

HB0202S03 compared with HB0202S02

{Omitted text} shows text that was in HB0202S02 but was omitted in HB0202S03
inserted text shows text that was not in HB0202S02 but was inserted into HB0202S03

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Private Landowner Big Game Revisions

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Carl R. Albrecht

Senate Sponsor:

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill addresses the hunting of big game.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines terms;
 - establishes the criteria for a landowner draw;
 - provides procedures to become an applicant for a landowner draw;
 - addresses the redeeming of a voucher;
 - guarantees vouchers under certain circumstances;
 - requires compliance with other laws; {and}
 - addresses rulemaking{·} ;
 - provides for the creation of reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management units;
- and
- addresses limits placed on reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management units.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

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19 None

20 None

23 ENACTS:

24 **23A-4-711** , Utah Code Annotated 1953 , Utah Code Annotated 1953

25 **23A-7-213 , Utah Code Annotated 1953 , Utah Code Annotated 1953**

26

27 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

28 Section 1. Section 1 is enacted to read:

29 **23A-4-711. Private landowner vouchers.**

26 (1) As used in this section:

31 (a)

27 {(a)} (i) "Applicant" means a person who:

28 {(i)} (A) holds a fee simple ownership interest in at least 640 contiguous acres but not more than 8,999 contiguous acres of private land in Utah within a limited entry elk unit; and

31 {(ii)} (B) has submitted an application to the division to participate in a landowner draw to hunt bull elk.

37 (ii) "Applicant" does not include a person who is a landowner or a landowner association under a reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit created in Section 23A-7-213.

33 (b) "Block" means 640 contiguous acres that are not excluded under Subsection (2).

34 (c) "Voucher" means an authorization issued by the division that entitles a person to purchase a bull elk permit valid for the private land submitted in the application.

36 (2)

. (a) An applicant may enter an annual landowner draw for a bull elk voucher for every complete block owned by the applicant.

38 (b) The private land that is the basis for determining whether there is a block for an application to qualify for a landowner draw shall have at least one common owner throughout the private land.

41 (c) In order for an applicant to qualify for a landowner draw, all the owners of the private land described in Subsection (2)(b) shall agree to the applicant applying for a landowner draw.

44 (d) Multiple applicants may not submit an application for the same block and the division may reject all applications for a block if more than one application is received for a single block.

47 (e) The following private land is not eligible for purposes of determining a block:

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- 48 (i) private land within a cooperative wildlife management unit under Chapter 7, Cooperative Wildlife
50 Management Units; or
- 50 (ii) private land within a landowner association program established by the Wildlife Board by rule made
53 in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act.
- 53 (3)
- . (a) The division shall determine the number of vouchers in a bull elk landowner draw under this section
56 by allocating an additional 5% of the total number of limited entry bull permits available in the
57 public draw within a limited entry elk unit.
- 56 (b) The division shall allocate:
- 57 (i) 50% of the vouchers in a landowner draw to applicants with 4,000 contiguous acres but not more
59 than 8,999 contiguous acres; and
- 59 (ii) 50% of the vouchers in the landowner draw to applicants with at least 640 contiguous acres but less
61 than 4,000 acres.
- 61 (c) If there is an odd number of vouchers in a landowner draw, the division shall allocate the one extra
63 voucher to:
- 63 (i) applicants described in Subsection (3)(b)(i) in years ending in odd numbers; and
64 (ii) applicants described in Subsection (3)(b)(ii) in years ending in even numbers.
- 65 (d) If a limited entry elk unit only has only one voucher available for the bull elk landowner draw
69 described in Subsection (3)(a), the division shall allocate that voucher to an applicant with acreage
71 of at least 640 contiguous acres but not more than 3,999 contiguous acres of private land.
- 69 (4)
- . (a) To qualify as an applicant under Subsection (2), a person shall obtain approval of the information
71 described in Subsection (4)(b) by the division.
- 71 (b) To seek approval, a person shall file an application with the division that includes:
- 72 (i) the name of the person;
- 73 (ii) the date of the application;
- 74 (iii) the number of blocks in which the person holds an ownership interest;
- 75 (iv) proof of the ownership interest in the private land for which the person is seeking a voucher;
- 77 (v) proof of the number of contiguous acres owned by the person within a limited entry elk unit; and
- 79 (vi) the location of the private land for which the person is seeking a voucher.
- 80 (c) The division shall:

