

Elk Hunting 101



Rules and Requests

- Questions are welcome
- Topics are not for confrontation
 - Many methods to hunt work well
- Return from Breaks on time
- Meet your neighbor
- Respect and Courtesy



Topics to Cover

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Preparation before the hunt
- Gear and Equipment
- Making Camp
- Scouting
- Hunting Tactics
- After the Shot
- The Harvest
- Sunset



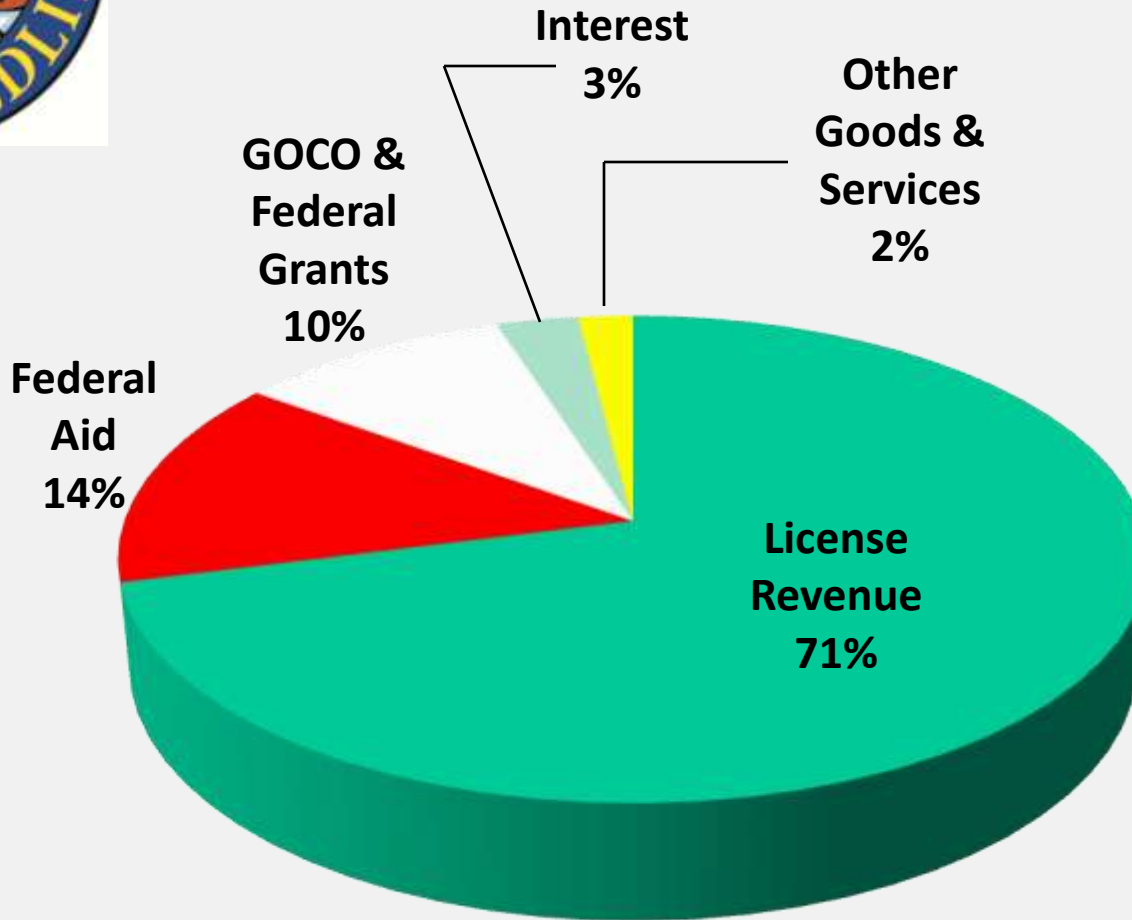


Mission

The mission of Colorado Parks and Wildlife is to perpetuate the wildlife resources of this state, to provide a quality state parks system and to provide enjoyable outdoor recreation opportunities to include hunting, angling and wildlife viewing that educate and inspire current and future generations to serve as active stewards of Colorado's natural resources.



