

**Vermont Fish and Wildlife  
Board Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, September 18, 2019**

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board held a meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 18, 2019, in the Dewey Building, located at 1 National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05602.

**Board Members in Attendance:** Tim Biebel (Board Chair); Michael Bancroft; Brian Bailey; Wendy Butler; Johanna Laggis; Dennis Mewes; Michael Kolsun; Bryan McCarthy; David Fielding; Bill Pickens; Jay Sweeny; Cheryl Frank Sullivan; and David Robillard.

**Department Staff in Attendance:** Louis Porter, Commissioner; Mark Scott, Director of Wildlife; Col. Jason Batchelder, Director of Law Enforcement; Catherine Gjessing, General Counsel; Will Duane, Executive Assistant; Adam Miller, Wildlife Species Program Manager; Cedric Alexander, Moose Project Leader; Forrest Hammond, Bear Project Leader; Nick Fortin, Deer Project Leader; Chris Bernier, Upland Game Bird Project Leader; and Chris Saunders, Commissioner's Office.

**Members of the Public:** Deborah Lang, Mike Covey, and David Allaben.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by the Chair**

---

**1) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

An amendment to the previous meeting's minutes from June, 2019 was offered by Brian Bailey to correct an error on page 8.

There was a unanimous voice vote to approve the previous meetings minutes as amended. Wendy Butler abstained from the vote as she was not present at the June, 2019 meeting.

---

**2) Public Comments (Limited to 2 minutes per speaker)**

Deborah Lang of Grand Isle, VT addressed the Board regarding mentenance of a

walking path near the Ed Weed Fish Culture Station in Grand Isle.

Mike Covey requested that the Board take regulatory action to enact wanton waste regulations through Board rule. Proposed regulatory language submitted by Mr. Covey is attached to these minutes.

---

### **3) Trapping for Compensation in Defense of Property – 3<sup>rd</sup>/Final Rule Vote**

Commissioner Porter summarized the regulatory process thus far for this rule. During the legislative portion of this rule's approval, the Department discussed the use of cable restraint devices for trapping in defense of property for compensation with the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules and the Office of Legislative Counsel. These devices are not included as part of this rule, but there was a question regarding the Board's authority to authorize the use of cable restraint devices for this type of trapping. Legislative Counsel first stated that the Board arguably has the statutory authority to define cable restraint devices by rule and allow them for use when trapping for compensation in defense of property, and then subsequently stated that the Board may not have such authority.

The Department supports this rule even with the unintended consequences in its authorizing legislation. The rule provides reasonable regulation of nuisance trappers.

**Motion:** Brian Bailey moved to approve the final version of the rule as approved by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules. Michael Kolsun seconded the motion.

**Vote:** Unanimous roll call vote to approve the rule.

The final version of the rule as approved is attached to these minutes.

---

### **4) Big Game Regulation Changes – 3<sup>rd</sup>/Final Rule Vote**

Department General Counsel Catherine Gjessing discussed the changes since the second vote in June and the approval by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules. Two rules in the package have minor changes since the second vote:

- 10 V.S.A. App § 4 Bow & Arrow, was changed from, "Unless otherwise provided, any game which may be taken by shooting may be taken by bow and arrow" to "Unless prohibited by federal law any game which may be taken by shooting may be taken by bow and arrow." Crossbows are prohibited by federal law to hunt migratory waterfowl.

- 10 V.S.A. App § 37 Deer Management, has changed as follows:
  - 7.4 – the word “deer’ is added before season.
  - 10.3 – “qualified person” is replaced with “novice hunter”
  - 8.0 – a reference had been made to an older statutory provision regarding the regular rifle season, this previously repealed statutory reference is changed to §4084
  - 11.1 – a comma is added after “dressed”.

**Motion:** Bryan McCarthy moved to approve the big game rule package as approved by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules and with the above mentioned revisions. Bill Pickens seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 12-1 roll call vote to approve the rule package. Members voting yes: Tim Biebel; Michael Bancroft; Brian Bailey; Wendy Butler; Johanna Laggis; Dennis Mewes; Michael Kolsun; Bryan McCarthy; David Fielding; Bill Pickens; Jay Sweeny; and Cheryl Frank Sullivan. Members voting no: David Robillard.

Following the vote, Commissioner Porter requested an agreement from the Board to allow the Department to report to the Board in three years on the data collected under the new regulatory regime. The Department also requested that the Board not enact changes to the deer regulations for a five year period. The Board supported that request with an unanimous informal vote.

The final versions of the approved rules are attached to these minutes.

---

## **5) Big Game Plan Presentation**

Mark Scott introduced the Department’s big game team and their work on the 10-year big game plan. Chris Saunders presented an overview of the work on the plan to date. The big game plan provides a framework for the the Department’s work on moose, deer, bear and wild turkeyThe presentation slides are attached to these minutes. Following the presentation the Board Members, Department staff broke into groups to gather input from Board members.

---

## **6) Date for setting Waterfowl Blinds**

The Board had received an inquiry regarding the setting of permanent blinds for migratory waterfowl hunting. Resident Canada goose hunting season opens on

September, 1. Currently, permanent waterfowl blinds cannot be placed on Lake Champlain before the first Saturday in September; in 2019 that date was September 7. The Department reviewed the pros and cons and recommended to the Board to not pursue a statutory change. After a discussion, the Board agreed.

---

## 7) Commissioner's Update

- The Department will circulate the petition language on wanton waste to the Board that was submitted at the outset of this meeting. Unless there is objection from the Board, the Department will consider the proposal and return with some information and thoughts for consideration at the next Board meeting. The Board Members indicated that they would like the Department to prepare materials for the next meeting.
- There may be a technical glitch with the results of the antlerless tag lottery results online. If hunters are having an issue determining if they received an antlerless tag in the lottery they should reprint their license online and see if the antlerless tags were included.
- Reports from staff indicate that this is good year for mast crop production, this will hopefully translate to less bear-human conflicts. Reports of conflicts have already started to decrease across the state and radio-collared bears are now feeding at higher elevations.
- The Department is collaborating with state and federal partners to handle escaped domestic pigs in Orange County that have been in the news recently. There will likely be a proposal for the legislature to give the Department greater authority to assist in situations like this regarding escaped pigs.
- The Department held a two-day budget discussion in July to develop strategies on implementing feasible recommendations that have been proposed over the last five years. The work on these initiatives is informed by the Department's five year strategic budget planning.
- The Department recently completed a series of wild game cooking seminars. The events were well attended and registrations filled up quickly. Thanks to all the Department staff and volunteers who helped make this events successful. Please let folks know that they can learn about upcoming events and seminars on the events calendar on our website.

- The Department will host a game dinner on October 16<sup>th</sup>, in collaboration with the Vermont Bowhunters association in Montpelier at the Garage Event Space. The focus of the dinner will be to begin outreach with Montpelier citizens regarding the recently approved expanded archery urban zones.
- 

\*\*\*\*\*

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:15

*The mission of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is the conservation of all species of fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.*

## Attachment 1: Proposed Wanton Waste Regulatory Language

### Wanton Waste and Wildlife Disposal

A person shall not intentionally kill fish or game of any species which has a season and a bag limit; and intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly fail to make a reasonable effort to retrieve and dispose of it. Any fish or game taken must be immediately made part of the daily or seasonal bag limit.

This shall not apply:

- (1) when the failure to retrieve and dispose of the carcass is beyond the control of the person due to:
  - (A) theft by another person;
  - (B) unanticipated weather conditions or other act of God that prevents salvage or retrieval;
  - (C) unavoidable loss in the field to a wild animal; or
  - (D) lack of legal access to property where wounded or dead game is located;
- (2) in order to defend a person or property, including defense of property authorized under this part or rules adopted under this part;
- (3) when the animal is sick, diseased, or injured;
- (4) to a law enforcement officer or state or municipal employee acting within the course of his or her employment; or
- (5) when following generally accepted hunting, trapping, or fishing practices for retrieval of fish or game, including requirements or practices under this part or rules adopted under this part.

**Attachment 2: Final Approved Rule for Trapping Rabbits and Furbearing Species in  
Defense of Property for Compensation**

**§ 44. Furbearing species**

**ANNOTATED**

**1.0 Authority**

1.1 This rule is promulgated pursuant to 10 V.S.A. §§ 4081, 4082, 4084, 4828, and 4861. In promulgating this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife, and fur-bearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of these valuable resources for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. §§ 4082 and 4084, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population, and utilization levels of the regulated species.

1.3 This rule shall apply to all persons who take or attempt to take fur-bearing animals by trapping or hunting.

**2.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this rule is to regulate the taking of fur-bearing animals.

**3.0 Definitions**

3.1 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife.

3.2 "Compensation" shall mean money.

3.3 "Department" means the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife.

3.4 "Board" means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board.

3.5 "Fur-bearing animal" means beaver, otter, marten, mink, raccoon, fisher, fox, skunk, coyote, bobcat, weasel, opossum, lynx, wolf, and muskrat or as amended pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4001.

3.6 "Trapping" means to take or attempt to take fur-bearing animals with traps including the dispatching of such lawfully trapped fur-bearing animals.

3.7 A "trap" means a mechanical device used to capture, kill and/or restrain fur-bearing animals excluding firearms, muzzleloaders and archery equipment.

3.8 A "tanned" pelt is one that has been treated to turn the skin into leather.

**4.0 Restrictions**

4.1 A person trapping for fur-bearing animals under this rule shall visit his/her traps at least once every calendar day, except as provided in paragraph 4.2, and dispatch or release any animal caught therein.

4.2 A person who sets body gripping traps in the water or under the ice, colony/cage traps underwater or foothold traps under the ice shall visit his/her traps at least once every three calendar days and remove any animal caught therein.

4.3 A person shall not set a trap on lands other than his/her own which does not have his/her name and address permanently and legibly stamped or engraved thereon, or on a tag of rustless material securely attached thereto.

4.4 All traps under ice will be marked with a tag visible above the ice.

4.5 A person shall not set a body gripping trap with a jaw spread over eight inches measured inside the jaws unless the trap is set five feet or more above the ground, or in the water.

4.6 A person shall not use toothed foothold traps or snares when trapping under this section.

4.7 A person shall not set a trap between December 31 and the following fourth Saturday in October unless the trap is in the water, under the ice, or on a float in the water.

4.8 A person shall not possess a living fur-bearing animal, except as provided by rules of the board or 10 V.S.A. part 4.

4.9 A person shall not possess a fur-bearing animal trapped outside of its legal season without the written authorization of the Department, not to include animals taken pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4828.

4.10 A person shall not possess fur or skin of a fur-bearing animal unlawfully taken.

4.11 A person shall not take a fur-bearing animal by use of any poisonous mixture.

4.12 A person shall not take a fur-bearing animal from dens by cutting, digging, smoking, by the use of chemicals, or by the use of mechanical devices.

#### **4.13 Beaver Muskrat**

a.) When trapping muskrat between March 1 and March 31, body gripping traps are restricted to 5 inches or less.

b.) A person shall not disturb or destroy a beaver or muskrat house or den or place a trap therein, thereon, or in the entrance thereof.



- c.) A person may set a trap within 10 feet of the nearest point, above the water, of a beaver house or dam only from the 4th Saturday in October through the last day of February, all dates inclusive.
- d.) Except for the setting of traps as provided under 4.13b and 4.13c, a person shall not interfere in any manner with dams, dens, or houses of beaver except upon prior written approval from the Commissioner.

#### **4.14 Bobcat; Otter; Fisher.**

- a.) From December 17 to December 31, both dates inclusive, in order to minimize incidental bobcat harvest during the remainder of the fisher season, a person shall not set a body gripping trap with a jaw spread over 6 inches measured inside the jaws unless the trap is set 5 or more feet above the ground, or in the water.
- b.) The skins of bobcat, otter, and fisher legally taken may be possessed, transported, bought and sold only when tagged and marked as hereinafter provided.
- c.) A person who takes bobcats, otter, or fisher during these seasons shall notify authorized Department staff within 48 hours of the close of the season. Pelts shall be presented to authorized Department staff for tagging. Such tags shall remain affixed to the pelts until tanned. Carcasses shall be surrendered to authorized Department staff at the time of tagging.
- d.) No bobcat, otter, or fisher pelts or carcasses taken during these seasons shall be transported out of the State of Vermont prior to being tagged by authorized Department staff.
- e.) A person who takes bobcat, fisher, and otter pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4828 and who desires to keep the pelt shall notify authorized Department staff with 84 hours of the taking. Pelts shall be presented to authorized Department staff for tagging. Such tags shall remain affixed to the pelts until tanned. Carcasses shall be surrendered to authorized Department staff at the time of tagging.

#### **4.15 Raccoons**

- a.) A person shooting raccoons during the raccoon hunting season shall use a 0.22 caliber rimfire firearm or a shotgun with #2 shot or smaller.
- b.) A light may be used to illuminate and shoot a raccoon once treed by a dog, or dogs, during the raccoon hunting season. A light may also be used to illuminate a raccoon once treed by a dog, or dogs, during the training season.

