Backcountry Wilderness Area Hunting Program
Summary

*This document is only a summary of the Backcountry Wilderness Area hunt program. For complete rules and regulations please view the rules and regulations document and all of the other documents that can be found on our web-site: www.hrcaonline.org/BackcountryHunts

- **Backcountry Wilderness Area (BWA) hunts include**
  - Bull and Cow Elk
  - Buck Deer
  - Spring Turkey
  - Coyote

- **In a typical year we allow:**
  - 12 bull hunts with a quota of trophy bulls (see more info on Bull Classifications below)
  - 7 cow hunts
  - 2 buck hunts
  - 10 spring turkey hunts

- **Breakdown of hunts and seasons:**
  - 2 bull elk archery hunts
  - 3 bull elk muzzle loader hunts
  - 1 bull in 1st rifle season
  - 2 bulls in 2nd rifle season
  - 2 bulls in 3rd rifle season
  - 2 bulls in 4th rifle season
  - 1 buck in 3rd rifle season
  - 1 buck in 4th rifle season
  - Cow hunts: Certain dates in December and January
  - Spring Turkey: April and May during CPW spring turkey season
  - Coyote: February

**IMPORTANT DATES**

- **DRAWINGS:**
  - 3rd Friday In January: Registration for all hunt drawings opens
  - 3rd Friday in February: Registration for hunt drawings closes
  - 1st Tuesday in March: Hunt Drawings

- **AUCTION:**
  - 3rd Tuesday in February: Registration for auction begins
  - 1st Tuesday in March: Auction begins
  - 1st Thursday in March: Auction Ends (March 9)
• RAFFLE (Beginning in 2024)
  o 1st Monday in February: Raffle Tickets On Sale
  o Thursday before the first Tuesday in March: Raffle Occurs

• RAFFLE (2023)
  o 1st Monday in April: Raffle Tickets On Sale
  o May 11: Raffle Occurs

• IN PERSON EVENTS (Starting in 2024):
  o 2nd Thursday in February: Meet and Greet, Answer Questions
  o Thursday before first Tuesday in March: Big Game Raffle Occurs
  o 2nd or 3rd Thursday in July: Meet and Greet, Turkey Raffles for next spring

• Hunt Drawings
  o All hunts in the Backcountry are determined through a lottery drawing, auction, or raffle

• Types of Drawings
  o Provide Your Own Tag:
    Hunter must obtain their own Unit 51 tag for the appropriate season.
    ▪ Typically Includes: Archery, 2nd and 3rd season limited, and all cow hunts (These are subject to change year to year)
    ▪ To be eligible for the “Provide Your Own Tag” drawings, hunter must have one preference point for that species, except cow elk.
    ▪ Evidence of the preference point must be emailed to mark.giebel@hrcoonline.org prior to the drawing. If evidence of preference point is not provided, hunter will be removed from that drawing.
  o Open Drawing:
    Any hunter can register for these drawings; if chosen, we provide a landowner voucher in order for the hunter to obtain the tag (big game only, not turkey, turkey tags are available over the counter)

• Auction
  o Our online auction takes place the 1st Thursday in March. The hunts available for auction are:
    ▪ Muzzle load buddy hunt (bull elk): One unrestricted bull, one restricted trophy bull
    ▪ Buddy cow hunt
    ▪ 1 or 2 spring turkey hunts
    ▪ One winter coyote hunt

• Raffle
  o 2023 will be a little different than 2024 and thereafter
    o Hunts available in 2023 by Raffle
      ▪ Hunters Choice: Winner chooses between a trophy bull hunt during 2nd Rifle Season or Muzzle Season.
      ▪ 4th Rifle Buddy Bull + Buck: Winner gets a bull and buck hunt and picks a buddy for an additional bull hunt.
      ▪ Spring Turkey for Spring of 2024
    ▪ 2024 and Beyond
      ▪ All of the above plus...
      ▪ One Archery Bull Hunt: Trophy bull hunt for 9 days during archery season. Winner must provide their own tag.
      ▪ Cow Hunt: 3 days between 1st rifle season and 2nd rifle season
**Landowner Voucher**
- A landowner voucher is a voucher that we provide to a hunter that is drawn in our drawings, wins a raffle, or auction, and are advertised as providing a voucher. The voucher is turned into CPW by the hunter and exchanged for a tag/license. The hunter may not have another List A hunt as all vouchers are for List A hunts (as defined in CPW Big Game Brochure). The voucher prevents the hunter from having to obtain their own tag through the CPW big game drawing.

