



## **2015-2019 BIG GAME SEASON STRUCTURE**

**Approved By Parks and Wildlife Commission - September, 2014**

### **I. DEER AND ELK SEASON STRUCTURE**

Deer and Elk Seasons listed below assume no change to the relative length and timing of high country deer seasons (with a minimal number of licenses), late rifle elk seasons (for population management), private land only hunts (to address game damage) or late season white-tail only seasons offered in select units in southern Colorado.

<b>A. Archery - Deer and Elk Season Structure West of 1-25 and GMU 140 (Status Quo)</b>	
	Archery season shall open on the last Saturday in August and run for 30 days.
<b>B. Muzzleloader – Deer and Elk Season Structure West of 1-25 and GMU 140 (Status Quo)</b>	
	Muzzleloader season shall open on the second Saturday of September and run for 9 days.
<b>C. Rifle – Deer and Elk Season Structure West of 1-25 and GMU 140 (Status Quo)</b>	
For deer and elk, past BGSS have offered a variety of rifle seasons. These have included combinations of an elk-only season and combined deer and elk seasons. The last several BGSS have remained fairly consistent, offering a limited elk-only season, two combined deer/elk seasons (some limited elk GMUs, additional GMUs with Over The Counter (OTC) elk licenses, and all deer licenses limited) and a limited fourth combined deer/elk season (with all deer licenses limited).	
	<p>Rifle seasons shall consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Season – 5-day season, followed by a 2-day break – separate limited elk, opening on the first Saturday after October 9.</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Season – 9-day season, followed by a 5-day break – deer and elk combined, opening on a Saturday.</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Season- 9-day season, followed by a 2-day break – deer and elk combined, opening on a Saturday.</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Season – 5-day season, deer and limited elk combined, opening on a Wednesday.</li> </ul>



**PLAINS DEER SEASONS East of I-25 excluding GMU 140**

Historically season structure for deer east of I-25 (excluding GMU 140) has differed from those seasons west of I-25 and GMU 140. The timing and length of seasons in this region have been adjusted to accommodate the different pattern of land ownership, agricultural practices including the timing of crop harvesting, weather, and the size of deer populations in the eastern plains. Prior to deer licenses being limited statewide, they were limited east of I-25 excluding GMU 140. The limited Season Choice license will be retained in specified units. The Season Choice license allows hunting in any or all of the seasons in the specified plains unit(s) until the license is filled.

<b>D. Archery - Plains Deer Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	Plains archery deer season will open on October 1 and run through December 31; in addition, archery season will close during those time periods when a plains rifle season is ongoing and in those GMUs where a late rifle season is occurring.
<b>E. Muzzleloader - Plains Deer Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	Plains muzzleloader season for deer will start the second Saturday of October and run for 9 days.
<b>F. Rifle - Plains Deer Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	Plains rifle deer season shall start on the Saturday of the last full weekend of October and run for 11 days. Late plains rifle deer season shall start on December 1 and run through December 14.

**PLAINS ELK SEASONS East of I-25 excluding GMU 140**

<b>G. Archery - Plains Elk Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	Plains archery season for elk shall open on the last Saturday of August and run for 30 days.
<b>H. Muzzleloader - Plains Elk Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	Plains muzzleloader season for elk (currently in GMUs 104, 133, 134, 141, and 142) will remain aligned with the general muzzleloader season dates west of I-25 (including GMU 140). This season will open the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday in September and run for 9 days.
<b>I. Rifle - Plains Elk Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	Plains rifle elk season - In those GMUs east of I-25 (except for select GMUs, presently 104, 133, 134, 140, 141 & 142). Opens September 1 and runs through January 31, either sex. All legal methods of take are permitted.



## II. MOOSE SEASON STRUCTURE

<b>A. Moose Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	<p>Moose season shall be divided into three “manner of take” seasons. These include Archery, Muzzleloader, and Rifle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Archery</u> – Archery moose season shall open on the first Saturday after Labor Day in September through close of archery deer and elk season.</li> <li>b. <u>Muzzleloader</u> – Muzzleloader moose season shall open on the second Saturday of September and run for 9 days.</li> <li>c. <u>Rifle</u> – Rifle moose season shall open on October 1 and run for 14 days.</li> </ul>

## III. PRONGHORN SEASON STRUCTURE

Late rifle pronghorn seasons are proposed to remain at the current time frame; they will vary in length to suit local management needs, but will close no later than December 31.

<b>A. Archery - Pronghorn Season Structure (Status Quo)</b>	
	<p>Archery pronghorn season shall open on August 15 of each year and run for 37 days, closing on September 20. Buck only hunting will run from August 15 through August 31 and September 1 through September 20 will be an either-sex season in those GMUs not addressed by limited licenses.</p>
<b>B. Muzzleloader - Pronghorn Season Structure (Change for 2015-2019)</b>	
	<p>Muzzleloader pronghorn season shall open on September 21 (the day following closure of archery pronghorn season) and run for 9 days.</p>
<b>C. Rifle - Pronghorn Season Structure* (Status Quo)</b>	
	<p>Rifle season opens the first Saturday of October and runs for 7 days. This alternative avoids conflicts between muzzleloader and archery hunters hunting during the same time period as rifle hunters. The break between muzzleloader and rifle season will vary in length and may occasionally be as short as 1 day.</p>

\* The opening date of the rifle season will float with the calendar on an annual basis; opening of archery and muzzleloader seasons are fixed dates.



