AS APPROVED 11/13/2025

FINAL REGULATIONS - CHAPTER W-2 - BIG GAME

ARTICLE I – General Provisions

#201 – License Fees

A. Big Game License Fees

1. License Fee Reduction:

In accordance with the provisions of §33-4-102, C.R.S., the following big game license fees shall be reduced to the fee specified herein, from the level set forth in §33-4-102, C.R.S.:

a) Nonresident Bear ……...$~~293.00~~299.81

b) Resident Bear (Youth) ……...$~~16.79~~17.18

c) Nonresident Bear (Youth) …….....$~~59.96~~61.35

B. Combination Big Game/Annual Fishing Licenses for Nonresidents

1. Big game licenses issued to non-residents shall be issued as combination Big Game/Annual Fishing licenses, and for each such combination license purchased each year by a nonresident $10 of the above license fee shall be allocated to the fishing portion of such combination license.

#203 – Manner of Take

See also #000 in Chapter 0 of these regulations for other applicable manner of take definitions.

A. The following are legal methods of take for all species and seasons listed in this chapter, except as otherwise noted. Any method of take not listed herein shall be prohibited, except as otherwise provided by statute or these regulations:

1. Rifles using center-fire cartridges of .24 caliber or larger, having expanding bullets of at least seventy (70) grains in weight, except:

a. for elk and moose where the minimum bullet weight is eighty-five (85) grains, and with a rated impact energy one hundred (100) yards from the muzzle of at least one thousand (1000) foot pounds as determined by the manufacturer's rating,

b. for wild bison where the minimum caliber is .264 and minimum bullet weight is one hundred-forty (140) grains,

c. ~~and except~~ for mountain lion where any center-fire rifle using bullets of at least forty-five (45) grains and producing at least four hundred (400) foot pounds of energy at the muzzle may be used.

~~a.~~d. Provided further that any semiautomatic rifle used shall not hold more than six (6) rounds in the magazine and chamber combined. A fully automatic rifle is prohibited.

2. Muzzle-loading rifles and smoothbore muskets, provided the minimum caliber shall be forty (.40) for all big game except for elk, ~~and~~ moose, and wild bison when hunting with conical bullets and fifty (.50) caliber when hunting with round ball bullets. The minimum caliber for elk, ~~and~~ moose, and wild bison shall be fifty (.50) when hunting with conical bullets and fifty-four (.54) when hunting with round ball bullets. All muzzle-loading rifles and smoothbore muskets from forty (.40) caliber through fifty (.50) caliber must use a bullet of at least 170 grains in weight. All muzzle-loading rifles and smoothbore muskets greater than fifty (.50) caliber must use bullets of at least 210 grains in weight.

   a. During the muzzle-loading firearms seasons for deer, elk, pronghorn, bear, ~~and~~ moose, and wild bison only lawful muzzle-loaders and smoothbore muskets may be used by muzzle-loading license holders.

   b. During the muzzle-loading firearm seasons for deer, elk, pronghorn, bear, ~~and~~ moose, and wild bison the following additional restrictions apply:

      1. Propellent/Powders: The use of pelletized powder systems and smokeless powder are prohibited.

      2. Projectiles: Sabots are prohibited. For the purposes of this regulation cloth patches are not sabots.

      3. Loading: Firearms must load from the muzzle. Firearms which can be loaded from the breech are prohibited.

      4. Sights: Any muzzle-loading rifle or smoothbore musket with any sighting device other than open or “iron” sights is prohibited.

      5. Electronic or battery-powered devices cannot be incorporated into or attached to the muzzle-loading firearm.

   3. Handheld bows, including compound bows, using arrows equipped with a broadhead with an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8ths of an inch with no less than two steel cutting edges. Each cutting edge must be in the same plane throughout the length of the cutting surface.

      a. During the archery seasons for deer, elk, pronghorn, bear, sheep, goat, ~~and~~ moose, and wild bison only lawful hand-held bows may be used by archery license holders.

      b. Bows must have a minimum draw weight of 35 pounds, except for wild bison where the minimum draw weight is 50 pounds.