**Registering for BACKCOUNTRY DRAWINGS**
- Registration for all drawings opens the 3rd Friday in January and closes 3rd Friday in February.
  - The drawing is held on the 1st Tuesday in March.
  - **HOW TO REGISTER:**
    - Go to [www.hrcaonline.org](http://www.hrcaonline.org) and click on “Activity Log In” at the very top right of the page.
    - Enter your user name and password. If you don’t remember this info, follow the steps or call 303-471-7020 or ask in person at any registration desk.
    - Once logged in, at the top click on “REGISTRATION”
    - Under “BACKCOUNTRY PROGRAMS” find and click on “HUNTS AND OUTFITTING SERVICES”
    - Find the appropriate DRAWING(S) you want to enter and Register.
    - If registering other individuals in your household, you must register each person for each drawing.
  - Add DRAWING to cart, follow the steps to check out and pay.
  - *You can also register over the phone or in person at any recreation center. Tell the staff person you are registering for Backcountry HUNT DRAWINGS under Activity Registration.*

**Registering for the AUCTION**
- Registration for the auction opens the 3rd Tuesday in February
  - The auction begins on the first Tuesday in March and ends on the 1st Thursday in March.
  - Details on how to register are emailed out to our email list in February.

**Classification of Bull Hunts**
- Each hunt is classified as a Trophy or Non-Trophy Hunt each year and detailed in that year’s “hunt plan”
  - **TROPHY:**
    - Any bull is eligible for harvest
    - Targeting mature 6x6 or better bulls that score over 300 inches Boone and Crockett.
  - **NON-TROPHY:**
    - Targeting bulls that are not and will not become Trophy bulls.
    - Young bulls that demonstrate ‘potential’ to be a trophy will NOT be harvested.
    - Final determination of “non-trophy” status is made by the guide.
    - Non-Trophy hunters should understand the following:
      - “Non-trophy” status is subjective. Guides have a unique understanding of what traits likely indicate a non-trophy bull in the Backcountry based on years of experience, game cam photos, and correlated tooth aging results of past harvests.
      - The available “non-trophy” bulls can vary significantly from year to year, season to season, and week to week depending on the annual vegetation growth, rut cycle, weather, and more. Therefore, the quality of non-trophy bulls harvested will also vary season to season and year to year.
      - Generally antler characteristics such as frame, points, tine length, beam length, and age/maturity factor into the subjective measure of a trophy, potential trophy, and non-trophy. Generally, non-trophy harvests lack in those characteristics with
age/maturity weighing in heavily. A mature bull with weak characteristics is a great non-trophy harvest.

- Non-trophies could score up to 300” but that would be the rare exception rather than the rule. The hunter should listen to the guide’s opinions as to what is currently available on the property and be willing to harvest any bull the guide recommends/approves.
- If the hunter holds out for the ‘exception’ they are more likely not to harvest

  Depending on annual conditions and the success of the trophy hunts earlier in the year, a Non-Trophy hunt may be upgraded to a Trophy hunt. Upgrades will occur in sequential season order. No hunter should apply for a Non-Trophy hunt with the expectation that it will be upgraded as it will be a rare occurrence.

• Fees
  o All Hunts Require a Guide; Guide is included in the fees.
  o Auction and Raffle winners do not pay the fees.
    ▪ Archery:
      ▪ Trophy: $2,500
    ▪ Muzzle 1: Auction
    ▪ Muzzle 2: Auction
    ▪ Muzzle Drawing: $2,000
    ▪ 1st-4th Rifle Bull Elk:
      ▪ Trophy: $2,500
      ▪ Non-Trophy: $1,500
      ▪ Youth Non-Trophy: $300
    ▪ Buck Deer:
      ▪ 3rd Season Youth
        o $300
      ▪ 4th Season: Auction
    ▪ Cow Elk:
      ▪ Youth
        o $250
      ▪ All others
        o $300
    ▪ Turkey
      ▪ Youth
        o $50
      ▪ All others
        o $150