Wildlife Funding



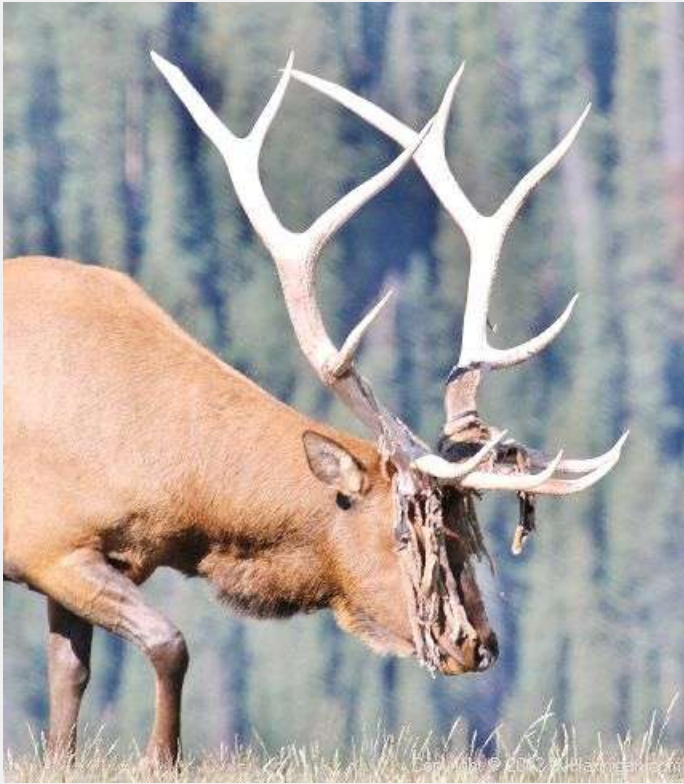
Insider



<http://wildlife.state.co.us/NewsMedia/DOWInsider/Pages/DOWInsider.aspx>

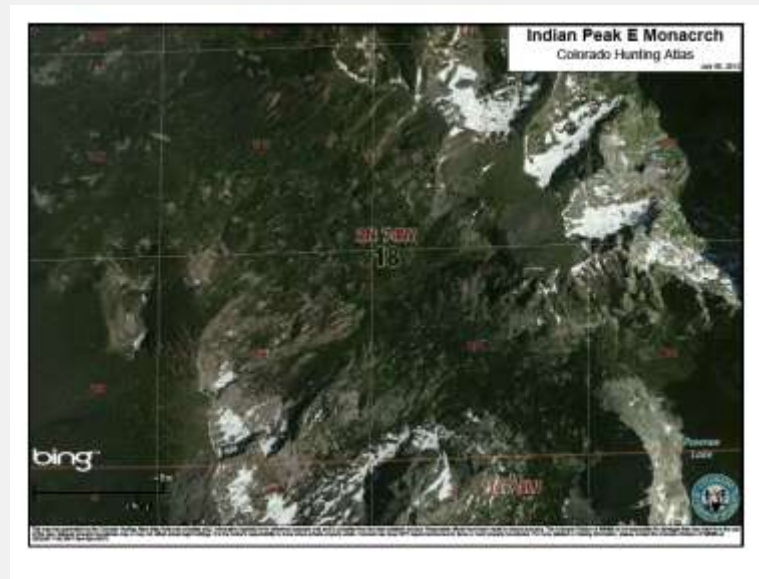
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Wildlife Viewing & Education
- Land/Water
- General
- Temporary Jobs
- Permanent Jobs
- Wildlife Species & Research
- Commission Meetings

Preparation before the Hunt



Scout From the House

- Topographical Maps
 - Federal Center
 - BLM Maps
 - National Geographic Maps
 - Gazetteer
 - Google Earth
 - CPW Hunting Atlas



Research

- Read
 - Elk Hunting University
 - Hunting articles and magazines
 - On Line article – Free
- Watch
 - Videos
 - You – Tube
- Check with CPW
 - Wildlife Officers
 - Hunt Planners
 - Biologists



Firearms and Ballistics

- Know your firearm/bow
 - Shoot from different angles and distances
 - Research your ballistics
 - Different grains, bullet weights, manufacturers
 - Altitude, weather
 - Arrow weights and broadhead weight
- Understand shot placement
 - Vitals
 - We will talk later on this one!