      c. No portion of the bow’s riser (handle) or any track, trough, channel, arrow rest or other device, excluding the cable(s) and bowstring, that attaches to the bow’s riser can contact, support and/or guide the arrow from a point rearward of the bow’s brace height.

d. Bows can propel only a single arrow at a time and no mechanism for automatically loading arrows is allowed.

e. Equipment using scopes, electronic or battery-powered devices cannot be incorporated into or attached to the bow or arrow, with the exception of lighted nocks on arrows and recording devices on bows that cast no light towards the target and do not aid in range finding, sighting, or shooting the bow.

f. Hydraulic or pneumatic technology cannot be used to derive or store energy to propel the arrow. Explosive arrows are prohibited.

4. Shotguns, no smaller than twenty (20) gauge and firing a single slug.

5. Crossbows, provided the minimum draw weight is at least one hundred twenty-five (125) pounds and has a minimum draw length of fourteen (14) inches as measured from the front of the bow to the nocking point of the draw string and contain a positive mechanical safety device. In addition, the bolt must be at least sixteen (16) inches in length equipped with a broadhead with an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8th of an inch with no less than two steel cutting edges and each cutting edge must be in the same plane throughout the length of the cutting surface.

   a. Crossbows are not legal during the archery seasons for deer, elk, pronghorn, bear, sheep, goat, ~~and~~ moose, and wild bison.

~~6.~~ Handguns, provided they have a minimum barrel length of four (4) inches and ~~comply with the following criteria:~~

~~7.~~6. ~~Except for mountain lion,~~ use a .24 caliber or larger diameter expanding bullet with a rated impact energy of at least 550 ft. pounds at 50 yards as determined by the manufacturer, except:~~.~~

   a. For mountain lion ~~only~~, use a centerfire handgun using bullets of at least 45 grains and producing at least 400 foot pounds of energy at the muzzle, as determined by the manufacturer.

   ~~a.~~b. For wild bison, use bullets of at least .429 caliber and a minimum case length of 1.285 inches, or any rifle caliber of .264 caliber and one hundred-forty (140) grains or larger used in a handgun.

#205 – Annual Bag Limits and Maximum Numbers of Licenses per Person

A. Deer, elk, pronghorn, black bear, mountain lion, moose, rocky mountain bighorn sheep, and mountain goat, and wild bison.

The annual bag and possession limit for deer, elk, pronghorn, black bear, mountain lion, rocky mountain bighorn sheep, ~~and~~ mountain goat, and wild bison shall be the total number of animals taken on all licenses which can be legally obtained by the hunter for each species during that license year, as established in the following lists. Big game taken during a hunting season established as a portion of the preceding license year's hunting seasons shall be counted as part of the preceding year's bag limit. When a license allows hunting in more than one Game

Management Unit, the unit listed in the hunt code on the license shall determine the maximum number of annual licenses a license holder may obtain for that species.

Notwithstanding the (“List A,” “List B,” “List C”) license categories set forth in this regulation, any license that is administratively converted to a private-land-only license as part of the Landowner Preference Program will retain the (“List A,” “List B,” “List C”) status of its original hunt code.

1. Deer

    a. One License - Any hunter may obtain one deer license.

    b. Two Licenses - A hunter may obtain two deer licenses if at least one of them is:

        1. a private land only antlered license for GMUs 29, 38, 51, 391 and 461,

        2. a private land only antlerless license,

        3. an over-the-counter either-sex whitetail only license,

        4. an either-sex whitetail only license, except Ranching for Wildlife license, for GMUs 59, 69, 84, 581,

        5. an antlerless whitetail only license, except Ranching for Wildlife license, or

        6. an antlerless license, except for Ranching for Wildlife license, for GMUs 15, 18, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 181, 361, 371, 421, 431, 444, 471.

        7. a license issued for hunt code DE087O2X, DE093O2X, DM009L1R, or DM951P5R.

    c. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may also obtain any number of the following deer licenses:

        1. an auction license,

        2. a raffle license,

        3. a game damage license,

        4. a special population management license (except that a hunter may not purchase more than one extra antlerless Ranching for Wildlife license as provided in #271(A)(2)) , a special allocation Ranching for Wildlife license for donation to youths or hunters with mobility impairments,

        5. a disease management license,

        6. a replacement license for an animal found CWD positive,

        7. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J).