• Seasons/Dates/Days
  o BWA hunt dates/seasons coincide with dates/seasons set by CPW with the following exceptions
    ▪ Archery Hunters:
      ▪ Unrestricted: Total of 9 days in the field; 3 limited to a blind
      ▪ 2nd Season Limited Bull: Limited to last 3 days of the 2nd rifle season
      ▪ 3rd Season Limited Bull: Limited to last 3 days of the 3rd rifle season
      ▪ 3rd Season Youth Bull: Limited to first 3 days of the 3rd rifle season
      ▪ 3rd Season Youth Buck: Limited to first 3 days of the 3rd rifle season
    ▪ Cow: Rolling hunt opportunity* Hunts will most likely be in December and January but there is a chance we may get some hunters in before that. The season for PLO cow hunts is September through January 31.
    ▪ Turkey: Rolling hunt opportunity* All turkey hunts will be during the spring season in April and May.
Each year, a calendar with designated days for all of the hunts is released. Rolling Hunt Opportunity Definition:
*Limited to a designated day or days determined by the number of the hunt drawn. Hunters will hunt in order, after the hunter ahead of them in numerical order harvests or has a successful hunt. As we progress down the list of hunters, we will call the hunters and plan their upcoming date accordingly. If the hunter does not get the opportunity to go out on the property for a hunt, they will receive a full refund for HRCA fees and their hunt opportunity will be rolled over to the next year. Any CPW license fees will likely not be refunded and the HRCA will not reimburse or be responsible for that in any manner.

- Bull Classifications and Wait Periods
  - If a hunter successfully harvests, there are associated wait periods from 1 to 20 years depending on the quality of harvest.
  - Each harvested bull is categorized into Management, Trophy, Giant, Bull of a Lifetime and have corresponding wait periods ranging from 2-20 years.
  - Winners of raffles and auctions are immune from wait periods

- Point System
  - BWA does have its own point system. There are three ‘pool’s to earn points: Bull elk; buck/cow/turkey; and youth.
  - Each year a person applies for a BWA hunt, they gain a point. Each point gets the hunter an entry in the drawings.
  - The points and point system are only applicable to ‘Provide Your Own Tag’ and ‘Open’ Drawings.
  - Beginning in 2020 the point system is weighted:
    - 5-9 points: Multiply x 2
    - 10-14 points: Multiply x 3
    - 15-19 points: Multiply x 4
    - 20-24 points: Multiply x 5

- Guide Services
  - Guides are mandatory for all hunts
  - All fees include a guide
  - All guides will be HRCA/Backcountry provided guides
  - Guide service provides expert knowledge of the property, calling, transportation on the property, additional parking areas, field dressing, caping, quartering, and transportation of meat to your home.
  - Service does not provide food, beverage, etc.
  - Refund Policy: No refunds once payment is made

- Non-Transferable
  - Hunts are not transferrable. If a person wins a hunt and declines it for any reason, they give up their hunt and another winner will be drawn.

DRAWING POOLS
These are the various ‘hats’ you can put your name in the drawing for:

**YOUTH POOL:**
- 3rd Rifle Youth Bull, 3rd Rifle Youth Buck, Youth cow hunts, youth turkey hunts
- Must be 18 or under, refer to CPW rules to define ‘youth.’
  *All cow hunters must obtain their tag through the CPW Big Game Drawing. The bull and buck hunts will be provided a voucher.

**LIMITED BULL POOL:**
• 2nd Rifle Bull Limited and 3rd Rifle Bull Limited
  o These hunts are “provide your own tag” and the winners must obtain their tag through this spring’s CPW big game drawing.
  o All entries must have at least one preference point in order to be eligible for this drawing. Proof of preference point must be emailed to Mark.Giebel@hrcaonline.org. If we do not receive proof of preference point, your name will be removed from this drawing.

BULLS POOL:
• 1st Rifle Bull, 2nd Rifle Bull or Muzzle
  o Vouchers are provided for all these hunts.

ARCHERY BULL 1 and 2 POOL:
• Our usual 4 days in the blind, 6 days in the field archery hunts
  o These hunts are “provide your own tag” and the winners must obtain their tag through this spring’s CPW big game drawing.
  o All entries must have at least one preference point in order to be eligible for this drawing. Proof of preference point must be emailed to Mark.Giebel@hrcaonline.org. If we do not receive proof of preference point, your name will be removed from this drawing.

COW/TURKEY POOL:
• 4th Rifle Buddy Buck (Buck will not be drawn this year as our 2020 winner was rolled into 2021 and the alternate took their spot in 2020)
• There are no cow drawings this year due to cow hunts not occurring this winter, all cow hunters drawn for this year will roll over to next fall/winter cow hunts.
• There are no turkey drawings this year because this spring’s turkey hunters were already drawn last July. Next year, 2022, we will draw for that spring’s turkey hunts.
• All cow hunters must obtain their tag through the CPW Big Game Drawing.

Stay Informed/Get Reminders
Join our email list and be sure to keep up on the latest regarding the BWA hunts.
Email Mark.Giebel@hrcaonline.org and ask to be added to our email list.