

# GENERAL WILDLIFE LAWS

For complete laws and rules, see Idaho Administrative Procedures Act: [adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current/13/index.html](http://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current/13/index.html)

All hunters must have a valid Idaho hunting license and the appropriate tags in their possession while hunting.

## Hunting Hours

Big game animals may be hunted only from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

## Definition of Hunting

Hunting means chasing, driving, flushing, attracting, pursuing, worrying, following or on the trail of, shooting at, stalking, or lying in wait for any wildlife whether or not such wildlife is then subsequently captured, killed, taken or wounded.

## Age Limit

Only properly licensed youths 10 or older may hunt big game. A youth may buy a license when 9 to apply for a controlled hunt, but he or she must be 10 at the time of their hunt.

## Bag and Possession Limits

A hunter may harvest only as many of a big game animal species as he or she has legal tags for in that year. Any animal harvested in a depredation hunt before a controlled hunt in the same unit for which the hunter holds a tag must be included under the limit and tagging rules of the controlled hunt tag. No person may take more than one animal per year during a controlled hunt season by using both a controlled hunt tag and a depredation tag.

## Mandatory Harvest Reporting Requirements

Moose, Bighorn Sheep and Mountain Goat Hunters: Hunters must present moose antlers or mountain goat horns at Idaho Fish and Game regional offices, official check point or to a conservation officer within 10 days of the kill. Bighorn sheep horns must be presented to an Idaho Fish and Game regional office where horns will be permanently marked with a metal pin.

## Waste of Game

Hunters are required to remove and care for the edible meat of big game animals, **except** black bears, mountain lions, and gray wolves. This includes the meat from hind quarters as far down as the hock, meat of the front quarters as far down as the knee and meat along the backbone which is the loin and tenderloin. It does not include meat of the head or neck, meat covering or between the ribs, internal organs, or meat on the bones after close trimming.

## Wounding and Retrieving

No person shall wound or kill any big game animal without making a reasonable effort to retrieve it and reduce it to possession. It is unlawful to enter private property without landowner permission to retrieve game.

## Electronic Calls

No electronic calls may be used to attract big game for the purpose of harvest, **except** such calls may be used to attract mountain

lions, black bears and gray wolves in seasons where approved by Commission proclamation.

## It is Unlawful To:

- Hunt or take any wildlife without a valid hunting license and without the required tag in possession.
- Party hunt, or help fill another person's tag.
- Shoot from or across the traveled portion, shoulders, or embankments of any road maintained by any government entity.
- Hunt big game or game birds from or by the use of any motorized vehicle, **except** for holders of a valid handicapped person's Motor Vehicle Hunting Permit when vehicle is stopped and off public roadways.
- Use any motorized vehicle to molest, stir up, rally or drive any game animal or game bird.
- Operate or use as an aid to hunting a motor vehicle in violation of area, trail, or road restrictions.
- To use aircraft, including unmanned aircraft, to locate game or furbearing animals and communicate location to persons on the ground, or to use any helicopter to transport hunters, gear or game **except** at established landing fields.
- Make use of any aircraft, including unmanned aircraft, to locate any big game animals for purpose of hunting those animals during the same calendar day those animals were located from the air.
- Fail to stop – with or without fish or wildlife – at any Fish and Game check station encountered, even if your hunting, fishing or trapping activity occurred outside the state of Idaho.
- Fail to produce wildlife for inspection upon request of a conservation officer or other person authorized to enforce Idaho Fish and Game rules.
- To hunt any animal or bird by aid of a spotlight, flashlight or artificial light of any kind; **except** unprotected or predatory animals on private land after obtaining written permission and on public lands after obtaining the required permit from an Idaho Fish and Game Regional office. It is lawful to hunt raccoons on public lands without a permit if such taking is not in violation of state, county, or city laws, ordinances, or regulations.
- Hunt big game with dogs, **except** for black bear and mountain lion. See current Big Game Seasons and Rules brochure for details. The use of one blood-trailing dog controlled by leash during lawful hunting hours and within 72 hours of hitting a big game animal is allowed to track wounded animals and aid in recovery. A hound hunter permit is not required.
- Transfer any license, tag, or permit or use another's license, tag, or permit.
- Acquire more controlled hunt tags per species than the bag limit for that species.
- Destroy or disturb traps, or remove any wildlife from traps belonging to others.