8. an Outreach license, as provided in #206(B)(4)(f).

9. a license issued for hunt code DF029P5R, DF038P5R, DF038L1R, DF056L1R, DF069L1R, DF085P5R, DF087O2X, DF091P5X, DF092P5X, DF093O2X, DF096P5X, DF096P6X, DF101O2X, DF104L3R, DF391P5R or DF481P5R.

2. Elk

   a. One License - Any hunter may obtain one elk license.

   b. Two Licenses - A hunter may obtain two elk licenses if at least one of them is

      1. a private land only antlerless license,

      2. an over the counter antlerless archery license,

      3. an antlerless license, except for Ranching for Wildlife license, issued for GMUs 1, 2, 6, 10, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 30, 31, 32, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 50, 52, 82, 85, 86, 133, 134, 140, 141, 142, 161, 171,181, 201, 411, 421, 431, 471, 500, 501, 512, 682, 691, 791, 851, or 861,

      4. a license issued for hunt codes EF009L1R, EM682P5R or EM682P6R.

   c. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may also obtain any number of the following elk licenses:

      1. antlerless private land only license for GMUs 104, 391 or 461,

      2. any over the counter either-sex license, except archery license, issued for GMUs 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 132, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, or 951,

      3. a license issued for hunt code, EF020L3R, or EF128L1R.

      4. an auction license,

      5. a raffle license,

      6. a game damage license,

      7. a special population management license (except that a hunter may not purchase more than one extra antlerless Ranching for Wildlife license as provided in #271(A)(2)) , a special allocation Ranching for Wildlife license for donation to youths or hunters with mobility impairments,

      8. a disease management license,

      9. a replacement license for an animal found CWD positive,

10. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J).

11. an Outreach license, as provided in #206(B)(4)(f).

3. Pronghorn

   a. One license - Any hunter may obtain one pronghorn license.

   b. Two licenses - A hunter may obtain two pronghorn licenses if at least one of them is:

      1. a private land only license,

      2. a doe license, except for Ranching for Wildlife license, issued for GMUs 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117,118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146 or 147,

   c. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may also obtain any number of the following pronghorn licenses:

      1. an auction license,

      2. a raffle license,

      3. a game damage license, if available,

      4. a special population management license, a special allocation Ranching for Wildlife license for donation to youths or hunters with mobility impairments,

      5. a disease management license, if available,

      6. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J).

      7. an Outreach license, as provided in #206(B)(4)(f).

4. Bear

   a. One license - Any hunter may obtain one bear license.

   b. Two licenses - A hunter may obtain two bear licenses if at least one of them is a private land only license or a bear license, except for a Ranching for Wildlife license, in GMUs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 131,161, 171, 201, 211, 214, 231, 301, 361, 391, 411, 421, 431, 441, 444, 461, 471, 481, 500, 501, 511, 521, 561, 581, 591, 711, 741, 751 or 771.

c. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may also obtain any number of the following bear licenses:

1. a game damage license, if available,

2. a disease management license, if available,

3. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J),

4. a special population management license, a special allocation Ranching for Wildlife license for donation to youths or hunters with mobility impairments.

5. a license issued for hunt code BE087U6R.

6. A private land only license in GMUs 14, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 104, 131, 361, 391, 411, 421, 431, 444, 461, 471, 481, 500, 501, 511, 521, 561, 581, 711, 741, 751, or 771.

5. Moose

a. One License - Any hunter may obtain one moose license. The lifetime bag limit for antlered moose is one, except when taken on an auction or raffle license or a license issued in accordance with regulation #271 or #272. Any person who harvests an antlered moose shall be ineligible to draw either an antlered or either-sex license.

b. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may also obtain any number of the following moose licenses:

1. an auction license,

2. a raffle license,

3. a game damage license, if available,

4. a special population management license, a special allocation Ranching for Wildlife license for donation to youths or hunters with mobility impairments,

5. a disease management license, if available,

6. a replacement license for an animal found CWD positive,

7. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J).

