

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:

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

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)(a) The division shall determine the number of vouchers in a bull elk landowner draw
54 under this section by allocating an additional 5% of the total number of limited entry
55 bull permits available in the 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
58 acres but not more than 8,999 contiguous acres; and
- 59 (ii) 50% of the vouchers in the landowner draw to applicants with at least 640
60 contiguous acres but less than 4,000 acres.
- 61 (c) If there is an odd number of vouchers in a landowner draw, the division shall allocate
62 the one extra 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
66 landowner draw described in Subsection (3)(a), the division shall allocate that
67 voucher to an applicant with acreage of at least 640 contiguous acres but not more
68 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
70 the information 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
76 a voucher;
77 (v) proof of the number of contiguous acres owned by the person within a limited
78 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:
81 (i) review an application; and
82 (ii) verify that property submitted in an application is capable of harboring bull elk
83 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
85 automatically approved each year and does not need to reapply unless there is a
86 change in land ownership, acreage, or habitat quality that would affect the person's
87 level of participation in the landowner draw. If there is a change in ownership or
88 acreage, the person shall file the information required under Subsection (4)(b) to be
89 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,
92 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
96 by the applicant within a limited entry elk unit.

- 97 (b) Notwithstanding a season for hunting bull elk designated by the Wildlife Board, an
98 individual who hunts on the applicant's private land pursuant to a voucher redeemed
99 under Subsection (5)(a) may:
- 100 (i) use archery equipment, as defined by the Wildlife Board by rule made in
101 accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, from
102 the start date of the archery bull hunt on the corresponding limited entry elk unit;
103 and
- 104 (ii) convert to any legal weapon, as defined by the Wildlife Board by rule made in
105 accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,
106 starting on September 1 and ending on October 31.
- 107 (6)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (6)(f), an applicant that qualifies for a
108 landowner draw under Subsections (2) through (5) and who owns at least 4,000
109 contiguous acres of private land but not more than 8,999 contiguous acres of private
110 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
112 accordance with Subsection (5).
- 113 (c) An applicant described in Subsection (6)(a) may sell, donate, or otherwise transfer a
114 voucher received under Subsection (6)(a).
- 115 (d) A voucher under this Subsection (6) is in addition to and not taken from the 5%
116 additional bull elk permits that are designated for the landowner draw under
117 Subsection (3).
- 118 (e) An applicant that receives a voucher under this Subsection (6) may also enter a
119 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
121 which the average age of the harvested bull elk in the limited entry elk unit where the
122 voucher applies is lower than the age objective in the applicable elk management
123 plan. The limitation of only one voucher under this Subsection (6)(f) applies until the
124 average age of the harvested bull elk for that limited entry elk unit in a year equals or
125 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
127 may not receive a depredation bull elk permit or submit a claim for compensation for
128 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
130 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,
132 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
134 consistent with this section.

135 **Section 2. Effective Date.**

136 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.