#### IV. MOUNTAIN LION SEASON STRUCTURE

<b>A. April Mountain Lion Season (Status Quo)</b>	
	April mountain lion season opens April 1 and closes April 30; this season occurs in select GMUs; licenses are unlimited and span both regular and April seasons; harvest is controlled through GMU-specific quotas.
<b>B. Fall Mountain Lion Season (Addition; Implementation To Be Determined)</b>	
	Fall mountain lion season in select units (DAUs/GMUs); opens with the 1 <sup>st</sup> rifle elk season and ends with close of 4 <sup>th</sup> rifle deer/elk season; licenses valid only during open rifle elk or deer seasons; elk or deer season participation will apply if hunting west of I-25 or in GMU 140. Pursuit with hounds will not be legal. Implementation of a season will be restricted to select DAUs/GMUs as determined by management need.
<b>C. Regular Mountain Lion Season (Status Quo)</b>	
	Regular mountain lion season opens the day following the closing date of the 4 <sup>th</sup> regular rifle deer and elk season (mid-November) and closes on March 31. Licenses are unlimited; harvest is controlled through GMU-specific quotas.

#### V. BLACK BEAR SEASON STRUCTURE

<b>A. Archery Black Bear Season (New for 2015-2019)</b>	
	Archery bear season opens on September 2 and closes on September 30; OTC with cap by DAU/GMU; no season participation restrictions; unfilled licenses may not be used during the regular deer and/or elk seasons.
<b>B. Muzzleloader Black Bear Season (Status Quo)</b>	
	Muzzleloader bear season runs for 9 days concurrent with muzzleloader deer and elk season; all licenses over the counter with cap by DAU/GMU; no participation restriction; unfilled licenses may not be used during the regular deer and/or elk seasons.
<b>C. Regular Rifle Black Bear Seasons (New for 2015-2019)</b>	
	Two regular rifle limited bear seasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> season opens September 2 and closes on September 30; limited licenses at the DAU level; unfilled licenses may not be used during the 2<sup>nd</sup> rifle bear season;</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> season opens with 1<sup>st</sup> rifle elk and ends with close of 4<sup>th</sup> rifle deer/elk season; licenses valid only during open rifle deer or elk seasons; OTC licenses with caps at the bear DAU/GMU level; hunters must have a rifle deer or elk license valid during any date of the regular rifle seasons for the same bear GMU if hunting west of I-25 or in GMU 140. The second rifle bear season increases the length of rifle hunting for bear by allowing hunting during all 4 rifle deer or elk seasons.</li> </ul>
<b>D. PLO Black Bear Season (Status Quo)</b>	



	PLO limited rifle bear season has earliest opening September 2 and latest ending date with close of 4 <sup>th</sup> rifle deer/elk season; limited licenses issued by DAU/GMU; no season participation restrictions; unfilled licenses may not be used during the regular deer and/or elk seasons.
<b>E. Plains Black Bear Season (Status Quo)</b>	
	Plains rifle bear season in select plains GMUs, opening September 2 and closing with close of 4 <sup>th</sup> rifle deer/elk season; unlimited licenses.

## VI. YOUTH HUNTING

<b>A. Youth Preference (New for 2015-2019)</b>	
	A minimum of 15 percent of limited licenses for doe pronghorn, antlerless and either-sex deer, and antlerless elk in all seasons and manners of take, except public Ranching for Wildlife and Air Force Academy seasons, are available for youth ages 12-17 who meet hunter education requirements.
<b>B. Youth Participation – Deer and Elk Hunting (New for 2015-2019)</b>	
	Youth hunters with unfilled limited antlerless or either-sex elk or deer licenses will be permitted to hunt any open antlerless rifle season for that species within the same DAU after the original licensed season has closed. This alternative requires youth hunters to convert an unfilled either-sex elk or deer license to an antlerless license for the appropriate species prior to hunting in any antlerless season following the closure of the original licensed season.
<b>C. Youth Participation – Pronghorn Hunting (Status Quo)</b>	
	Youth hunters with unfilled limited doe or either-sex pronghorn license will be permitted to hunt designated late pronghorn doe seasons in select units, after the original licensed season has closed.

## VII. PREFERENCE POINTS

<b>A. Preference Point System (Status Quo)</b>	
	No change alternative - until further Commission action relating to license allocation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the list of hunts participating in the Hybrid Draw will be frozen to include units eligible for the 2014 season;</li> <li>b) the hybrid portion of quota will remain at 20 percent; and</li> <li>c) the list of hunts with 80/20 resident/nonresident allocation of licenses will be frozen to include units eligible for the 2014 season.</li> </ul>