

2020



**MONTANA FISH,
WILDLIFE & PARKS**

Bison

Montana Hunting Regulations



Regulations Adopted by F&W Commission

Regulations for season dates, structures, and restrictions were adopted by the F&W Commission on February 13, 2020, under the authority granted in MCA 87-1-301 and are valid March 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021. The F&W Commission reserves the authority to amend the seasons, limits and regulations herein if deemed necessary for wildlife management purposes. Statutes and other information, including other agencies' restrictions, are provided as a courtesy and do not fall under commission authority. Martha Williams, Director. Discrimination Prohibited – State and Federal laws, Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or disability. Anyone believing he or she has been discriminated against (as described above) in any FWP program, activity, or facility may write to FWP Human Resources, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701 or the office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Obtain a License

- A hunter may hold only one bison license.
- Bison licenses are allotted through a random drawing.
- Hunters must have applied for a bison license by May 1, 2020.
- Successful either-sex bison license applicants:
 - will receive a letter with instructions to view online bison hunter orientation.
 - hunters wishing to use **archery** equipment **MUST** also complete a mandatory archery orientation outlined in the letter sent to successful either-sex applicants.
- Potential second choice hunters will only be contacted in the event of the hunt roster being implemented. Up to 200 second choice state-issued licenses **MAY** be incrementally awarded depending upon bison migration into individual hunting districts. The bison hunt roster is primarily used to issue cow/calf only licenses during the general season, depending on migration. It can also be used for bison damage or management hunts for bull, cow, or calf at any time as needed. All bison second choice applicants are given a roster number. Applicants can visit MyFWP at fwp.mt.gov to see their position on the roster. To check the status of the hunt and to see whether the hunt roster has been implemented, please call the bison hotline at 406-577-7889 during the hunt periods.

License cost:	Resident	Nonresident
Conservation 12-17 & 62+ years	\$4	\$10
Conservation 18-61 years	\$8	\$10
Base Hunting License	\$10	\$15
Bison Application Nonrefundable Fee	\$10	\$50
Bison License	\$125	\$1250

Bison License Quota

- Nonresidents are limited to, but not guaranteed, 10 percent of the hunting district's license quota.
- In addition to the 85 either-sex State-issued licenses and the potential 200 second choice state-issued licenses, Tribal treaty bison hunting may occur concurrently with state bison hunting.
- Hunting is restricted to individuals with licenses issued via a drawing process similar to that employed for other special licenses issued by FWP or as designated by Tribal authority. All licenses are non-transferable.

Laws and Rules

- Statute denoted by **MCA**.
- Commission Rule denoted by **CR**

Aircraft- Unlawful Use (MCA 87-6-208)

- It is unlawful for a person to shoot a game animal from an aircraft.
- It is unlawful for a person to use an aircraft for the purpose of concentrating, pursuing, driving, rallying, or stirring up any game animal.
- Aircraft may not be used to locate game animals for the purpose of
 - Hunting those animals during the same hunting day after a person has been airborne or
 - Providing information for another person for the purpose of hunting those animals within the same hunting day after being airborne.

Artificial Light (MCA 87-6-401)

It is unlawful for anyone to take or attempt to take any game animal or game bird with the aid of projected artificial light. Use of rifle scopes that project an artificial light to illuminate the target or project infra-red light visible only with specialized optics to illuminate the target are unlawful for the taking of game animals.

Baiting (MCA 87-6-401, CR)

- It is unlawful for anyone to hunt or attempt to hunt by the aid of or with the use of any bait, salt lick, trap, snare or set gun.
- Baiting shall mean the placing, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering of food sources or salt so as to constitute a lure or attraction.

