

Effective 7/1/2023

Part 7 Hunting

23A-4-701 Trial hunting authorization.

- (1) Upon application, the division may issue a trial hunting authorization to an individual who:
 - (a) is 11 years old or older at the time of application;
 - (b) is eligible under state and federal law to possess a firearm and archery equipment; and
 - (c)
 - (i) was born after 1965; and
 - (ii) has not completed a division approved hunter education course.
- (2) Notwithstanding Section 23A-4-1001, an individual who obtains a trial hunting authorization under Subsection (1) may obtain:
 - (a) a hunting license under Section 23A-4-401, 23A-4-706, or 23A-4-707; or
 - (b) a hunting permit authorized by the Wildlife Board under Subsection (4).
- (3) An individual who obtains a hunting license or permit with a trial hunting authorization under Subsection (2) may use the license or permit if the individual is:
 - (a) 12 years old or older; and
 - (b) accompanied, as defined in Subsection 23A-4-708(1), in the field while hunting by an individual who:
 - (i) is 21 years old or older;
 - (ii) is eligible under state and federal law to possess a firearm and archery equipment;
 - (iii) possesses a current Utah hunting or combination license;
 - (iv) has satisfied applicable hunter education requirements under this chapter; and
 - (v) possesses the written consent of the holder's parent or legal guardian, if accompanying a holder of a trial hunting authorization who is under 18 years old.
- (4) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the Wildlife Board may make rules to:
 - (a) designate the types of hunting permits under Subsection (2) that may be obtained with a trial hunting authorization;
 - (b) establish the term of a trial hunting authorization;
 - (c) establish the number of years a person may obtain a trial hunting authorization;
 - (d) prescribe the number of individuals using a trial hunting authorization that an individual may accompany in the field under Subsection (3) at a single time;
 - (e) establish the application process for an individual to obtain a trial hunting authorization; and
 - (f) administer and enforce this section.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 103, 2023 General Session

23A-4-702 Air rifle hunting.

- (1) As used in this section, "pre-charged pneumatic air rifle" means a rifle that fires a single projectile with compressed air released from a chamber:
 - (a) built into the rifle; and
 - (b) pressurized at a minimum of 2,000 pounds per square inch from an external high compression device or source, such as a hand pump, compressor, or scuba tank.
- (2) An individual may use a pre-charged pneumatic air rifle to hunt:
 - (a) a species of protected wildlife designated by the Wildlife Board;

- (b) a cottontail rabbit;
 - (c) a snowshoe hare; or
 - (d) a turkey, with a fall turkey permit.
- (3) The division shall review available funding to pay the costs of regulating hunting with pre-charged pneumatic air rifles, including eligibility for federal excise taxes, and report the division's findings to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee by no later than the November 2024 interim committee meeting.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 103, 2023 General Session
Amended by Chapter 345, 2023 General Session

23A-4-703 Big game hunting permit.

- (1) A person who is at least 12 years old may apply for or obtain a permit to hunt big game as provided by a rule or proclamation of the Wildlife Board upon:
- (a) paying the big game hunting permit fee established by the Wildlife Board;
 - (b) paying the fee established by Subsection (4); and
 - (c) possessing a valid hunting or combination license.
- (2)
- (a) A person who is 11 years old may apply for or obtain a big game hunting permit consistent with the requirements of Subsection (1) if that person's 12th birthday falls within the calendar year for which the permit is issued.
 - (b) A person may not use a permit to hunt big game before the person's 12th birthday.
- (3) The division shall use one dollar of a big game permit fee collected from a resident for the hunter education program as provided in Section 23A-4-401.
- (4) There is established a fee in the amount of \$5 added to a permit under this section to be deposited in the Predator Control Restricted Account.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 103, 2023 General Session

23A-4-704 Bear hunting permit.

- (1) A person 12 years old or older may apply for or obtain a permit to take bear as provided by a rule or proclamation of the Wildlife Board upon:
- (a) paying the bear hunting permit fee established by the Wildlife Board; and
 - (b) possessing a valid hunting or combination license.
- (2) A person 11 years old may apply for or obtain a bear hunting permit consistent with the requirements of Subsection (1) if that person's 12th birthday falls within the calendar year in which the permit is issued.
- (3) The division shall use one dollar of a bear permit fee collected from a resident for the hunter education program.

