

Changes to Deer, Elk and Antelope Regulations

March 17, 2010

The Nebraska Game & Parks Commission will hold a public hearing to take input, and then consider changes to the hunting regulations covering deer, elk, and antelope, at the Commission's March 19 meeting in Lincoln. The changes are designed to provide additional hunting opportunities and encourage the harvest of antlerless whitetail deer. Some of the key changes, based on our reading of the new regulations, include:

Deer

- * Expand the new October antlerless season, October 2-11, allowing harvest of 2 antlerless whitetail in many Season Choice areas.
- * Put in place 'earn a buck' provisions in the Elkhorn and Wahoo deer units, requiring that a hunter check in an antlerless deer before checking in a buck, and extending the November firearm season to 11 days (from 9) in those two units.
- * Add a bonus antlerless whitetail tag to each regular deer tag for the Missouri, Calamus West, Loup West, Keya Paha, Frenchman Whitetail, Platte Whitetail, Republican Whitetail, and Sandhills units, except in some National Wildlife Refuges and Bessey National Forest. These are in addition to bonus antlerless tags already in place for Blue Northwest, Blue Southeast, Elkhorn, and Wahoo units.
- * Extend the January Season Choice deer season and Youth deer season to 24 days, starting December 26, to allow for hunting antlerless deer with a firearm over Christmas break.
- * Establish a new Statewide Whitetail Buck season, with the option to harvest the buck with your choice of weapons (like a Season Choice permit).
- * Prohibit the taking of mule deer in the (newly designated) Mule Deer Conservation Units on statewide archery or muzzleloader permits, but allow hunters with mule deer permits for those units to harvest deer with a firearm, bow and arrow, or muzzleloader during the appropriate season. The Mule Deer Conservation Units include the Buffalo, Frenchman, Platte, and Republican deer units.
- * Allow hunters with firearm deer permits to hunt during that season with bow and arrow, but hunters with archery permits would still need to hunt during archery seasons.

Antelope

- * Increase the number of firearm, muzzleloader, and landowner permits.
- * Establish a new late season for the new Cherry Late unit, allowing the harvest of 25 does or fawns between Highway 87 (Hay Springs) and Highway 83 (Valentine) north of the Niobrara.
- * Substantially increase the number of either sex antelope permits issued.

Elk

- * Increase the number of elk permits.
- * Allow hunters to get an antlerless elk permit once every five years (instead of every 3 years).