Bison Specific Regulations

- To protect public safety and minimize traffic obstructions, no bison hunting is allowed within 100 yards of US HWYs 20, 89, 191, or 287.
- Hunting on national forest lands must follow restrictions in USFS order 36 CFR 261.10 (d) (firearm discharges are prohibited within 150 yards of residence, building, campsite, developed recreation site, or occupied area or across a forest service road or body of water).
- Hunting shall be only by foot or horseback.
- Hunters who harvest a bison shall, upon field dressing the carcass, cut open the rumen and remove and spread its vegetative contents.
- Hunters who harvest a bison near a roadway or any other facility shall remove all unutilized parts of the carcass (entrails, tissues, bones, hides, fetuses, legs, etc.) to an area at least 200 yards from any roadway, dwelling, campground, designated trail or trailhead. These unutilized parts shall be placed in a manner as to be inconspicuous to passersby.
- Bison hunt information is available by calling 1-406-577-7889.

Check Stations (MCA 87-6-218)

All hunters are required by law to stop as directed at all designated check stations on their way to and from hunting areas, even if they have no game to be checked.

Dogs (MCA 87-6-404)

It is unlawful for a person to use dogs to chase game animals. Dogs may be utilized to recover or locate wounded game animals, but handlers shall maintain physical control of the dog at all times by means of a maximum 50-foot lead attached to the dog's collar or harness.

Evidence of Sex (MCA 87-6-406)

A person who kills a game animal in this state shall retain evidence of sex of the animal with the carcass until it is processed. The provisions of this section do not apply to a game animal harvested using a license with which either sex of the animal may be taken. Evidence of sex does not need to be naturally attached. A person who kills a game animal in a hunting district where the harvest is limited by the animal's antler point or horn size shall retain the antlers or horns until the carcass is processed.

Firearms

- The only means of taking allowed are center-fire rifles and/or archery equipment. Crossbows and muzzleloading black powder rifles are not permitted.

- Rifles are restricted to center-fire, 150 grain or larger bullet.
- Hunters wishing to harvest bison with archery equipment must complete the mandatory archery orientation course at: fwp.mt.gov

Glandular Scents (CR)

- Natural or artificial glandular scents may be used by licensed hunters to attract game animals by spraying or pouring the scent on the ground or other objects. **Exception:** Natural or artificial glandular scents may not be used to hunt black bears.
- Hunters may not create a scent station where the scent continues to be dispensed without the hunter's direct action, such as an automatic device, which drips or otherwise continues to dispense scent.
- No scents other than glandular may be used for attracting game animals, but other scents may be used to mask human odor.

Hunter Harassment (MCA 87-6-215)

It is unlawful to:

- Intentionally interfere with the lawful taking of a wild animal.
- Disturb an individual engaged in the lawful taking of a wild animal with intent to prevent the taking of the animal.

Hunter Orange Requirement (MCA 87-6-414)

Firearm Hunters

Any person hunting or accompanying a hunter as an outfitter or guide must wear a minimum of 400 square inches of hunter orange (fluorescent) material above the waist, visible at all times (see the following exception).

Archery Hunters

A licensed bowhunter pursuing deer, elk and/or antelope during the Archery Only Season or in an archery only hunting district is not required to meet the hunter orange requirement, even if there is a concurrent firearm season in that hunting district or portion of district. However, bowhunters hunting during any portion of the general (firearm) season for deer, elk, antelope, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, black bear, and/or mountain lion must always wear a minimum of 400 square inches of hunter orange (fluorescent) above the waist, visible at all times.

Hunting Hours (CR)

Authorized hunting hours for the taking of game animals begin one-half hour before sunrise and end one-half hour after sunset each day of the hunting season. See the official Sunrise-Sunset Tables listed on page 135.

Incidental Harvest Resulting in an Unlawfully Taken Animal

If you or a member of your hunting party shoots an animal that results in an unlawfully taken animal, you should notify an FWP game warden or 1-800-TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668) immediately and follow their instructions.

> Hunters should field dress the animal but DO NOT transport the animal until you've received instructions.

Inspection by Warden (MCA 87-1-502, 87-6-218)

Game animals, game and nongame birds, fish, and furbearers taken must be shown to FWP Enforcement personnel for inspection when requested.

Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact (IWVC)

Montana is a member of the IWVC. Under the compact, member states recognize suspensions of hunting, fishing or trapping privileges. It is unlawful for a violator whose privilege to hunt, fish or trap is suspended to obtain or attempt to obtain a license, tag or permit in a member state. For more information, call 406-444-2452.

Kill Site Verification (ARM 12.6.1005)

At the request of a Department Game Warden, it is required to return to the kill site of any game animal, game bird, wolf, or furbearer that has been hunted or trapped.

Landowner Permission (MCA 87-6-415)

A resident or nonresident shall obtain permission of the landowner, the lessee, or their agents before taking or attempting to take furbearing animals, game animals, migratory game birds, nongame wildlife, predatory animals, upland game birds, or wolves while hunting on private property.

- Even if the land is not posted, hunters must have permission from the land owner, lessee, or their agent before hunting on private property, regardless of whether the land is posted or not.

- Access to public land through private land requires permission of the private land owner, lessee, or their agent.
- Retrieval of all wildlife through private land requires permission of the private landowner, lessee, or their agent.

License and Permit Possession/Use (MCA 87-6-304)

It is unlawful to:

- Hunt or attempt to hunt for any game animal unless the person is carrying the required license or permit at the time.
- Refuse to produce a license or permit and the identification used in purchasing a license or permit for inspection to a game warden.
- Alter or change a license in any material manner.
- Loan or transfer any license to another person.
- Use a license issued to another person.
- Attach the person's license to a game animal killed by another person.
- Have physical control over a valid and unused hunting license or permit issued to another person while in any location that the species to be hunted may inhabit. This prohibition does not apply to a person who is carrying or has physical control over a license or permit issued to that person's spouse or to any minor when the spouse or minor is hunting with that person.

License Validation/Tagging (MCA 87-6-411)

- A hunter must cut out the proper month and day of the kill from the appropriate license and attach it to the animal before the carcass is removed from the site of the kill, or before the hunter leaves the site of the kill.
- To properly validate a license (sometimes referred to as a tag):
 - The triangles denoting the month and day the animal was killed must be completely cut out and removed.
 - The properly validated license must remain with the meat (including cold storage) until consumed.

Littering (MCA 75-10-212)

A holder of a Montana resident or nonresident hunting license or camping permit convicted of littering campgrounds, public or private lands, streams, or lakes, while hunting, fishing, or camping shall forfeit any current Montana hunting, fishing, or trapping license and the privilege to hunt, fish, camp, or trap in Montana for a period of one year.

Marked or Radio-Collared Animals (CR)

It is lawful to shoot game animals that have radio collars, neck bands, ear tags and/or other markers, but markers and radio collars must be returned to FWP. Please report the killing of a marked animal to the local FWP office.

Motion-Tracking Devices (MCA 87-6-401)

It is unlawful for a person, while hunting, to possess any electronic motion-tracking device or mechanism that is designed to track the motion of a game animal and relay information on the animal's movement to the hunter.

Motion tracking devices are defined by F&W Commission as remote operated camera or video devices capable of transmitting real time information, pictures or videos; seismic devices; thermal imaging devices; and satellite and radio telemetry devices.

A radio-tracking collar attached to a dog that is used by a hunter engaged in lawful hunting activities is not considered an unlawful motion-tracking device.

Motorized Vehicles (MCA 87-6-405)

It is unlawful for anyone to:

- hunt or attempt to hunt any game animal from any self propelled (motorized) or drawn vehicle. To be lawful, a hunter must have two feet on the ground and his/her body outside of the vehicle. Holders of the Permit To Hunt From A Vehicle are the exception to this.
- use a motorized vehicle or aircraft to concentrate, drive, rally, stir-up, corral, or harass game animals.
- use a motor-driven vehicle on a road or trail on state land if that road or trail is posted as closed by the land management agency. This restriction applies only to state land and not to federal land. For more information related to state school trust lands, see page 29.
- use a motor-driven vehicle other than on a road or trail designated for travel by a landowner unless permission has been given by that landowner.