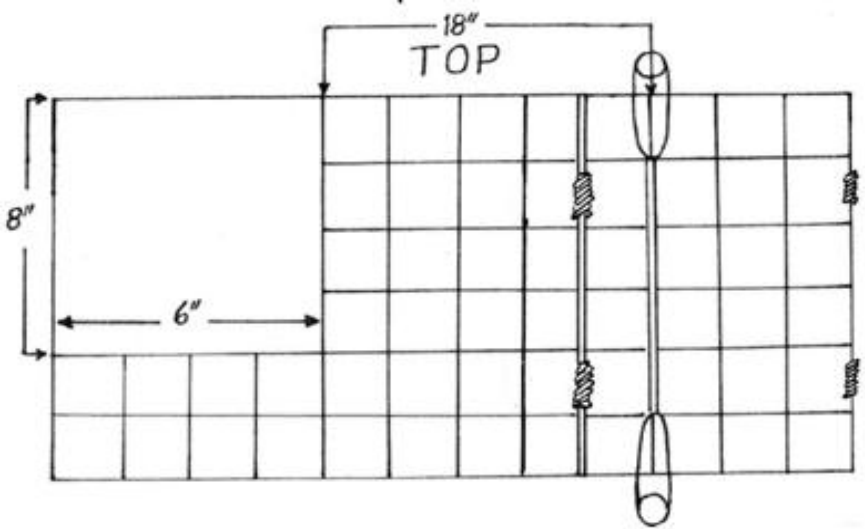
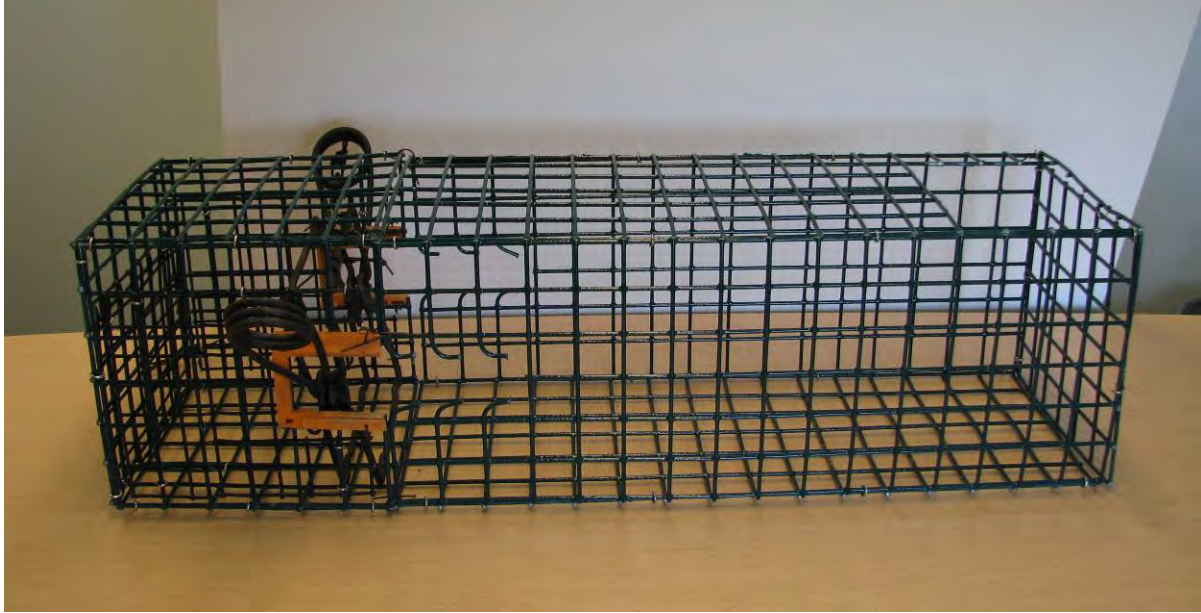
#### **4.16 Lynx**

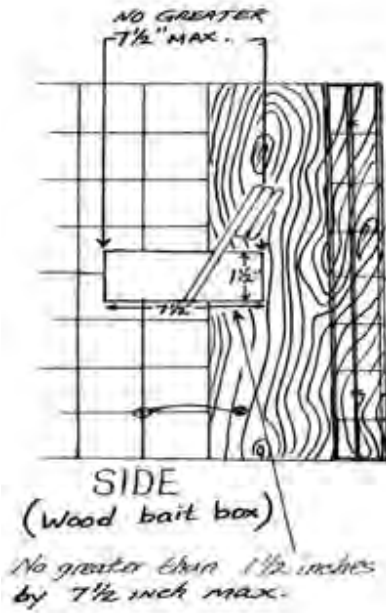
- (a) This subsection shall be effective on January 1, 2014.

- (b) Any person who incidentally captures a lynx shall notify the Department immediately.
- (c) The following regulations on traps and trapping shall apply within the Wildlife Management Unit E.
  - (1) Foothold traps set on land must be anchored using a chain or cable no longer than 18” that is center-mounted to the trap using a swivel connection and must have at least one in-line swivel along the chain or cable.
  - (2) From the fourth Saturday in October to December 31, both dates inclusive, all body gripping traps must be set:
    - i. In the water, or;
    - ii. Within a Canada lynx exclusion device as described below and as depicted in Diagram 1:
      - a. the trap jaws shall be completely within the device;
      - b. the trap springs may extend outside of device through openings no larger than 7.5” wide by 1.5” high;
      - c. the device shall not have an opening greater than 6” by 8”;
      - d. the opening shall not be directly in front of the trap but shall instead be either on the top or side of the device;
      - e. the trap set within the device shall be a minimum of 18” from the closest edge of the opening to the trap;
      - f. there shall be at least two attachment points for each side of the device where there is a joint or where panels come together;
      - g. the device shall be constructed of wood or of wire mesh of 16 gauge or less wire (.05” diameter wire or greater) and having a mesh size with openings no greater than 1.5” X 1.5” or 1” X 2”;
      - and,
      - h. the trap shall be anchored outside of the device; or
    - iii. Off the ground as described below and as depicted in Diagram 2:
      - a. at least 5’ above the ground or if snow is on the ground at least 5 feet above snow level with the exception of the 24-hour period immediately following a snowstorm;

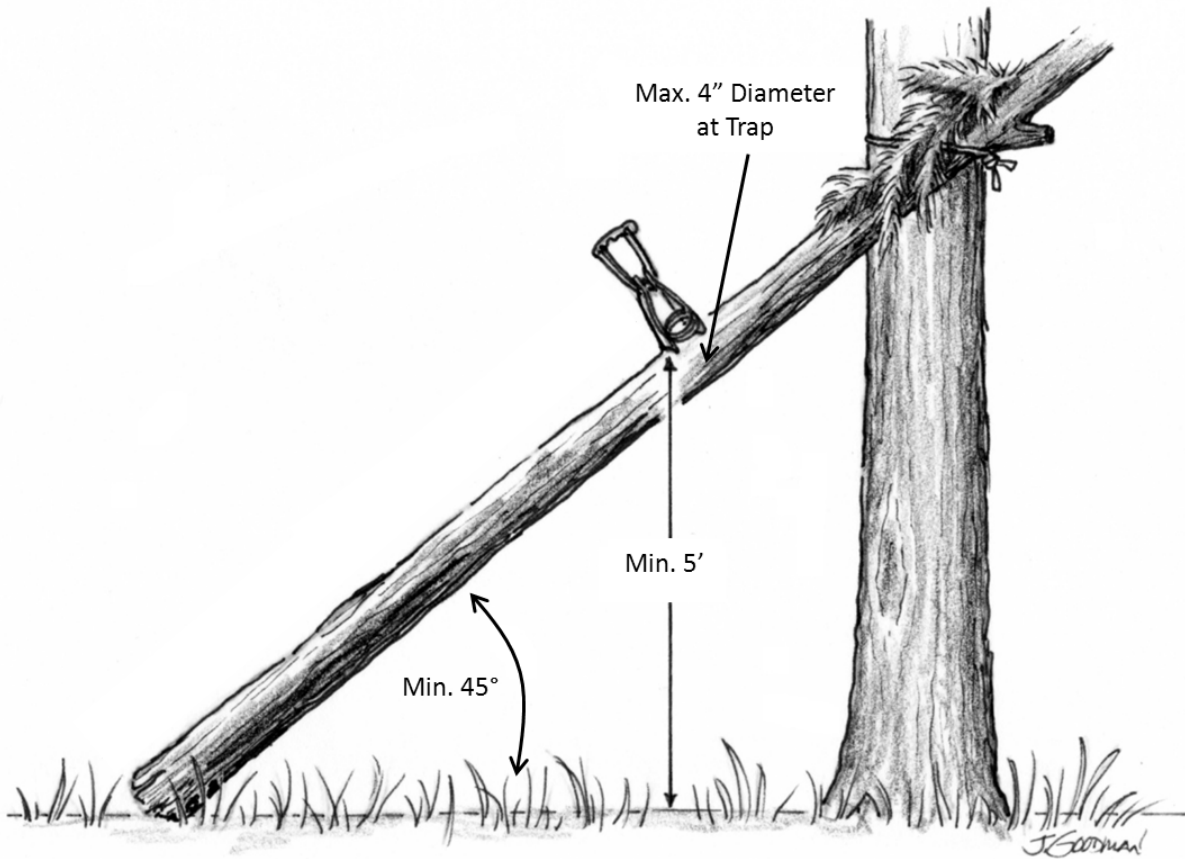
- b. affixed to a standing tree which is free of branches below the trap or to a leaning section of pole that has not been planed or otherwise altered except for the removal of branches and is less than 4” in diameter at the trap and is angled at least 45° along its entire length from the ground to the trap; and
    - c. in an area that is free of any object within 4’ of the trap.
  - (3) From the fourth Saturday in October to December 31, both dates inclusive, body gripping traps no larger than a typical 160 (inside jaw spread up to 6.5”) may also be set on the ground if placed:
    - i. Under overhanging stream banks, or;
    - ii. In blind sets without the aid of bait, lure or visual attractants, or;
    - iii. Within a cubby constructed of artificial materials with the trap inserted at least 7” from the front and with an opening no greater than 50 square inches as depicted in Diagram 3.
  - (d) The establishment of a ten-year “Lynx Study Period” shall commence on the effective date of this subsection. The Department will assess the status of lynx in Vermont, identify and evaluate additional techniques and devices for avoiding incidental capture of lynx, and develop revisions to these rules in accordance with the findings of such studies and all current information. The rules set forth in this subsection 4.16 shall expire on January 1, 2024 unless such rules are either extended or amended by the Fish and Wildlife Board. The decision to extend or amend these rules shall be based on an evaluation of the following key criteria:
    - (1) Reliable evidence of the presence or absence of a resident, breeding population of Canada lynx;
    - (2) The availability of more effective and/or practical alternatives for avoiding the incidental capture of lynx; and
    - (3) The outcome of Maine’s Incidental Take Permit application process.

**Diagram 1.** Canada lynx exclusion device for body gripping traps.

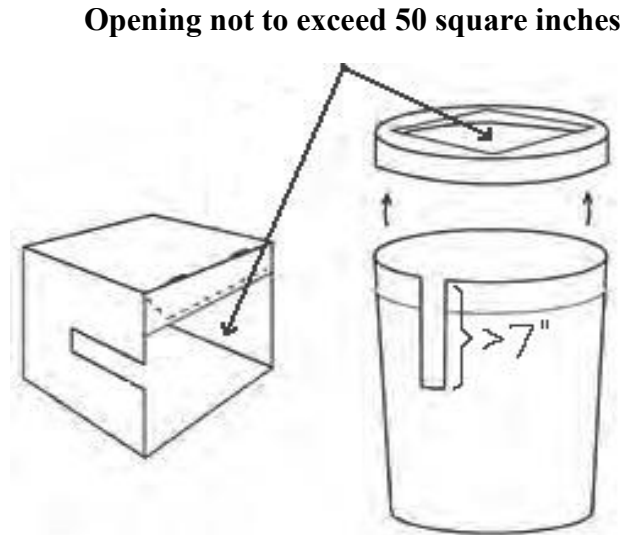




**Diagram 2. Off the ground sets for body gripping traps.**



**Diagram 3.** Cubby sets for body gripping traps no larger than a typical 160.



#### 4.17 Biological Collection

- a) Any person who obtains a trapping license shall complete and submit an annual biological collection trapper survey for the license season to the Department, within the timeline specified by the Commissioner.
- b) The failure to complete and submit a biological collection survey to the Department shall be a nonpoint violation under 10 V.S.A. § 4502.