- Enter Idaho with livestock without a health certificate for transport and a brand inspection slip.
- Intentionally interfere with the lawful taking of wildlife or lawful predator control by another.
- To hunt any game animal/bird by means of baiting with the exception of applicable rules for the black bear baiting permit and gray wolf trapping (see current Big Game Seasons and Rules brochure for black bear and wolf baiting definitions/rules). Bait is defined as any substance including grain, salt in any form (liquid or solid), or any other substance placed to attract game animals/birds, **except** synthetic liquid scent for deer and elk.
- Take big game with the aid of radio telemetry; use of telemetry equipment with hounds or other sporting dogs is allowed.
- To possess or transport game or parts (including processed meat) taken by another person without having a proxy statement, see page 32.
- Import a carcass or any part of a wild deer, elk or moose from another state, province in Canada or any other country with a documented case of chronic wasting disease. For more information, including exceptions, see [idfg.idaho.gov/cwd/laws](http://idfg.idaho.gov/cwd/laws).

### Areas Closed to Big Game Hunting

- All state parks, **except** Farragut State Park, Farragut Wildlife Management Area, Billingsley Creek Unit of Thousand Springs State Park, Castle Rock State Park, and the City of Rocks National Reserve are open to hunting.
- Part of the Craters of the Moon National Monument and preserve is closed to hunting. For information visit: [www.nps.gov/crmo/planyourvisit/upload/CRMO-Hunting.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/crmo/planyourvisit/upload/CRMO-Hunting.pdf).
- Nez Perce National Historical Park in Clearwater, Idaho, and Nez Perce counties.
- Harriman State Park Wildlife Refuge.
- That portion of Ada County between State Highway 21, Warm Springs Avenue, and the Boise City limits.
- Yellowstone National Park in Fremont County.
- Any of those portions of state wildlife preserves (Myrtle Creek, David Thompson, and Lewiston), state wildlife management areas, Springfield state bird preserve, bird refuges, and bird sanctuaries that have been closed to hunting by legislative or commission action.
- All or portions of national wildlife refuges, **except** as specified in federal regulations for individual refuges.
- All Snake River islands between Glens Ferry bridge and Sailor Creek bridge in Elmore County.
- Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument in Twin Falls County, **except** that portion within an area 50 feet above the high water level of the Snake River. The upslope area is marked by yellow fiberglass markers, and hunting is permitted downslope to the river.
- Mountain lions and gray wolves may not be hunted or pursued within one-half mile of any active Idaho Fish and Game big game feeding site.

- Black bears and gray wolves may not be hunted or pursued within 200 yards of the perimeter of any designated dump ground or landfill.

### Trespass Law

Idaho's trespass law changes July 1, 2018. Persons are now required to have written permission or other lawful permission to enter private property. The law specifies:

No person shall enter or remain on private land to shoot any weapon or hunt, fish, trap or retrieve game without written permission or other lawful permission. (See page 2 for lawful permission form.)

A person should know land is private and they are not allowed without permission because:

- The property is associated with a residence or business;
- **OR** cultivated;
- **OR** fenced or enclosed in a way that delineates the private property;
- **OR** unfenced and uncultivated but is posted with conspicuous "no trespassing" signs or bright orange/fluorescent paint at all property corners and boundaries where the property intersects navigable streams, roads, gates and rights-of-way entering the land and posted in a way that people can see the postings.

**Note** – if private property adjoins or is contained within public lands, the fence line adjacent to public land should be posted with "no trespassing signs" or bright orange/fluorescent paint at the corners of the fence adjoining public land and at all navigable streams, roads, gates and rights-of-way entering the private land from public land and posted in a way that people can see the postings.

It is illegal for anyone to post public land that is not held under an exclusive control lease.

Private posting at navigable streams shall not prohibit access to navigable streams below the high-water mark as allowed by Idaho law.

A property owner may revoke permission at any time. Any person must leave private property when asked to do so by the owner or agent.

A first conviction of trespass on private property carries a mandatory one-year revocation of hunting/fishing/trapping licenses in addition to misdemeanor fine and seizure of animals taken on private property.

Federal law prohibits unauthorized trespass on Indian-owned reservation lands for hunting, fishing, or trapping purposes.

Refer to Idaho Code 36-1603 and I.C. 18-7008.

[idfg.idaho.gov/title36/16/03](http://idfg.idaho.gov/title36/16/03)

### Bag and Possession Limits

**Moose:** No person may harvest more than one antlered and one antlerless moose in Idaho during their lifetime, **except** Super Hunt tag winners and left-over tag holders may harvest moose regardless of any previous harvest of moose in Idaho.