Off Road- Federal lands (CR)

- operate, on federal public lands, a motorized wheeled vehicle off legal routes (including game retrieval). All Federally approved travel plans on public lands in Montana have been adopted by the F&W Commission. Contact the appropriate land management agencies for travel plan information.

Boats (MCA 87-6-207)

- use a powerboat, sailboat, or any boat under sail or any floating device towed by a powerboat, sailboat, or any boat under sail for the purpose of killing, capturing, taking, pursuing, concentrating, driving, or stirring up any game animal.

Off-Highway Vehicles (including ATV, UTV and dirt bikes)

Residents (MCA 23-2-804, 23-2-111) – OHVs must be registered with the county treasurer and display a current off-highway permanent registration decal to be used for off-road recreation on public lands (trails, frozen lakes, reservoirs). To be used on roads (county, Forest Service, etc.), an OHV must be registered with the county treasurer and display a license plate and street-legal modifications. Resident hunters utilizing “summer motorized recreation trails” must also purchase a summer motorized recreation trail pass (decal) at a cost of \$20, valid for 2 years and expires on December 31 of the second calendar year. All decals must be affixed in a conspicuous place on the OHV.

Nonresidents (MCA 23-2-814) – OHVs that are owned by a nonresident may not be operated by a person anywhere in Montana unless a nonresident temporary-use permit is obtained. North Dakota residents are exempt. Permits are good for one calendar year, cost \$35 and can be purchased from local vendors (stateparks.mt.gov/recreation/ohvProgram.html, OHV Permits and Laws), at FWP offices or online at app.mt.gov/als. Contact Montana State Parks OHV Program at 406-444-3750.

Outfitters and Guides (MCA 37-47-301)

A person may not act as an outfitter or guide or advertise or otherwise represent to the public that the person is an outfitter or guide without first securing a license.

- It is unlawful to engage in outfitting/guiding while not licensed.
- It is unlawful to hire an outfitter or guide not licensed by the Department of Labor and Industry. For information, call 406-841-2300.

Possession of Wildlife Parts (MCA 87-6-202, 87-3-315, 87-3-145, and ARM 12.3.186)

Individuals may possess, transport, sell, or purchase naturally shed antlers, or the antlers with a skull or portion of a skull attached from animals that have died from natural causes and that have not been unlawfully killed. Carcasses and parts of elk, deer, antelope and moose killed in vehicular collisions may be taken and possessed but only with a Vehicle-Killed Wildlife Salvage Permit. No other game animals may be salvaged by this permit. A person may recover and possess the horn or horns and attached skull, or portion thereof, of a mountain sheep that died of natural causes and was not purposefully or accidentally killed, captured, or taken, including due to being struck by a vehicle. Horns and skulls recovered must be reported to the department within 48 hours and presented to the department for inspection and placement of a permanent pin in a horn within 10 days. The fee for the pin is \$25. Horns and skulls found in state parks may not be recovered or possessed.

Public Roadways (MCA 87-6-403)

It is unlawful for anyone to hunt or attempt to hunt any game animal on, from, or across any public highway or the shoulder, berm, barrow pit or right-of-way of any public highway (the entire width between the boundary lines of every publicly maintained way when any part thereof is open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel).

Recorded Animal Sounds (MCA 87-6-401)

It is unlawful to use any recorded or electrically amplified bird or animal calls or sounds or imitations of bird or animal calls or sounds to assist in the hunting, taking, killing or capturing of any wildlife except predatory animals, wolves, and those birds not protected by state or federal law.

Restitution for Unlawfully Taken Wildlife (MCA 87-6-906, CR)

Under Montana law, a person convicted, or who was charged and forfeited bond or bail, of unlawfully killing, taking, or possessing game animals shall reimburse the state.