6. Mountain Lion

a. One License - Any hunter may obtain one mountain lion license.

b. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may also obtain any number of the following mountain lion licenses:

1. a game damage license, if available,

2. a disease management license, if available,

3. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J).

7. Bighorn Sheep

a. One License - Any hunter may obtain one rocky mountain bighorn sheep license or one desert bighorn sheep license. The lifetime bag limit for desert bighorn sheep is one. Provided further that application restrictions in regulation #206 apply. The lifetime bag limit for a bighorn sheep ram is one for rams harvested after January 1, 2028, except when taken on an auction or raffle license or a license issued in accordance with regulation #271 or #272. Any person who harvests a ram, after January 1, 2028, shall be ineligible to draw a ram or either-sex license.

b. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may obtain any number of the following bighorn sheep licenses:

1. an auction or raffle license for rocky mountain bighorn sheep,

2. a special bighorn sheep management license, a special allocation Ranching for Wildlife license for donation to youths or hunters with mobility impairments,

3. a disease management license, if available,

4. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J).

8. Mountain Goat

a. One License - Any hunter may obtain one mountain goat license. Provided further that application restrictions in regulation #206 apply. The lifetime bag limit for a mountain goat harvested with a male or either-sex license is one if harvested after January 1, 2028, except when taken on an auction or raffle license or a license issued in accordance with regulation #271 or #272. Any person who harvests a male goat, after January 1, 2028, shall be ineligible to draw a male or either-sex license.

b. Any Number of Licenses - A hunter may obtain any number of the following mountain goat licenses:

1. an auction or raffle license for mountain goat,

2. a special mountain goat management license, if available,

3. a disease management license, if available,

4. a rewards program license (except that a hunter may not be issued more than one Turn In Poachers (TIPS) license per year, as provided in #002(J).

9. Wild Bison

~~c.~~a. One License – Any hunter may obtain one wild bison license. The lifetime bag limit for wild bison is one, except when issued in accordance with regulation #230, #271, or #272. Provided further that application restrictions in regulation #206 apply.

B. Exceptions to Bag Limit Calculation. The following big game animals shall not be counted against an annual bag and possession limit for that species:

1. Accidental Hunter Take: Any big game animal accidentally taken by a hunter, provided that prior to any further hunting the individual self-reports the incident to the Division as soon as practicable and the Division verifies the claim of accidental kill. For the purposes of this regulation an "accidental kill" means any unintentional taking of wildlife not resulting from carelessness or negligence on the part of the hunter.

a. Determination of whether the taking involves carelessness or negligence shall be based on a consideration of the totality of circumstance surrounding the taking including but not necessarily limited to, number of shots fired, number of animals present, number of animals killed or wounded, type of firearm or ammunition used, angle and distance of shot, species of animal, topography, ground cover, and light or weather conditions.

2. Accidental Vehicle Kills: Any big game animal accidentally killed by a motor vehicle or train shall not be counted against an annual bag limit for that species.

3. Damage Kills: Any big game animal causing damage and taken under the authority of §33-3-106 C.R.S.

4. Southern Ute Tribal Lands: Any big game animal taken on a Southern Ute Tribal Lands permit.

#217 – Season Tables and Hunt Code Descriptions

A. Big Game season tables are established by species (sheep, goat, bear, lion, deer, elk, pronghorn, wild bison, and moose) and hunt (archery, muzzle-loading, early, regular, plains, private land only, late, and Ranching for Wildlife). Tables contain general information describing the hunt type, season dates, unit(s) or portions thereof, hunt code, license types, and numbers.

ARTICLE IV – Mountain Goat

#230 – Special Management Licenses for Sheep, ~~and~~ Goat and Wild Bison

A. The Director is authorized to issue special management licenses for bighorn sheep, ~~or~~ mountain goat and wild bison when necessary to:

1. prevent exposure of a sheep, ~~or~~ goat, or wild bison population to disease which could result from sheep, ~~or~~ goats or wild bison having had contact with domestic livestock which present

a disease transmission risk; either within or outside of an established game management unit; or to prevent the potential spread of disease by sheep, ~~or~~ goats or wild bison pioneering from units with such disease.

2. allow for targeted surveillance of sheep,~~ and~~ goat and wild bison populations for management purposes.

