

STATE OF NEVADA  
BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS

Commission Policy Number 24 :-P24

Title : Hunting Opportunities Among

Weapons and Hunter Groups

Commission Policy Number 24

Reference: NRS 501.105, 501.181

Effective Date: May 13, 2006

Amended Date: ~~March 16, 2013~~

**PURPOSE**

To establish hunting opportunities for the various weapons and hunter groups.

**POLICY**

It is the policy of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners to approve the harvest levels for big game species based on the weapons and hunter groups' relative demand for hunting opportunity and their hunter success rates.

**FINDINGS**

After due deliberation and consideration of the relevant information presented to it, the ~~Commission~~ makes the following findings:

Commission makes the following findings:

1.

~~1.~~ The Commission has a duty to provide ~~reasonable~~ hunting opportunity ~~in Nevada~~ Nevada's citizens.

~~2.~~ 2. Hunting in Nevada is an important activity for its citizens for many reasons, including but not limited to the following values that hunting provides ~~it supplies~~:

- ~~A lean,~~ Providing a healthy ~~food~~ source of protein;
- ~~Family~~ Promoting family and other social interaction;
- ~~A~~ Maintaining a link to Nevada's outdoor history, culture and traditions;
- ~~A~~ Supplying connection with Nevada's natural and scenic landscape;
- ~~Providing a~~ source of physical exercise important for maintaining health and fitness;
- ~~Appreciation~~ Encouraging appreciation for the natural habitat and scenic landscape, which is a major component of Nevada's quality of life;
- ~~Public~~ Engendering public support for Nevada's ~~superior~~ wildlife management programs; ~~and~~
- ~~One~~ Providing one of the principal sources of wildlife management funding in Nevada.

~~3.~~ 3. The Commission takes administrative notice of Nevada's wildlife-limiting climatic and habitat

conditions. These include precipitation averages that make Nevada the driest state in the nation, and Great Basin and Mojave Desert vegetation and geography types that provide limited forage and cover. These limiting conditions prevent Nevada's wildlife populations from reaching numbers comparable to those of other states, including other western states.

4. Due to Nevada's relatively low wildlife numbers and its increasing human population, it is necessary to ration big game hunting opportunities in the State. ~~Consequently, Nevada is unique as the only state in the nation whose resident big game hunting opportunities are entirely rationed by a tag draw system, pursuant to which hunters must successfully draw a tag in order to be able to hunt a big game animal. An applicant who is unsuccessful in the tag drawing for any given year cannot hunt big game that year. In all other states, resident hunters either have statistically better odds in their respective states' tag draws, or have opportunities to purchase big game tags across the counter. Consequently, all other states' residents have better home state opportunities to hunt than Nevada residents despite Nevada's limits on nonresident tags.~~

5.

~~5.~~ Nevada's already-limited resident hunting opportunities would be significantly lowered if nonresidents competed equally with residents for big game tags or were given a greater advantage. Such a change would be against the public interest.

~~6.~~ 6. Given the ~~geographic and climatic~~physical constraints of Nevada's natural environment, the Commission—with the support of both resident and nonresident hunters—has elected ~~over the past thirty years~~ to emphasize a sustained quality hunting experience rather than attempt to match the quantity of hunting opportunities available in other states. ~~To in order to~~ do so, the Commission has consistently applied a conservative strategy that, compared to other states, maintains a high male to female ratio among big game populations. ~~Elimination of nonresident restrictions could require lowering the quality of the hunting experience to mitigate the impact of increased nonresident tags on resident opportunity. Such change would be contrary to the public interest and the interest of all hunters, including nonresident hunters.~~

## TERMS OR DEFINITIONS

**Antelope With Horns Shorter Than Ears:** In accordance with NAC 502.003, any pronghorn antelope without horns or with both horns that are shorter than its ears. Generally considered to be a doe (female), fawn, or young male antelope.

**Antelope With Horns Longer Than Ears:** In accordance with NAC 502.002, "antelope with horns longer than its ears," any pronghorn antelope having at least one horn that is longer than either ear of the antelope. Generally considered to be a mature male antelope.

**Antler:** In accordance with NAC 502.005, "Antler" means any bony growth originating from the pedicle portion of the skull of a big game mammal that is annually cast and regenerated as part of the annual life cycle of the big game mammal.

**Antlered Deer:** In accordance with NAC 502.007, "antlered deer," any deer having at least one antler that is visible above the hairline of the deer. Generally considered to be a buck (male) deer.

**Antlered Elk:** In accordance with NAC 502.0074, “antlered elk” means any elk having at least one antler that is visible above the hairline of the elk.

**Antlered Moose:** Any moose having at least one antler that is visible above the hairline of the moose.

**Antlerless Deer:** In accordance with NAC 502.008, “antlerless deer,” any deer without antlers. Generally considered to be a doe (female) or fawn deer.