Sale of Game Animals (MCA 87-6-206)

A person may not purposely or knowingly sell, purchase, or exchange all or part of any game fish, bird, game animals, or fur-bearing animals, except that a person may sell, purchase, or exchange:

- Hides, heads, or mounts of game fish, birds, game animals, or fur-bearing animals that have been lawfully killed, captured, or taken, except that the sale or purchase of a hide, head, or mount of a grizzly bear is prohibited, except as provided by federal law.
- Naturally shed antlers or the antlers with a skull or portion of a skull attached from a game animal that has died from natural causes and that has not been unlawfully killed, captured, or taken or accidentally killed; for additional exceptions, see 87-6-206 MCA. Sale of meat is not allowed.

Simulated Wildlife (MCA 87-6-217)

It is unlawful to discharge a firearm or other hunting implement at a simulated wildlife decoy in violation of any state statute, ARM, or F&W Commission rule regulating the hunting of the wildlife being simulated.

Transport of Wildlife

- An individual other than the license holder may transport lawfully taken, properly tagged game animals that comply with the “Evidence of Sex Requirements.”
- It is unlawful to ship, possess, transport, or take out of state unlawfully killed game animals.
- It is a violation of the Federal Lacey Act to transport an unlawfully taken game animal across state boundaries.
- If you are transporting lawfully taken wildlife (including parts and/or products of live or dead animals) between the United States and any foreign country, you must complete a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service declaration form. For further information, contact the USFWS wildlife inspector at 406-335-4350 or www.fws.gov.
- Questions concerning carcass transport may be directed to FWP Enforcement at 406-444-2452 or to your home state’s wildlife division.

Traps (MCA 87-6-601)

It is unlawful to destroy, disturb, or remove any trap or snare belonging to another person or remove wildlife from a trap or snare belonging to another person.

Two-way Communication (ARM 12.6.1010)

The use of two-way electronic communication is prohibited:

- While in the act of hunting game animals or wolves to aid in the taking or locating of live animals.
- While in the act of hunting mountain lion or bobcats with dogs, beginning when the dogs are placed or physically released on tracks or a scent trail.
- To avoid game check stations or FWP enforcement personnel.
- To facilitate unlawful hunting activity.

The use of two-way electronic communication for the use of safety or other legitimate purposes is exempt.

Two-way electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, the following; radios (walkie-talkies/CB), cell phones, text messages, and the use of social media or other electronic platforms, applications, or programs.

