

2019 Michigan Elk Digest

Application Period: May 1-June 1, 2019

Reminders

- A base license is not required to apply for an elk license
- Mentored Youth Hunters can now apply for a license or chance, see pg. 9
- Drawing results poster June 24 visit Michigan.gov/Elk

RAP (report All Poaching): 800-292-7800

Michigan.gov/Elk

[Graphic: DNR logo]

[Graphic: Celebrating 100 years of Elk in Michigan license plate]

[Graphic: Elk in field looking off in the distance]

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The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State’s natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) is a seven-member public body whose members are appointed by the governor and subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. The NRC has exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game and sportfish. The commission conducts monthly, public meetings in locations throughout Michigan. Citizens are encouraged to become actively involved in these public forums. For more information visit Michigan.gov/NRC.

NOTICE: This brochure is not a legal notice or a complete collection of hunting regulations and laws. It is a condensed digest issued for hunter’s convenience. Copies of Wildlife Conservation Orders, which contain complete listings of regulations and legal descriptions, are available on our website:

Michigan.gov/DNRLaws.

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.

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Stay on top of the latest news from the Michigan DNR. Visit us at Michigan.gov/DNR to sign up for email updates!

[Graphic: Elk in open field looking off in the distance]

Elk Management

Michigan’s elk herd is a wildlife management success story made possible by many individuals and organizations who work to maintain a place for this species. Historically, elk were found in southern Michigan but had disappeared by the late 1800’s due to unregulated harvest and market hunting.

Today's elk herd is a result of seven elk brought from the western United States and relocated to Wolverine, Michigan in 1918. 2018 marked the 100-year celebration of elk in Michigan! The first elk hunts were held in 1964 and 1965 in response to the growing elk population and a desire to control elk numbers. The hunt was a success but was not immediately continued. The first elk management plan was written soon after in 1975 and was a formal acknowledgement that elk were an important resource to the people of the state and set the stage for increasing elk numbers. Elk hunts were cautiously implemented in the 1980s, testing and refining hunting as a tool to control elk numbers and distribution. The update of the Elk Management Plan in 1984, recognized the importance of elk viewing and made elk hunting the preferred method for controlling elk numbers and distribution. The most recent management plan, approved in 2012, has a population goal of 500-900 animals and set a continued focus on:

- Managing a sustainable elk population in balance with habitat
- Use hunting to control elk numbers, herd composition, and distribution
- Enhance the understanding of elk management

[Graphic: Celebrate 100 Years of Elk with an Elk license plate learn more at Michigan.gov/Elk]

Estimating Elk Population

The manner in which elk populations are monitored has changed significantly through time. From the initial release of seven elk in 1918 until the 1960s, estimates were based on track counts, personal observations of elk groups, and information gathered from hunters and local residents. In the 1960s, elk pellet group surveys were used to determine the size and distribution of the herd. While this technique was useful for determining trends, it wasn't a reliable method for estimating population. From 1975 to 2001, the DNR used a combination air and snowmobile survey methods. This survey provided a minimum count. Since 2006, elk populations have been estimated using a fixed-wing airplane and corrected with a sightability model. This technique uses the scientific method and provides population estimates to guide management. The current aerial survey covers over 1,000 square miles and shows the distribution of elk in January. Distribution is also measured in the fall and early winter using location reports from hunters who have seen and harvested elk during the hunt. Biologists compile and assess this information to recommend hunting regulations to the Natural Resources Commission.

[Graphic: Two Bulls running away from a net, used to survey population numbers]

[Graph: Estimated Elk Population compared to the annual harvest for years 1975-2018]

In general, elk seasons during August, September, and October target elk outside of the core elk management area. December hunt periods are used to manage the overall elk numbers including those in the core elk management area. The January hunt is used if the first two earlier season harvests did not meet the management goals. The zone and quota system were designed to focus the harvest in specific areas to address crop damage or forest regeneration issues and also to limit the spread of elk from the elk management area. Elk hunts have occurred annually since 1984. Elk distribution is affected by food availability and changing land use. Young aspen stands are a preferred habitat because of the food provided and other plants found there. The acreage of young aspen available on state land within the elk range changes over time. The projected increase in young aspen in the next 10 years should reduce the potential for forest regeneration issues if the elk population remains stable. Land use

changes can also affect distribution, such as large single owner blocks of private land being divided into smaller ownerships and public land can see changing recreational use.