#### 5.0 Seasons, Bag Limits

The following seasons, methods and bag limits are hereby established for the species listed. All hunting seasons will be with or without dogs, except as otherwise provided. Below is the exclusive, exhaustive list of season and means of take of fur-bearing animals. The taking of fur-bearing animals at other times or by other means, except where otherwise provided by law, is prohibited. All dates are inclusive.

Seasons	Dates	Bag Limit
5.1 Beaver		
By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct. through March 31	No Limit
By hunting	No open season	Zero

5.2	Otter		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.- last day of March	No limit
	By hunting	No open season	Zero
5.3	Marten	No open season	Zero
5.4	Mink		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
	By hunting	No open season	Zero
5.5	Raccoon		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
	By hunting	Second Sat. in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
5.6	Bobcat		
	By trapping	December 1-December 16	No limit
	By hunting	January 10-February 7	No limit
5.7	Fox (red or grey)		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
	By hunting	Fourth Sat. in Oct. through the second Sun. in Feb.	No limit
5.8	Skunk		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
	By hunting	No closed Season	No limit
5.9	Muskrat		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.-March 31	No limit
	By hunting	March 20-April 19	No limit
5.10	Coyote		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
	By hunting	No closed season	No limit
5.14	Fisher		
	By trapping	December 1-December 31	No limit
	By hunting	No open season	Zero
5.15	Weasel		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
	By hunting	No closed season	No limit
5.16	Opossum		
	By trapping	Fourth Sat. in Oct.-Dec. 31	No limit
	By hunting	No closed season	No limit

5.17 Wolf	No open season	Zero
5.18 Lynx	No open season	Zero

5.20 With the exception of state and federally listed threatened and endangered species, seasons shall not be applicable to any person, who takes a furbearing animal in defense of persons or property for compensation, in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4828.

**6.0 Trapping Rabbits and Furbearers in Defense of Property for a Fee**

6.1 In accordance with Sec. 11 of Act 170 from the 2017-2018 Adj Session, the following sections and subsections of Board rules set forth in Title 10, Appendix § 44 are applicable to trapping rabbits and fur-bearing animals in defense of property for compensation: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.8 (however, possession is allowed for the purpose of moving the animal to a more appropriate place for dispatch), 4.10, 4.11 (unless the animal has already been trapped), 4.14 (e), 4.16 (b), 4.17 (a) and (b).



ANNOTATED

**TITLE 10 APPENDIX  
CHAPTER 1. GAME  
Subchapter 1. General Provisions  
~~§ 2d. Archery deer hunting licenses~~**

~~§ 2d. Second archery deer hunting licenses~~

~~Pursuant to Title 10 V.S.A. § 4084(a), relating to deer, the Fish and Wildlife Board establishes that:~~

~~1.0 A person taking a deer on a second archery license, pursuant to § 4084(a), may take an antlerless deer during the period from the first Saturday in October and running for 28 consecutive calendar days and the nine consecutive calendar days starting on the first Saturday after the completion of the regular rifle deer hunting season.~~

ANNOTATED

**TITLE 10 APPENDIX  
CHAPTER 1. GAME  
Subchapter 1. General Provisions**

**§ 4. Bow and arrow hunting**

Unless otherwise ~~provided~~ **prohibited by federal law**, any game which may be taken by shooting may be taken by use of bow and arrow, or by crossbow where ~~authorized under 10 V.S.A. § 4711~~ or authorized by Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board rules.

**ANNOTATED**

**TITLE 10 APPENDIX  
CHAPTER 1. GAME  
Subchapter 1. General Provisions**

**§ 7. Bear Management Rule**

1.0 Authority

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(a). In adopting this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and fur-bearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the black bear population.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4084, this rule establishes season and possession limits for black bear, and prescribes the manner and means of taking black bears.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to establish seasons for the taking of black bear, to establish legal means or methods of taking black bears, and to establish limits on the number of black bears to be taken annually.

3.0 Definitions:

3.1 "Accompany" for the purposes of hunting bear with dogs means that:

a. A Sub-permittee engaged in the control, handling, transporting or intercepting of Department registered dogs while hunting with dogs, shall be under the express direction of the permit holder, and

b. A Sub-permittee who harvests a black bear shall be under the direct control and supervision of the bear dog permit holder, including the ability to see and communicate with each other without the aid of artificial devices such as radios or binoculars, except for medically necessary devices such as hearing aids or eyeglasses.

3.2 "Bait" means as any animal, vegetable, fruit, mineral matter, honey, or any other substance capable of luring or attracting black bear or any other wildlife.

3.3 "Baited area" means an area where any animal, vegetable, fruit, mineral matter, honey, or any other substance capable of luring or attracting black bear or any wildlife, has been placed or deposited including, but not limited to, bird feeders.

3.4 "Bear Dog Permit" or "Permit" means a permit issued by the Commissioner to a person who wishes to hunt, pursue or take black bear with the aid of dogs.

3.5 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.6 "Control of Dog/Dogs" means the transportation, loading or unloading of dogs from vehicle(s); the handling, catching, restraining or releasing dogs; and the use of telemetry/GPS to locate or track dogs.

3.7 "Department" means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.8 "Department Registered Dog" means a dog bearing a numbered identification dog-tag (Department Registration Dog-Tag) approved or issued by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, with the permit holder's bear dog permit number and a number one through six.

3.9 "Hunting with Dogs" for the purposes of this rule means that one or more dog(s) with Department Registered Dog-Tags are on the ground whether in pursuit of a black bear or not.

3.10 "Legal means" or "Legal method" means the taking of a black bear by muzzleloader, rifle, handgun, archery equipment, or crossbow ~~when authorized~~.

3.11 "Pack of Dogs" means one to six dogs, acting as a unit during the pursuit of black bear.

3.12 "Sub-Permittee" means any person with a valid Vermont hunting license designated by the bear dog permit holder to assist or take a bear with the aid of dogs, in accordance with written authorization issued by the Department.

3.13 "Relaying Dogs/Packs" means the removal and replacement of one or more dog or dogs to the trail of a bear to the original pack of dogs once the pursuit has begun. If the hunting or pursuit of a black bear commences with fewer than six dogs in the original Pack of Dogs, the addition of a dog or dogs shall not be considered relaying, provided that no more than the same six dogs are part of a single Pack of Dogs during the hunting, pursuing or taking of a black bear.

3.14 "Bear Tag" means a document issued by the Department authorizing the taking of a black bear in the current season.

3.15 "Unregistered Dog" means a dog that does not have a valid numbered dog license as described in 3.8.

#### 4.0 Seasons and Shooting Hours

##### 4.1 Early and Late Season

a) Early Season: For Vermont Residents: September 1 through the day before the first day of the Regular Deer Season. For Non-Vermont Residents without the use of dogs: September 1 through the day before the first day of the Regular Deer Season. For Non-resident Bear Dog Permit Holders: The early black bear season shall be open to Non-Resident bear dog permit holders on September 15 and not before.

b) Late Season: For Vermont Residents and Nonresidents: The first day of the Regular Deer Season through the second Sunday of the Regular Deer Season.

4.2 Shooting hours: One half hour before sunrise until one half hour after sunset.

##### 5.0 Tags and Bag Limit

5.1 To take a black bear during the Early Season, a person must, in addition to a having a valid Vermont Big Game Hunting license, possess an Early Season Bear Tag issued separately by the Department.

5.2 To take a black bear during the Late Season, a person must have a valid Vermont Big Game Hunting license.

5.3 A person shall not harvest more than one black bear per calendar year, not to include animals taken pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4827.

##### 6.0 The taking of bear with the aid of dogs

6.1 Licenses and Permits Any person hunting, pursuing, harvesting, or in any manner involved in the taking of a black bear with the use of dogs must hold a valid Vermont Big Game Hunting License, use only Department Registered Dogs and have purchased ~~possess~~ a valid bear tag. In addition, the person hunting, pursuing, harvesting, or in any manner involved in the taking of a black bear with the use of dogs must hold a valid bear dog permit or accompany a bear dog permit holder. The permit shall be carried at all times by the permittee while hunting with dogs or taking black bear and exhibited to a game warden, landowner, or law enforcement officer upon demand.

6.2 A person shall not take a black bear into his/her actual possession except by killing the bear by legal means or methods.

a) A person taking black bear with the use of a bow and arrow or crossbow shall, upon demand of a game warden or other law enforcement personnel, show proof of having a prior archery license, or of having passed a bow hunter education course in Vermont, another state or a province of Canada approved by the Commissioner.

### 6.3 Dogs and Packs

a) A person shall not take black bear with the aid of dogs unless the person is in control of the dog or dogs.

b) No person shall take a black bear with the aid of any Unregistered Dog. No person shall have an Unregistered Dog in his or her possession while hunting, pursuing or taking a black bear.

c) A person hunting with dogs, pursuing, and taking black bear with the aid of dogs shall attach a Department Registration Dog-Tag and a metal identification name plate with the person's name, address and telephone number to the dog's collar.

d) A person taking a black bear with the aid of dogs shall only take a black bear with a Pack of Dogs as defined in this rule. No person shall pursue, hunt, or take black bear by Relaying Dogs/Packs.

e) Two or more permit holders may hunt together and combine Department Registered dog(s) to form a Pack of Dogs. The combined bear dog permit holders shall not take black bear with the aid of more than six dogs combined forming a single pack of dogs. Once hunting with dogs commences, dogs not on the hunt shall be restrained in the dog box or inside the vehicle. The combined bear dog permit holders shall not possess any Unregistered Dogs while hunting, pursuing or taking black bear.

### 7.0 Prohibitions

7.1 No person shall place bait to attract black bear for the purposes of allowing a bear dog to catch/strike the scent of a black bear. No person take bear by using bait or a baited area.

7.2 A person shall not advertise, barter, exchange goods or services, or otherwise sell the use of a dog or dogs for the purpose of taking any black bear.

7.3 While hunting with dogs, no person shall have in their possession an Unregistered Dog while possessing Department Registered dogs.

7.4 It shall be a violation for a Vermont resident to apply for a bear dog permit for the purpose of allowing a nonresident bear dog owner to hunt bear in Vermont with the aid of dogs.

7.5 No person shall hunt black bear with a bow and arrow or crossbow if the arrow or bolt has an arrowhead that measures less than seven-eighths of an inch at its widest point or that has less than two sharp cutting edges.

#### 8.0 Reporting

8.1 The black bear carcass shall be field dressed prior to reporting.

8.2 Upon request of a Game Warden, the person harvesting the bear and the permit holder shall show and return to the kill site with a Game Warden.

8.3 All bear harvests shall be reported to a game warden, official Fish and Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or a person designated by the Commissioner within 48 hours. The person who harvested the bear and the bear dog permit holder must both be present to legally report the harvest. If the bear dog permit holder harvested the bear, only he or she must be present when reporting the harvest.

8.4 It shall be unlawful to provide false information when reporting a black bear taken with the aid of dogs.

8.5 The fine, points and any other penalty for any violation of this subsection 8 shall be assessed to the violator and in addition, to the permit holder if the violator is not the permit holder.

#### 9.0 Biological Collection

9.1 Any person who harvests a bear shall collect a premolar tooth and submit the tooth to a game warden, official Fish and Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the Commissioner to receive the biological collection, within ~~48 hours~~ (30) thirty days of taking the bear.

9.2 Unless otherwise specified by statute, the failure to collect and submit a bear tooth shall not result in license suspension points and shall be considered a minor violation subject to a civil fine.

**ANNOTATED**

**TITLE 10 APPENDIX  
CHAPTER 1. GAME  
Subchapter 1. General Provisions**

**§ 22. Turkey Seasons**

**1.0 Authority**

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(a). In adopting this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and fur-bearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the turkey flock.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4084, this rule establishes daily, season and possession limits for game, territorial limits; to prescribe the manner and means of taking; to establish territorial limits for the taking of turkeys; and to establish restrictions on taking based upon sex, maturity or other physical distinction.

2.0 Purpose The purpose of this regulation is to establish seasons for the taking of turkeys, to establish open Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) for the taking of turkeys, to establish methods of taking turkeys and to establish limits on the number of turkeys to be taken.

**3.0 Definitions**

3.1 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.2 "Crossbow" means a device consisting of a bow mounted to a rigid stock for discharging bolts or arrows and having a mechanical means to hold and release the drawn string, which must be fired from the shoulder. A bolt means a short projectile for a crossbow that resembles an arrow and has a head that measures no less than 7/8 inch at its widest point. A crossbow shall have a minimum pull of 125 pounds, a working mechanical safety and a stock no less than 23 inches in length.

3.3 "Department" means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.4 "Legal means" means the taking of a turkey by shotgun, crossbow, or archery equipment in conformance with Section 6 of this rule.



3.5 "Permit" means a document issued by the Department authorizing the taking of a turkey.

3.6 "Wildlife Management Unit" (WMU) means one of 21 geographical areas in Vermont for which big game regulations may vary.