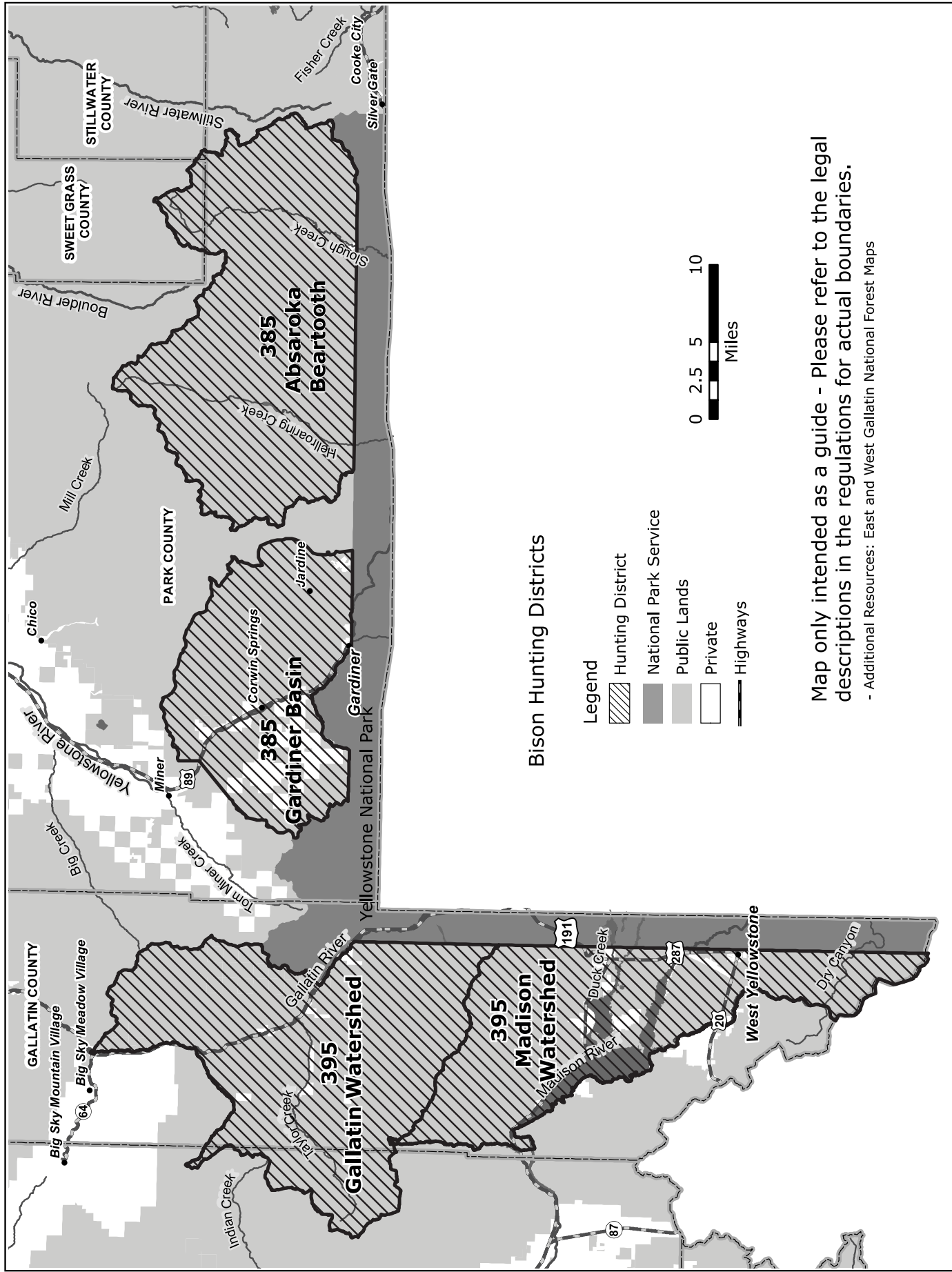
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles UAV (CR)

It is unlawful for a person to use an UAV/drone for the purposes of concentrating, pursuing, driving, rallying, or stirring up any game animal. A UAV/drone may not be used to locate game animals for the purposes of: hunting those animals during the same hunting day after a UAV/drone has been airborne, or providing information for another person for the purposes of; hunting those animals within the same hunting day after the UAV/drone has been airborne. UAVs/drones are not allowed to film a hunt.

Waste of Game (MCA 87-6-205)

- Hunters, or persons in possession of a game animal or game animal parts, are prohibited from wasting or rendering unfit for human consumption, any part of a game animal that is defined as “suitable for food.”
- For game animals (excluding mountain lions), all of the four quarters above the hock, including loin and backstrap, are considered suitable for food.

2020 Bison Hunting District Map



Map only intended as a guide - Please refer to the legal descriptions in the regulations for actual boundaries.

- Additional Resources: East and West Gallatin National Forest Maps

Bison Regulations

Mandatory Reporting: Successful bison hunters must report their harvested bison within 48 hours by calling 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) or 406-444-0356.