[Graph: Young Aspen Acres from 1951 to projected 2019 and 2020 numbers]

[Graphic: Bull grazing in an open field]

[Graphic: Hunter with prize elk harvest]

[Graphic: orange lottery ticket with “Pure Michigan Hunt. Enter to win the hunt of a lifetime mi.gov/pmh. Multi-species hunt and prize package valued at over \$4,000. Each application only \$5.”

Written on it

[Graphic: Hey educators! Don’t let your students miss out on Elk University. Register today and get the free curriculum for your high schoolers! Visit Michigan.gov/DNREducation and look for Wildlife

Classroom Curricula. Picture of an Elk calling on a yellow background]

Time Zones A & B: Hunting Hours for Elk ONLY One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset (adjusted for daylight saving time). For hunt dates not listed in the table, please consult your local newspaper.

Zone A Counties

Alpena Presque Isle

Zone B Counties

Antrim Charlevoix Cheboygan Crawford Emmet Montmorency Oscoda Otsego

Hunting Hours 2019-2020

Hunt Period	Date	Time Zone A AM	Time Zone A PM	Time Zone B AM	Time Zone B PM
1	Aug. 27	6:19	8:50	6:23	8:55
1	Aug. 28	6:21	8:48	6:24	8:53
1	Aug. 29	6:22	8:47	6:25	8:52
1	Aug. 30	6:23	8:45	6:26	8:50
1	Sept. 13	6:40	8:18	6:44	8:23
1	Sept. 14	6:41	8:16	6:45	8:21
1	Sept. 15	6:42	8:14	6:46	8:19
1	Sept. 16	6:43	8:12	6:47	8:18
1	Sept. 27	6:57	7:59	7:01	7:56
1	Sept. 28	6:58	7:50	7:02	7:54
1	Sept. 29	6:59	7:48	7:03	7:52
1	Sept. 30	7:00	7:46	7:05	7:50
2	Dec. 14	7:34	5:22	7:41	5:24
2	Dec. 15	7:35	5:22	7:41	5:24
2	Dec. 16	7:36	5:22	7:42	5:25
2	Dec. 17	7:37	5:23	7:43	5:25
2	Dec. 18	7:37	5:23	7:44	5:25
2	Dec. 19	7:38	5:24	7:44	5:26
2	Dec. 20	7:38	5:24	7:45	5:26
2	Dec. 21	7:39	5:25	7:45	5:27
2	Dec. 22	7:40	5:25	7:46	5:27
3	Jan. 15	7:39	5:48	7:45	5:50
3	Jan.16	7:38	5:49	7:44	5:51

3	Jan. 17	7:38	5:50	7:44	5:53
3	Jan. 18	7:37	5:51	7:43	5:54
3	Jan. 19	7:36	5:53	7:42	5:55

Zones are hunting hour zones NOT elk hunting areas. See pg. 10 for the counties within your assigned elk management unit. Hunt times are only for elk hunting and not to be used for other species.

