hunters to apply online for permits/licenses awarded through a drawing as safeguards will not accept incomplete applications. Also, your information is retained for future purchases or license applications.

Drawing Applications

- Drawing applications are available from FWP's website at <http://fwp.mt.gov> and from License Providers.
- Applications for deer and elk permits must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service on or before **March 15**. Applications for deer B, elk B, antelope and/or antelope B licenses must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service on or before **June 1**. Hunters may apply online no later than **March 15** for deer and elk permits or **June 1** for deer B, elk B, antelope and antelope B licenses.
- Both resident and nonresident hunters are eligible to apply for most of the licenses awarded through the drawings. By state law, nonresidents are limited to, but not guaranteed, 10 percent of the license and/or permit quota.
- Drawings are based upon the final quotas adopted by the F&W Commission which may differ from the quotas listed in the printed hunting district regulations.
- For specific license/permit opportunities please refer to the hunting district regulations where you will find a complete list of all available hunting opportunities for each hunting district.

Party Applications

- Applicants may apply as a "party." If you apply as a party, each party member must list the identical license/permit choices in the identical order on his/her application. If one or more party members does not pay the bonus point fee, but the other members pay the fee, those who have not paid the fee will be taken out of the party. It is unlawful to loan or transfer a license to another or to use a license issued to another.
- Either everyone in the party is successful in obtaining a license or everyone is unsuccessful. A party of individuals is assigned one random number in the computer. If that number is drawn, each member of the party receives a permit/license.
- The success rate for applying as a party versus as an individual is about the same. However, if a resident applies with a nonresident in a party, the whole party is considered "nonresident" because of the 10 percent quota limit on nonresident licenses and/or permits.
- The maximum number of applicants in a party is 5 members.

Licenses and Permits Through A Drawing

- You may apply for a permit and/or license that allows you to hunt in an otherwise restricted area or time period. You may also decide to participate in the bonus point system.
- Residents must hold a general deer license before applying for a deer permit.
- Residents must hold a general elk license before applying for an elk permit.
- Nonresidents must hold a Big Game Elk/Deer or Deer Combination License before applying for a deer permit.
- Nonresidents must hold a Big Game Elk/Deer or Big Game Elk Combination License before applying for an elk permit.
- Nonresident holders of a Landowner-Sponsored Deer Combination License are reminded that

the license (including deer B licenses) entitles them to hunt deer only on the deeded lands of the sponsoring landowner. This license may not be used on leased or public land. However, the license is valid statewide for fishing and hunting upland game birds.

- Nonresident holders of a Landowner-Sponsored Deer Combination License may apply for a deer permit or deer B license only in the hunting district where they are authorized to hunt deer.

Bonus & Preference Point System

Bonus Points can increase your chances to draw a license or permit.

- Bonus points essentially offer you additional drawing chances and are used for first choice drawings only.
- Existing bonus points will be mathematically "squared" prior to the drawing. That means if you already have 3 "base" bonus points those will be "squared" and you'll then have 9 points going into the drawing.
- If you wish to participate in the Bonus Point program (to use or gain points), make sure to check "YES" on the Bonus Point question and include the \$20 (nonresident) or \$2 (resident) Bonus Point fee for each license/permit drawing applied for.
- If you're unsuccessful, you'll be awarded an additional base bonus point for next year's drawing.
- An applicant may skip two consecutive years of participation without forfeiting accumulated points, but if an applicant misses the third year, all accumulated points for that license/permit type are lost.
- Bonus points are nontransferable; they cannot be transferred between the species drawings or individuals.
- The base bonus points for party applications are the average of their individual base bonus points added together and rounded to the nearest whole number.

Landowner Preference

- Montana landowners (resident and nonresident) may qualify for preference in the license/permit drawings for deer, elk, and antelope.
- In order to claim landowner preference for deer B, deer permit, and/or antelope drawings, a landowner must own at least 160 acres of land within the hunting district applied for. If the license/permit is only valid for a portion of the hunting district, the landowner must own land within that portion and the land must be used primarily for agricultural purposes.
- In order to claim landowner preference for the elk B license and/or elk permit drawings, a landowner must own or be contracting to purchase at least 640 contiguous acres of land within a district regularly used by elk for one or more seasonal activities. If the license/permit is only valid for a portion of the hunting district, a landowner must own land within that portion to claim preference.
- A landowner may designate his/her preference to a member of his/her immediate family (blood or marriage related) or a ranch manager (paid

Visit <http://fwp.mt.gov>

employee who has state, federal, or FICA taxes withheld from pay). Only one person may use designated preference in a partnership or corporation.