#### 4.0 Spring Season

4.1 Dates: May 1, through May 31, inclusive.

4.2 Shooting hours: One-half hour before sunrise to twelve noon.

4.3 Legal turkey: Only wild turkeys with beard(s).

4.4 Bag Limit: Two bearded wild turkeys per person per season.

4.5 Open WMUs: Open statewide

#### 5.0 Fall Season.

5.1 Dates and Open WMU's.

(a) Bow and Arrow, and crossbow only:

i. Dates: From the 1st Saturday in October to the beginning of the shotgun/bow and arrow/crossbow season.

ii. Open WMUs: Open Statewide

(b) Shotgun/Bow & Arrow/Crossbow Season

i. Dates: Nine consecutive days beginning 21 days prior to the regular deer season, inclusive.

ii. Open WMUs: B, D, G, H, I, J, L, M, O, P, and Q and their respective subunits:.

(c) Shotgun/Bow & Arrow/Crossbow Season

i. Dates: For 16 consecutive days beginning 21 days prior to the regular deer season, inclusive.

ii. Open WMUs: subunits: WMUs F, K, and N and their respective subunits:.

5.2 Shooting hours: One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

5.3 Legal Turkey: Any wild turkey.

5.4 Bag limit: One turkey per person.

6.0 Legal Method of Taking:

6.1 Only a shotgun, crossbow, or bow and arrow may be used. ~~A cross bow may only be used by a hunter who is 50 years or older or has a permit in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4711.~~

6.2 Only number 2 through number 8 shot shall be used or possessed.

6.3 An arrowhead must be at least 7/8th of an inch in width and have two or more cutting edges.

6.4 Rifles shall not be used or carried by any person while hunting turkeys. A person taking a turkey with a crossbow or bow and arrow may carry a handgun in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4252(b), however, that person may not use the handgun to take turkey.

6.5 No person shall use dogs in the spring, nor electronic calling devices, bait, live decoys, or participate in cooperative drives during either season.

6.6 Any person wishing to hunt turkey with a crossbow or bow and arrow must hold proof of having held an archery license or a certificate of satisfactory completion of a bowhunter education course from Vermont or another state or province of Canada which is approved by the Commissioner.

6.7 Unless it is uncocked, a person shall not possess or transport a crossbow in or on a motor vehicle, motorboat, airplane, snowmobile, or other motor-propelled vehicle except as permitted in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4705.

7.0 Youth Turkey Hunting Weekend

7.1 Youth turkey hunting weekend shall be the Saturday and Sunday prior to opening day of spring turkey season on May 1.

7.2 Legal Turkey: Only bearded turkeys may be taken.

7.3 Bag limit: One bearded turkey per youth. A youth may also hunt during the spring season and take two bearded turkeys during that season.

7.4 Season: One half hour before sunrise until 5 p.m.

**ANNOTATED**

**TITLE 10 APPENDIX  
CHAPTER 1. GAME  
Subchapter 1. General Provisions**

**§ 33. Moose Management Rule**

1.0 Authority

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(a). In adopting this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and fur-bearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the moose herd.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board may: establish open seasons; daily, season and possession limits for game; territorial limits; prescribe the manner and means of taking moose; establish territorial limits for the taking of moose; and establish restrictions on taking based upon sex, maturity and other physical distinctions.

1.4 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i)(1), this rule establishes a process to auction five (5) moose permits to be awarded to the highest bidders.

1.5 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i)(2), this rule establishes a separate drawing for eligible Vermont veterans through a special priority drawing through the permit lottery system.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to establish two annual moose seasons, to establish the procedures to be used in applying for and issuing moose permits, and to establish the administrative framework for regulating the taking of moose.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 "Antlered moose" means a moose which has at least one antler 6 inches or more in length measured from the tip of the main beam along the distal edge of the antler to the base of the antler burr at the skull.

3.2 "Antlerless" means those moose without antlers or antlers less than six inches in length.

3.3 "Applicant" means a person who has submitted a completed legal application to the lottery.

3.4 "Application" means the form provided by the Department that allows a person to be entered into the lottery.

3.5 "Board" means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board.

3.6 "Bonus point" means: 1) a point accrued for successfully applying for a permit, but not being drawn, or 2) a point accrued by indicating on the application that the person should not be entered into that year's drawing, but wishes to accrue a point.

3.7 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.8 "Crossbow" means a device consisting of a bow mounted to a rigid stock for discharging bolts or arrows and having a mechanical means to hold and release the drawn string, which must be fired from the shoulder. A bolt means a short projectile for a crossbow that resembles an arrow and has a head that measures no less than 7/8 inch at its widest point. A crossbow shall have a minimum pull of 125 pounds, a working mechanical safety and a stock no less than 23 inches in length.

3.9 "Department" means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.10 "Either sex" means a moose of any sex.

3.11 "Guide" means a person authorized to accompany, direct, aid, assist, and/or instruct a Permittee during a moose hunt.

3.12 "Guide Permit" means a document, provided by the Department to the Permittee, to allow for a guide to assist in a moose hunt.

3.13 "Legal means" means the taking of a moose by muzzleloader, rifle, handgun, shotgun, a crossbow, or bow and arrow in conformance with this rule.

3.14 "Permit" means a document issued by the Department authorizing the taking of a moose.

3.15 "Permittee" means a person who has successfully acquired a legal permit through the lottery or auction as described in this rule.

3.16 "Subpermittee" means an individual designated by a Permittee, whose name has been provided to the Department in conformance with this rule, who may be permitted to take a moose.

3.17 "Wildlife Management Unit" (WMU) means one of twenty-five geographical areas in Vermont established for managing wildlife through regulation.

#### 4.0 Moose Seasons

There shall be two moose seasons annually.

4.1 Archery. The first moose season shall be by archery only:

a) This season shall be open for seven consecutive days, beginning the first day of October.

b) To take an animal during this season a person must possess a valid archery moose permit as prescribed in Section 9 of this rule.

4.2 Regular. The second moose season shall be for any legal means of take:

a) This season shall be open for six consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in October.

#### 5.0 Possession Limit

5.1 The bag limit for moose shall be one moose per moose hunting permit.

5.2 The possession limit for moose shall be one moose per moose hunting permit.

#### 6.0 Permit Application Process

6.1 Applications must be made on an official moose hunting application form provided by the Department.

6.2 Only applications received by the Department's central office during the official application period will be considered. Applications must be received prior to the deadline established by the Department.

6.3 The Department will consider only complete applications. For an application to be complete it must be legible, must contain all the information requested by the Department, must bear the applicant's original signature, or, in the case of electronic or facsimile applications, attestation under the pains and penalties of perjury. To be considered complete the form must be accompanied by any required application fee, or means of payment, such as a valid credit card payment.

6.4 The Department will consider no more than one complete application from any applicant per year for each of the two separate lotteries held. A lottery will be held for both the regular and archery seasons. Only one permit may be issued per person per calendar year.

6.5 Ten (10) percent of the moose hunting permits may be issued to non-resident hunters.

6.6 No person who has held a valid Vermont moose hunting permit in any of the previous five (5) years may apply for a moose hunting permit or a bonus point in the current calendar year. The application of the five (5) year waiting period shall only be effective for persons who hold a moose hunting permit after January 1, 2016.

## 7.0 Lottery Points

7.1 A person may accumulate one additional chance, or "bonus point" to win the lottery for each consecutive year that person legally submits and provides the fee for an application but is not selected to receive a permit.

7.2 Two separate lotteries may be held, one for the archery season and one for the regular season. Applicants may accumulate up to one bonus point per year in each of the two separate lotteries, provided a complete application is submitted.

7.3 Applicants may elect to accrue a bonus point without entering the moose hunt lottery by submitting a completed application and fee and indicating at the appropriate place on the application form that they do not wish to be entered in the lottery for the current calendar year.

7.4 To accrue bonus points, a person must provide a complete application for the given year's lottery for which the person wishes to receive a permit (archery or regular). All bonus points in both lotteries are lost upon receipt of a valid permit or failure to provide a complete application for each designated lottery - a person may continue to accrue bonus points in one lottery, even if he or she fails to provide a valid application for the other.

## 8.0 Permit Selection Process

8.1 All those who have submitted completed applications and who wish to be entered into the lottery will be entered into the lottery. The Department will hold, or cause to be held, a transparent, random drawing to include all persons who have submitted a complete application.

8.2 Selected regular season applicants will receive a permit for their WMU of preference until the permit quota for their preferred WMU is filled at which time a permit will be awarded for their second choice WMU, and so on.

8.3 Selected regular season applicants will be notified by mail, and will receive a permit form to complete. Successful applicants have 15 calendar days to return the completed forms with the appropriate fee, and their Subpermittee's name, if any.

8.4 Selected archery season applicants will be notified by mail, and will receive a permit form to complete. Successful applicants have 15 calendar days to return the completed forms with the appropriate fee and indicate the name of their Subpermittee, if any.

#### 9.0 Moose Hunting Permits

9.1 An applicant who is chosen by lottery, or is the successful auction bidder may purchase a moose hunting permit from the Department.

9.2 At the time of issuance, moose season permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must hold a valid Vermont big game hunting license.

9.3 At the time of issuance, archery season permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must show proof of having held an archery deer license and/or a certificate of satisfactory completion of a bowhunter education course from Vermont or another state or province of Canada which is approved by the Commissioner. Archery season permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must hold a valid Vermont big game hunting license.

9.4 Moose hunting permits are valid only within the WMU or WMUs designated on the permit, for the specified season, and for the type (either sex, antlered, or antlerless) specified on the permit.

#### 10.0 Deferments

10.1 The Commissioner may grant a one time, one-year deferment to successful applicants for reasons of personal or family illness, temporary disability, or military deployment.

10.2 Requests for deferment shall be made on the Department-issued form to the Commissioner and received no later than three days prior to the start of the moose season for which a permit has been issued. Requests shall contain information required by the Commissioner to substantiate the request.

10.3 Deferred permits shall be issued for the same WMU and permit type (either sex, antlered, antlerless, archery or regular) as the originally issued permit.

#### 11.0 Subpermittees

11.1 A person holding a valid moose hunting permit may designate one (1) Subpermittee who shall be permitted to hunt moose pursuant to the permit.

11.2 The Subpermittee must always be accompanied by the permit holder. For these purposes, "accompanied," means being able to communicate without the aid of artificial devices except medically-prescribed eyeglasses or hearing aids.

11.3 Once the applicant has provided the name of their selected Subpermittee to the Department, no change to this selection will be allowed except for personal or family illness, temporary physical disability, or military deployment.

11.4 Any request for change of Subpermittee must be made in writing to the Commissioner and received no later than three (3) days prior to the start of the moose season for which a permit has been issued.

#### 11.5 Subpermittee Ineligibility

a) Subpermittee Ineligibility No person who has held a Vermont moose hunting permit in any of the previous five (5) years may be designated as a Subpermittee in the current calendar year.

b) No person who holds a valid moose hunting permit in one year may be designated as a Subpermittee in the same year.

c) No person may be named as a Subpermittee on more than one permit during the same year.

#### 12.0 Guides and Guide Permits

12.1 The Guide shall be allowed to direct, aid, assist and instruct the Permittee and Subpermittee during the hunt.

12.2 A Guide may not carry any other firearm, muzzleloader, or archery equipment.

12.3 Each Permittee shall be issued a Guide Permit by the Department. The Guide Permit must be carried by the guide at all times while accompanying the Permittee while hunting moose.

12.4 A person serving as a Guide must hold a current valid Vermont big game hunting license.

12.5 A Guide Permit may be carried by different persons at any time during the moose hunt, but only one person at a time may serve as a Guide for each moose hunting party.

12.6 A person may simultaneously serve as a Guide for more than one moose Permittee but must be carrying the proper Guide Permit for each guided party.

#### 13.0 Control Measures

13.1 In addition to all relevant laws and regulations pertaining to the hunting and taking of big game in Vermont, the following additional restrictions apply:

a) No persons other than the Permittee, Subpermittee and Guide shall participate in a hunt to take moose.



b) Portable radio transceivers, GPS, and/or cell phones shall not be used to communicate during the hunting or taking of moose. Such devices may be used, however, after the moose is legally tagged.

c) No electronic devices such as radio telemetry equipment shall be used to take moose.

d) No electronic devices may be used to attract moose.

e) No person shall shoot or attempt to shoot a moose when the moose is within 100 yards of any town, state, or federal highway as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 4705(f).

f) Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. App. § 12, notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. App. § 12, Section 1(g), a person may employ the licensed handler of an authorized leashed tracking dog to track a moose wounded while lawfully hunting under this rule.

g) Unless it is uncocked, a person shall not possess or transport a crossbow in or on a motor vehicle, motorboat, airplane, snowmobile, or other motor-propelled vehicle except as permitted in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4705.