Elk Hunting

2019 Elk Drawing and Weighted Lottery System

Hunters are selected for an elk hunting license using a random weighted drawing system that began in 2003. The pool of applicants is often 100 times greater than the number of licenses issued and only Michigan residents are eligible to apply to hunt. In each license drawing, those who are not selected receive one additional chance for future drawings. Only one additional chance will be awarded in a given year. Chances are reset to zero for all successful applicants, including those who choose not to purchase their license. In addition, those who purchase an elk license are subject to an ineligibility period for future drawings, during which time they are not eligible to apply for an elk license or chance, as explained on page 11. An applicant's total number of entries in a given drawing is equal to his or her current application plus any additional chances earned in previous drawings. For example, a person who applies with three chances (earned in previous drawings) will have a total of four entries in the current drawing. The weighted drawing system provides some advantage to hunters who apply consistently year after year while still offering an opportunity to all applicants, including those applying for the first time. However, there is no guarantee that every hunter will eventually draw an elk license regardless of the number of chances he or she earns. The elk drawing system also ensures that the percentage of hunters selected from a given region (Upper Peninsula, Northern Lower Peninsula (NLP), and Southern Lower Peninsula) equals the percentage of individuals who applied from that region. For example, if 30 percent of all applicants reside in the NLP, 30 percent of selected hunters will be NLP residents. Applicants may apply for an elk license, or for a chance only.

- Chances are tracked by customer ID. To ensure that all of your chances are considered in the drawing, you should apply with the same ID used to apply in previous years. If your ID changes, call 517-284-WILD (9453) before the application deadline to ensure your chances are combined under your current ID.
- You must apply at least once every five years to retain your chances. Elk chances are reset to zero for applicants who do not apply for five consecutive years. Chances reset under the previous three-year rule will not be restored.
- Check your total chances at Michigan.gov/elk.

How to Apply for a Limited-License Hunt

Eligibility You must meet all of the following qualifications to be eligible to apply for an elk license or chance:

1. Be a Michigan resident - this includes qualified military personnel and fulltime students attending a Michigan college or university who reside in the state during the school year.
2. Hunters who are 9 years of age or younger must be licensed under the Mentored Youth Hunting Program prior to applying for an elk license or chance. (note, hunters age 10+ do not need to have hunter safety or be an apprentice before they apply)

3. 3. Have one of the following forms of customer identification: –Valid Michigan driver’s license – State of Michigan ID card (issued by the Secretary of State) –DNR Sportcard (issued through license agents or at mdnr-eligence.com).

Applying for a Hunt The DNR issues two types of elk hunting licenses: (1) Any-elk — valid for taking either a bull or an antlerless elk; (2) Antlerless-only — valid for taking an antlerless elk only.

1. From table below, select your desired application type.

Application Type	Application eligible for Any-Elk License	Applicant eligible for an Antlerless-Only Elk License (If not selected in the Any-Elk license drawing.)
Bull or Antlerless Applicant is willing to harvest a bull or an antlerless elk	Yes	Yes
Bull-Only Applicant is only willing to harvest a bull elk	Yes	No
Chance Only Applicant does not want a 2019 elk license but would like to earn an additional chance for future drawings	No	No

2. Purchase your elk application type at any license agent, DNR Customer Service Center, or online at mdnr-eligence.com. (It is unlawful to apply more than once.) It costs \$5 to apply. A base license is not required for purchase of an elk application. Mentored Youths must be licensed under the Mentored Youth Hunting Program to apply.

IMPORTANT: You are responsible for submitting a valid application and obtaining a DNR receipt that states your correct customer ID and application type. Do not accept a receipt that is not legible. Check the receipt for accuracy and retain as proof that you applied. Ensure any application errors are corrected prior to the application deadline. Applicants who submit an invalid application will be ineligible for the drawing.

- For application assistance, call 517-284-WILD (9453).
- You are responsible for obtaining your drawing results online.
- Drawings results will be posted at Michigan.gov/Elk on June 24

2019 Elk Management Units

For detailed descriptions of elk hunt unit boundaries, go online to Michigan.gov/DNRLaws or contact a DNR Customer Service Center

[Graphic: Northern Lower Peninsula map of counties open to Elk hunting during the August and September Hunts]

[Graphic: Northern Lower Peninsula map of counties open to Elk hunting during the December hunt]

Successful Applicants

Successful elk drawing applicants will be mailed detailed information about their hunt, including assigned hunt period, elk management unit, and type of license (any-elk or antlerless-only). Be sure your mailing address is kept up-to-date with the Secretary of State. Hunt assignments cannot be changed.