- Nonresidents owning land in Montana should contact FWP Headquarters in Helena at 406-444-2950 for details on how to apply for landowner preference. See the Licenses Available Chart for prerequisite license requirements and deadlines to apply.

Drawing Results

License	Drawing Results	Refunds Mailed
Nonresident Combination	Mid-April	End of April
Deer & Elk Permits	Mid-April	End of April
SuperTags for: Antelope, Bighorn Sheep, Bison, Deer, Elk, Moose, Mountain Goat, Mountain Lion	After July 11	NA
Antelope, Deer, Elk Licenses	Mid-July	End of August
Check for drawing results at http://fwp.mt.gov/myfwpApps/myfwp_input.action		

Fees and Refunds

- In addition to the cost of each permit or license, there is a \$5 nonrefundable application fee for each license or permit you apply for.
- In some situations, FWP may refund resident or nonresident (in full or in part) fees for licenses and/or drawings.
- The appropriate documentation (death certificate, medical statement, etc.) must accompany the unused license(s) and a signed request form certifying the license(s) has not been used. Nonresident license holders should call 406-444-2950 for information.
- Situations include:

Reason	Deadline	Refund
Death of licensee	12/31/17	100%
Death of family member	12/31/17	90%
Medical emergency	12/31/17	90%

Call Licensing at 406-444-2950

- If you do not receive your license or refund within 2-3 weeks of time from refund dates. Note: the license fee is refunded if an applicant is unsuccessful in the drawings, unless there is a valid obligation owed to the State of Montana or if the refund is less than \$5.
- For information on drawings for big game hunting.
- For surplus licenses (any left over licenses or permits from the drawings) information and applications (available by early August).

License Discount Opportunities

- Montana resident members of the Montana National Guard, Federal Reserve or Active Duty, who participated after September 11, 2001 in a contingency operation outside the state for two months and have been released from active duty or discharged, are entitled to a free conservation license OR a sportsman without bear license for a fee of \$10. These licenses will be issued only at FWP offices. DD 214 and supporting documentation is required.
- To take advantage of this opportunity you must obtain the license in the year you returned from military service, or in the following year.
- A veteran with certain combat connected injuries may be entitled to half-priced licenses for deer and antelope. Up to 50 licenses will be issued annually. Contact FWP License Bureau Chief for details at 406-444-2663.
- Nonresidents who hold a current upland game bird license, big game combination, elk combination or deer combination license may purchase a nonresident turkey license for \$57.50.
- Nonresident Youth Big Game Combination Licenses will be sold for \$510.00 to nonresident youth who have an adult immediate family member sponsor (applicant's natural or adoptive parent, grandparent, brother or sister who is 18 years of age or older) who possesses a current resident deer or elk license or a nonresident big game, elk combination or nonresident deer combination license. The youth must be accompanied by the sponsor while hunting. Applications are available from FWP's website at <http://fwp.mt.gov> and will be processed at any FWP office. For further details and an application, contact Licensing at 406-444-2950.
- Nonresident students enrolled as a full-time student (12 or more credits) in a postsecondary educational institution in Montana or Nonresident full time students in another state who graduated from a MT High School and their parent is a MT resident are eligible for discounted hunting licenses. The nonresident college student big game combination license will cost \$495.00 and includes Conservation, fishing, upland bird, deer and elk. A Base Hunting License is a prerequisite.
- Application for the nonresident college student big game combination license may be made after the second Monday in September at any FWP Regional office or Department Headquarters in Helena. To qualify, the applicant shall present a valid student identification card and copy of paid tuition as current full-time enrollment at a post secondary education institution in Montana. Payment of the \$15 Base Hunting License fee is also required. Proof of completing a hunter education course is also needed.

Youth Opportunities

Special 2-day Youth Deer Hunt

- Youth Hunters and Apprentice Hunters ages 10-15 may hunt during the Youth Statewide Two-day Deer Hunt. See page 111.

Youth Deer Hunts

- Some hunting districts offer special opportunities for youth ages 12-15. See specific hunting district regulations.

Youth Elk Hunts

- Youth 12 (by Jan 16, 2018) -15 years of age may hunt elk as listed in the specific hunting district regulations without applying for an elk permit through the drawing in the following hunting districts. Be sure to check specific hunting district regulations as youth hunting opportunities in some of the districts listed below may not include either-sex or antlered bull elk.