**Bighorn Sheep:** No person may harvest more than one Rocky Mountain and one California bighorn sheep in Idaho during their lifetime. Lottery and Auction tag winners are exempt from the once in a lifetime provision.

**Mountain Goat:** No person who has harvested a mountain goat in Idaho since 1977 may apply for a mountain goat tag in Idaho.

### **Possession and Sale of Wildlife Parts**

Lawfully harvested wildlife parts – **except** edible meat from game animals – may be purchased, bartered or sold when accompanied by a written statement showing said wildlife was lawfully harvested. If black bear, mountain lion or gray wolf parts – excluding tanned or finished rugs or mounts – are sold or bartered, a signed written statement showing the taker’s name, address, license and tag numbers, date and the location of kill must be provided to the buyer. Buyers must submit completed transaction statements to Idaho Fish and Game within 10 days of sale.

Wildlife parts legally harvested outside of Idaho may be possessed and sold in Idaho if such sale is not prohibited in Idaho or the state, province or country where harvested, or by federal law.

It is unlawful to possess any wildlife or parts that were killed, taken or obtained unlawfully.

### **Possession and Sale of Wildlife Found Dead**

Protected species of wildlife that have died of natural causes are considered property of the state and may not be possessed.

However, big game animal parts, such as hides, horns – **except** horns from bighorn sheep – bones, antlers and teeth, of deer, elk, moose, pronghorn, mountain goat, black bear, mountain lion and gray wolves that have died of natural causes, including legally salvaged road kill, may be recovered, possessed, purchased, bartered, sold or transferred. If sold, black bear and mountain lion parts must be accompanied by documentation on how they were obtained.

Legally salvaged road kill may not be used as bait for hunting or trapping, **except** it may be used as bait for trapping gray wolves statewide. For more information and to complete the required form to legally-salvage road kill please visit our website at [idfg.idaho.gov/species/roadkill](http://idfg.idaho.gov/species/roadkill) or call a Fish and Game office.

Edible meat from game animals taken from the wild may not be purchased, bartered or sold.

### **Recovery, Possession & Sale of Bighorn Sheep Horns**

Horns from bighorn sheep that have died of natural causes may be recovered and possessed. All bighorn sheep horns must be presented to Fish and Game for marking with a permanent pin within 30 days of recovery. It is unlawful to sell, barter or purchase bighorn sheep horns obtained under these circumstances, or to transfer ownership of recovered bighorn sheep horns without a permit from Fish and Game.

### **Furbearers**

Bobcats, badgers and red foxes are classified as furbearers and may be hunted or trapped only during the furbearer season. No open season exists for lynx, wolverines or fishers. See current Upland Game, Furbearer & Turkey Seasons and Rules.

### **Predatory and Unprotected Wildlife**

Coyotes, skunks, weasels, jackrabbits, raccoons and starlings are classified by Idaho law as predatory. Eurasian collared-doves,

English sparrows and feral pigeons are unprotected. Predatory and unprotected wildlife may be taken in any number year-round and at any time by holders of the appropriate valid Idaho hunting or trapping licenses, provided such taking is not in violation of state, county or city laws, ordinances, rules or regulations.

### **Closed Seasons**

There are no open seasons for caribou, bison (buffalo), grizzly bear or lynx. With the exception of bison, these are threatened or endangered species and are protected by state and federal laws. Please report any suspected sightings of lynx to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Boise at 208-378-5243.

### **Protected Nongame and Threatened or Endangered Species**

No person shall take or possess wildlife species classified as Protected Nongame or Threatened or Endangered at any time or in any manner, **except** as provided in Sections 36-106(e)5 and 36-1107, Idaho Code, by Commission Regulation, or IDAPA 13.01.10.100.06b.

### **Livestock Health Certificate Requirement**

Anyone bringing livestock or hunting dogs into the state should call the Idaho Department of Agriculture, 208-332-8540, for health certificate requirements.

### **Weed-Free Hay Requirement**

On Bureau of Land Management public lands, national forest lands or Idaho Fish and Game wildlife management areas, anyone using pack animals or straw in their camp must only use weed-free certified hay, forage or straw to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. To obtain an up-to-date list of local growers and vendors with noxious weed-free certified forage for sale, call the Department of Agriculture at 208-332-8592, or check for more information at: [invasivespecies.idaho.gov/weed-free-forage](http://invasivespecies.idaho.gov/weed-free-forage)

### **Prescribed Burning**

Prescribed burning uses fire to restore forests and rangelands and improve conditions for wildlife. Prescribed fire may be planned in your hunting unit. Stay informed by contacting your local land management agencies.