Successful applicants must attend a mandatory hunt orientation class the day before their scheduled hunt (see page 12).

[Graphic: Two males and a youth inspecting a successful Bull harvest]

2019 Elk Seasons and License Quotas

Hunt Period	Season Dates	Elk Management Units (Public and Private Land)	Any-Elk License Quota	Antlerless-Only License Quota
1	August 27-Aug 30, Sept 13-16, Sept.27- Sept. 30	L	30	70
2	Dec. 14-22	F,G,X	30	70
3	Jan. 15-19, 2020	This hunt period will be held only if additional harvest is needed to achieve population management goals after hunt periods 1 and 2.	This hunt period will be held only if additional harvest is needed to achieve population management goals after hunt periods 1 and 2.	This hunt period will be held only if additional harvest is needed to achieve population management goals after hunt periods 1 and 2.

Ineligibility Periods for Elk License Recipients

Those who are issued an elk license are subject to an ineligibility period for future elk drawings. This ineligibility period does not apply to Pure Michigan Hunt winners. Individuals who have received an elk license through a prior elk drawing are eligible to apply for the Pure Michigan Hunt.

- A person issued an antlerless-only elk license is ineligible to apply for, obtain, or purchase an elk license or chance for 10 years. For example, those issued an antlerless-only license in 2012 are ineligible from 2013 through 2022.
- A person issued an any-elk license is ineligible to apply for, obtain, or purchase a future elk license for the remainder of his or her life

License Purchase

License Purchase If you are selected in the drawing, you may purchase your elk receipt online at mdnr-eligence.com or from any license agent. • Hunters may purchase their elk receipt only after they have obtained a base license for the year. This does not apply to a hunter with a mentored youth license. • Hunters must purchase their elk receipt prior to the elk hunt orientation class (see below) and bring it to the class. Elk hunting licenses will be issued upon completion of the class.

- Make sure the information on your receipt is accurate.
- Licenses may not be altered or transferred. However, successful applicants may transfer their drawing success to an unsuccessful youth applicant or any person with an advanced illness. See the “Elk Hunt Transfer Program” on page 13 for more information. When hunting, you must carry your elk license and the identification used to purchase that license and present upon demand of a Michigan conservation officer, a tribal conservation officer, or any law enforcement officer.

Required Licenses by Title and Age	Cost for Mentored Youth License	Cost for Junior License	Cost for Resident License	Cost for Senior License
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	Age: Up to 9	Age: 10-16	Age: 17+	Age: 65+
Application for License Drawing	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Base License	N/A Mentored Youth License \$7.50	\$6.00	\$11.00	\$5.00
Elk Receipt	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00

Mandatory Elk Hunt Orientation Class

Successful applicants must attend a half-day training session near the elk hunt area on the day before their scheduled hunt. The location of the sessions will be provided to successful applicants. The training session will cover hunter safety, elk behavior, marksmanship, carcass handling, hunting rules and regulations, hunting tips, and recommended hunt locations. Following the session, hunters will be issued their licenses, along with materials and information to help their efforts afield. Hunting for Michigan elk is challenging. Temperatures range from -20 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Many people walk for long periods over multiple days before having an opportunity to take an elk. Once taken, moving an animal roughly four times the size of a white-tailed deer can be difficult. Preseason scouting is important, as is good marksmanship and knowledge of the animal. Preparation for the hunt will increase the enjoyment of the elk hunting experience.

Elk Hunt Transfer Program

Successful elk drawing applicants may transfer their drawing success to an eligible person they know or donate anonymously to individuals on the DNR transfer waiting list. Eligible individuals include:

- Youth hunters, age 16 and younger, who applied for an elk license and were unsuccessful in the current-year license drawing.
- Any person who has been diagnosed with an advanced illness*. An application for a license in the current-year drawing is not required. Individuals with an advanced illness must complete the Physician Certification of Advanced Illness form to certify their eligibility for a transfer. The form is available at Michigan.gov/HuntTransfers. Eligible individuals can also register for the DNR transfer waiting list to receive a donated elk hunt. Visit Michigan.gov/HuntTransfers for details and registration. Those interested must register online by July 10. Elk chances are reset to zero for transfer recipients. Recipients are also ineligible for a future elk license per the timeframes noted on page 11.