Resident and Nonresident Youth Opportunities with a General License

R2	201, 204, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 240, 261, 262, 270, 280, 281, 283, 291, 292, 293
R3	300, 301, 302, 310, 311, 314, 316, 317, 318, 319, 321, 328, 329, 331, 332, 334, 335, 339, 340, 341, 343, 360, 361, 362, 380, 392
R5	560

Youth Elk Permits and Elk B Licenses

- Elk permits and elk B licenses only for youth 12 (by Jan 16, 2018) -15 years of age to hunt elk as listed in the specific hunting district regulations are offered in hunting districts listed below.
- To qualify, the applicant must:
 - be 12 (by Jan 16, 2018) -15 years of age at time of application.
 - show proof of successfully completing hunter education.
 - be accompanied, while hunting, by an adult and/or guardian who is at least 18 years of age.
- Youth that are 15 years of age at the start of the general season, October 21, are eligible to hunt in the youth areas even if they turn 16 years of age during the season.

Youth Resident/Nonresident Elk Permits

R2	282-10, 217-11
R3	313-10

Elk B Licenses

R2	270-01, 270-03, 270-05
R6	621-00, 631-01, 690-00

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Youth Hunter	
Age	Opportunities and Special Requirements
Available To Resident & Nonresident	
10-17	An Apprentice Hunter is a resident or nonresident, 10-17 years of age, certified at an FWP office. This allows the youth to hunt some species, while accompanied by a mentor, without first completing a hunter education course. The apprentice hunter may not apply for or purchase a bighorn sheep license or a hunting license or permit with a limited quota. Other restrictions apply. See our website for details at: http://fwp.mt.gov/hunting/licenses/all/apprenticeHunter/default.html .
11	A youth 11 years of age who will reach 12 years of age by January 16, 2018, may (after completing hunter education): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for any special drawing, except spring turkey – must be able to show proof of having completed an approved hunter education course at the time of application. • After August 15, 2017, hunt any game species for which their license is valid during an open season.
under 14	In order to carry or use a firearm in public, a youth under 14 years of age must be accompanied by a person having charge or custody of the child; or be under the supervision of a qualified firearms safety instructor or an adult 18 years of age or older who has been authorized by the youth's parent or guardian, as per Montana law.
10-15	<u>Youth Statewide Two-Day Deer Hunt</u> – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The F&W Commission is allowing two additional days to provide a hunting opportunity to encourage youth participation in deer hunting. • Legally licensed hunters 10 through 15 years of age may hunt deer during the Statewide Two-day Youth Only Deer Season –October 19-20. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – During these two days, youth hunters with a general deer or deer B license may take those deer species and sex otherwise available on their general or deer B license the first day of the general firearm season in the specific hunting district the youth is hunting. • A non-hunting adult at least 18 years of age must accompany the youth hunter in the field. • Shooting hours, hunter safety requirements and all other regulations that apply to the regular deer firearm season shall apply to this youth two-day deer season.
Available To Nonresident Only	
12-17	Nonresident Youth Big Game Combination Licenses will be sold for \$510.00 to nonresident youth who have an adult immediate-family member sponsor (applicant's natural or adoptive parent, grandparent, brother or sister who is 18 years of age or older and possesses a current resident or nonresident general deer or elk license). The youth must be accompanied by the sponsor while hunting. Applications are available from FWP's website and may be processed at any FWP Office. For further details and an application, contact Licensing at 406-444-2950.



Pass it on.

Share your passion for hunting by becoming a Montana hunter or bowhunter education instructor. It's a great way to give back and be part of the community of volunteer instructors.

Contact your nearest FWP office for more information on how to become an instructor or contact program coordinator
Wayde Cooperider at (406) 444-9947 or wacooperider@mt.gov

 **Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

Be safe and enjoy your hunting season!

How to use these Regulations

1. Identify the species you want to hunt.
2. Identify the district where you want to hunt (deer and elk map on pages 21-29, antelope map on pages 89-93).
3. Find that hunting district (deer and elk district regulations on pages 32-72, antelope district regulations on pages 95-101).
4. Read the regulations for the selected district to determine what species, when and where (if there are any restrictions within the hunting district) you may hunt in that district.
5. Check the legal description and any Restricted Area Descriptions (pages 16-17) for the district. It is your responsibility to know that you are in a legal hunting area.

Hunters with a Disability

- Certification for “special considerations” are lifetime certifications and do not need to be renewed annually.
- For applications, detailed eligibility requirements, and information on licenses and permits for hunters with disabilities contact any FWP office. See addresses and phone numbers on page 113.

Resident With a Disability Conservation License

- Residents certified as permanently and substantially disabled, as defined by FWP rules, who purchase a conservation license, may purchase a fishing license for half price. If they also purchase a base hunting license for \$10, they may then purchase general deer, general elk and/or upland game bird (excluding turkey) licenses for half price. Applications for a Resident With a Disability Conservation License are available at all FWP offices and FWP website.
- The certification is valid for the life of the holder or until changed by the Montana Legislature.

