

Early antlerless-only deer season to open in two southeastern MN areas

Hunters in portions of southeastern Minnesota can harvest antlerless deer in an early antlerless-only season from Thursday, Oct. 20, to Sunday, Oct. 23, in deer permit areas 346 and 349 in Winona, Houston and Fillmore counties, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

These areas have high deer densities and private landowners have experienced deer damage to agricultural crops. Hunters should be aware that public land is limited in the early antlerless hunt areas, and hunters need to ask permission to hunt private lands.

In the early antlerless deer hunt, only antlerless deer may be taken,

and hunters may use up to five early antlerless permits. Deer harvested during the special season do not count toward a hunter's statewide limit during the regular season. Early antlerless deer permits may be purchased wherever hunting licenses are sold. Bonus permits may not be used for the early antlerless season.

All deer harvested during this season must be tagged with an early antlerless permit. Hunters also must have a valid archery, firearms or muzzleloader deer license. The early antlerless season coincides with the four-day special youth deer season. More information can be found at www.mndnr.gov/deer.

Changes affect how deer carcasses can enter Minnesota

Hunters can no longer bring whole deer carcasses into Minnesota from anywhere in North America. This restriction includes all members of the deer family (deer, elk, moose and caribou).

Previously, the restriction only applied to animals harvested in areas of North America where chronic wasting disease (CWD) has been known to occur.

"We are making this change to respond to the increasing prevalence and geographic spread of CWD," said Adam Murkowski, Big Game Program leader with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The disease is always fatal and infected deer can appear healthy. Live animal testing is still in development.

Hunters may bring only the following parts into Minnesota, regardless of where the animal was harvested outside of the state:

- Meat that is boned out or that is cut and wrapped (either commercially or privately).
- Quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached.
- Hides and teeth.
- Antlers or clean skull plates (no brain tissue attached) with antlers attached.
- Finished taxidermy mounts.
- Nonresidents transporting whole or partial carcasses on a direct route through Minnesota are exempt from this restriction; however, similar restrictions exist in all surrounding states.

This rule has been finalized and is in place for the fall of 2016.



Temporary off-highway vehicle trail closures begin in November

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will restrict recreational use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs) in some areas during the upcoming firearms deer hunting season. Vehicles affected by the restrictions include all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), off-highway motorcycles (OHMs) and snowmobiles that are not being used in conjunction with deer hunting by a licensed deer hunter.

The restrictions, which apply to state forest trails and access routes but not to state forest roads, aim to protect recreational riders from potentially unsafe riding conditions and to minimize conflicts between deer hunters and recreational riders who may inadvertently disturb them.

Licensed deer hunters may only use an OHV or snowmobile in restricted areas during the legal hunting season:

- Before legal shooting time.
- From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- After legal shooting hours.

Effective dates of the recreational riding restrictions will be:

- Nov. 5-Nov. 20 for the northeastern Minnesota 100 series deer season.
- Nov. 5-Nov. 13 for the Minnesota 200 series deer season.

Because recreational OHV trails located in southeastern Minnesota close Nov. 1 each year, no additional OHV riding restrictions are necessary in that part of the state.

While many recreational OHV riders have voluntarily opted not to ride forest trails during deer hunting and small-game seasons, recreational OHV riding has become a year-round sport for many. DNR officials remind everyone who visits Minnesota's state forests this fall to put safety first.

For more information, see the 2016 deer season map online at www.mndnr.gov or contact the DNR Information Center at info.dnr@state.mn.us or 651-296-6157 or 888-646-6367 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Deer hunters in southeastern Minnesota encouraged to submit harvested deer for CWD sampling

Deer hunters in southeastern Minnesota who harvest a deer during the 3A and 3B firearms deer seasons are encouraged to have their deer sampled for chronic wasting disease (CWD) at one of 30 locations that will be staffed.

Due to the expansion of CWD in Iowa and Wisconsin, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will be conducting CWD surveillance in deer areas 339 to 349 throughout the firearm season, an area that includes nearly all the 300 series permit areas. The goal is to collect 3,600 samples.

"Working with hunters to sample deer for evidence of CWD is our best opportunity for early detection of the disease in Minnesota," said Lou Cornicelli, wildlife research manager. "Early detection is important from the perspective of limiting disease spread, and we will make the process as quick as possible to get hunters on their way."

CWD is caused by an abnormal protein called a prion that affects the animal's brain. The disease is always fatal, and can spread from one animal to another. Months to years pass from the time an animal is infected to when it shows signs of the disease. There is no known treatment for the disease, and the prions can persist and remain infectious in the environment.

Recent research has demonstrated that long-term CWD infections in wild deer have led to measurable reductions in deer populations.

"We take these actions because our only real opportunity to reduce or eliminate disease is to find it right away," Cornicelli said. "If a disease like CWD becomes established, it will be a problem for future generations."

The DNR's CWD management plan calls for surveillance when risk increases. That risk includes positive domestic animals or when the disease is found in adjacent states.

"Much of the southeast has not been extensively sampled since 2009 and because of the Iowa and Wisconsin infections, it is important to aggressively conduct surveillance," Cornicelli said.

To further reduce the risk of CWD entering Minnesota, whole deer carcasses are no longer allowed to be imported into Minnesota from anywhere in North America. This is a new restriction this year in Minnesota. There are no restrictions on carcass movement for deer harvested in Minnesota and moved within the state.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and other public health agencies have concluded there is no known link between CWD and any neurological disease in humans. However, both the CDC and the World Health Organization recommend that no part of a known positive animal should be consumed by humans. Additionally, there is no evidence that CWD can be naturally transmitted to species other ungulates.