Amended by Chapter 381, 2024 General Session

23A-4-705 Turkey hunting permit -- Use of fee.

- (1) A person may apply for or obtain a permit to take turkey as provided by a rule or proclamation of the Wildlife Board upon:
- (a) paying the turkey permit fee established by the Wildlife Board; and
 - (b) possessing a valid hunting or combination license.

- (2) The division shall use one dollar of a turkey permit fee collected from a resident for the hunter education program.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 103, 2023 General Session

23A-4-706 Resident hunting license -- Use of fee.

- (1) A resident may obtain a hunting license after paying the fee established by the Wildlife Board.
- (2) A hunting license authorizes the licensee to, according to this title and the Wildlife Board's rules and proclamations:
 - (a) take small game;
 - (b) hunt or trap cougar during a period beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31; and
 - (c) apply for or obtain a big game, bear, or turkey hunting permit.
- (3) Up to \$1 of the hunting license fee may be used for the hunter education program.
- (4)
 - (a) Up to 50 cents of the hunting license fee may be used for the upland game program to:
 - (i) acquire pen-raised birds; or
 - (ii) capture and transplant upland game species.
 - (b) The hunting license fee revenue designated for the upland game program by Subsection (4)(a) is in addition to hunting license fee revenue that may be used for the upland game program as provided by Sections 23A-3-207 and 23A-3-208.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 103, 2023 General Session

Amended by Chapter 345, 2023 General Session

23A-4-707 Nonresident hunting license -- Use of fee.

- (1) A nonresident may obtain a hunting license after paying the fee established by the Wildlife Board.
- (2) A hunting license authorizes the licensee to, according to this title and the Wildlife Board's rules and proclamations:
 - (a) take small game;
 - (b) hunt or trap cougar during a period beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31; and
 - (c) apply for or obtain a big game, bear, or turkey hunting permit.
- (3)
 - (a) Up to 50 cents of the hunting license fee may be used for the upland game program to:
 - (i) acquire pen-raised birds; or
 - (ii) capture and transplant upland game species.
 - (b) The hunting license fee revenue designated for the upland game program by Subsection (3)(a) is in addition to hunting license fee revenue that may be used for the upland game program as provided by Sections 23A-3-207 and 23A-3-208.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 103, 2023 General Session

Amended by Chapter 345, 2023 General Session

23A-4-708 Children accompanied by adults while hunting with weapon.

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (a) "Accompanied" means at a distance within which visual and verbal communication is maintained for the purposes of advising and assisting.
 - (b)

- (i) "Electronic device" means a mechanism powered by electricity that allows communication between two or more people.
 - (ii) "Electronic device" includes a mobile telephone or two-way radio.
 - (c) "Verbal communication" means the conveyance of information through speech that does not involve an electronic device.
- (2) A person younger than 14 years old who is hunting with a weapon shall be accompanied by:
- (a) the person's parent or legal guardian; or
 - (b) a responsible person who is at least 21 years old and who is approved by the person's parent or guardian.
- (3) A person younger than 16 years old who is hunting big game with a weapon shall be accompanied by:
- (a) the person's parent or legal guardian; or
 - (b) a responsible person who is at least 21 years old and who is approved by the person's parent or guardian.
- (4) A person who is at least 14 years old but younger than 16 years old shall be accompanied by a person who is at least 21 years old while hunting wildlife, other than big game, with a weapon.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 103, 2023 General Session

23A-4-709 Tagging requirements.

- (1) The Wildlife Board may make rules that require the carcass of certain species of protected wildlife to be tagged.
- (2) Except as provided by the Wildlife Board by rules made in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, a hunter who lawfully killed the animal shall tag the carcass of a species of protected wildlife required to be tagged before the carcass is moved from or the hunter leaves the site of kill.
- (3) To tag a carcass, a person shall:
- (a)
 - (i) completely detach the tag from the license or permit;
 - (ii) completely remove the appropriate notches to correspond with:
 - (A) the date the animal was taken; and
 - (B) the sex of the animal; and
 - (iii) attach the tag to the carcass so that the tag remains securely fastened and visible; or
 - (b) complete an electronic tagging certification according to standards approved by the Wildlife Board by rule made in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act.
- (4) A person may not:
- (a) remove more than one notch indicating date or sex; or
 - (b) tag more than one carcass using the same tag.