How to Request a Hunt Transfer

Successful applicants who wish to transfer their drawing success must submit a transfer request form. Forms are available at Michigan.gov/HuntTransfers. If a hunt recipient is not named on the form, the hunt will be offered to the next person on the DNR hunt waiting list. Elk chances are reset to zero for all successful applicants, but those who transfer their drawing success remain eligible for a future elk license. It is unlawful for an individual to receive a fee, other consideration, or service of value, either directly or indirectly, for transferring drawing success to another person, or assisting and/or guiding that person in the hunt that has been transferred. * Advanced Illness is a medical condition that must be diagnosed and certified by a physician. Advanced Illness is defined by the Public Health Code, Act 368 of 1978 [MCL - 333.5653]. See www.legislature.michigan.gov.

[Graphic: Bull against a tree line looking out into a field]

Mentored Youth Hunting (MYH) Program

The MYH program allows youth hunters 9 years of age and younger to hunt with a mentor who is at least 21 years of age, has hunting experience, and possesses a valid Michigan license to hunt other than an apprentice license. The mentored youth license is a “package” license to hunt small game including waterfowl, turkey (spring and fall), deer, trap furbearers, and fish for all species. It also allows the ability to apply for or purchase additional licenses including antlerless deer, bear, elk, and fall turkey.

Additional restrictions apply; complete program details can be found in the Michigan Hunting Digest, or online at Mi.gov/MentoredHunting.

Apprentice Hunting License

A person who does not have a hunter safety certificate and is 10 years of age or older may purchase a base apprentice hunting license. An apprentice hunter may purchase this license for two license years before he or she must successfully complete a hunter safety course. The base apprentice hunting license is available to residents and nonresidents. When afield, an apprentice hunter must be accompanied by someone 21 years of age or older who possesses a regular current-year hunting license for the same game as the apprentice. For apprentices 10-16 years of age, the accompanying hunter must be the apprentice’s parent, guardian, or someone designated by the parent or guardian. “Accompanied by” requires the accompanying hunter to be able to come to the immediate aid of the apprentice and stay within a distance that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and verbal contact. For hunting elk, the accompanying hunter needs a 2019 elk hunting license, but it does not have to be for the same management unit or season dates as the apprentice. A person may accompany no more than two apprentice hunters while hunting.

Elevated Platforms

Elk hunters may use elevated platforms, tree stands, or ground blinds on public lands in the elk management unit for which they are licensed. Elevated platforms, tree stands, or ground blinds may be placed from August 15 through five days after the close of the elk season or if successful, five days after harvesting an elk. The name and address, Michigan driver’s license, or DNR sportcard number must be affixed to the elevated platform, tree stand, or ground blind in legible English that can be easily read from the ground. Hunting platforms cannot be affixed or attached to any tree by nails, screws or bolts; however, a “T” bolt or similar device supplied by a tree stand manufacturer can be used.

Equipment Used to Take Elk

All firearms, crossbows, and bows that are legal for hunting deer in Michigan are also legal for elk hunting, except the use of buckshot is not allowed. Please refer to the current years Hunting Digest for specifications. It is unlawful to assist a tribal member engaged in treaty-authorized hunting unless the non-tribal member assisting: (1) has a state license for that activity and complies with all state laws including season dates covering that activity, or (2) is the spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild or sibling of the tribal member who is present during the activity, and as long as such assistance by the family member does not include using a firearm, crossbow or bow.