**Antlerless Elk:** In accordance with NAC 502.009, any elk without antlers including cow (female) and calf.

**Antlerless Moose:** Any moose without antlers. Generally considered to be a cow (female) or calf.

~~7. In order to maintain the quality of big game hunting opportunities for all hunters in Nevada and also maintain reasonable resident opportunities, it may be necessary to apply restrictions upon nonresident big game tag applicants that takes into consideration the opportunity of the nonresident hunters in their home states.~~

### ~~TERMS OR DEFINITIONS~~

**Big Game:** For the purpose of this policy, big game means all big game mammals except mountain lion.

**Billy:** Any male mountain goat.

**Boar:** Any male black bear.

~~**Branch antlered elk:** An elk having at least one antler with more than one discernible point.~~

~~**Buck:** Antlered deer and antelope with horns longer than their ears.~~

~~**Bull:** Antlered elk.~~

**Demand:** Measure of interest that a particular hunter group has in attaining a big game tag based on ~~the previous~~ years'~~year's resident first-choice~~ applications ~~or previous year's tag sales~~ for a given hunter group and unit group.

Ewe: Any female bighorn sheep having a horn or horns of at least 5 inches in length each as measured on the outside curve of the horn from the skull to the tip.

**Expand:** Taking a projected number of harvested animals and dividing by the expected hunter success rate to generate a tag allocation.

**Hunter Groups:** In accordance with NAC 502.063, NAC 502.085, Residents of Nevada, resident juniors, and nonresidents of Nevada.

**Harvest Objectives:** The numbers of male and female big game animals that the Department has determined can be safely removed from a population through harvest without causing detrimental impacts to that population.

**Hunter Success:** Percentage of hunterstag holders harvesting a big game animal. Hunter success will be primarily based on the previous years three-year average hunter success rate for a given hunter group and unit group using both resident and nonresident hunters. A long-term or statewide average may be used to moderate erratic variations in hunter success rates.

**Junior Hunter:** In accordance with NAC 502.063, generally a person between 12 years and 18 years.

Nanny: Any female mountain goat.

**Nonresident:** means a person who is not a resident of Nevada.

**Projected Male (~~bull or buck~~) Harvest:** \_\_\_\_\_ A projected number of males reported to be harvested that will result in a desired post-hunt male to female ratio objective (i.e., buck or bullratio).

**Projected Female (*antlerless deer, antlerless elk, antelope with horns shorter than ~~their~~ ears, or ewe*) Harvest:** A projected number of females reported to be harvested to achieve various management objectives; maintaining population numbers in balance with habitat conditions, optimal levels for a given species, or below a level set in local management plans; optimum sustained yield during periods of average to exceptional environmental conditions; and/or providing for recreational opportunity.

Ram: Any male bighorn sheep.

**Resident:** Means a person who is a resident of Nevada.

Sow: Any female black bear.

Spike Elk: In accordance with NAC 502.104, any antlered elk having not more than two points above the top of the ear on either antler. Spike-only elk hunts are intended to target yearling bulls (males).

Reasonable Harvest Levels: Means the same as the projected male and female harvest. Harvest levels that meet or accomplish management objectives.

**Unit Groups:** A defined geographic area within Nevada within which separate or conjoined population assessments, harvest objectives, and other management actions are applied.

**Weapons Groups:** Any legal weapon, muzzleloader, and archery.

## **GENERAL RULES—ALL SPECIES**

Population estimates of males and females (one year-old or older) for each unit group at the pre-hunt period (late summer) will be the basis for determining projected harvest levels for each species class.

The Commission approves the projected male and female~~(bull or buck) and female (antlerless deer and elk, short-horned antelope, or ewe)~~ harvest levels among those weapons and hunter groups that are identified for each unit group through the public scoping process involving the County Advisory Boards~~county advisory boards~~ to Manage Wildlife~~manage wildlife~~ and approved by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

## **FIRST COME FIRST SERVED**

Any tag remaining after the big game draws, returned to the Department with no eligible alternate, or returned to the Department with less than 14-days before the season opener will be offered for purchase to both residents and nonresidents in the First Come, First Served program.

## **DEMAND-SUCCESS**~~Weapon and Hunter Groups and Animal Classes~~

~~Hunting opportunity may be allocated among the following weapon and hunter groups and class:~~

	MULE-DEER			ANTELOPE		ELK		DESERT BHS	CA-BHS	ROCKY- MTN-BHS	MTN- GOAT	BLACK BEAR
	Antlered	Antlerless	Either	Horns Long	Horns Short	Antlered	Antlerless	Any-Ram	Any Ram	Any Ram	Either	Either
Res-Any Legal Weapon	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NR-Any Legal Weapon	X	X <sup>(1)</sup>		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NR-Restricted Deer	X											
Res-Jr-Any Legal-Weapon <sup>(2)</sup>			X									
Res- Muzzleloader	X			X		X	X					
NR Muzzleloader	X			X		X	X					
Res-Archery	X			X		X	X					
NR-Archery	X			X		X	X					

<sup>(1)</sup> ~~Second draw only.~~

<sup>(2)</sup> ~~Weapon appropriate for the season.~~

### Hunting Opportunity **FORMULA**

The Demand-Success formula will be used to allocate tags to various weapon classes for each species.