13.2 Regular Season: Moose may be taken only with the following implements and restrictions:

a) Centerfire rifles or handguns not less than .25 caliber.

b) A muzzleloading firearm of not less than .45 caliber, with a minimum barrel length of 20 inches and designed to be fired from the shoulder, or a muzzleloading handgun of not less than .45 caliber and with a minimum barrel length of 10 inches.

c) Bows of not less than 50 pound draw weight, based on the archer's normal draw length for traditional bows, and using arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with two or more cutting edges. A person taking moose may use a crossbow as a means of take during any season that permits the use of a bow and arrow-only ~~when holding a valid permit issued pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4711 or when the person is 50 years or older~~; and the crossbow is used in accordance with this subsection.

13.3 Archery Season: Moose may be taken only with the following implements and restrictions:

a) Bows of not less than 50 pound draw weight, based on the archer's normal draw length for traditional bows, and using arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with no fewer than two or more cutting edges.

b) ~~A person taking moose may use and possess a crossbow only when holding a valid permit issued pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4711 or when the person is 50 years or older.~~ Crossbow bolts shall have arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with two or more cutting edges.

#### 14.0 Tagging and Reporting

14.1 The transporting of moose shall be in accordance with current regulations and statutes pertaining to big game.

14.2 Once a moose is legally tagged, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 2a., there is no limit to the number of persons that can assist with the field dressing and removal of the moose from the kill site.

14.3 Moose taken under this rule must be reported, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 2, by exhibiting the eviscerated carcass, or parts thereof, to a Department official at a Department-authorized moose check station during its scheduled days and hours of operation within 48 hours of tagging.

14.4 The moose head hide, lower legs, and boned-out ribcage and/or bones need not be reported, however, both complete central incisors must be presented.

14.5 The permittee shall bring the following to the biological check station:

- (a) The lower jaw, including incisors, one of which shall be taken for aging purposes;
- (b) The intact antler rack on an antlered moose;
- (c) The portion of the skull on a male antlerless moose where antlers would be attached;
- (d) The female reproductive tract including both of the ovaries;
- (e) The udder; and
- (f) All edible portions of the moose not including organs.

14.6 No moose shall be transported out of the State without first being reported as required herein.

14.7 The Permittee and/or Subpermittee must identify the exact kill site on a Department map, and if requested, shall be required to take Department personnel to the kill site and/or the site of carcass evisceration for purposes such as, but not limited to, verification of the cause of death and site of kill, or to obtain ovaries or other biological samples left behind.

#### 15.0 Permit Allocation

15.1 The number of either-sex and/or antlerless permits or bull only permits to hunt and take moose during both the regular and archery seasons will be set by the Board.

16.0 Special Priority for Eligible Vermont Veterans

16.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4254, eligible for Vermont veterans will receive special priority drawing in the regular moose season lottery drawing.

16.2 A total of five (5) regular season permits will be allocated for this special priority drawing. These five permits will be included in the total permits authorized by separate Board Rule.

16.3 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing must submit a complete application approved by the Department. A person applying for the special priority drawing permits must have marked the appropriate box on the application indicating that they comply with the provisions of this section.

16.4 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing and who are not drawn for a moose permit in that special priority drawing shall be entered into the subsequent regular drawing.

16.5 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing and who do not receive a moose permit shall be awarded preference points for the subsequent special priority drawing.

17.0 Moose Permit Auction

17.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i), five moose permits shall be set aside to be issued by auction. These permits are in addition to the permits authorized by separate Board rule.

17.2 Complete bids must be received by the Department's central office prior to the deadline established by the Department.

17.3 Permits will be awarded to individuals that submit the five (5) highest bids. Individuals submitting the next five (5) highest bids will be eligible, in order of declining bid value, to receive a permit if higher-ranked bidders do not submit payment within 15 calendar days following notification.

17.4 An individual may submit more than one bid; however he/she may only receive one moose permit. If an individual submits multiple bids, only the highest value bid will be included in the auction as an official bid.

17.5 Once notified of winning a moose permit, successful bidders have 15 calendar days to submit their bid payment, and to indicate: the season they will hunt in, the Wildlife Management Unit they will hunt in; and their Subpermittee, if any.

17.6 If an individual receives a moose permit from the regular moose lottery or archery moose lottery, and is also a successful auction bidder, the person may choose either permit. Should a

person choose the regular moose lottery permit or the archery moose lottery permit, the bid amount will be refunded and the next highest unsuccessful bidder will be offered the auction permit.

17.7 Individuals who have held a valid moose permit acquired by the regular or archery moose lottery or auction are ineligible from participating in the moose permit auction for five years.

ANNOTATED

TITLE 10 APPENDIX  
CHAPTER 1. GAME  
Subchapter 1. General Provisions

**§ 36. Youth hunting day-Deer**

~~(1)(a) On the Sunday prior to the opening day of the regular deer season a resident who is under 16 years of age and has received a permit upon successful completion of a hunter firearms safety course may take one (1) wild deer with one antler at least three inches in length.~~

~~(b) However, if the Fish and Wildlife Board determines that taking of antlerless deer will be allowed then the Wildlife Management Units where this will be allowed and numbers of antlerless deer that may be taken will be adopted by rule, relating to the taking of antlerless deer.~~

~~(c) If a deer of either sex may be taken, as determined by (a) and (b), then the limit shall be one deer.~~

~~(2) Issuance of Tags; Proof of Residency:~~

~~Proof of satisfactory compliance in a hunter firearms safety course and proof of residency must be presented before the issuance of a tag.~~

~~(3) Nonresidents will not be eligible for this hunt.~~

~~(4) To hunt under this section each person shall hold a valid hunting license under 10 V.S.A. § 4255, except a minor of a landowner pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4253. (10 V.S.A. § 4742(b))~~

~~(5) Each person hunting under this section shall be accompanied by an unarmed adult who holds a valid hunting license and who is over 18 years of age. (10 V.S.A. § 4742(b))~~

~~(6) An adult accompanying a youth under this section shall accompany no more than two (2) permittees at one time. (10 V.S.A. § 4742(b))~~

~~(7) No person shall hunt under this section on privately owned land without first obtaining the permission of the owner or occupant. (10 V.S.A. § 4742(d))~~

~~(8) Tagging:~~

~~A deer taken pursuant to this section shall immediately be tagged upon being taken into a person's possession by attaching the tag to the deer carcass. The tag shall be placed on the deer carcass in a location that is open to view. Such tag shall remain on the deer carcass during possession and transportation and until such time that the animal is cut up for consumption. A person shall not transport parts of a deer taken under this section unless the parts or package containing them are marked with a name and address of the person who killed the deer. (10 V.S.A. App. § 2a)~~

~~(9) Reporting:~~

~~A person taking a deer pursuant to this section shall within 48 hours report the taking and exhibit the carcass to the nearest Game Warden, official Fish & Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the Commissioner to receive the reports.~~

## Title 10 V.S.A. App. § 36

~~No deer taken under this section shall be transported out of the State without first being reported as required herein. (10 V.S.A. App. § 2(a))~~

~~(10) A person taking a deer under a permit pursuant to this regulation and 10 V.S.A. § 4742 will be eligible to take a deer during the regular deer season and other remaining open seasons if they have not taken three deer in the calendar year as prescribed in 10 V.S.A. § 4753.~~

**ANNOTATED**  
**Changes Highlighted**

**TITLE 10 APPENDIX**  
**CHAPTER 1. GAME**  
**Subchapter 1. General Provisions**

**Subchapter 3. Quadrupeds**

**§ 37. Deer Management Rule**

**1.0 Authority**

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(b). In adopting this rule, the fish and wildlife board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and fur-bearing animals in this state is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the state requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the deer herd.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4084, this rule establishes open seasons; establishes daily, season and possession limits; prescribes the manner and means of taking white-tailed deer and establishes restrictions on taking based on sex and antler characteristics.

**2.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this rule is to manage the white-tailed deer herd, implementing will of the General Assembly to design rules to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the deer herd.

**3.0 Definitions**

3.1 Antlerless Deer: "Antlerless Deer" are defined as those deer without antlers or antlers less than three (3") inches in length.

3.2 Antlerless Deer Permit: An "antlerless deer permit" is a permit issued pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(g) that allows a person to take one antlerless deer during the antlerless or muzzleloader seasons.

3.3 Antler Point: A "point" is an antler projection of at least 1" measured from the base of the point at the main beam to the tip of the point. A broken main beam shall count as a point regardless of length.

3.4 Bait: For the purposes of this regulation, "bait" is defined as any animal, vegetable, fruit or mineral matter placed with the intention of attracting wildlife. Natural and artificial scents and lures that are not prohibited under Section ~~41-14~~ of this regulation and are not designed to be consumed by eating or licking, shall not be bait for the purposes of this rule.

3.5 Baiting: "Baiting" is the use of any animal, vegetable or mineral matter, including scents and lures prohibited under section ~~41-14~~ of this regulation: that has the effect of enticing wildlife to a certain location.

3.6 Board: The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board.

3.7 Bona fide agricultural practices: Practices that have been employed to plant, grow and harvest an agricultural product conducted in the usual manner.

3.8 Crossbows: A crossbow means a device consisting of a bow mounted to a rigid stock for discharging bolts or arrows and having a mechanical means to hold and release the drawn string, which must be fired from the shoulder. A bolt means a short projectile, designed for a crossbow, that resembles an arrow. No person shall hunt wild animals or game with a crossbow if the bolt has an arrowhead less than seven-eighths of an inch at its widest point and has less than two sharp cutting edges. A crossbow shall have a minimum pull of 125 pounds, a working mechanical safety and a stock no less than 23 inches in length.

3.9 Legal Buck: in Wildlife Management Units C, D1, D2 E1, E2, G, I, L, M, P, Q any white-tailed deer with at least one antler three (3") inches or more in length; and in Wildlife Management Units A, B, F1, F2, H, J1, J2, K, N, and O a legal buck shall be any white-tailed deer with at least one antler with two or more antler points one inch in length or longer.

3.10 Novice: A person who purchased their first hunting license within the past 12 months and is 16 years of age or older.

3.11 Youth: A person who is 15 years of age or younger.

#### **4.0 Annual Deer Limit**

4.1 A person shall not take more than ~~three~~ four white-tailed deer-in a calendar year, only ~~two~~ one of which may be a legal buck.

a) Youth and novice hunters shall be allowed to take two legal bucks, provided that one is taken during the youth or novice season, not to exceed the annual limit of four white-tailed deer.

#### **5.0 Antlerless Deer Season**



5.1 For four consecutive days, commencing on the Thursday 16 days prior to the opening day of the regular rifle season shall be the antlerless deer season.

5.2 A person hunting under this section shall obtain a muzzleloader license as provided in 10 V.S.A. § 4252 and must possess an antlerless deer permit.

5.3 A person may take one antlerless deer per antlerless deer permit. A person may take additional antlerless deer if they obtain additional antlerless deer permits not to exceed the annual limit as prescribed in section 4.1 of this rule. No person may purchase or possess more than one antlerless deer permit at a time, or purchase a subsequent antlerless deer permit until the person has harvested an antlerless deer. If a person possesses a permit to take an antlerless deer, then the person may take an antlerless deer.

5.4 A person hunting with a muzzleloading firearm pursuant to this rule shall not carry any firearms other than one single-barreled muzzleloading firearm as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 4001(33) while hunting deer during this season.

5.5 No person taking deer by means of muzzleloader may possess archery equipment or crossbow while hunting.

5.6 No person shall take a deer in a WMU unless they are licensed, permitted and explicitly authorized to do so by the Board rules, or procedures adopted in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082 (c).

~~6.0 Deer; Seasons for Taking by Muzzleloading Firearm~~ Muzzleloader Season

6.1 Muzzleloader Season: For the nine consecutive calendar days commencing on the first Saturday after the completion of the regular rifle deer hunting season, a person may take:

- a) One legal buck by muzzleloading firearm, provided that they have not yet taken a buck as prescribed in Section 4.1 of this rule, and
- b) If the Board has authorized the taking of antlerless deer, and if ~~an individual~~ a person possesses ~~a permit to take~~ an antlerless deer permit, then the ~~individual~~ person may take an antlerless deer as authorized. No person may purchase or possess more than one antlerless deer permit and a person can only purchase a subsequent antlerless deer permit after the person has harvested an antlerless deer, not to exceed the annual limit as prescribed in section 4.1 of this rule.

6.2 A person hunting with a muzzleloading firearm under this section shall obtain a muzzleloader license as provided in 10 V.S.A. § 4252.

6.3. A person hunting with a muzzleloading firearm pursuant to this rule shall not carry any firearms other than one single-barreled muzzleloading firearm as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 4001(33) while hunting deer during this season.

6.4 No person taking deer by means of muzzleloader may possess archery equipment or crossbow while hunting.

6.5 No person shall take a deer in a WMU unless they are licensed, permitted and explicitly authorized to do so by the Board rules, or procedures adopted in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082 (c).

