

Carl R. Albrecht proposes the following substitute bill:

**Private Landowner Big Game Revisions**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Carl R. Albrecht**

Senate Sponsor:

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**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.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

ENACTS:

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

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

Section 1. Section **23A-4-711** is enacted to read:

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

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Applicant" means a person who:

(i) holds a fee simple ownership interest in at least 640 contiguous acres but not more

- 29 than 8,999 contiguous acres of private land in Utah within a limited entry elk unit;  
30 and
- 31 (ii) has submitted an application to the division to participate in a landowner draw to  
32 hunt bull elk.
- 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  
35 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  
37 complete block owned by the applicant.
- 38 (b) The private land that is the basis for determining whether there is a block for an  
39 application to qualify for a landowner draw shall have at least one common owner  
40 throughout the private land.
- 41 (c) In order for an applicant to qualify for a landowner draw, all the owners of the  
42 private land described in Subsection (2)(b) shall agree to the applicant applying for a  
43 landowner draw.
- 44 (d) Multiple applicants may not submit an application for the same block and the  
45 division may reject all applications for a block if more than one application is  
46 received for a single block.
- 47 (e) The following private land is not eligible for purposes of determining a block:
- 48 (i) private land within a cooperative wildlife management unit under Chapter 7,  
49 Cooperative Wildlife Management Units; or
- 50 (ii) private land within a landowner association program established by the Wildlife  
51 Board by rule made in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative  
52 Rulemaking Act.
- 53 (3) The division shall determine the number of vouchers in a bull elk landowner draw under  
54 this section by allocating an additional 5% of the total number of limited entry bull  
55 permits available in the public draw within a limited entry elk unit.
- 56 (4)(a) To qualify as an applicant under Subsection (2), a person shall obtain approval of  
57 the information described in Subsection (4)(b) by the division.
- 58 (b) To seek approval, a person shall file an application with the division that includes:
- 59 (i) the name of the person;
- 60 (ii) the date of the application;
- 61 (iii) the number of blocks in which the person holds an ownership interest;
- 62 (iv) proof of the ownership interest in the private land for which the person is seeking

- 63           a voucher;
- 64           (v) proof of the number of contiguous acres owned by the person within a limited
- 65           entry elk unit; and
- 66           (vi) the location of the private land for which the person is seeking a voucher.
- 67       (c) The division shall:
- 68           (i) review an application; and
- 69           (ii) verify that property submitted in an application is capable of harboring bull elk
- 70           during the hunting season described in Subsection (5)(b).
- 71       (d) Once a person is approved as an applicant for a landowner draw, the applicant is
- 72           automatically approved each year and does not need to reapply unless there is a
- 73           change in land ownership, acreage, or habitat quality that would affect the person's
- 74           level of participation in the landowner draw. If there is a change in ownership or
- 75           acreage, the person shall file the information required under Subsection (4)(b) to be
- 76           eligible for the next landowner draw.
- 77       (5)(a) An individual may redeem a voucher to obtain a permit to hunt bull elk:
- 78           (i) if the individual is the applicant or is an individual to whom the applicant sells,
- 79           donates, or otherwise transfers the voucher; and
- 80           (ii) conditioned on the individual:
- 81           (A) being otherwise authorized to hunt big game under this title; and
- 82           (B) only hunting under that permit on the contiguous acres of private land owned
- 83           by the applicant within a limited entry elk unit.
- 84       (b) Notwithstanding a season for hunting bull elk designated by the Wildlife Board, an
- 85           individual who hunts on the applicant's private land pursuant to a voucher redeemed
- 86           under Subsection (5)(a) may:
- 87           (i) use archery equipment, as defined by the Wildlife Board by rule made in
- 88           accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, from
- 89           the start date of the archery bull hunt on the corresponding limited entry elk unit;
- 90           and
- 91           (ii) convert to any legal weapon, as defined by the Wildlife Board by rule made in
- 92           accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,
- 93           starting on September 1 and ending on October 31.
- 94       (6)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (6)(f), an applicant that qualifies for a
- 95           landowner draw under Subsections (2) through (5) and who owns at least 4,000
- 96           contiguous acres of private land but not more than 8,999 contiguous acres of private

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

122 **Section 2. Effective Date.**

123 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.