Amended by Chapter 347, 2024 General Session

23A-4-710 Hunting Mentor Program.

- (1) As used in this section, "immediate family member" means a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, parent-in-law, child-in-law, sibling-in-law, or stepchild.
- (2) A resident or nonresident minor under 18 years old may use the hunting permit of another person if:
- (a) the permit holder:

- (i) receives no form of compensation or remuneration for allowing the minor to use the permit;
 - (ii) obtains the division's prior written approval to allow the minor to use the permit; and
 - (iii) accompanies the minor, for the purposes of advising and assisting during the hunt, at a distance where the permit holder can communicate with the minor, in person, by voice or visual signals; and
- (b) the minor is otherwise legally eligible to hunt.
- (3) If the permit holder dies before the hunt authorized by the permit described in this section, the minor may use the permit if the minor is:
- (a) an immediate family member of the permit holder; and
 - (b) accompanied by an adult immediate family member while using the permit.
- (4) This section does not convey any property interest.
- (5) The Wildlife Board shall issue a permit in accordance with this chapter.

Enacted by Chapter 149, 2023 General Session

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 than 8,999 contiguous acres of private land in Utah within a limited entry elk unit; and
 - (ii) has submitted an application to the division to participate in a landowner draw to hunt bull elk.
 - (b) "Block" means 640 contiguous acres that are not excluded under Subsection (2).
 - (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.
- (2)
- (a) An applicant may enter an annual landowner draw for a bull elk voucher for every complete block owned by the applicant.
 - (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.
 - (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.
 - (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.
 - (e) The following private land is not eligible for purposes of determining a block:
 - (i) private land within a cooperative wildlife management unit under Chapter 7, Cooperative Wildlife Management Units; or
 - (ii) private land within a landowners association program established by the Wildlife Board in accordance with Section 23A-4-712.
- (3)
- (a) The division shall determine the number of vouchers in a bull elk landowner draw under this section by allocating an additional 5% of the total number of limited entry bull permits available in the public draw within a limited entry elk unit.
 - (b) The division shall allocate:
 - (i) 50% of the vouchers in a landowner draw to applicants with at least 4,000 contiguous acres but not more than 8,999 contiguous acres; and

- (ii) 50% of the vouchers in the landowner draw to applicants with at least 640 contiguous acres but less than 4,000 contiguous acres.
 - (c) If there is an odd number of vouchers in a landowner draw, the division shall allocate the one extra voucher to:
 - (i) applicants described in Subsection (3)(b)(i) in years ending in odd numbers; and
 - (ii) applicants described in Subsection (3)(b)(ii) in years ending in even numbers.
 - (d) If a limited entry elk unit only has only one voucher available for the bull elk landowner draw described in Subsection (3)(a), the division shall allocate that voucher to an applicant with acreage of at least 640 contiguous acres but not more than 3,999 contiguous acres of private land.
- (4)
- (a) To qualify as an applicant under Subsection (2), a person shall obtain approval of the information described in Subsection (4)(b) by the division.
 - (b) To seek approval, a person shall file an application with the division that includes:
 - (i) the name of the person;
 - (ii) the date of the application;
 - (iii) the number of blocks in which the person holds an ownership interest;
 - (iv) proof of the ownership interest in the private land for which the person is seeking a voucher;
 - (v) proof of the number of contiguous acres owned by the person within a limited entry elk unit; and
 - (vi) the location of the private land for which the person is seeking a voucher.
 - (c) The division shall:
 - (i) review an application; and
 - (ii) verify that property submitted in an application is capable of harboring bull elk during the hunting season described in Subsection (5)(b).
 - (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.
- (5)
- (a) An individual may redeem a voucher to obtain a permit to hunt bull elk:
 - (i) if the individual is the applicant or is an individual to whom the applicant sells, donates, or otherwise transfers the voucher; and
 - (ii) conditioned on the individual:
 - (A) being otherwise authorized to hunt big game under this title; and
 - (B) only hunting under that permit on the contiguous acres of private land owned by the applicant within a limited entry elk unit.
 - (b) An individual who hunts on the applicant's private land pursuant to a voucher redeemed under Subsection (5)(a) may:
 - (i) 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; and
 - (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.
- (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 more than 8,999 contiguous acres of private land within a limited entry elk unit may qualify for up to an additional two bull elk vouchers annually that are determined by the division based on Subsection (4)(c)(ii) and rules for criteria made by the Wildlife Board in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act.