LPT	Number of Licenses	Season Dates	Opportunity	Opportunity specific details and/or restrictions
HD 385 Gardiner Basin Portion AND Absaroka Beartooth Portion (wilderness north of Yellowstone National Park including the upper portions of the Hellroaring and Slough Creek drainages).				
NOTE: The Absaroka-Beartooth portion is a very remote wilderness accessible only by foot or horse. Retrieving a harvested bison will present an extraordinary challenge. A mature bull bison can weigh 2,000 pounds and yield 800 pounds of meat. Hunters must be prepared to pack out this amount of meat, as well as the head and hide if desired, and to care for the meat properly in order to avoid spoilage. It is not recommended that hunters attempt this hunt without a string of pack-animals capable of this task and several additional people to assist with processing the harvested animal.				
385-20	40 Licenses	Nov 15 - Feb 15	Either Sex	
385-21	5 Licenses	Sep 15 - Nov 14	Either Sex	Only valid in the Absaroka Beartooth portion of the HD. This is a wilderness backcountry hunt.
385-77	Bison Hunt Roster	Nov 15 - Feb 15	Opportunity will vary based on need	Second Choice only license. A bison hunter list will be created from a random drawing of all second choice applicants for HD 385. Hunters may or may not be activated based upon bison presence. A list will be developed from these choices in the sequence drawn and may be used to issue either a bison cow or calf license during the general bison season, depending on migration, or bison damage/management hunts as needed.

HD 395 Madison Watershed Portion AND Gallatin Watershed Portion.

NOTE: The Gallatin Watershed Portion of Bison HD 395 is CLOSED TO HUNTING. See map, legal descriptions and hunting closures in the legal descriptions in these regulations.

395-20	40 Licenses	Nov 15 - Feb 15	Either Sex	
395-77	Bison Hunt Roster	Nov 15 - Feb 15	Opportunity will vary based on need	Second Choice only license. A bison hunter list will be created from a random drawing of all second choice applicants for HD 395. Hunters may or may not be activated based upon bison presence. A list will be developed from these choices in the sequence drawn and may be used to issue either a bison cow or calf license during the general bison season, depending on migration, or bison damage/management hunts as needed.

Common Sense Precautions When Field-Dressing Big Game

- To minimize risk of disease or parasite transmission to humans, follow these proper ways to handle wild meat:
 - Consider every bison to be potentially infected. The results of blood tests show that about 50 percent of the bison are exposed to brucellosis.
 - Always wear protective gloves when dressing carcasses or handling viscera.
 - Minimize contact with animal fluids, brain and spinal tissues.
 - Avoid contact with milk or material from the reproductive tract.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth until you have scrubbed after handling the animal.
 - Individuals with open sores or cuts on their hands should be especially careful.
 - Discard organ meats.
 - Wash hands and instruments thoroughly after field dressing or processing.
- To minimize risk of disease or parasite transmission to your domestic dog, prevent consumption of big game viscera.

Information and Recommendations

- Bison can achieve a live weight of up to 2,000 pounds, and can be very difficult for the average person to field dress alone. Participants should bring several people with them, or hire an outfitter to assist with the field dressing and handling of their bison. If participants plan to field dress and load their own animal, axes, knives, saws, and block and tackle may be necessary.
- Due to the bison's immense size and thick hide, palatable meat may spoil quickly without immediate and proper care. It is recommended that bison be skinned and quartered within five hours of the kill. The hide should not be left on the bison overnight, even if it is hanging.

Brucellosis

- Bison in Yellowstone National Park carry bacteria that cause a disease known as brucellosis or Bang's disease. Brucellosis in Yellowstone National Park bison is one of the primary reasons that attempts are being made to control bison in Montana.
- Brucellosis in bison is caused by a bacterium that can also infect humans. In humans, brucellosis is called undulant fever. Symptoms include intermittent fever, chills, night sweats, body aches, poor appetite and weakness. If undulant fever is treated early, it is fairly easy to cure. However, if the disease reaches a chronic stage, treatment is difficult.
- In bison, the bacteria is concentrated in the lymph nodes, reproductive organs and the udder. Cooking destroys bacteria that may be present in the meat. Thus, when thoroughly cooked, the meat is safe to eat.

Hunter Access

Hunters, it is your responsibility to know where you are, to know who owns the land, and to know what access restrictions apply. Check FWP's website at fwp.mt.gov/hunting/hunterAccess for information on FWP's Block Management Program.

Bison Specific Lands Information

- Hunting is allowed on public land. State-licensed hunting is also allowed on private land with landowner permission.
- Hunting is subject to emergency closure in the event it becomes necessary to allow for hazing under the Interagency Bison Management Plan.
- Closure area to protect eagle-nesting sites on National Forest System Lands on Horse Butte Peninsula as posted from Dec. 1 to Aug. 15.