Demand is defined as the long-term average of successful applications for all weapons class choices. Demand is based on long-term average applications for each weapon group.

Success is defined as the percentage of hunters harvesting a big game animal. Success is based on the hunter success rates from previous years. A long-term or statewide average may be used to moderate erratic variations in hunter success rates.

### **RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT TAG ALLOCATION**

The Commission strives to allocate approximately 90 percent of available quota to resident hunters and 10 percent of available quota to nonresident hunters for males of each big game species.

~~The Commission will establish a goal of a minimum nonresident quota of approximately 10 percent.~~

## **SPECIFIC RULES—BY SPECIES**

### **MULE DEER**

#### **Allocation of Projected Harvest by Weapon Group**

~~The demand-success process for determining antlered mule deer~~ Determining hunting quotas will be as follows:

For Standard and Alternative Hunt Units (see Game Division Big Game Management Objectives)

- 1) Determine opportunity for the desired animal harvest for each unit group ~~junior hunter group will involve using a percentage of last year's statewide resident junior deer tag sales and apportioning this number into unit groups~~ based on the pre-hunt population estimate and desired male to female ratio (typically 30 bucks per 100 does).
- 2) Apportion proportion that the desired harvest into the various group's any legal weapon classes based on a fixed demand rate of 55% Any-Legal-Weapon, 7.5% Muzzleloader, and 12.5% Archery for standard hunt units.
- 3) For alternative and non-standard hunt units, the demand will be based on the number ~~buck tag sales is of~~ first choice applicants for each weapon type from the previous year.
- 4) Determine final quota for each unit group and weapon type by dividing the desired harvest by the previous 3-year average hunt success rate.

A long-term or statewide average may be used to moderate erratic variations in hunter success rates in some instances.

~~the statewide any legal weapon tag sales. Prior to determining the big game hunting opportunity each year, the Board of Wildlife Commissioners will determine what percentage of the previous year's statewide junior tag sales to apply for the coming year.~~

~~Archery, muzzleloader and any legal weapon buck opportunities will be taken from the projected buck harvest remaining after the junior hunting opportunity has been subtracted. The remaining projected buck harvest will be divided among archery, muzzleloader and any legal weapon groups by their percent demand and then expanded to quotas based on hunter success.~~

~~Projected antlerless harvest (less the projected junior antlerless harvest) will simply be expanded based on hunter success for the any legal weapon group quota.~~

## **ELK**

### **Allocation of Projected Harvest by Weapon Group**

~~Modeled changes in population size, The projected bull-cow ratios, and percent of main beams > 50-in reported by previous year's hunters will be assessed to determine desired (less projected elk incentive tag harvest. Using calculated demand, the projected antlered, antlerless, and spike harvest will then be distributed~~ among the various weapon groups identified for a given elk class and unit group. The projected harvest, once ~~allocated~~ among the weapon groups, will be divided by hunter success for the appropriate weapon group ~~expanded~~ to determine the recommended tag quota ~~hunting opportunities.~~

## **ANTELOPE**

### **Allocation of Projected Harvest by Weapon Group**

The projected buck harvest will be divided among the various weapon groups identified for a given antelope class and unit group. The projected harvest, once divided among the weapon groups, will be expanded to hunting opportunities.

Horns shorter than ears harvest will be based on the hunter success of previous years for a given hunter group and unit group hunter success. A long-term or statewide average may be used to moderate erratic variations in hunter success rates.

## **BIGHORN SHEEP**

### **Weapon, and Hunter Groups, and Animal Classes**

Bighorn ram and ewe hunting opportunities will ~~only~~ involve a single weapon group, any legal weapon and archery weapon groups. Management ram hunts may be implemented in unit groups where broken-horned rams are common, where reduced ram densities are desired, and where providing opportunities for hunting will having negligible effects on herd dynamics.

### **Allocation of Projected Harvest by Hunter Group**

Hunter success rates will not be used to expand either the projected ram or ewe harvest.

## **MOUNTAIN GOAT**

### **Weapon, and Hunter Groups, and Animal Classes**

Mountain goat hunting opportunities may consist ~~consists~~ of a single class, any mountain goat (male or female), or Billy only. Hunts are ~~and a single weapon group, any legal weapon only.~~

**Allocation of Projected Harvest by Hunter Group**

Hunter success rates will not be used to expand the projected mountain goat harvest.

This policy shall remain in effect until amended, repealed, or superseded by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

*BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS IN REGULAR SESSION, Date.*

**Chairwoman Tiffany East**

*March 16, 2013.*



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~~Chairman Jack Robb~~

**Board of Wildlife Commissioners**