Permit To Hunt From a Vehicle (PTHFV)

- Residents and nonresidents certified as permanently and substantially nonambulatory, as defined by State Law, may apply for a PTHFV.
 - Specific PTHFV field regulations apply. Noncompliance may result in loss of this privilege.

Permit To Modify Archery Equipment (PTMAE)

- Residents and nonresidents certified as permanently and substantially disabled, as defined by FWP rules, may apply for a PTMAE. The PTMAE allows a person with a disability to use archery tackle that supports the bow, and draws, holds, and releases the string to accommodate the individual disability.
- Arrows are not exempt, and must meet requirements for the Archery Only Season.
- This permit does not entitle the holder to use a crossbow during the Archery Only Season.
- The permit only allows modification of legal archery tackle and must be used with a valid bow and arrow license and appropriate hunting license.

Certain Combat Disabled Veterans

- A veteran with certain combat-connected injuries may be entitled to half-priced licenses for deer and antelope. Up to 50 licenses will be issued annually. Contact FWP License Bureau for details at 406-444-2663.

B Licenses and/or Permits for Hunters with a Disability

- Applicants must apply on FWP-provided forms available at FWP offices or FWP website. For more information contact FWP at 406-444-2950.
- Deer:
 - Deer permit 630-20 (HD 630).
 - Applicants must be a Resident, hold a Disability Conservation License and apply on or before March 15.
- Elk:
 - Elk B license 121-01 (HD 121).
 - Applicants must have a Permit to Hunt From a Vehicle, valid conservation and apply on or before June 1.
- Antelope:
 - Individuals who are permanently, physically disabled and nonambulatory as defined in ARM 12.3.106, may apply for an antelope license. A total of 25 antelope licenses are issued through the June 1 drawing. These licenses are offered in those antelope hunting districts which have a total quota of 50 or more antelope licenses. Applicants must apply on FWP-provided forms available at all FWP offices. Applications must be postmarked on or before June 1.

General Information

Block Management

The Block Management Program is a public hunting access program in which FWP enters into contractual agreements with private landowners (and sometimes public land management agencies) about how free public hunting access will be permitted and managed on enrolled lands. Through the contractual agreement, private landowners agree to allow public hunting on enrolled lands under specified conditions, and FWP agrees to assist the landowner by enforcing the ranch rules adopted through the Block Management contract. Each FWP region annually publishes a regional Hunting Access Guide by August 15th that lists the Block Management Areas (BMAs) enrolled for that year and explains how to gain access to them. For general information about the program, contact FWP at 406-444-2612.



If you or someone you know has a disability and/or is aging, and is in need of assistive technology (AT) or adaptive equipment to help you participate in outdoor recreation, please contact:

MonteCH at the University of Montana Rural Institute
52 Corbin Hall
Missoula, MT 59803
(406) 243-5751

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Common Sense Precautions When Field-Dressing Big Game

- To minimize risk of disease or parasite transmission to humans, follow these proper ways to handle wild meat:
 - Wear rubber (latex) gloves when field dressing game.
 - Minimize contact with animal fluids, brain and spinal tissues.
 - Wash hands and instruments thoroughly after field dressing or processing.
- Cook all meat until well done before consuming.
- To minimize risk of disease or parasite transmission to your domestic dog, prevent consumption of big game viscera.

Donate Hunting License to Disabled Military Service Member or Veteran

Residents and nonresidents can donate their Montana hunting license to a disabled military veteran or disabled active duty service member who is working with an organization that uses hunting as part of the rehabilitation process. The disabled person who receives the license will be a Purple Heart recipient and have a 70 percent or greater disability rating. Visit the website for more information:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/hunting/licenses/buyApply/donateLicense.html>

Harvest Survey

Montana FWP conducts an annual telephone survey to gather hunting and harvest information from Montana hunters. Telephone interviewers call mid-week evenings and weekends to speak to hunters one-on-one to get the most accurate information possible. Wildlife managers use the results to evaluate hunting seasons and set quotas, season dates and other regulations.

Hunters Against Hunger

When you purchase a Montana hunting license you'll have an opportunity to make a donation of \$1 or more to Hunters Against Hunger. Contributions help pay for butchering and distribution of processed game donated to food banks.

Marked or Radio-Collared Animals

It is legal to shoot big game animals that have radio collars, neck bands, ear tags and/or other markers, however, markers and radio collars must be returned to FWP. Please report the killing of a marked animal to the local FWP Office.