General Information

Precaution about Lead in Wild Game

Elk that are shot with rifle bullets containing lead, particularly copper-jacketed and hollow-point bullets, can have particles of lead remaining in the meat, some too small to be seen or felt. Lead can be harmful

to humans and wildlife, even in very low amounts. If you have questions about the health effects of lead exposure from lead fragments, call the DNR Wildlife Disease Lab at 517-336-5030 and/or look through the information on the DNR website at Michigan.gov/WDM. You may also contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800-648-6942 or visit Michigan.gov/MDHHS

Commercial Hunting Guides on State-Land

All commercial hunting guides using state-owned lands must receive written authorization. Guides are required to meet the conditions of the written authorization. If you are a guide who utilizes state-owned lands, visit the DNR website at Michigan.gov/WildlifePermits or contact Casey Reitz at ReitzC@Michigan.gov or 517-284-6210 for more information. Commercial guiding on National Forest (NF) lands requires a federal special use permit. Applications can be obtained through any NF office or by calling - Hiawatha NF: 906-428-5800; Huron-Manistee NF: 231-775-5023; or Ottawa NF: 906-932-1330.

Support Sportsmen Against Hunger

The Department of Natural Resources encourages hunters to support the effort to provide processed wild game meat to local families in need. You can help in one of two simple ways. First, tell your license agent that you would like to make a cash donation when you purchase your hunting license. Second, consider donating a portion of your processed game (donations can be accepted only if the processing is done by a licensed processor). For more information, call 517-853-3663 or go online to sportsmenagainsthunger.org.

Need Information?

Contact a DNR office listed below or visit us online. Customer Service Centers (CSC) are open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Baraga CSC 427 US-41 North Baraga, MI 49908 906-353-6651

Bay City CSC 3580 State Park Drive Bay City, MI 48706 989-684-9141

Cadillac CSC 8015 Mackinaw Trail Cadillac, MI 49601 231-775-9727

Crystal Falls Field Office 1420 W. US-2 Crystal Falls, MI 49920 906-875-6622

Detroit Metro CSC 1801 Atwater St. Detroit, MI 48207 313-396-6890

Escanaba CSC 6833 US-2 41 & M-35 Gladstone, MI 49837 906-786-2351

Gaylord CSC 1732 W. M-32 Gaylord, MI 49735 989-732-3541

Lansing CSC 4166 Legacy Parkway Lansing, MI 48911 517-284-4720

Marquette CSC 1990 US-41 South Marquette, MI 49855 906-228-6561

Naubinway Field Office PO Box 287 W11569 US 2E. Naubinway, MI 49762 906-477-6048

Newberry CSC 5100 M-123 Newberry, MI 49868 906-293-5131

Norway Field Office 520 W. US-Hwy 2 Norway, MI 49870 906-563-9247

Plainwell CSC 621 N. 10th St. Plainwell, MI 49080 269-685-6851

Roscommon CSC I-75 & M-18 South, 8717 N. Roscommon Rd. Roscommon, MI 48653 989-275-5151

Sault Ste. Marie Field Office PO Box 798 2001 Ashmun Sault St. Marie, MI 49783 906-635-6161

Traverse City CSC 2122 South M-37 Traverse City, MI 49685 231-922-5280

Helpful URLs

Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/michigandnr Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/mdnr_wildlife
Hunter Education: Michigan.gov/HunterEducation

Direct DNR website URLs: Hunting: Michigan.gov/Hunting Trapping/Fur Harvesting:
Michigan.gov/Trapping Pure Michigan Hunt: Michigan.gov/PureMichiganHunt DNR Digests and Guides:
Michigan.gov/DNRDigests Mi-HUNT: Michigan.gov/MiHunt Explore Michigan's Wetland Wonders:
Michigan.gov/WetlandWonders Invasive Species: Michigan.gov/InvasiveSpecies Shooting Ranges:
Michigan.gov/ShootingRanges Emerging Diseases: Michigan.gov/EmergingDiseases
Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division 525 W. Allegan Street P.O. Box 30444
Lansing, MI 48933 517-284-WILD (9453)