Reminders for hunters, and chances to win

Hunters in the permit areas where sampling is taking place are reminded that they will not be able to register deer by phone or internet during the surveillance period. Deer must be registered in person at a walk-in registration station and hunters are strongly encouraged to allow sampling of their deer.

Deer must be present at the time of registration. When surveillance quotas are met, the electronic system will be turned back on. Hunters will not be notified of individual results, unless their deer is positive. The DNR will release details after deer season that explain overall surveillance results.

CWD sampling only takes a few minutes and is done while the hunter registers their deer. To help encourage samples, Bluffland Whittails Association has donated a compound bow and a muzzleloader and the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association has donated a muzzleloader. Hunters who submit a sample for testing will be entered into a random drawing for one of those items. Also, every hunter who donates a sample will be given a DNR cooperater patch as a small token of appreciation.

DNR staff will be working at 30 sampling sites from 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 5, and Sunday, Nov. 6, and from 9 a.m.-noon, Monday, Nov. 7. A smaller number of stations will be open the second weekend, Saturday, Nov. 12, to Sunday, Nov. 13.

Sampling goals will likely not be met during the opening 3A season that runs from Nov. 5 to Nov. 13, so stations will be staffed during the 3B season, which runs from Saturday, Nov. 19 to Sunday, Nov. 27.

Deer check stations where CWD surveillance is occurring are listed on the DNR website at www.mndnr.gov/cwd, and hunters are encouraged to check the site for new information. They are:

- Bissen's Tavern, 202 S. Third, Brownsville.
- Caledonia True Value, 520 Old Highway Drive, Calendonia.*
- Rhino's Archery, 31821 64th Ave., Cannon Falls.
- Magnum Sports, 21 First St., Chatfield.*
- Elba Valley Express, 1105 S. Main St., Elba.*
- Mauer Brother's Tavern, 1200 S. Main St., Elba.
- Holiday Station Store #3563, 1500 Vermillion St., Hastings.
- Main Street Saloon, 56 Main St., Hokah.
- Houston Amoco Food Shop, Highway 16 E., Houston.*
- Kasson Hardware Hank, 11 Fourth St. SE., Kasson.
- Prairie Bait Shop, 705 Dodge St., Kellogg.
- Pump for Less/Southside Corner, 101 Kistler Drive, La Crescent.
- BP Gas, 100 Sheridan W., Lanesboro.*
- Lewiston Hardware Hank, 400 Debra Drive, Lewiston.
- Mabel BP, MN-44, Mabel.
- Becklund's Auto Repair and Towing, 500 Bridge St., Millville.
- Eagle View Bar and Grill, 208 Bennett Ave., Minneka.
- Greenway Cooperative, 100 North Main St., Pine Island.
- Kreofsky Building Supply, 865 Enterprise Drive SW., Plainview.
- 4 Season's Sport Shop, 2301 W. Main St., Red Wing.*
- Gander Mountain-Rochester, 3470 55th St. NW., Rochester.
- Archery Headquarters, 3440 Northern Valley Place NE., Rochester.
- Rollingstone Mini Mart, 555 MN-248, Rollingston.
- Pam's Corner Convenience, 105 State Highway 16, Rushford.*
- Good Sport Liquor/Bar N Grill, 149 E. Sixth St., St. Charles.
- River Valley Outfitters, 1023 Hiawatha Drive W., Wabasha.
- Mills Fleet Farm, 920 US-61, Winona.*
- Witoka Tavern, 27999 County Road 9, Witoka*.
- Gas and Goodies, 104 E. Front St. Box 155, Wykoff.
- Neptune Bar and Grill, 468 MN-60, Zumbro Falls.

*These stations will be open the entire week of the 3A season.

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NOTICE TO HUNTERS

New MN Chronic Wasting Disease "requirement"—All deer for taxidermy purposes must now have no spine and no brain tissue attached. Head must be skinned off.

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DNR fishing report

Clear Lake

Water temperature is around 58 degrees. The fish cleaning station at McIntosh is closed for the season. The bathrooms at Lynne Lorenson and the Ventura Jetty's are also closed. Anglers without a boat can still find some good wading opportunities in early October for yellow bass and walleyes. Try the McIntosh swim beach, off the North Shore on the edge of the rushes or off Farmer's Beach. Use a jig and piece of cut bait or minnows.

Yellow Bass-Excellent: Try Hy-Vee reef, State Reef, the sandy shoreline near the Ventian Village mouth, McIntosh swim beach, the hump on the little lake out from McIntosh swim beach and the inlet from the Ventura Marsh. Tip a small jig with a minnow or a piece of cut bait and bump it along the bottom.

Walleye-Fair: Some walleyes are being caught near the Ventura grade. Use jigs and a minnow or cut bait in many of the same areas that yellow bass are biting. Boat anglers may find walleyes near the Hy-Vee reef, the edge of the North Shore Reed bed or the island.

Black Crappie-Fair: Anglers have caught some in the Baptist camp area out near 10 contour.

Muskellunge-Good: October is usually a good month for musky fishing.

Yellow Perch-Good: Yellow perch are hitting by the grade on 1/16 ounce black leadheads with a piece of cut bait.

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