Tapeworm: Protect your Pets

Domestic dogs can pick up a parasite (*Echinococcus granulosus*) by eating carcasses or organs from infected deer, elk or moose. The domestic dog can then pass it to humans in its feces. If your dog does have access to carcasses, talk to your veterinarian about an appropriate deworming strategy.

Weed Control and Weed-Free Hay

Montana requires use of certified weed-free hay, grain, straw, mulch, cubes, and pelletized feed on state and federal lands. For further information, contact the Department of Agriculture at 406-444-3144.

Contacts

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks State Headquarters

1420 East 6th Avenue, PO Box 200701,
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-2535

Harvest Reporting1-877-FWP-WILD
.....(1-877-397-9453) or 406-444-0356

Quota Status 1-800-385-7826 or 406-444-1989

Hunter Education.....406-444-9948
Wildlife406-444-2612
Enforcement406-444-2452
Montana State Parks.....406-444-3750
Drawings.....406-444-2950
Licenses406-444-2535
Hearing Impaired (use Montana
Relay).....7-1-1 or 1-800-253-4091

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Regional Headquarters

REGION 1

490 N Meridian Rd
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-752-5501

REGION 2

3201 Spurgin Rd
Missoula, MT 59804
406-542-5500

REGION 3

1400 South 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718-5496
406-994-4042

HELENA Area Resource Office (HARO)

930 Custer Ave W
Helena, MT 59620
406-495-3260

BUTTE Area Resource Office (BARO)

1820 Meadowlark Ln
Butte, MT 59701
406-494-1953

REGION 4

4600 Giant Springs Rd
Great Falls, MT 59405
406-454-5840

LEWISTOWN Area Resource Office (LARO)

215 W Aztec Dr
PO Box 938
Lewistown, MT 59457
406-538-4658

REGION 5

2300 Lake Elmo Dr
Billings, MT 59105
406-247-2940

REGION 6

1 Airport Rd
Glasgow, MT 59230
406-228-3700

HAVRE Area Resource Office (HvARO)

2165 Hwy 2 East
Havre, MT 59501
406-265-6177

REGION 7

352 I-94 Business Loop
PO Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301
406-234-0900

Contacts Outside Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Montana State Agencies

Agriculture.....406-444-3144
Guides & Outfitters406-841-2300
Livestock406-444-7323
State Lands (DNRC)406-444-2074
Tourism.....406-841-2870

Federal Agencies

US Department of
Interior (USDI)202-208-3100
USDI Fish & Wildlife
Service.....406-449-5225
USDA Forest Service ...406-329-3511
USDI Bureau of Land
Management406-896-5000
National Weather Service
(Missoula)406-329-4840

Tribal Lands

Blackfeet Reservation ..406-338-7276
Crow Reservation406-638-2179
Flathead Reservation ...406-883-2888
..... ext 7200
Fort Belknap406-353-2205
Fort Peck Reservation..406-768-5305
Northern Cheyenne
Reservation406-477-6526
Rocky Boy Reservation 406-395-4207



PERRY BACKUS, Ravalli Republic file photo

According to data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, duck and other waterfowl populations in Montana have surged to record or near-record levels over the past two years.