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- 81 (i) review an application; and
- 82 (ii) verify that property submitted in an application is capable of harboring bull elk during the hunting season described in Subsection (5)(b).
- 84 (d) Once a person is approved as an applicant for a landowner draw, the applicant is automatically approved each year and does not need to reapply unless there is a change in land ownership, acreage, or habitat quality that would affect the person's level of participation in the landowner draw. If there is a change in ownership or acreage, the person shall file the information required under Subsection (4)(b) to be eligible for the next landowner draw.
- 90 (5)
- . (a) An individual may redeem a voucher to obtain a permit to hunt bull elk:
- 91 (i) if the individual is the applicant or is an individual to whom the applicant sells, donates, or otherwise transfers the voucher; and
- 93 (ii) conditioned on the individual:
- 94 (A) being otherwise authorized to hunt big game under this title; and
- 95 (B) only hunting under that permit on the contiguous acres of private land owned by the applicant within a limited entry elk unit.
- 97 (b) ~~{Notwithstanding a season for hunting bull elk designated by the Wildlife Board, an }~~ An individual who hunts on the applicant's private land pursuant to a voucher redeemed under Subsection (5)(a) may:
- 100 ~~{(i) {use archery equipment, as defined by the Wildlife Board by rule made in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, from the start date of the archery bull hunt on the corresponding limited entry elk unit; and} }~~
- 104 ~~{(ii) }~~ (i) {convert to any} hunt with one type of legal weapon, as defined by the Wildlife Board by rule made in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act~~{, starting on September 1 and ending on October 31.}~~; and
- 109 (ii) hunt during one of the corresponding season dates for the type of legal weapon used by the individual that is established by the Wildlife Board for a bull elk hunt on the corresponding limited entry elk unit.
- 107 (6)
- . (a) Except as provided in Subsection (6)(f), an applicant that qualifies for a landowner draw under Subsections (2) through (5) and who owns at least 4,000 contiguous acres of private land but not

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more than 8,999 contiguous acres of private land within a limited entry elk unit shall annually receive two bull elk vouchers.

- 111 (b) An individual may redeem a voucher obtained under this Subsection (6) in accordance with Subsection (5).
- 113 (c) An applicant described in Subsection (6)(a) may sell, donate, or otherwise transfer a voucher received under Subsection (6)(a).
- 115 (d) A voucher under this Subsection (6) is in addition to and not taken from the 5% additional bull elk permits that are designated for the landowner draw under Subsection (3).
- 118 (e) An applicant that receives a voucher under this Subsection (6) may also enter a landowner draw for a bull elk voucher in accordance with Subsection (2).
- 120 (f) An applicant may receive only one voucher under this Subsection (6) for any year in which the average age of the harvested bull elk in the limited entry elk unit where the voucher applies is lower than the age objective in the applicable elk management plan. The limitation of only one voucher under this Subsection (6)(f) applies until the average age of the harvested bull elk for that limited entry elk unit in a year equals or exceeds the age objective in the applicable elk management plan.
- 126 (7) During the fiscal year in which an applicant receives a bull elk voucher, the applicant may not receive a depredation bull elk permit or submit a claim for compensation for wildlife damage to the applicant's private land used to qualify for a landowner draw.
- 129 (8) An individual who redeems a voucher under this section shall comply with the other applicable provisions of this title and rules or proclamations of the Wildlife Board.
- 131 (9)
- . (a) The Wildlife Board may make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, that are necessary to administer this section.
- 133 (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (9)(a), a rule made by the Wildlife Board shall be consistent with this section.

140 Section 2. Section 2 is enacted to read:

141 **23A-7-213. Reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit.**

142 (1)

- . (a) The Wildlife Board may issue a certificate of registration for a reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit to a landowner association that owns at least 4,000 contiguous acres of private land but not more than 8,999 contiguous acres of private land.

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- 146 (b) A reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit may only authorize the hunting of elk.
148 (2)
- . (a) The Wildlife Board shall establish season dates and boundaries for a reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit.
- 150 (b) In accordance with Subsection 23A-2-305(3), if season dates specified in this Subsection (2) start on a Sunday, the season date shall begin on the Saturday before.
- 152 (c) Season dates specified in this Subsection (2) may differ from statewide season dates.
- 153 (3) A reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit shall offer at least 50% of the reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit authorizations for hunting elk to the general public at the times and places designated on the application for a certificate of registration.
- 157 (4) A reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit is governed by the other provisions of this chapter.
- 159 (5) A landowner or an organization of owners of private lands that operate under a certificate of registration for a reduced acreage elk cooperative wildlife management unit may not apply for or obtain a voucher to purchase a bull elk permit under Section 23A-4-711.

163 Section 3. **Effective date.**

This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.

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