~~7.5 Limit: No more than two deer, only one of which may be a legal buck, may be taken during muzzleloader season, not to exceed the annual limit as prescribed in Section 5.1 of this rule.~~

### **7.0 Archery Season ~~for Taking by Bow and Arrow or Crossbow~~**

7.1 Archery Season: October 1 through December 15, except during the regular rifle deer hunting season: ~~During the period from the first Saturday in October running for 28 consecutive calendar days and the nine consecutive calendar days starting on the first Saturday after the completion of the regular rifle deer hunting season.~~

- a. One legal buck may be taken by bow and arrow or crossbow, during the archery season anywhere in the state; not to exceed the annual limit as prescribed in Section 5.14.1 of this rule, and
- b. In Wildlife Management Units declared open by the Board to the taking of antlerless deer, a person may take antlerless deer.

7.2 A person hunting with a bow and arrow or crossbow under this section shall obtain an archery license as provided in 10 V.S.A. § 4252. An archery license will be valid for one deer; additional archery licenses are required for the taking of additional deer ~~in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4252 and section 7.6 of this rule.~~

### 7.3 The Board may establish Expanded Archery Zones

a) Within these zones, the archery season shall begin September 15. From September 15 to September 30, only antlerless deer may be taken.

### b) [Zone Boundaries]

7.4 Crossbows may be used as a means of take during any deer season that permits the use of a bow and arrow ~~by any person who is 50 years or older or by a person holding a permit issued under 10 V.S.A. § 4711.~~

7.5 The holder of an archery license or a super sport license, hunting with a bow and arrow or a crossbow, may possess a handgun while archery hunting, in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4252 (b), provided that the license holder shall not take game by firearm while hunting.

~~8.7 Limit: No more than two deer, only one of which may be a legal buck, may be taken during the archery season; not to exceed the annual limit as prescribed in Section 5.1 of this rule.~~

7.6 Unless it is uncocked, a person shall not possess or transport a crossbow in or on a motor vehicle, motorboat, airplane, snowmobile, or other motor-propelled vehicle except as permitted in accordance with 10 V.S.A. §4705.

### **8.0 Regular Rifle Season**

Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4741, for the 16 consecutive calendar days commencing 12 days prior to Thanksgiving day, a person may take by lawful means one legal buck. No person shall take a deer in a WMU unless they are licensed, permitted and explicitly authorized to do so by the Board rules, or procedures adopted in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082 (c).

### **9.0 Youth Deer Hunting Weekend**

9.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4742a, the Saturday and Sunday three weeks prior to the opening day of the regular rifle deer hunting season shall be youth deer hunting weekend.

9.2 Limit: One white-tailed deer. One legal buck may be taken during the youth deer hunting weekend, or any deer if the Board has authorized the taking of antlerless deer during youth hunting weekend.

9.3 To participate in the youth deer hunt, a qualified youth must be 15 years of age or younger and have a valid Vermont hunting license and a youth deer weekend license.

9.4 The youth must be accompanied by an unarmed adult who holds a valid Vermont hunting license and who is 18 years of age or older. An adult accompanying a youth under this section shall accompany no more than two young people at one time. As used in this section, "accompany," "accompanied," or "accompanying" means direct control and supervision, including the ability to see and communicate with the youth hunter without the aid of artificial devices such as radios or binoculars, except for medically necessary devices such as hearing aids or eyeglasses.

9.5 No youth shall hunt under this section on privately owned land without first obtaining the permission of the owner or occupant.

### **10.0 Novice Season**

10.1 Novice Season: This season shall be concurrent with the Youth Deer Hunting Weekend as prescribed in 10 V.S.A. § 4742a and section 9.1 of this rule.

10.2 Limit: One white-tailed deer. One legal buck may be taken during this season, or any deer if the Board has authorized the taking of antlerless deer during youth hunting weekend.

10.3 To participate in the novice season, a novice hunter must have a valid Vermont hunting license, and follow the requirements of youth hunting week-end.

10.4 The novice hunter must be accompanied by an unarmed adult who holds a valid Vermont hunting license and who is 18 years of age or older. An adult accompanying a novice under this section shall accompany no more than two novice hunters at one time. As used in this section, "accompany," "accompanied," or "accompanying" means direct control and supervision, including the ability to see and communicate with the novice hunter without the aid of artificial devices such as radios or binoculars, except for medically necessary devices such as hearing aids or eyeglasses.

10.5 No Novice hunter shall hunt under this section on privately owned land without first obtaining the permission of the owner or occupant.

### **11.0 Reporting**

11.1 A deer carcass shall be field dressed, prior to reporting in accordance with 10 V.S.A. App. § 2.

11.2 Upon request, the person harvesting a deer shall show and return to the kill site with a Game Warden.

### **12.0 Feeding of Deer**

12.1 No person shall feed white-tailed deer at any time in Vermont except:

- a. Under a license or permit issued pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4152 by the Department for bona fide scientific research, mitigation of wildlife damage or nuisance problems, or wildlife population reduction programs only; or
- b. By planting, cultivating or harvesting of crops directly associated with bona fide agricultural practices, including planted wildlife food plots; or
- c. By distribution of food material for livestock directly associated with bona fide agricultural practices; or
- d. By cutting of trees or brush; or

e. By incidental feeding by an elevated bird/squirrel feeders (feeders must be at least five feet above the ground) providing seed, grain, fruit, worms, or suet for birds or squirrels, located within 100 feet of an occupied dwelling.

**13.0 Baiting**

13.1 No person shall take deer by using bait. Exempted from this prohibition are:

- a. Incidental feeding of wildlife within active livestock operations;
- b. Standing crops planted and left standing as food plots for wildlife;
- c. Grain or other feed scattered or distributed solely as a result of normal agricultural, gardening, or soil stabilization, and logging practices;
- d. Vegetation or food/seed naturally deposited.

13.2 No person shall take any game or wild animal by using bait during deer seasons established under Part 4 of Title 10 or by rules of the Board, except that persons taking fur-bearers as authorized under 10 V.S.A. § 4252(3) may use bait in conjunction with traps being set to take fur-bearers.

**14.0 The Ban of urine and other natural lures**

14.1 Authority.

The Fish & Wildlife Board finds that, in order to protect the health of white-tailed deer in Vermont, it is necessary to prohibit the use of cervid urine, blood, glands, gland oil, feces, or other bodily fluids for the purpose of taking or attempting to take deer.

14.2 Restricted and Permitted Uses of cervid urine, blood, glands, gland oil, feces, or other bodily fluids.

- a) No person shall possess while hunting or use, for the purposes of taking or attempting to take, attracting, surveillance or scouting deer; any product that contains or purports to contain any cervid urine, blood, gland oil, feces, or other bodily fluids.
- b) A person may utilize the body parts of a wild Vermont white-tailed deer legally taken or acquired by that person for coyote hunting.

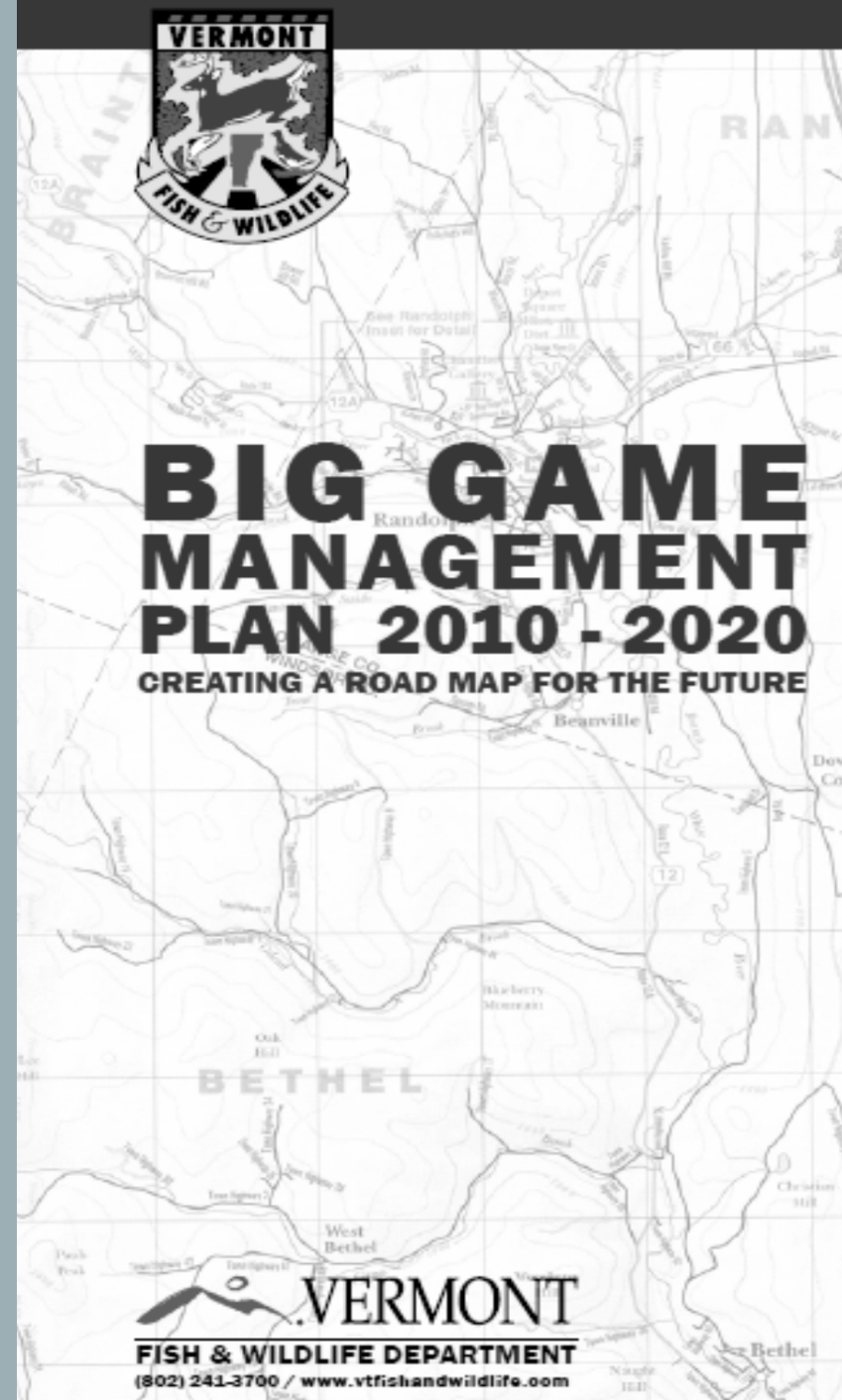


**2020 – 2030 BIG GAME PLAN  
STRATEGIES**



## BIG GAME PLAN: **WHY**

- Deer, bear, moose and turkey management
- Every 10 years
- Identifies issues; sets goals and strategies
- Comprehensive rather than reactionary
- Not just about hunting
- Significant public involvement



## BIG GAME PLAN: **PROCESS**

**January 2018**

Internal development

**March 2018**

Deer and Moose  
Hearings

**May & July 2018**

Stakeholder Meetings

**Fall 2018**

Big Game Survey



## BIG GAME PLAN: 2018 VERMONT BIG GAME SURVEY

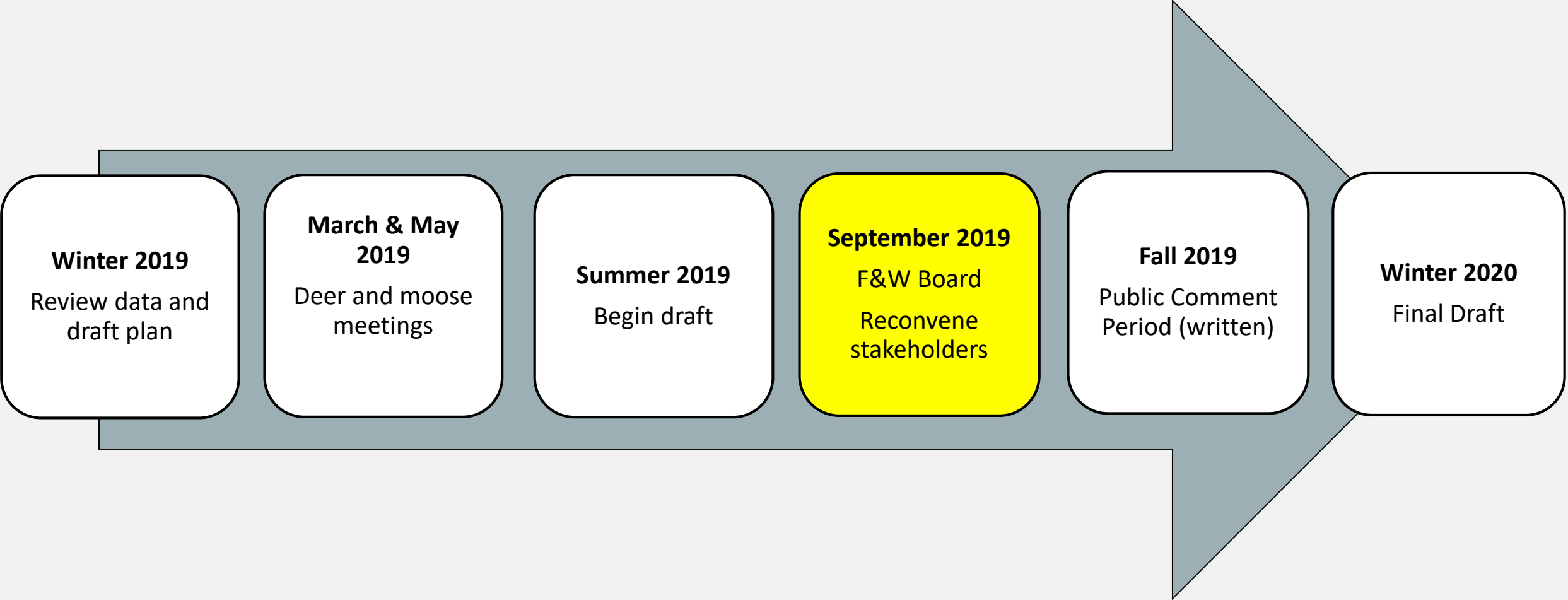
### December 2018

- Residents (600) and Resident Hunters (600)
- Residents → *population perceptions, knowledge and behavior*
- Hunters → *satisfaction, current and potential regulations*

