

WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

CHAPTER 15

WILD BISON RECREATIONAL HUNTING SEASON

Section 1. Authority. This regulation is promulgated by authority of W.S. §23-1-101, §23-1-302 and §23-2-107.

Section 2. Regulation. The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission hereby adopts the following regulation governing wild bison recreational hunting seasons. This regulation shall remain in effect until modified or repealed by the Commission.

Section 3. Definitions. For the purpose of this regulation, definitions shall be as set forth in Title 23, Wyoming Statutes, and the Commission also adopts the following definitions:

(a) "Archery Equipment" means a bow of at least fifty (50) pounds draw weight or possessing the ability to cast a hunting arrow of five hundred (500) grain weight at least one hundred sixty (160) yards. The crossbow hunter must be equipped with a crossbow of not less than ninety (90) pounds draw weight which has a minimum draw length of fourteen (14) inches (from front of bow to back of string in the cocked position) and a positive safety mechanism. Crossbow bolts must be at least sixteen (16) inches long. The broadhead of arrows or bolts shall be of sharp steel with a minimum cutting width of one (1) inch.

(b) "Bull" means an adult male bison.

(c) "Calf" means young of the year bison.

(d) "Cow" means an adult female bison.

(e) "Edible portions" means the meat of the front quarters as far down as the knees, the meat of the hindquarters as far down as the hocks, and the meat along the backbone between the neck and hindquarters including the loins and tenderloins, excluding meat on the ribs and neck.

(f) "Firearm" means any firearm which has a barrel bore diameter of at least twenty-seven hundredths ($27/100$) of an inch and is chambered to fire a center-fire cartridge not less than two (2) inches in overall length, including a soft or expanding point bullet of a minimum of one hundred fifty (150) grains, seated to a normal depth.

(g) "Harvest Card" means a survey form used by the Department to collect wild bison hunting and harvest information.

(h) "Muzzle-loading Firearm" means a muzzle-loading rifle having a barrel bore diameter of at least $50/100$ of an inch and a charge of at least one hundred (100) grains of black powder or equivalent.

(i) “National Elk Refuge Permit” means a permit that allows a properly licensed wild bison hunter to access the National Elk Refuge to take a bison.

(j) “Site of kill” means the location where the harvested animal died.

(k) “Type” means a limitation on a bison license in a particular hunt area for the sex of animal, the length of season, the type of weapon or a portion of a hunt area in which the license shall be valid.

(l) “Wild Bison Priority List” means random lists generated from all bison applicants for the current harvest year.

Section 4. Recreational Hunting Season Established and Effective Date. When the Department determines a wild bison recreational hunting opportunity exists, there shall be a wild bison recreational hunting season as established in accordance with Section 5 through Section 19 of this regulation.

Section 5. Supervision of Licensees. Wild bison recreational hunting may be done under the supervision or direction of Department personnel.

Section 6. Notification.

(a) Applicants shall be notified by mail of their placement on the wild bison priority list by the Department.

(b) Applicants on the wild bison priority list shall be notified by mail or by telephone, in order of their priority ranking, when the Department determines a wild bison recreational hunting opportunity may exist. The notification shall be mailed a minimum of five (5) days immediately prior to the scheduled wild bison hunting season.

(c) At the Department’s discretion, additional notifications may be made by mail or by telephone. If telephone calls are made, the calls shall be done by the Department during the evening hours between 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Mountain Time. If telephone calls are made, a minimum of three (3) attempts by telephone shall be made that evening and the subsequent evening to contact and notify any individual applicant. Notification attempts shall be spaced at a minimum of one-half (½) hour intervals. Department personnel must speak directly to the applicant during the notification call. If an individual cannot be contacted, the next individual on the list shall be notified and those who could not be contacted shall retain their positions on the wild bison priority list.

Section 7. Selection of Bison to be Harvested.

(a) Hunters may be directed by Department personnel to take a specific age class of wild bison in a specific geographic portion of a hunt area, during a specific time period or by a specific method of take in order to meet the Department’s management objectives. Numbers and age classes of wild bison available when the applicant arrives may differ from those available at the time of the notification call or letter. Issuance of a wild bison license provides the licensee an opportunity to hunt a wild bison; it does not guarantee that a licensee shall harvest a wild bison.

Section 8. Wild Bison Hunting Orientation Information.

(a) Applicants selected to participate in the wild bison recreational hunting season shall be provided wild bison hunting orientation information in a manner determined by the Department.

Section 9. Legal Methods of Take. Wild bison shall be taken by the use of legal firearms, archery equipment and muzzle-loading firearms; except as provided in this section. Wild bison shall only be taken by the use of legal firearms on the National Elk Refuge.

Section 10. Licensing. Licenses shall be issued upon payment by the applicant of the proper license fee at the Department Regional Office administering the wild bison recreational hunt. A license must be purchased prior to participating in the wild bison recreational hunt. A conservation stamp shall be in possession of the licensee while exercising the privileges under the wild bison license.