### **Wildlife Violator Compact**

Many states including Idaho have entered into a “Wildlife Violator Compact.” If your hunting, fishing, or trapping license is revoked by any of the member states, all the remaining states will revoke the same license or privilege for the same time period. In addition, any nonresident who does not satisfy the requirements of an Idaho citation will have his or her hunting and fishing license revoked in their home state until those requirements are satisfied. For information on the Compact and a list of member states, go to [idfg.idaho.gov/enforcement](http://idfg.idaho.gov/enforcement).

### **Boundary Waters Reciprocal Agreement**

The Oregon-Idaho boundary water reciprocal agreement recognizes the legal right to fish, hunt or trap in the waters or on the islands of the Snake River where said river forms the boundary line between the state of Oregon and the state of Idaho by the holder of either a valid Oregon or Idaho license in accordance with the laws and rules of the respective state.



# TAGGING AND TRANSPORTING GAME

## How to Properly Validate a Big Game Tag

Hunters must completely remove two notches indicating month and day of kill. - - - - -

**Note:** Immediately after the kill, the triangles denoting the month and day must be cleanly and completely removed. Tearing, slicing or punching the tag is not legal.



## Proper Tagging and Transportation of Animals and Meat

Immediately after any moose, bighorn sheep or mountain goat has been killed, the hunter harvesting the animal must comply with the following regulations regarding the proper tagging, transportation and shipment of a carcass:

The appropriate big game tag must be validated and securely attached to the animal **immediately after the kill**. The validated tag must remain attached to the **largest portion of edible meat to be retained** until the meat is processed and reaches the final place of storage for personal consumption.

### Proper Location of Tag

Attach to the largest portion of the edible meat to be retained.

Any license, tag or permit that is defaced or altered is invalid from the date and time of issue. It is unlawful to use or attempt to use any license that has been defaced or altered.

## Transportation Issues

Any person who transports any wildlife for another person or receives any wildlife for cleaning, processing, as a gift, or for storage must have a written proxy statement signed by the person who killed the animal specifying the numbers and kinds of wildlife; date taken; hunter's name and address; and license, tag and permit numbers. The proxy form is provided below for convenience.

### Preserving Evidence of Sex

**Moose:** The antlers of a bull moose must be carried out with the head. The entire head of an antlerless male moose (with antlers less than 6 inches long) killed during an antlerless-only season may be left naturally attached to the whole carcass or to a front quarter until the carcass reaches the final place of storage or consumption. If the head is removed, the sex organs must remain naturally attached to the carcass until it reaches the final place of storage or personal consumption. Plus, the antlers must accompany the carcass while in transit.

**Bighorn Sheep:** Any hunter taking a bighorn sheep ram must leave that portion of the skull plate containing the upper one half of the eye socket naturally attached to both of the horns until after the horns have been pinned by Fish and Game.

**Mountain Goat:** Hunters must pack out the head and horns. If the head is removed from the carcass, a portion of the sex organs must remain naturally attached to the carcass until it reaches the final place of storage or consumption.

## PROXY STATEMENT (To transport wildlife taken by another person)

Taker's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Taker's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Taker's Address \_\_\_\_\_

License No. \_\_\_\_\_ Tag No. \_\_\_\_\_

Species <small>(Circle)</small>	#Taken	Date Killed	Unit/Hunt Area	Sex
Bighorn Sheep				
Moose				
Goat				
Other				

### Other Game:

Species \_\_\_\_\_ #Taken \_\_\_\_\_ Date Killed \_\_\_\_\_



# WEAPON RESTRICTIONS

## Rifle, Shotgun and Airgun

In any hunt, including any-weapon seasons, it is unlawful to pursue or kill big game animals:

- By any means other than approved firearms, muzzleloaders, archery methods and airguns.
- With any electronic device attached to, or incorporated on, the firearm or scope; **except** scopes containing battery powered or tritium lighted reticles are allowed.
- With any firearm that, in combination with a scope, sling and/or any attachments, weighs more than 16 pounds.
- With any fully automatic firearm.
- With any shotgun using shot smaller than #00 buck.
- With any rimfire rifle, rimfire handgun, or muzzleloading handgun, **except** for mountain lions, or legally-trapped gray wolves.