3. prevent unplanned expansion of sheep,~~ or~~ goats or wild bison outside of established game management units for the species.

B. Sheep and goat ~~L~~licenses will be offered to unsuccessful applicants for an adjacent or nearby unit for the same species, in the order in which they would have been drawn if successful. Wild bison licenses will be distributed randomly from the wild bison roster.

1. Applications for the bison roster must be submitted no later than midnight mountain time on January 31 annually.

~~B.~~C. Manner of Take will be rifle and associated methods.

~~C.~~D. Mandatory check requirements are the same as for established seasons for sheep or goat, except that mandatory tissue submission requirements may be stipulated for individual targeted surveillance hunts. Wild bison taken under these Special Management Licenses are required to be submitted for mandatory checks in accordance with regulation #274.

~~D.~~E. Such licenses will not use or generate preference points.

ARTICLE XII – Special Hunting Seasons/Licenses for Big Game

#271 – Big Game Animals Causing Damage and Big Game Populations Over Objective

A. Special Population Management Seasons for Big Game Ungulates

1. The Director shall have the authority to establish special management seasons for antlerless or female big game ungulates in specific game management units or portions thereof which significantly exceed the population objective, when the anticipated harvest from the current year's archery, muzzle-loading and regular rifle seasons did not occur. Provided further that the Director shall have the authority to establish these hunts between November 16 and February 28, to specify a time period for each of these hunts but not to exceed ten days each, and shall authorize hunters to use designated unfilled big game licenses for these hunts and units.

2. The Director shall have the authority to allocate antlerless deer and/or elk licenses on existing Ranching for Wildlife properties located in game management units where deer or elk populations significantly exceed the population objective. These licenses shall be in addition to the number of licenses allocated to each ranch pursuant to the Cooperative Agreement established in #210(A)(2). The additional allocation and use of the antlerless licenses provided for in this section shall be allocated by season(s) and quota(s) established in the ranch's respective Cooperative Agreement and subject to the following provisions:

a. No ranch shall be required to accept any additional antlerless licenses.

b. The public allocation of such additional antlerless licenses shall only be offered to hunters who have successfully drawn antlered, either-sex or antlerless licenses for the same species on the ranch. Public hunters who choose to purchase one additional antlerless license from the Division shall be required to use the additional license during the season established for the license for which they drew. No more than one additional antlerless license will be available to any public hunter.

c. The allocation of such additional antlerless licenses for private seasons shall be equal to, and not to exceed, the total number of additional antlerless licenses allocated to public hunters.

B. Special Game Damage Seasons for Big Game Ungulates

1. The Director shall have the authority to establish special hunting seasons for big game ungulates~~, between August 15 and February 28,~~ when necessary to control damage to property. Seasons shall be for the taking of antlerless or female animals unless the Director has determined that the taking of antlered or male animals is necessary ~~in order~~ to alleviate the damage. These seasons may occur year-round for male wild bison, between August 15 and January 31 for female wild bison, and between August 15 and February 28 for other ungulates.

a. Game damage hunts are limited to a maximum of 50 licenses per species per Game Management Unit or 30 percent of the antlerless, either-sex, or doe licenses issued for the DAU (whichever is greater), unless a distribution management plan establishing a different percentage has been approved by the Parks and Wildlife Commission or additional permits are approved by the Director or his designee.

b. On private lands and Russell Lakes, Rio Grande and Higel State Wildlife Areas, the Area Wildlife Manager (AWM) is authorized to conduct these seasons based upon the following criteria:

1. The AWM finds that such a season would be consistent with the distribution management plan approved by the Parks and Wildlife Commission.

2. When there is no approved distribution management plan, the AWM finds that a season will reduce or eliminate damage for which the Division is liable, and that holding a season would be desirable considering

a. The species and number of animals involved.

b. The number of animals that would have to be removed to reduce or eliminate damage.

c. The location of the damage problem.

d. The type and extent of damage.

e. The time of year and its relationship to the life history of the animals.

f. The length of time such damage will continue without big game removal.

g. Management closures, hunting seasons and other public use.

h. The effect on population objectives for the GMU and DAU.

i. Whether landowner operations (e.g., harvesting) or critical wildlife biological activities (e.g., fawning) would be interrupted.

j. Safety risks.

k. Any other pertinent factors.