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License Availability Chart

2017 LICENSE TYPE	Resident COST	Nonresident COST	DEADLINE	NOTES
Base Hunting License	\$10.00	\$15.00		Required prerequisite for hunting or applying for a permit or license.
Conservation	\$8.00	\$10.00		Required prerequisite.
Antelope – 900 Archery – Drawing	\$19.00	\$205.00	June 1*	
– Disabled – Drawing	\$19.00	\$205.00	June 1*	Special disabled antelope application fee required. For information call (406) 444-2950.
– Drawing	\$19.00	\$205.00	June 1*	Must have a current conservation license and a base hunting license to apply.
Big Game Combination – General Drawing		\$1010.00	March 15*	Includes conservation, deer, elk, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey), base hunting & season fishing licenses.
– Youth (12-17)		\$510.00		Includes conservation, deer, elk, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey) base hunting & season fishing licenses. For information call (406) 444-2950.
Bighorn Sheep – Drawing	\$125.00	\$1,250.00	May 1*	There is a \$10 Resident/\$50 Nonresident nonrefundable application fee required with the application. The license cost is paid if successful in the drawing.
Bison – Drawing	\$125.00	\$1250.00	May 1*	There is a \$10 Resident/\$50 Nonresident nonrefundable application fee required with the application. The license cost is paid if successful in the drawing.
Black Bear	\$19.00	\$350.00	Spring - April 14 Fall - August 31	Can purchase after deadline dates, but then there is a 24-hour wait period to use license.
Bow and Arrow License	\$10.00	\$10.00		Required during the Archery Only Season for any species or to archery hunt in an Arch-Equip only area or hunting district. A prerequisite to apply for a permit that is only valid valid during the Archery Only Season.
College Student Combination		\$495.00		Certification required for nonresident students attending a Montana college full-time. For information call (406) 444-2950. License available at any FWP office after September 12. Base Hunting License is also required.
Combat Disabled/Active Duty Veteran – Antelope	\$7.00	\$100.00		50 licenses - issued thru Helena Licensing only. For information call (406) 444-2950.
– Deer, General	\$8.00	\$125.00		
– Deer B	\$5.00	\$37.50		
Coming Home to Hunt – Deer Combination		\$311.00	March 15*	Includes conservation, deer, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey), base hunting & season fishing licenses. For information call (406) 444-2950.
– Big Game Combination		\$515.00	March 15*	Includes conservation, deer, elk, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey), base hunting & season fishing licenses. For information call (406) 444-2950.
Deer – General (18-61 yrs)	\$16.00			
– General (Disabled, Senior (62+) & Youth (12-17))	\$8.00			
Deer B – Drawing	\$15.00	\$80.00	June 1*	
– Over-the-Counter and Single-Region Antlerless	\$10.00	\$75.00		Over-the-counter. Valid in specific district(s). Purchase beginning August 7.
Deer Combination – General Drawing		\$602.00	March 15*	Includes conservation, deer, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey), base hunting & season fishing licenses.
– Landowner Sponsored Drawing		\$602.00	March 15*	
Deer Permit – Drawing	\$5.00	\$5.00	March 15*	Application fee only. Permit must be used with general deer license. Residents must have current year general deer license to apply. Nonresidents must also apply for a deer license when applying for a deer permit.
Elk – General (18-61 yrs)	\$20.00			
– General (Disabled, Senior (62+) & Youth (12-17))	\$10.00			
Elk B License – Drawing	\$25.00	\$275.00	June 1*	Antlerless only.
– Over-The-Counter	\$20.00	\$270.00		Over-the-counter. Antlerless only. Valid in specific district(s). Purchase beginning August 7.
Elk Combination – Drawing		\$858.00	March 15*	Includes conservation, elk, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey), base hunting & season fishing licenses.

Key: * = Must be postmarked on or before deadline date. ** = Must be received by 5 pm. MST on deadline date.

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2017 LICENSE TYPE	Resident COST	Nonresident COST	DEADLINE	NOTES
Elk Permit – Drawing	\$9.00	\$9.00	March 15*	Residents must have current year general elk license to apply. Nonresidents must also apply for an elk license when applying for an elk permit. A permit must be used with a General Elk License.
Hound Training License	\$5.00			
Nonresident Montana Native – Bird License		\$55.00		For Montana native born with current Montana resident relative; other qualifications apply. For information call (406) 444-2950. Deer Combo includes Includes conservation, deer, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey), base hunting & season fishing licenses. For information call (406) 444-2950. Big Game Combo includes all of the Deer Combo plus an elk license.
– NR Deer Combination License		\$306.00		
– NR Big Game Combination License		\$510.00		
– Season Fishing License		\$43.00		
Migratory Bird – (12 - 15)		\$25.00		Federal Stamp is not required.
– (16 - 17)	\$3.25	\$25.00		Federal Stamp also required.
– (18+)	\$6.50	\$50.00		Federal Stamp also required.
Moose – Drawing	\$125.00	\$1,250.00	May 1*	There is a \$10 resident/\$50 nonresident application fee required with the application. The license cost is paid if successful in the drawing.
Mountain Goat	\$125.00	\$1,250.00	May 1*	There is a \$10 resident/\$50 nonresident application fee required with the application. The license cost is paid if successful in the drawing.
Mountain Lion – General License	\$19.00	\$320.00	August 31	Can purchase license after deadline date, but then there is a 5-day wait period to use the license.
– Special License – Limited Entry Drawing	\$19.00	\$320.00	August 10**	Application fee is only \$5.00. The license cost must be paid if successful in the drawing.
Off-Highway Temporary Use Decal		\$27.00		
Sandhill Crane – Drawing	\$5.00	\$5.00	July 27**	Cost is the application fee only.
Sportsman – Military Recognition	\$10.00			Must go through certification process only at FWP offices. Includes conservation, season fishing, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey), deer & elk licenses. \$10.00 fee is for base hunting license.
– with Bear	\$85.00			Includes conservation, deer, elk, bear, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey) & season fishing licenses.
– without Bear	\$70.00			Includes conservation, deer, elk, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey) & season fishing licenses.
– without Bear – Senior (62+) & Youth (12- 17)	\$35.00			Includes conservation, deer, elk, state lands, upland bird (excluding turkey) & season fishing licenses.
State Lands Recreational License – General (18-59)	\$10.00			Required for recreational use on state school trust lands. The State Lands Recreation License is included in the Montana Conservation License specifically for the purpose of hunting, fishing, and/or trapping (HFT). All other recreational use on state school trust lands requires this State Lands Recreation License.
– Youth (12-17)	\$5.00			
– Senior (60+)	\$5.00			
– Family	\$20.00			
Swan Drawing Deadline	\$5.00	\$5.00	August 31**	Cost is application fee only.
Turkey License – Over the Counter	\$6.50	\$115.00		If nonresident has already purchased an Upland Bird License, then turkey licenses are \$57.50 each.
– Drawing	\$5.00	\$5.00	Spring - March 2** Fall - July 27**	There is a \$5 resident or nonresident application fee required with the application. The license cost is paid if successful in the drawing.
Upland Bird – General (18-61)	\$7.50	\$110.00		
– Youth (12-17)	\$3.75	\$55.00		
– Senior (62+) or disabled	\$3.75	\$110.00		
– 3 Day		\$50.00		Valid for three calendar days (which are indicted on the license). Not valid for sage grouse at any time or for ring-necked pheasants during the opening week of the season.
– 3 Day Preserve		\$20.00		Valid only on state-licensed shooting preserves.
Wolf	\$19.00	\$50.00	August 31	Can purchase after the deadline, but then there is a 24-hour wait period to use the license. Limit 5 licenses per hunter.