### Past Surveys

- Public Opinion on Wildlife Species Management in Vermont (2007)
- Resident Hunters' Opinions on Potential Changes to the Deer and Moose Seasons in Vermont (2010)
- Deer Hunting and Harvest Management in Vermont (2014)

**BIG GAME PLAN: PROCESS**





**BIG GAME PLAN:  
OVERARCHING ISSUES**

1. Declining hunter numbers
2. Suburbanization
3. Climate change
4. Promoting utilization
5. Habitat loss
6. Access to land
7. Human/wildlife conflicts
8. Biological data collection

## OVERARCHING ISSUES: **STRATEGIES**

1. **Maximize opportunity for big game hunters**, including liberalizing season length and bag limits, where possible, to meet big game population objectives.
2. **Recruit new hunters with the primary purpose of introducing new, diverse audiences to, and maintaining the high support for, hunting.**
3. **Encourage the utilization of big game species** with a primary purpose of increasing support for hunting and encouraging more bear and antlerless deer harvest, if necessary.
  - More utilization-related content on the website
  - Review the current statutory window to sell big game carcasses during the open season and 20 days thereafter to connect the public to hunting.

## OVERARCHING ISSUES: **STRATEGIES**

4. Use **Vermont Conservation Design** to identify priority big game habitat for conservation, such as young forests and habitat connectivity.
5. **Continue to provide outreach on the impacts of climate change.**
6. **Advocate for public hunting access for lands enrolled in the Use Value Appraisal Program (Current Use) and conserved lands.**
7. **Continue outreach to private landowners, municipalities, non-profits and other landowners on the value of allowing hunting access.**

## OVERARCHING ISSUES: STRATEGIES

- 7. Develop a single, comprehensive database to track and record human-wildlife conflicts, including those involving big game species.**
8. Maintain mandatory big game reporting but investigate ways to make it easier for hunters to check their game in, particularly with the use of technology.
10. Implement disease surveillance plans for all four species and maintain incident response teams.
11. Continue to collaborate with other members of Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAWFA) including technical committees, disease surveillance, population monitoring and original research.

## BIG GAME PLAN: **BEAR**

1. Bear-human conflicts
2. Population size and distribution
3. Habitat conservation
4. Management strategies & season structure



## ISSUE #1: BEAR - HUMAN CONFLICTS

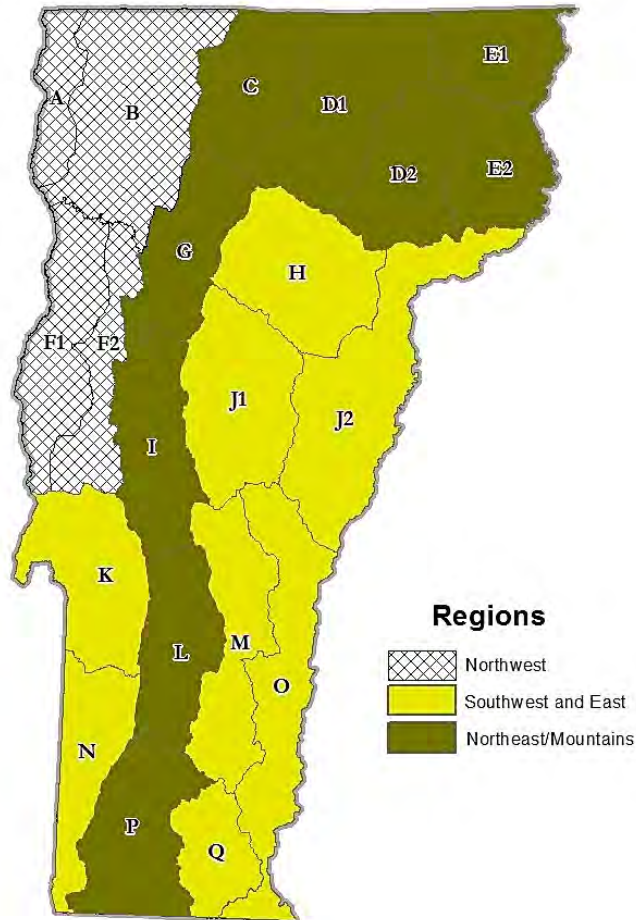
**Minimize the total number of negative interactions occurring between bears and humans to achieve acceptable levels of human safety and acceptance.**

1. Continue to work with partners to increase public awareness of the factors that lead to human-bear conflicts and the legal and appropriate actions to take to avoid negative interactions.
2. Continue outreach and education efforts including improving the bear section of the website and creating “how to” videos to help reach a larger segment of the public.
3. **Better define and clarify existing regulations regarding the feeding of bears.**
4. **“Raise the bar” on getting the public to take more responsibility for addressing local bear-human conflicts.**
  - Correct actions to take when a bear enters a backyard
  - Department’s position on relocating bears
  - When it is appropriate to kill a bear
5. **Assist communities experiencing the greatest number of conflicts** with creative ways in addressing human-bear conflicts.
6. **Continue to work with DEC to improve their outreach on universal composting to reduce conflicts.**



## BEAR#2: BEAR POPULATION SIZE & DISTRIBUTION

### Regional Bear Management Areas



**Maintain an average, five-year population of 4,500 bears.**

- Maintain current regulations to sustain the population goal, accounting for population modeling variance.**
- Continue to use season length, especially during the overlap with the November deer season, as the primary method of adjusting the size of the bear population.
- Consider managing bears regionally rather than statewide.**
  - Could include restricting bear population growth in the northwestern part of the state.
  - Could better address the disconnect between conflict numbers and bear population size.



**BEAR #3: BEAR HABITAT  
CONSERVATION**

**Maintain a no net loss of function and value of existing bear habitat.**

1. Continue to work with Vermont's regulatory process to reduce human-bear conflicts arising from new commercial and residential developments.
2. Update the Black Bear Habitat Mitigation Guidelines.
3. **Work with Vermont Conservation Design** to prioritize the protection of bear travel corridors and linkage habitat while also working to increase the amount of young forest habitat throughout the state.

## BEAR #4. MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES & SEASON STRUCTURE

**Optimize public hunting opportunity for the utilization of bears for food and other uses, ensure hunter satisfaction within biologically sustainable regulations, and continue to use public hunting to meet black bear population objectives.**

- 1. Continue to collect and assess data that will allow for regional management.**
2. Continue to address issues that could possibly restrict bear hunting with hounds in Vermont.
- 3. Begin outreach to hunters that stresses that the decline in hunter numbers will likely necessitate changes in bear season structure and overall bear management.**
  - Promote bears as a source of local, sustainable food.
- 4. Evaluate and monitor deer hunting regulations to determine the influence they may have on the bear harvest and population size.**

## BIG GAME PLAN: **DEER**

1. Disease
2. Deer wintering areas
3. Population objectives
4. Deer-human conflicts
5. Socially-driven hunting regulations






A map of North America showing the distribution of deer and the status of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The map is divided into several regions. A central box contains the text "DEER #1: DISEASE". Below the map, there is a list of six points. A legend in the bottom right corner explains the symbols used on the map: a light gray square for "CWD in free-ranging populations", a dark gray square for "Known distribution prior to 2000 (free-ranging)", and a circle with a dot for "CWD in captive facilities".

## DEER #1: DISEASE

To maintain a healthy deer population that is free of major diseases.

1. **Enhance the Department's disease surveillance, particularly for CWD.**
2. **Continue to emphasize and improve CWD prevention efforts.**
3. **Consider expanding restrictions on the importation of legally harvested cervids.**
4. Develop a CWD response plan, including all necessary approvals and authorities.
5. Increase public outreach regarding CWD.
6. Continue monitoring other diseases with potential to impact deer populations.

Chronic Wasting Disease  
in North America

-  CWD in free-ranging populations
-  Known distribution prior to 2000 (free-ranging)
-  CWD in captive facilities

## DEER #2: DEER WINTERING AREAS

**To maintain adequate quantity and quality of deer winter habitat to sustain populations at target levels.**

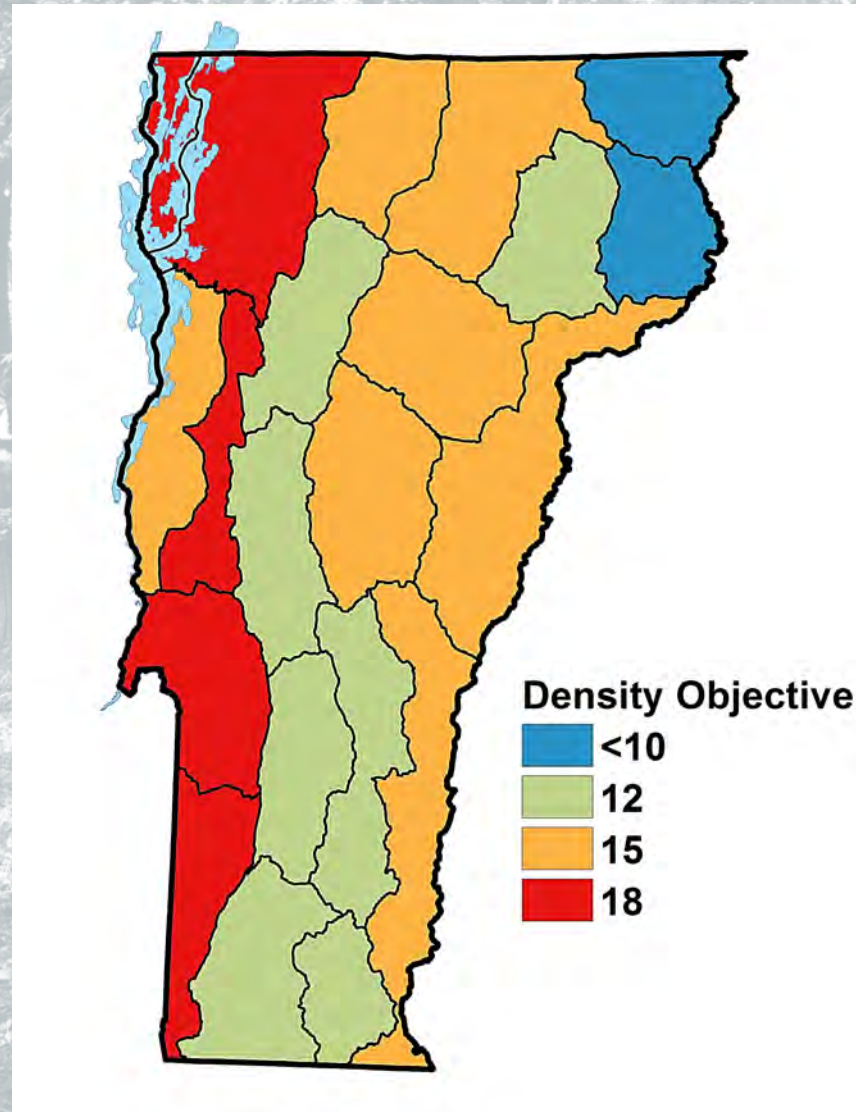
- 1. Continue to protect Deer Wintering Areas (DWAs) through regulatory review.**
2. Continue to update the Department's inventory of DWAs opportunistically.
- 3. Develop a remote sensing approach to aid in identification of unknown or unmapped DWAs.**
4. Conduct outreach to landowners and land managers about the importance of DWA conservation.
5. Continue to work with FPR and their county foresters to ensure that habitat is adequately managed under the UVA program.
6. Work with FPR to develop guidelines for the management of hemlock DWAs given the potential impacts of Hemlock woolly adelgid.
7. Continue to work with conservation partners that own or manage conserved land to ensure that DWAs and other habitats are properly managed.