3. The Area Wildlife Manager shall provide the landowner with special application forms for distribution to individuals of their choice. Participants shall submit the completed application form with payment to the Division office indicated on the application.

4. In the event the landowner cannot secure enough people to effect an adequate harvest the Division can assist in locating individuals.

a. The Division shall

1. Verify that damage or conflicts are occurring or can reasonably be anticipated to occur.

2. Designate what area shall be open to hunting.

3. Determine the manner of hunting that will be permitted.

4. Determine the number of hunters allowed to hunt in each designated area.

b. Hunting will be done under the direction of a District Wildlife Manager, following approval by the owner of land where such damage is occurring.

c. Hunters shall hunt in designated areas and on the dates indicated on the license.

1. A map or a written description of the designated area open to hunting (which would include, but would not be limited to landowner(s) name, game management unit, township, range and section(s) and/or identification of landmarks such as roads, rivers, or fence lines which coincide with boundaries), will be provided to each licensed hunter by the Division.

d. Any person who purchases a license for a game damage season shall be required to complete a Division harvest survey form and return it to the Area office that is nearest the location of the hunt no later than 5 days after the season ends.

C. Special Game Damage Licenses for Bear and Mountain Lion

1. The Director shall have the authority to establish special hunting licenses for mountain lion and bear, which allow for take in excess of the otherwise applicable limited license numbers or quotas, when necessary to control damage to private property.

a. AWMs are authorized to issue these bear and mountain lion licenses to address specific animals determined after an investigation to be causing damage to private property.

1. Bear or mountain lion licenses above the established limited license numbers or quota for the area may be issued only where necessary to take specific animals determined after an investigation to be causing damage to private property.

2. Bear hunting authorized under this provision will be conducted between September 2 and the end of the fourth regular rifle season annually.

3. Mountain lion hunting authorized under this provision will be conducted during established lion seasons.

4. Licenses will be issued only if licenses are not otherwise available for purchase under standard license distribution methods or where mountain lion quotas have been reached in the area.

5. License will be restricted by manner of take, period of time within the dates specified above, and location within the GMU(s) or DAU(s) in question as necessary to ensure the offending animal is appropriately targeted.

6. Hunting will be conducted under the direction of a District Wildlife Manager.

b. Any person who purchases a license shall be required to complete a Division harvest survey form and return it to the Area office that is nearest the location of the hunt no later than 5 days after the end of the hunting period authorized by the license.

c. Bear and mountain lion taken pursuant to a license issued under this provision shall not be counted against the annual bag and possession limit for the species in question.

D. Special Hunting Season In Game Management Unit 20 For Cow Elk Normally Not Available For Harvest During Regular Or Late Big Game Seasons:

1. Season dates, license types, permit numbers will be established by the Director or his designee.

2. The Division will designate the area open to hunting, manner of take, and season dates which are necessary to achieve its population management objective for this population of elk. Hunting shall occur only during the designated time periods indicated on the hunter's license and only in those areas specifically designated on the map provided by the Division. Special Unit 20 cow elk hunts shall be established based on the following criteria: (a) the hunt does not fall within the criteria established for game damage hunts; (b) snow ground cover and/or other conditions favor are expected to favor successful hunting; (c) elk must be available to hunters in portions of Unit 20 which are open to hunter access; and (d) no special season will be created under this regulation which would extend beyond February 15th.

3. Eligible hunters will be selected in the following priority: a) from the list of hunters who applied for a Unit 20 limited elk license and were unsuccessful; and b) from a new list of hunters established by the Division Northeast Regional office pursuant to notice in local newspapers. Such list will be established on a first-come, first-served basis.

4. Individuals who participate in this special hunt may also participate in any other season for elk if otherwise eligible to do so.

E. Special Hunting Licenses and Seasons For Deer and Elk in Urbanized Areas:

1. The Division Director (or designee) shall have the authority to establish special deer and elk hunting seasons between August 15 and February 28 annually to achieve population management objectives as specified in Division approved county or municiple management plans. Seasons shall be for the taking of antlerless animals unless the Director determins that the taking of antlered animals is necessary per the issues and goals brought forth in the Division approved management plan.