Guns and Ammo

- Shoot a rifle that -
 - Fits
 - You can shoot accurately and are confident in using
 - Hit the range and use several positions
 - Consider shooting sticks or bipod for stability
- Use ammunition that is proper for the hunt:
 - .270 caliber 150 grain
 - .308 caliber 150-165 grain
 - 30-06 caliber 150 -180 grain
- Never hunt with a clean barrel
 - Sight in, clean, then foul shoot the barrel. Clean barrels will vary the shot placement on the first round
- Buy at least two boxes of ammo. Preferably the same lot number

Gear and Equipment

- Optics
 - Binos/Spotting Scopes
- Tripods
- Boots
- Trekking Poles
- Back pack
- Rain Gear
- Clothing
- Lights
- GPS and Compass
- Cell Phone
- Water/Water Bottle
- Firearm
- Archery Gear

Range Estimation

Rangefinder – very accurate and important tool

- Use to pre range distance to land marks when still hunting.
- Spotter can use rangefinder and tell shooter the distance to target
- Shooter will repeat/confirm distance before shooting



Important Documents

- Personal Documents – Driver's License, Medical Cards
- Regulations
 - Get several copies. One in the truck and one in your pack
 - Legal Possession of Licenses
 - Hunter Education Card
 - Legal Hunting Methods
 - Antler Point Restrictions
 - Handguns
 - After you harvest
 - Carcass Tags
 - Evidence of sex
 - Accidental Take
- Check your License for:
 - Proper season dates
 - Proper unit you are hunting

Making Camp

- Choose a spot
 - Plan and prepare your meals ahead of time
 - keep meals simple
 - cook at home
 - pre-pack lunches
 - Set up camp before the season
 - bring water or pump lots when you set up camp
 - bring wood or gather lots early
 - set up your hunting pack at home

Making Camp

- Critters in Camp
- A good warm bed
- Fires
 - Check local ordinances
 - Tent stove but maybe no campfire
- Leave it Right!
 - Pick up all the trash and other disturbance



Scouting



Scouting

- Pre-Season
 - Get High and be there early
 - Have a scouting plan
 - Look for rubs, scat and trails
 - Check for water sources
- Use maps and aerials





- Maps allow you to look into an area before you get there
- They allow you to see what you can't see

See the Elk? →





Scouting

- Find this and find elk!



Rubs, Wallows and trails

Scouting

- Hunt the Timber and Treeline
 - Elk will hang in the upper regions till snow pushes them down
 - Glass the edges of the timber
- Glass the entire country you can see
- Look at the same area at least 3 times
- Look for parts – Legs, antlers, butts
- Watch the skyline in early am and evening
- Watch your scent and avoid being seen

ELK BIOLOGY AND HABITAT

- **Know your game!**
- **What elk eat!**
 - **Grasses/Forbs/Shrubs**
 - **Aspen = Elk**
- **Things to Consider**
 - **Largest Elk Herds occur west of the Divide**
 - **Highest elk density occurs in association with aspen, oakbrush and mountain shrubs**
 - **Vast public lands mean lots of opportunity and lots of ground to consider/cover**
 - **Find the Refuge areas – Find the elk**



Break



Hunting Tactics

- Understand elk – Why do they do that?
- Elk Senses
 - Sight – Good vision but trouble with detail
 - Smell – the most developed sense
 - Hearing – very good but rely on other senses to validate what they heard



Hunting Tactics

- Stand Vs Stalk
 - Cover, wind, shooting lanes ??
 - Play the wind
 - Wind in your face if at all possible
 - LETS LOOK AT THE WIND



Downslope drainage: Cool air desends
Early Morning: Hunt across or up



Upslope Winds: Warm air rises
Late Afternoon: Hunt across or down



Prevailing Winds: The best case



Hunting Tactics

- Stand Vs Stalk
 - Cover, wind, shooting lanes
 - Play the wind
 - Wind in your face if at all possible
 - LETS LOOK AT THE WIND
- Caught moving?
 - Stay still
 - No eye contact
- The eyes have it - ***A herd has many eyes and ears***
- Using Calls
 - Cow Calls
 - Bugles

Cow Talk

Sounds and Calls

- **Calling is an effective way to bring the elk in close enough for a good shot.**
- **Understand the language**
 - **Bulls bugle to establish dominance and attract cows**
 - **Cows are the communicators and the “secret”**
 - **Calf call- calves looking for mom (ee-uw-uw-eu)**
 - **Chirp – (eeu)**
 - **Mew – (meeeew)**
 - **Just calling is not effective, call to “Speak the Language”:
Understand what you are saying**
 - **Listen to elk talk and watch what they are doing**