- (b) An individual may redeem a voucher obtained under this Subsection (6) in accordance with Subsection (5).
 - (c) An applicant described in Subsection (6)(a) may sell, donate, or otherwise transfer a voucher received under Subsection (6)(a).
 - (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).
 - (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).
 - (f) The division may eliminate or reduce the number of vouchers issued to an applicant under Subsection (6)(a) 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 elimination or reduction of vouchers 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.
 - (g) The division shall review a voucher issued under Subsection (6)(a) every three years to determine if the correct number of vouchers are being issued based on Subsection (4)(c)(ii) and rules described in Subsection (6)(a).
 - (h) This Subsection (6) does not apply to land or a landowner within a limited entry elk unit that has a landowners association on May 7, 2025, or that is a member of a landowners association on May 7, 2025.
 - (i) This Subsection (6) does not apply to land or a landowner that has the option of joining a cooperative wildlife management unit or who is in a cooperative wildlife management unit that is issued a certificate of registration before May 7, 2025.
- (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 within the limited entry elk unit.
- (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.
- (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.
 - (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (9)(a), a rule made by the Wildlife Board shall be consistent with this section.

Enacted by Chapter 84, 2025 General Session

23A-4-712 Landowners association program.

- (1) As used in this section:
- (a) "Landowners association" means an organization consisting of private landowners working with the division to implement this section and whose land:
 - (i) provides habitat for deer, elk, or pronghorn as determined by the division; and
 - (ii) is not enrolled in another private lands permit program.
 - (b) "Voucher" means an authorization issued by the division to a landowner that entitles the landowner or a permitted transferee of the landowner to purchase a permit from the division.

- (2) The landowners association program under this section:
 - (a) provides an incentive for a private landowner to manage the private landowner's land as quality habitat for public wildlife;
 - (b) assists and supports the division in managing big game populations;
 - (c) increases private landowner tolerance of big game on the private landowner's private land;
 - (d) increases big game hunting opportunities;
 - (e) increases and secures public hunting access on a participating landowner's private land;
 - (f) reduces the division's obligations in responding to and compensating for depredation events occurring on private lands;
 - (g) uses objective criteria to determine how hunting opportunities are allocated to the landowners association program; and
 - (h) allocates hunting opportunities in a manner that fluctuates in proportion to variations in public draw permits.
- (3) A landowners association may not be established or operate without first obtaining a certificate of registration from the Wildlife Board.
- (4)
 - (a) The division shall establish the number of limited entry landowners association program vouchers available on an annual basis by:
 - (i) identifying the total number of public draw permits in a limited entry unit for the previous hunt year;
 - (ii) identifying the total acreage of private land in a limited entry unit enrolled in the landowners association;
 - (iii) calculating the percentage of habitat of a big game species in the landowners association by dividing the habitat acreage represented by the landowners association by the habitat acreage in the whole limited entry unit; and
 - (iv) applying the percentage described in Subsection (4)(a)(iii) to the total number of available public draw permits from the previous year to determine the number of limited entry landowners association program vouchers to be allocated to the landowners association.
 - (b) The division shall round numbers when determining permit numbers by rounding down when the number is .49 or less and rounding up when the number is .50 or greater.
 - (c) An approved landowners association that qualifies for less than one voucher under Subsection (4)(a) does not receive a voucher under Subsection (4)(a), but shall annually receive one voucher in accordance with Subsection (4)(d).
 - (d) The division shall annually allocate one additional voucher to each landowners association described in Subsection (4)(a) or (c).
- (5) A landowner participating in the landowners association program may not submit a claim for compensation for wildlife damage under Chapter 8, Part 4, Damage by Big Game, to the landowner's private land that is enrolled in the landowners association program.
- (6) The Wildlife Board may make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, and enforce rules applicable to the landowners association program organized for the hunting of big game that in the Wildlife Board's judgment are necessary to administer and enforce this section.

Enacted by Chapter 84, 2025 General Session