2. Counties or municipalities must submit a proposed management plan to the Division, which includes the following:

    a. Explaination of the need and scope of the issues (i.e. habitat degredation, human conflicts, human health and safety issues, etc);
    b. Estimated population of deer or elk creating the issue and a target population number being sought post removal;
    c. Season dates;
    d. Manner of take;
    e. Numbers of licenses and projected harvest;
    f. Geographic location and description of hunting area(s); and
    g. Method for selecting eligible hunters.

3. Management plans will be evaluated on the merits of furthering goals for suburban deer or elk management and in relation to the appropriate Division Big Game Herd (DAU) Management Plan. The Director (or designee) shall provide the county or municipality with special application forms for distribution to individuals as specified within the submitted and approved management plan. Participants shall submit the completed application to the Division to obtain the appropriate hunting license.

4. The participating county or municipality will assume full responsibility for the plans and elements therein. The Division will be available to provide technical assistance to the county or municipality in preparing the management plan.

5. The county or municipality may not charge hunters a fee beyond what is required to cover their administrative costs to run the program.

6. All participating counties, municipalities and individuals are required to follow all applicable state statutues and regulations. No county or municipality will allow, encourage, or otherwise promote violations thereof.

7. The Division can unilaterally, without prior notification, terminate or void any applications given to a county or municipality prior to their redemtion for a license for issues related to human health, safety, or any wildlife related violations associated with the management plan implementation, or documented deviation from the management plan as it was submitted to the Division. Management plans may be amended with Division approval.

8. Individuals who participate in these special hunts may also participate in any other season for deer or elk if otherwise eligible to do so.

9. Any county or municipality receiving licenses for a special hunting season for deer and elk in urbanized areas shall be required to complete a Division harvest survey form and return it to

the Area office that is nearest to the location of the hunt no later than 5 days after the season ends.

#272 - Big Game Disease/Animal Health Seasons

1. Special Hunting Seasons for Disease Management in Big Game

    a. The Director shall have the authority to establish special hunting seasons for big game, when hunting harvest has not been adequate to reduce the incidence of disease, to reduce emigration of infected animals, or to otherwise control expansion of the disease.

        1. No more than 200 licenses per species shall be issued annually per Game Management Unit (GMU) unless authorized by the Director

        2. Seasons shall be for the taking of antlerless or female animals unless the Director has authorized the issuance of male ~~(antlered)~~ licenses. No more than 10% of the licenses shall be issued for male ~~(antlered)~~ animals unless authorized by the Director.

        3. Licenses will be valid only in the unit(s) specified on the license. Licenses may be restricted to specific properties or areas as determined by the Area Wildlife Manager.

        4. License fees may be reduced when authorized by the Director, when necessary to ensure sufficient hunter participation, provided that no license is to be sold for less than $5.00. License fees shall be set to ensure recovery of the cost of the retail and system agent commissions.

        5. Multiple carcass tags may be issued with each license, as authorized by the Director. Provided further that the payment of separate license fees shall be required if licenses for more than one species are to be sold.

        6. Any licensee who takes deer or elk during any such season for the purpose of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) management shall submit the head from all animals taken when required to do so as a condition of the license, to the testing site specified at the time the license is issued, within 5 days after harvest. Hunters must complete the special survey tag available at any head collection site and attach it to the animal's head. Antlers and capes from harvested deer may be removed by hunters before submitting heads for sampling.

ARTICLE XIII – ~~Vacant~~Wild Bison

#273 – Wild bison seasons are closed statewide except as authorized by the Director in accordance with regulations #230, #271, and #272.

#274 – Special Restrictions

A. Licensed hunters who take wild bison must present the head with horns attached to any submission site for inspection by an employee of the Division on or before the 5th working day after the taking thereof.

B. Any unsuccessful wild bison licensee must complete and return the mandatory questionnaire to the Division within thirty (30) days after the close of the season.

C. At the time of the mandatory check, the Division shall be authorized to extract and retain the incisor teeth. If frozen, the Division may retain heads as necessary for thawing sufficient to extract the incisor teeth.