Section 11. National Elk Refuge Permits. A National Elk Refuge permit is required prior to hunting wild bison on the National Elk Refuge and shall be in possession of the hunter while hunting wild bison on the National Elk Refuge. A limited number of permits shall be available to hunt wild bison on the National Elk Refuge. Permits shall be issued by the Department to licensed wild bison hunters in the order of their placement on the wild bison priority list and shall be valid only for specified dates. Alternate permits may become available throughout the hunting season depending upon harvest and management objectives.

Section 12. Tagging Requirements. When any wild bison is killed under a license, the licensee shall detach, sign and date the carcass coupon and attach the coupon to the carcass before leaving the site of the kill. The coupon shall remain on the wild bison carcass at all times until the meat undergoes processing, except that during transportation of the carcass the coupon may be removed to prevent its loss. If the coupon is removed for transportation of the carcass, it shall be in the possession of the person accompanying the carcass at all times.

Section 13. Retrieval of Edible Portions. No person shall take and leave, abandon, or allow any wild bison, or edible portion to intentionally or needlessly go to waste. The failure of any person to properly dress and care for any wild bison killed by that person and if the carcass is reasonably accessible, within forty-eight (48) hours to take or transport the carcass to the camp of that person, and to properly care for the carcass is prima facie evidence of a violation of this section. The Department may require substantive proof from any person who fails to retrieve from the site of kill all edible portions of a wild bison as to why the edible portions were not removed from the field.

Section 14. Wearing of Fluorescent Orange Clothing. No person shall hunt any wild bison without wearing in a visible manner one (1) or more exterior garments, which shall include a hat, shirt, jacket, coat, vest or sweater of a fluorescent orange color.

Section 15. Retention of Evidence To Identify Sex of Wild Bison Harvested. Any person who takes any wild bison in a hunt area where the taking of either sex is controlled or prohibited shall comply with this section while said animal is in

transportation from the site of the kill to the residence of the person taking the wild bison, or delivered to a processor for processing.

(a) In hunt areas where the taking of any wild bison is restricted to a specific sex of animal, the visible external sex organs shall accompany the animal as a whole, or edible portion thereof.

Section 16. Transportation and Exportation.

(a) No person shall ship, transport, or receive for shipment or transportation within Wyoming, any wild bison or part thereof, unless tagged with a Wyoming interstate game tag, or unless:

(i) The transportation is by a person accompanying the carcass of a wild bison who is in possession of a proper coupon.

(b) No wild bison or any part thereof shall be shipped or transported from the State unless accompanied by the licensee who harvested the animal, in possession of a proper coupon, or unless:

(i) The part to be exported from the State is of a nonedible trophy or hidelike nature and properly tagged with a Wyoming interstate game tag.

(ii) The wild bison was legally harvested by a nonresident and is tagged with a Wyoming interstate game tag.

Section 17. Hunting Regulations.

(a) Shooting Hours. Shooting hours for the hunting of wild bison shall be from one-half (1/2) hour before sunrise to one-half (1/2) hour after sunset.

(b) Bag and Possession Limits. The bag and possession limit for wild bison shall be one (1) wild bison per license. No person who is issued a wild bison hunting license and who harvests a wild bison after January 31, 2001, shall be eligible to apply for or receive a hunting license for wild bison in any future year.

Section 18. Mandatory Reporting. Within three (3) consecutive days (seventy-two (72) hours) after taking a wild bison, or after the hunter concludes hunting wild bison for the season, the licensee shall submit a completed harvest card to the Department Regional Office where the wild bison license was purchased. Successful hunter harvest cards shall include the licensee's name, license number, date of harvest, total number of days hunted, the sex and age class (adult, yearling, calf) of the wild bison harvested, the drainage and the legal description of where the bison was harvested to include section, range and township or UTM coordinates. Successful hunters shall also supply biological samples as required by the Department. Unsuccessful hunter harvest cards shall include licensee's name, license number and total number of days hunted.

(d) Open Areas, Season Dates and Limitations.

Hunt Area	Type	Date of Seasons		Limitations
		Opens	Closes	
2	1	Sept. 1	Jan. 3	Any bull wild bison; also valid in Area 1 upon notification by the department; other limitations specified during notification
	4	Sept. 1	Jan. 3	Any cow/calf wild bison; also valid in Area 1 upon notification by the department; other limitations specified during notification

Section 19. Hunt Area Descriptions.

(a) Area and Number.

Area 1. Absaroka. All lands within Park, Hot Springs and Fremont counties and Teton County east of the Continental Divide, excluding lands administered by the Wind River Indian Reservation and Yellowstone National Park.

Area 2. Jackson. All lands within Lincoln and Sublette counties and Teton County west of the Continental Divide, excluding Grand Teton National Park, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Memorial Parkway and Yellowstone National Park.

Section 20. Violation of Commission Regulations. Failure to abide by the provisions of this regulation shall be punishable as provided by Wyoming statutes for violation of Commission regulations.

Section 21. Savings Clause. If any provision of this regulation shall be held to be illegal or unconstitutional, such a ruling shall not affect other provisions of this regulation which can be given effect without the illegal or unconstitutional provision; and, to this end, the provisions of this regulation shall be severable.

WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

By:


Clifford Kirk, President

Date: April 23, 2009