Common Sense Tips

- Keep sun at back; wind in face
- Be careful with your light
- Look under the trees
- Stop in a shooting position



Shot Placement and Anatomy

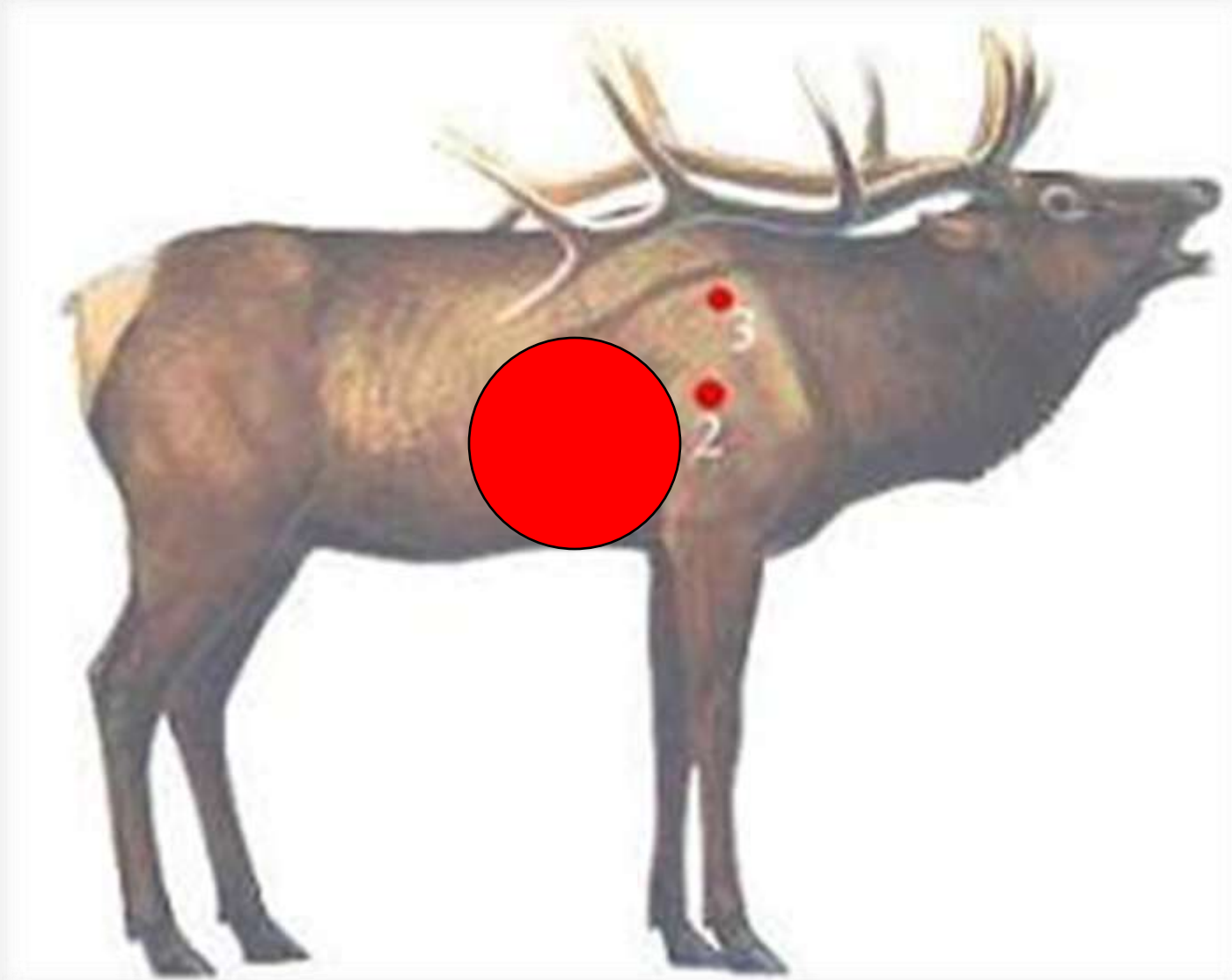
- Understand the internal anatomy
- Heart and lungs provide a large target area
 - About 25 inches of target
- Behind the front shoulder is best
- Avoid Head shots and Neck shots