Key: * = Must be postmarked on or before deadline date. ** = Must be received by 5 pm. MST on deadline date.

Habitat protection, enhancement key in upland bird numbers

TED McDERMOTT

For Lee Newspapers

Kirk Miller, president of Helena's Headwaters Chapter of the conservation group Pheasants Forever, knows first-hand the importance of habitat for pheasants.

"I've been walking through a corn field once and looked down and literally three feet behind me there was a pheasant hunkered down," Miller says. "They'll just let you walk by."

Like other upland birds, pheasants require the cover of brush to hide from hunters and other predators. Cover also provides birds with shelter from extreme weather,

as well as a place to nest and raise their broods. In addition to cover, uplands birds need a balance of grassland, cropland and wetlands to find food and thrive.

During the 2017-2018 hunting season, Miller and other observers are hopeful that ongoing efforts to improve habitat for upland birds will help offset the effects a cold winter and a wet spring may have had on pheasant, turkey, grouse and partridge populations.

"The wet, cold spring we had did a number on the nest success," says Vanna Boccadori, a Butte-based wildlife biologist for Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.



Brett French, Billings Gazette file photo

During the 2017-2018 hunting season, Kirk Miller with Pheasants Forever and other observers are hopeful that ongoing efforts to improve habitat for upland birds will help offset the effects a cold winter and a wet spring may have had on pheasant, turkey, grouse and partridge populations.

More **UPLAND**, page 19






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Upland

continued from Page 18

Out in the field, Boccadori says she's been seeing single birds but "not any broods." As a result, she expects "an average year, is all," for upland-bird hunters.

Miller, however, is somewhat more optimistic.

"The spring moisture was probably good for the birds," Millers says. "Vegetative cover helps during the hatch, helps protect from predators. And, also, that spring moisture and grass helps with insect populations." Insects are food for upland birds. As a result, Miller believes "the spring conditions will probably overcome any loss that might have happened because of the cold winter."

Whatever the precise effect of recent weather, Miller says there's a natural ebb

and flow in bird numbers: "Pheasant populations and other upland birds are pretty cyclical. They get hammered by weather, but then they bounce back. The key is having good habitat."

To that end, Pheasants Forever is involved in a range of projects designed to help birds thrive, including partnering with FWP on a long-term habitat-improvement project at the Canyon Ferry Wildlife Management Area near Helena. The ongoing work at Canyon Ferry is one part of a much broader effort by Montana FWP to improve upland-bird hunting. Through its Upland Game Bird Enhancement Program, FWP has conserved hundreds of thousands of acres of upland-bird habitat, helped open private land to hunters and released pen-reared pheasants to boost bird populations, among other initiatives.

Despite this year's uncertain outlook, FWP population



Billings Gazette photo

By far the most popular upland bird in Montana is the ring-necked pheasant.

predictions are not low enough to warrant a change in upland-bird bag limits or the length of hunting seasons, Boccadori says. Grouse, partridge, and turkey seasons open Sept. 1 and end Jan. 1, with one exception: sage

grouse season ends early, on Sept. 30. Pheasant season opens Oct. 7, though youth ages 12 to 17 will have an early opportunity to take pheasant the weekend of Sept. 23-24. Pheasant season also ends on New Year's Day.

