



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

REBECCA A. HUMPHRIES
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: February 8, 2010

MEMORANDUM TO THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Subject: Elk Regulations and License Quotas
Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 6 of 2010
FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, authorizes the Director and the Commission to issue orders to manage wild animals in this state.

Discussion and Background:

This amendment establishes the dates and license quotas for the 2010 elk seasons.

Elk Season Dates

Elk Hunt Period 1 is designed to target elk outside the primary elk range before these elk move for the breeding season. This elk hunt period is recommended to be eight days long, consisting of a four day hunt in late August and early September and a four day hunt in mid-September.

Elk are known to move into new areas between the early and late hunts. Elk Hunt Period 2 was added in 2009 to provide additional elk harvest, when elk are still in agricultural areas, while avoiding hunter crowding during Hunt Periods 1 and 3. Allowing a new set of hunters to pursue elk within an additional hunt period should produce higher success rates than providing additional permits during the other periods. This elk hunt period is proposed to be reduced from nine days to five days in length. It is recommended to open on a Saturday in mid-October.

Elk Hunt Period 3 will focus harvest where it is needed within individual Elk Management Units in the core elk range and allow additional harvest outside the core area. The Hunt Period dates are recommended in order to start on a weekend and run through the following weekend.

The recommended dates for Hunt Period 1 are August 31 through September 3 and September 24 through September 27.

The recommended dates for Hunt Period 2 are October 16 through October 20.

The recommended dates for Hunt Period 3 are December 4 through December 12.

There is no recommended change to the dates for Hunt Period 4 in January.

Elk License Quotas

The elk population objective is 800 to 900 animals in the winter herd. Results from the 2010 winter survey indicated the herd was between 592 and 964 with a median estimate of 778. The Department is proposing a decrease in the elk harvest with the intent to maintain elk numbers near the population goal. The opportunity to hold a January harvest if necessary is also desired to address management issues which may remain upon the conclusion of the earlier hunts. The recommended quota of 230 elk licenses, a decrease of 150 licenses from 2009, is designed to achieve a harvest of 160 elk based on past hunter success rates.

The recommendation for Hunt Period 1 is 60 elk licenses; 20 any-elk licenses and 40 antlerless-only elk licenses. In 2009 with 110 licenses, 75 elk were taken during Hunt Period 1.

The recommendation for Hunt Period 2 is 60 elk licenses; 20 any-elk licenses and 40 antlerless-only elk licenses. In 2009 with 110 licenses, 61 elk were taken during Hunt period 2.

For Hunt Period 3, the recommendation is 110 licenses; 35 any-elk licenses and 75 antlerless-only elk licenses. This quota is designed to maintain the harvest pressure on elk in Units B and D, while maintaining elk numbers in Units A, C, and E. It is anticipated that approximately one-half of the harvest will occur in Unit X. In 2010, a total of 160 licenses were available for the December hunt, resulting in a harvest of 121 elk.

The recommended maximum quota for Hunt Period 4 is 50. The Director, in consultation with and concurrence of the Chair or Vice Chair of the Natural Resources Commission, may determine the number and type of licenses available and the elk management units open for Hunt Period 4. Elk Hunt Period 4 was not used in January 2010.

The 2007 Inland Consent Decree authorizes the five 1836 Treaty tribes to issue elk licenses equal to 10 percent of state issued any elk licenses and 10 percent of state issued antlerless licenses, rounded up.

Recommendation:

This order is being submitted for information and consideration. This item appeared on the Department's February 2010 calendar and may be eligible for approval on April 8, 2010.

Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division

Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Recreation Division

Lynne M. Boyd, Chief
Forest Management Division

Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division

Arminda S. Koch
Resource Management Deputy Director

I have analyzed and discussed these recommendations with staff and concur as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

Rebecca A. Humphries
Director

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER

Amendment No. 6 of 2010

By authority conferred on the Natural Resources Commission and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment by sections 40107 and 40113a of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40107 and 324.40113a, it is ordered that effective April 9, 2010, the following section(s) of the Wildlife Conservation Order shall read as follows:

3.1 Elk open season, hunt periods; season limit.

Sec. 3.1. (1) The open season for taking elk shall be those days as specified below for the following hunt periods:

Hunt Period	Open Season
1	September 1 August 31 to September 4 3 and September 14 24 to September 15 27 , in elk management unit "L."
2	October 13 16 to October 24 20 , in elk management unit "L."
3	December 8 4 to December 15 12 , in elk management units "A," "B," "C," "D," "E," and "X."
4	A total of five days beginning on the Wednesday closest to January 15 for four days thereafter, only in elk management unit(s) where additional harvest is deemed necessary to meet elk management objectives.

(2) The season limit shall be one elk per license.

3.8 Elk license quota, hunters restricted to assigned management unit, exception.

Sec. 3.8. (1) The license quotas for elk hunt period 1, as specified in Section 3.1(1), shall be:

(a) Elk management unit L, ~~35~~ **20** any elk licenses and ~~75~~ **40** antlerless elk licenses.

(2) The license quotas for elk hunt period 2, as specified in Section 3.1(1), shall be:

(a) Elk management unit L, ~~35~~ **20** any elk licenses and ~~75~~ **40** antlerless elk licenses.

(3) The license quotas for elk hunt period 3, as specified in Section, 3.1(1) shall be:

(a) Elk management unit A, ~~14~~**10** any elk licenses and ~~27~~**10** antlerless elk licenses.

(b) Elk management unit B, ~~14~~**10** any elk licenses and ~~27~~**30** antlerless elk licenses.

(c) Elk management unit C, ~~4~~**5** any elk licenses and ~~8~~**5** antlerless elk licenses.

(d) Elk management unit D, ~~20~~**10** any elk licenses and ~~34~~**30** antlerless elk licenses.

(e) Elk management unit E, ~~4~~**0** any elk licenses and ~~8~~**0** antlerless elk licenses.

(4) The license quota for elk hunt period 4, as specified in Section 3.1(1), shall be no more than 50. The director, in consultation with and concurrence of the chair or vice chair of the natural resources commission, may determine the number and type of license available and the elk management units, as described in chapter XII, open during this season.

(5) An elk hunter shall hunt in their assigned season and elk management unit except elk hunters assigned to hunt in elk management units A, B, C, D, or E may hunt in elk management unit X.

Issued this 8th day of April, 2010.

Approved as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

Keith J. Charters, Chairman
Natural Resources Commission

Approved as to matters over which the Director has authority.

Rebecca A. Humphries
Director