## Short-Range Weapons

In big game seasons restricted to short-range weapons, it is unlawful for hunters to use any weapon other than a muzzleloader, archery equipment, crossbow, or a shotgun using slugs or shot of size #00 buck or larger, or handgun using straight-walled cartridges not originally developed for rifles.

## Muzzleloader Caliber Requirements

In any hunt, including general any weapon seasons and short-range hunts, it is unlawful to pursue or kill big game animals: With any muzzleloading rifle or musket that is less than .45 caliber for deer, pronghorn, mountain lion or gray wolf; or is less than .50 caliber for elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat or black bear.

## Muzzleloader Only Season

Any person hunting in a muzzleloader only season, including controlled hunts, must have in their possession a license with a muzzleloader permit validation. During a muzzleloader only season, it is illegal to pursue or kill a big game animal with any firearm, muzzleloading pistol, or weapon other than a muzzleloading rifle or musket. In addition, the muzzleloading rifle or musket must be:

- Capable of being loaded only from the muzzle.
- Equipped with only open or peep sights. Scopes and any electronics are prohibited, **except** hunters with a visual disability may apply for a permit to use nonmagnifying scopes. (Applications are available at Fish and Game offices.)
- Loaded only with loose black powder, loose Pyrodex, or other loose synthetic black powder. Pelletized powders are prohibited.
- Equipped with a single or double-barrel.
- Loaded with a projectile that is within .010 inch of the bore diameter. Sabots are prohibited.
- Loaded with a patched round ball or conical non-jacketed projectile comprised wholly of lead or lead alloy.
- Equipped only with a flint, percussion cap or musket cap. 209 primers are prohibited.
- Equipped with an ignition system, in which any portion of the cap is exposed or visible when the weapon is cocked and ready to fire. For additional information about muzzleloader equipment visit our website at <https://idfg.idaho.gov/hunt/weapons>

## Archery Equipment

In any hunt, including general any weapon seasons and short-range hunts, it is unlawful to pursue or kill big game animals:

- With arrows or bolts having broadheads measuring less than 7/8 inch in width and having a primary cutting edge less than 0.015 inch thick.
- With any bow having a peak draw weight of less than 40 pounds up to or at a draw of 28 inches, or any crossbow having a peak draw weight of less than one hundred-fifty (150) pounds.
- With an arrow or bolt wherein the broadhead does not precede shaft and nock.
- With any chemicals or explosives attached to the arrow or bolt.
- With arrows or bolts having expanding broadheads.
- With arrows or bolts having barbed broadheads, which is a broadhead with any portion of which forms an angle less than 90 degrees with the shaft or ferrule.
- With any electronic or tritium-powered device attached to an arrow, bolt or bow, **except** disabled archery permit holders may use a nonmagnifying sight with battery powered or tritium lighted reticles.
- With any bow capable of shooting more than one arrow at a time.
- With any compound bow set at more than 85 percent let-off.
- With an arrow or bolt, and broadhead with a combined total weight of less than 300 grains.
- With an arrow less than 24 inches from broadhead to nock inclusive.
- With a bolt (crossbow) less than 12 inches from broadhead to nock inclusive.

## Archery Only Season

Any person hunting in an archery only season, including controlled hunts, must have in their possession their license with archery permit validation. During an archery only season, it is illegal for hunters to use any firearm, crossbow, or implement other than a longbow, compound bow or recurve bow in compliance with general archery equipment requirements, or:

- Any bow equipped with magnifying sights.
- Any device that holds a bow at partial or full draw, **except** hunters possessing a disabled archery permit may use a device that holds a bow at partial or full draw. (Applications for the use of devices holding a bow at partial or full draw by disabled hunters are available at Fish and Game offices.)
- Any crossbow, **except** disabled hunters possessing a permit may use a crossbow. (Applications for the use of crossbows by disabled hunters are available at Fish and Game offices.)

## Airguns

Any airgun used for big game must use pre-charged, pneumatic power to propel a projectile (excluding shot and arrows) with unignited compressed air or gas and bullets at least thirty-five (0.35) caliber for deer, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, or gray wolf, and at least forty-five (0.45) caliber for elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, or black bear.

Fish and Game recommends that airguns used to hunt big game animals be capable of producing at least 350 foot pounds of energy at the muzzle of the barrel.