Miller will be among the bird hunters out in the field this year with his dogs, a German shorthaired pointer and an English setter, trying to flush pheasants out of the cover his group has helped to enhance. Whatever prognosis proves correct and however many birds he finds, Miller is sage about enjoying his time in the field.

"Even those days where you don't hardly see any birds," Miller says, "it's just a lot of fun to see those dogs work and figure out problems and also see how smart pheasant are to find ways to avoid the dogs and humans. That's probably what I enjoy the most. And then it's just nice country. It's a long walk."

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Waterfowl populations up, boding well for 2017-18 season



Perry Backus, Ravalli Republic

According to data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, duck and other waterfowl populations in Montana have surged to record or near-record levels over the past two years. Indications are that those good numbers will carry over into the 2017-2018 hunting season.

TED McDERMOTT
For Lee Newspapers

Jim Hansen has been hunting ducks, geese, and other waterfowl for 52 years. And for more than two decades he has served as Central Flyway Migratory Bird Coordinator for Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, a position he holds today. So Hansen knows what makes for a good year of bird hunting.

"There's a lot of little ins and outs to this business," Hansen says.

Everything from the characteristics of Arctic cold fronts passing through the state to the amount of precipitation can determine how many birds hunters can bag in a season. Another major factor, of course, is the health of waterfowl populations. On that score, at least, Hansen and other observers are optimistic about the 2017-2018 season.

According to data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, duck and other waterfowl populations in Montana have surged to record or near-record levels over the past two years.

More **WATERFOWL**, page 22

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Waterfowl

continued from Page 20

Indications are that those good numbers will carry over into the 2017-2018 hunting season.

Wet weather across Saskatchewan and Alberta during nesting season means waterfowl production should remain strong north of the border, with breeders returning to fertile breeding grounds. And that will likely offset some expected production declines in Eastern Montana and North Dakota, which have been ravaged by drought and, in some places, wildfire.

"If ponds start to dry up — as they surely have in parts of Montana — production from those breeders may not be as good as they would be in a wet year," Hansen says. "In some cases, ponds that had water in the spring might be drying up. But, overall, I think production — especially from Southern Canada — will be quite good. And that will make up for any losses here in parts of Montana and parts of North Dakota that are fairly dry this summer."

Due to the good outlook for bird populations, regulations for coot, scaup, geese, swans, and most duck species remain essentially unchanged from last year. But there is one important exception: the daily pintail bag is being cut in half, from one bird to two. According to Hansen, this change is due to a decline in overall pintail numbers and to a multistate pintail harvest strategy that includes Montana.

While Montanans "don't really kill that very many pintails," according to Hansen, this species of duck does migrate through Southwest Montana. "They're not abundant by any means, but they're a fairly common duck in that area, especially early in the season," he says.



David Grubbs photo

Everything from the characteristics of Arctic cold fronts passing through the state to the amount of precipitation can determine how many birds hunters can bag in a season.



BRETT FRENCH, Billings Gazette file photo

Duck, coot, and geese season opens Sept. 30 and runs through Jan. 7 in Montana's Pacific Flyway, which covers Western Montana.

Duck, coot, and geese season opens Sept. 30 and runs through Jan. 7 in Montana's Pacific Flyway, which covers

Western Montana. An additional weekend will also be tacked onto the season Jan. 13-17. Swan season will span

from Oct. 7 to Dec. 1 in those areas of the Pacific Flyway (in Cascade, Chouteau, Liberty, Toole, Teton, and Pondera counties) open to swan hunting with a special permit. And thanks to a special statewide program, young hunters 10-17 years old will have a chance to get a jump on waterfowl season Sept. 23-24.

With another good outlook for waterfowl, Hansen says this season will be a good time for new hunters, young and old, as well as experienced hunters, like him, to see if they can bag some birds.

"There'll be a lot of ducks coming," Hansen says.

But while waterfowl will come, they may not find the habitat they need to stop or stay, says Barry Allen, regional director of Ducks Unlimited. He's concerned that dry conditions and warmer weather throughout the state could lead to "some challenges this year." Foremost among those challenges could be dry conditions that reduce habitat for some species of waterfowl, including ducks.

Despite such challenges, Allen says he'll be out scanning the Big Sky for waterfowl and hoping for the best.

"It depends on where you hunt," Allen says, "but I think it'll be a pretty decent season."

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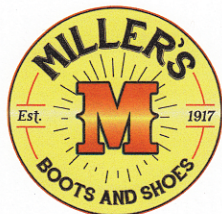
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