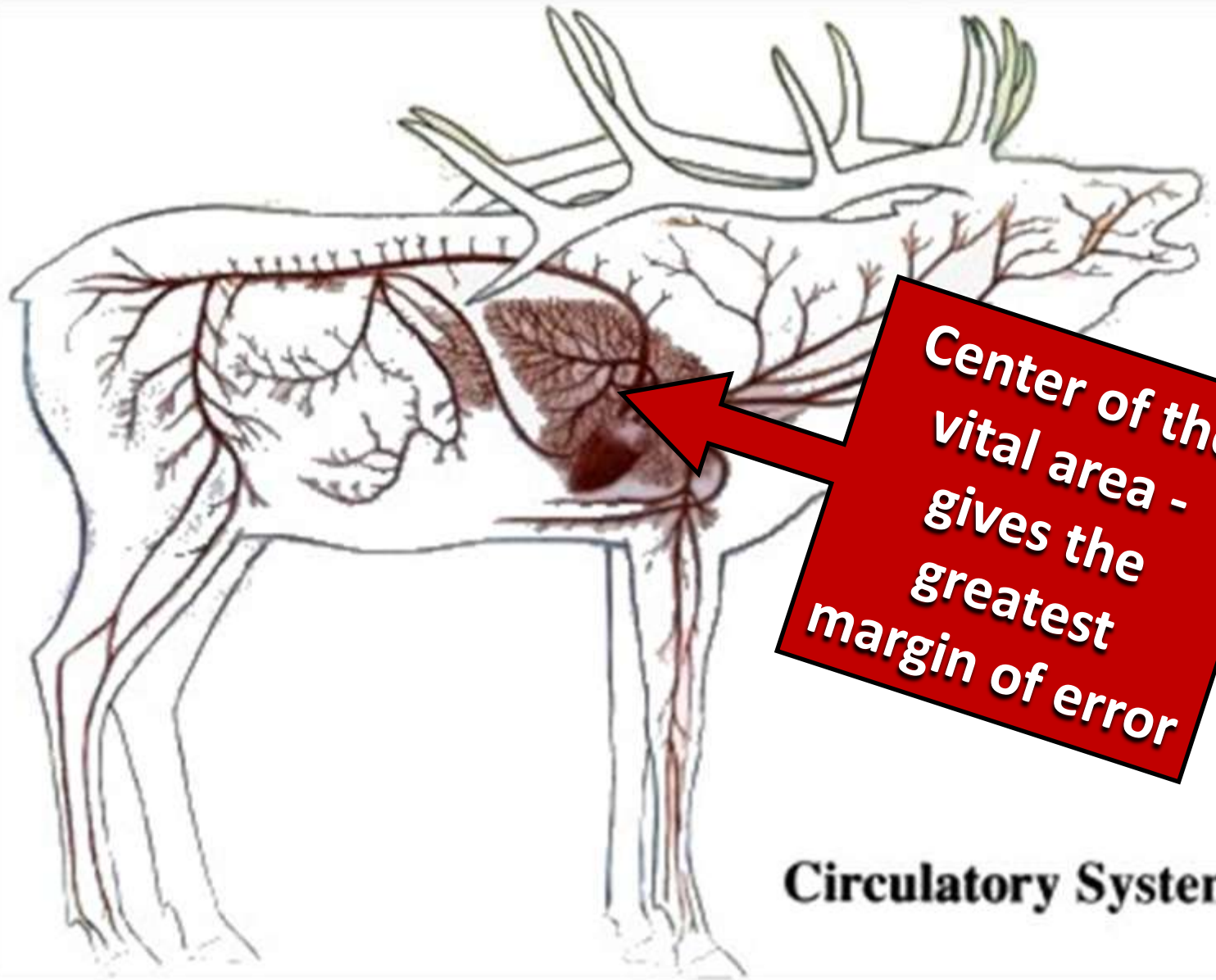


The Elk

Shot Placement

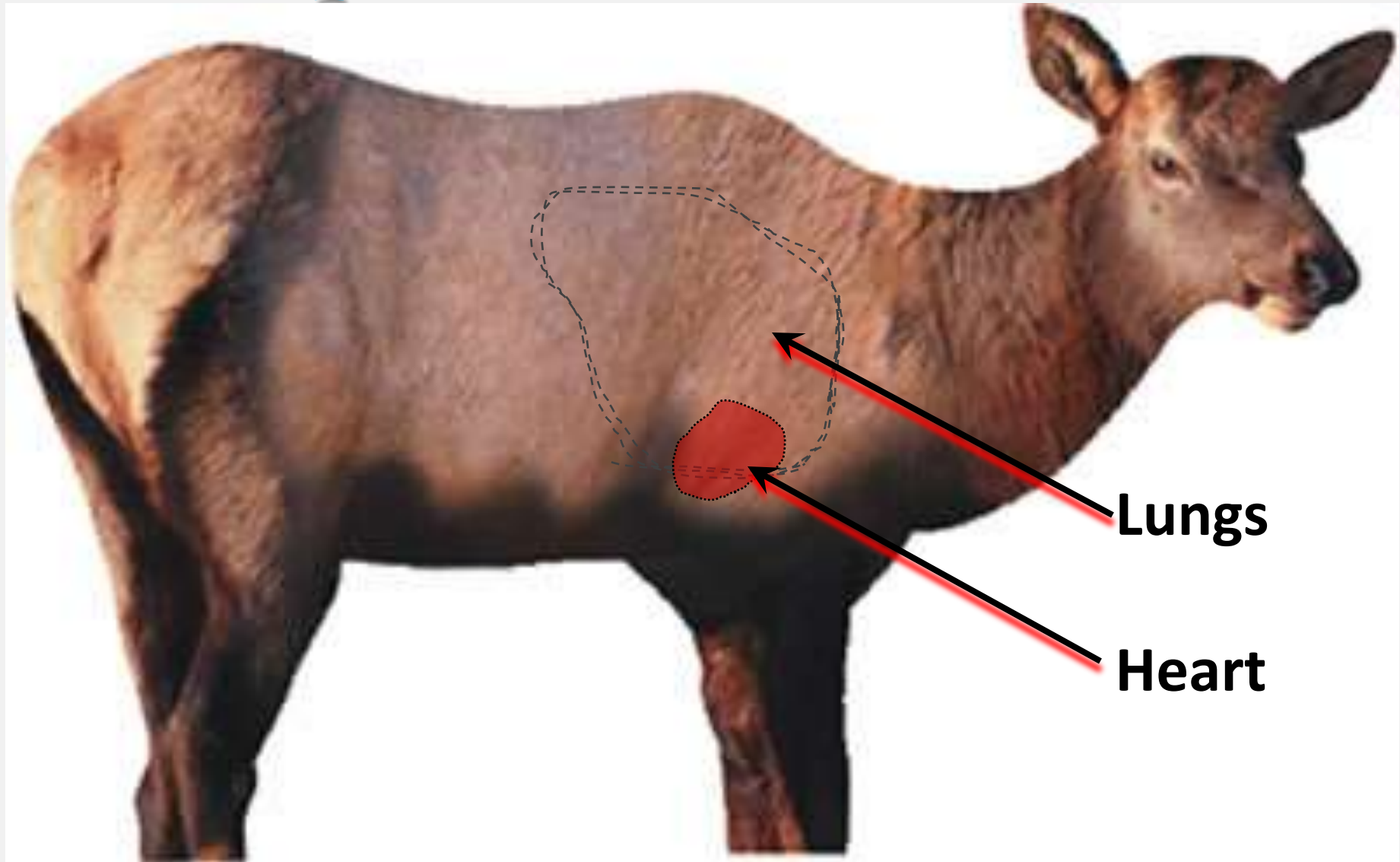


Shot Placement



Circulatory System

Shot placement/vital zone



After the Shot

- Archery
 - Watch the direction of the animal
 - Give it time to lay down and expire
 - Trail slowly
- Rifle
 - Watch direction of travel
 - Try to watch the elk you shot – Difficult in a crowd
 - Reload quickly for a second shot
 - Keep the animal in the sights until you know it has expired

The Harvest

- Properly complete the tag immediately at the site of the harvest
- Take a camera
- Take several knives and a good sharpener
- Bone out vs quarter
 - Evidence of Sex “naturally attached”
- Be cool – cool the meat as quickly as possible
- Take all edible portions of meat
 - Game bags

BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!





Make sure !



Sunset

- Enjoy the hunt and your time in the field
- Take a friend and share the experience
- Do your homework
- Leave the woods as you found them
- Be honest and ethical