Basis and Purpose

Differential pricing for nonresident black bear, youth black bear, and nonresident mountain lion

Following the passage of the Hunting, Fishing, and Parks for Future Generations Act (SB 18-143), the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission has the authority to adjust most wildlife licenses annually with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). While most resident and nonresident wildlife license fees have been adjusted to the statutory maximum, differential pricing has been retained for nonresident black bear and youth resident and nonresident black bear.

Implementation of SB25-053 Protect Wild Bison Act

On January 1, 2026, Colorado Senate Bill 25-053 will establish a dual classification system for bison in the state. This new law distinguishes between "wild bison," which are classified as big game wildlife, and "domestic bison," which are privately owned bison, bison legally reduced to captivity, bison that have escaped lawful captivity, and bison owned by or lawfully reduced to captivity by an Indian tribe, including hybrids with domestic cattle. This new framework aims at addressing bison crossing into Colorado from the Utah Book Cliffs herd and provides a proactive way to manage potential conflicts with landowners and other wildlife. The new rules include several updates to existing regulations, including adding new hunt code classifications, updating definitions, and adopting license fees.

The changes offer a balanced and responsible approach to a complex issue. Instead of immediately opening a general hunting season, the regulations establish a measured and controlled process for issuing licenses only if a need arises. If needed, hunting licenses will only be issued in three specific situations including for game damage (regulation #271), disease (regulation #272) or for population movement control (regulation #230). Since no diseases of concern have been detected in the Book Cliffs herd, these regulations are currently a preventative measure, ensuring that any future issues can be addressed with an established procedure.

There are now two ways to obtain a wild bison license and the process depends on the reason for the issuance of the license. For licenses issued by the Director pursuant to regulation #230, hunters must apply during the big game draw and pay an application fee and have a qualifying license to be added to a wild bison roster. A random selection process from that roster will only be used if a need for these licenses arises, so it's likely that zero licenses will be issued in many years. For licenses issued pursuant to regulations #271, and #272, the normal issuing process for those types of licenses will be followed.

To help with data collection, all successful hunters must present their harvested bison to the Division for inspection within five working days. While, unsuccessful hunters must complete a mandatory questionnaire within 30 days of the season's end. This data will provide valuable information on wild bison distribution and disease status. Lastly, the new regulations specify the potential damage amounts caused by wild bison for grazing, forage and crops. The changes aim to manage issues such as competition with livestock and other wildlife, as well as damage to private property.

The statements of basis and purpose for these regulations can be obtained from the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, Office of the Regulations Manager by emailing dnr_cpw_planning@state.co.us or by visiting the Division of Parks and Wildlife headquarters at 6060 Broadway, Denver, CO, 80216.

The primary statutory authority for these regulations can be found in § 24-4-103, C.R.S., and the state Wildlife Act, §§ 33-1-101 to 33-6-209, C.R.S., specifically including, but not limited to: §§ 33-1-106, C.R.S.

EFFECTIVE DATE - THESE REGULATIONS SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2026 AND SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT UNTIL REPEALED, AMENDED OR SUPERSEDED.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF COLORADO THIS 13TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025.

APPROVED:
Richard Reading
Chair

ATTEST:
Eden Vardy
Secretary

Phil Weiser
Attorney General

Natalie Hanlon Leh
Chief Deputy Attorney General

Shannon Stevenson
Solicitor General

Tanja Wheeler
Associate Chief Deputy
Attorney General

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Office of the Attorney General

Tracking Number: **2025-00468**

OPINION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL RENDERED IN CONNECTION WITH THE RULES ADOPTED BY THE Colorado Parks and Wildlife (406 Series, Wildlife) ON 11/13/2025

2 CCR 406-2
CHAPTER W-2 - BIG GAME

The above-referenced rules were submitted to this office on 11/14/2025 as required by section 24-4-103, C.R.S. This office has reviewed them and finds no apparent constitutional or legal deficiency in their form or substance.

November 26, 2025 09:26:21 MST

Philip J. Weiser
Attorney General
by Russell D. Johnson
Deputy Solicitor General