## DEER #3: POPULATION OBJECTIVES

To maintain deer populations at levels that are socially acceptable and ecologically sustainable.

1. Manage deer densities using **WMU-specific** population and physical condition objectives.
2. Monitor characteristics of deer and habitat that can change in response to deer abundance.
3. Continue to collect physical condition data including yearling antler beam diameter, fawn and yearling body weight and reproductive data.
  - Consider collecting data on fawn recruitment .
  - Work with foresters to monitor impacts to forest health.
4. Work with landowners and land managers to encourage hunting and inform them about the need to manage deer abundance.
5. Adjust antlerless deer harvests as necessary to achieve population and physical condition objectives.
  - **Monitor the effects of deer hunting regulation changes on the antlerless harvest.**
  - Consider additional liberalization of antlerless harvest, if necessary, to achieve annual harvest objectives.

## DEER #3: POPULATION OBJECTIVES





A photograph of a deer looking over a wire fence. The deer's head and eyes are visible through the mesh. The background is a blurred natural setting with foliage.

## DEER #4: DEER – HUMAN CONFLICTS

**To minimize the number of deer-human conflicts.**

1. Maintain deer populations at socially acceptable levels.
2. Demonstrate the effectiveness of archery hunting to reduce locally overabundant deer in developed areas.
3. **Work with communities to address locally overabundant deer in developed areas, including establishment of expanded archery zones.**
4. Encourage communication and cooperation between antlerless deer hunters and landowners seeking relief from deer damage.

## ISSUE #5: HUNTER SATISFACTION

To provide a quality deer hunting experience for as many hunters as possible.

1. Maximize hunting opportunity by providing longer hunting seasons and opportunities to hunt multiple seasons.
2. Maximize opportunity to harvest a deer.
3. Ensure there are a sufficient number of older bucks on the landscape to provide hunters a reasonable chance of seeing one.
4. Continue to regularly survey hunters and involve them in the rule-making process.

## BIG GAME PLAN: **MOOSE**

1. Regional population objectives
2. Hunt shutdown thresholds
3. Disease
4. Moose-human conflicts
5. Habitat and carrying capacity
6. Allocation of hunting opportunity



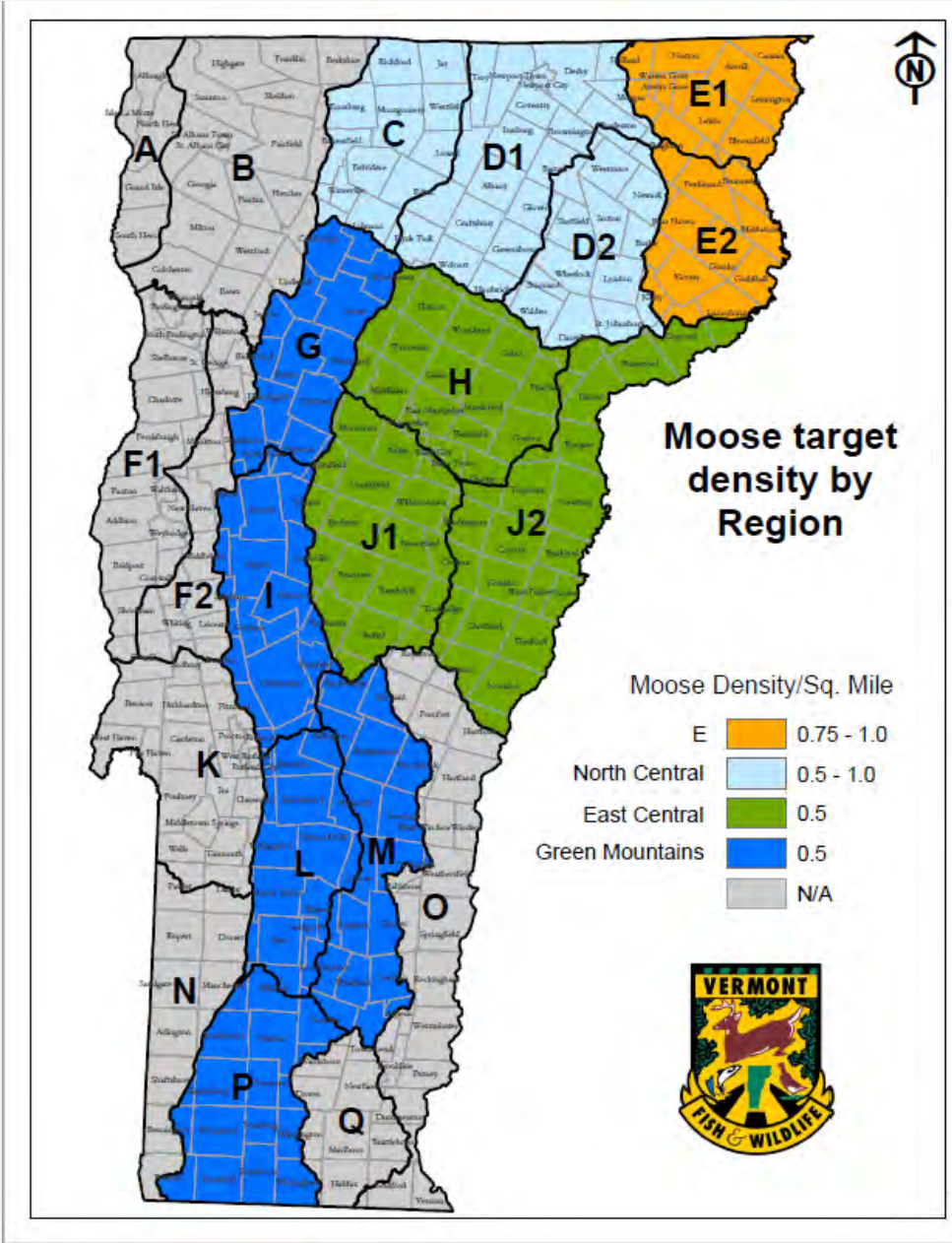
## MOOSE #1: REGIONAL POPULATION GOALS

To maintain regional populations of healthy moose at or below ecological and/or socially acceptable carrying capacities.

**1. Maintain target populations in the WMU E, North Central, East Central and Green Mountain moose management regions.**

- **When appropriate, provide hunting opportunity in all WMUs.**
- **Maintain 67 to 100 bulls per 100 adult cows.**
- **Improve current and explore new population monitoring methods.** May include:
  - Expanding annual deer hunter effort survey
  - Developing a camera trap network
  - Monitoring snow urine (urea nitrogen/creatinine ratio)

# MOOSE #1: REGIONAL POPULATION GOALS



## Rolling 3 Year 2016 -2018 Population Estimate by Region & 2020-2030 Target

Region	WMUs	Target Density (Moose/Mile <sup>2</sup> )	Area	2016 – 2018 Population	2020 - 2030 Target
E	E1 & E2	0.75 - 1.0	632	830	551
North Central	C,D1,D2	0.5-1.0	1146	342	746
East Central	H,J1,J2	0.5	1563	309	782
Green Moutains	G,I,L,M,P	0.5	2206	410	994
B	B	n/a	420	34	n/a
Champlain Valley	A,F1,F2	n/a	301	0	n/a
Southeast	O,Q	n/a	697	17	n/a
Southwest	K,N	n/a	634	0	n/a
				<b>1943</b>	<b>3072</b>



**MOOSE #2: HUNTING PERMIT THRESHOLDS**

To establish moose density thresholds in Wildlife Management Units that would dictate hunting closures or re-openings.

**1. Hunting Permit thresholds:**

- **No permits if < 75% of target for 2 consecutive years.**
- **Resume permits if within 25% of target for 2 consecutive years.**

<b>Unit Z Target = 100</b>	<b>Population Year 1</b>	<b>Population Year 2</b>	<b>Hunt?</b>
<b>Scenario #1</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Scenario #2</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>YES</b>

## MOOSE #3: DISEASE

**To better understand and address the impacts of disease on the long-term viability of moose in Vermont.**

- 1. Implement a density goal of 1 moose/square mile, or lower, for any WMU where winter tick are persisting at epizootic levels.**
- 2. Per funding, study the impacts of disease on the moose population.**
  - Support research into biopesticides.
  - Explore the use of snow urine to monitor nutritional status.
  - Monitor tick load and hair loss on all incidental and/or legally killed moose, when available.
  - Submit blood serum from euthanized sick-acting moose for ELISA test (brainworm) and consider the test on all incidental mortalities and harvested moose.
  - Evaluate the need and feasibility of field necropsies of all incidental moose mortalities.
- 3. Maintain WMU E1 and E2 deer density < 10/sq. mile.**



## MOOSE #4: MOOSE - HUMAN CONFLICTS

### **To minimize motor vehicle - moose collisions and other forms of damage caused by moose.**

1. Continue to improve the protocol for moose/human conflicts.
2. **Consider revisiting the moose doing damage rule in light of the declining moose population** (e.g. sap tubing damage only during sugaring season).
3. Continue to work with the VTRANS to erect and maintain warning signs at traditional moose crossings.
4. When feasible, continue to work with VTRANS in implementing roadside brush-clearing projects to improve visibility at the most dangerous crossings.
5. Cooperate with VTRANS to investigate the use of new technology that may help reduce moose/vehicle collisions.
6. When feasible, cooperate with VTRANS on the Installation of wildlife crossing culverts or travel lanes during interstate and highway bridge replacements.
7. Issue annual press releases to remind motorists of moose hazards during seasons of increased moose movements.

## MOOSE #5: MOOSE HABITAT AND CARRYING CAPACITY

**Maintain necessary habitat to support regional moose density objectives.**

- 1. Enhance moose habitat on State and Federal lands, especially in regions where young forest comprises < 10% of forestland.**
- 2. Support and monitor research into moose and parasite dynamics.**

## WILD TURKEY

1. Population size
2. Management strategies & season structure
3. Disease
4. Turkey – human conflicts
5. Habitat change and conservation



A photograph of several wild turkeys in a snowy, wooded environment. The turkeys are dark-colored with some lighter feathers on their wings. They are standing on the snow, and some are looking towards the camera. The background shows a large tree trunk and more snow-covered ground.

## TURKEY #1: POPULATION SIZE

**Maintain healthy, sustainable populations of wild turkeys consistent with their biological and cultural carrying capacities.**

1. Annually collect and assess turkey harvest data to determine population trends.
2. Continue conducting turkey brood surveys to assess annual poult production.
3. **Evaluate and implement new population monitoring and modelling practices (e.g. winter flock surveys, hunter sighting surveys, population models, hunter effort surveys).**
4. **Improve regional approach to managing turkeys via the use of appropriate population thresholds and indices.**



**TURKEY #2: MANAGEMENT  
STRATEGIES & SEASON  
STRUCTURES**

**Maximize the ecological and social benefits derived from Vermont's wild turkey population by administering biologically appropriate and sustainable harvest regulations.**

1. Continue prioritizing quality spring hunting over fall hunting.
2. Consider liberalizing fall hunting where opportunities exist.
3. **Evaluate and implement methods for using turkey hunting as a way to recruit new hunters such as, but not limited to, the creation of a "novice season" for turkeys similar to the recently adopted deer novice season.**
4. **Liberalize and simplify shot size regulations including the use of non-lead, tungsten shot.**

### TURKEY #3: DISEASE



**Safeguard the health of Vermont's wild turkey population through the effective surveillance of and response to disease outbreaks.**

- 1. Participate in regional studies designed to facilitate the understanding of wild turkey disease distribution and significance.**
- 2. Implement a disease reporting system (i.e. online report form) designed to facilitate the effective monitoring of and response to disease outbreaks in wild turkeys.**

## TURKEY #4. CONFLICTS WITH HUMANS

**Maintain public support for wild turkey conservation by providing technical assistance when conflicts arise and by maintaining the turkey population within its cultural carrying capacity limits.**

1. Develop standardized protocols for guiding staff response to conflicts caused by wild turkeys.
2. Develop and disseminate educational materials designed to inform citizens/farmers about techniques for minimizing conflicts.
3. **Strengthen outreach efforts aimed at increasing the public's awareness of the importance of reporting conflicts with turkeys**
  - Develop and implement an online turkey conflict reporting database designed to facilitate the collection, assessment and archiving of conflict data.
  - Annually compile and evaluate conflict reports to document problems and inform management decisions.
4. **Pursue an adaptive regulated harvest strategy that strives to maintain wild turkey populations within their cultural carrying capacity.**

## **TURKEY #5: HABITAT CHANGE & CONSERVATION**

**To maintain the productivity of Vermont's landscape for wild turkeys by working to identify, protect, and enhance key habitats.**

1. Develop and maintain habitat demonstration areas designed to promote appropriate commercial and non-commercial land management practices beneficial to turkeys.
2. Provide information and technical assistance to private landowners and other land managers regarding turkey habitat management.
3. Collaborate with key partners (e.g. NWTF, GMNF, etc.) to promote turkey habitat management and conservation.



# Breakouts