Federal Land Access

- National Parks Service: National Parks are closed to hunting. For other lands administered by the National Park Service, please contact the specific site managers for additional information.
- National Wildlife Refuges - More restrictive regulations, including species specific restrictions and closures, may apply to national wildlife refuges open to public hunting. Contact the specific refuge and/or visit fws.gov/refuges for additional information.
- U.S. Forest Service: Area-specific closures or restrictions may apply. Inquire at the appropriate Regional Forest Service Office.
- Bureau of Land Management: Area-specific closures or restrictions may apply. Inquire at the appropriate BLM Field Office.
- Other federal lands: Area-specific closures or restrictions may apply. Inquire at the local federal land management agency office.

Unlawful Posting of State or Federal Land (MCA 45-8-115) It is unlawful for a person to knowingly post land that is under the ownership or control of the state or federal government to restrict access or use of state or federal land.

Private Lands- See landowner permission.

State School Trust Lands

- A Conservation License provides hunters, anglers and trappers access to lawfully accessible State School Trust lands.
- Overnight (2-night) camping is allowed within 200 feet of a lawful access point.
- Motorized travel is only allowed on public roads or on roads designated as open.
- Firearms may not be discharged within one-quarter mile of inhabited dwellings or outbuildings on state trust lands without permission of the inhabitant.
- Game retrieval is by foot or horse only.
- No open fires are allowed except in designated campground fire pits.
- Additional information is available from FWP, or contact DNRC at (406) 444-2074.

Bison Hunt Legal Descriptions

The following areas are open to bison hunting for the 2020 season.

Restricted Area: No hunting within the city limits of West Yellowstone, no hunting within the fenced boundary of the West Yellowstone airport and closure area to protect eagle-nesting sites on National Forest System Lands on Horse Butte Peninsula as posted from Dec. 1 to Aug. 15.

HUNTING DISTRICT 385:

Gardiner Basin Portion - Beginning at the boundary intersection of Yellowstone National Park and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness just east of Gardiner, then northerly and westerly along said Wilderness boundary to USFS Trail #64 near the Bear Creek campground, then northerly along said trail to the intersection with USFS Trail #62, then northwesterly along USFS Trail #62 to the watershed divide east of Monitor Peak, then northwesterly along the watershed divide over Monitor Peak to Red Mountain, then southwesterly along the watershed divide to Dome Mountain, then southwesterly in a direct line to the bison-resistant cattle guard across U.S. HWY 89 in Yankee Jim Canyon, then southerly in a direct line to crest of watershed divide between Sphinx Creek and Tom Miner Creek Basin, then southerly along the watershed divide over Black Mountain to the boundary of Yellowstone National Park at Shooting Star Mountain, then generally east along the Yellowstone National Park boundary to the boundary intersection of Yellowstone National Park and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness just east of Gardiner, the point of beginning.

NOTE: Gardiner Hunting Closure - Closed to all hunting; Beginning at the Junction of U.S. Hwy 89 and Little Trail Creek, then up Little Trail Creek to the posted line (approx. 1/2 mile above U.S. Hwy 89), then southeasterly along said line to the Travertine-Trail Creek Road, then easterly along said road to its intersection with the Gardiner-Jardine Road, then northeasterly along said road to Eagle Creek, then southerly down said creek to the Yellowstone National Park boundary, then westerly along said boundary to the intersection with Stevens Creek, then northeasterly in a straight line to the intersection with U.S. Hwy 89, then northwesterly along said highway to the junction of Little Trail Creek, the point of beginning.

AND

Absaroka Beartooth Portion - (wilderness north of Yellowstone National Park including the upper portions of the Hellroaring and Slough Creek drainages) - The entire Hellroaring, Buffalo Fork, and Slough Creek drainages north of Yellowstone National Park.

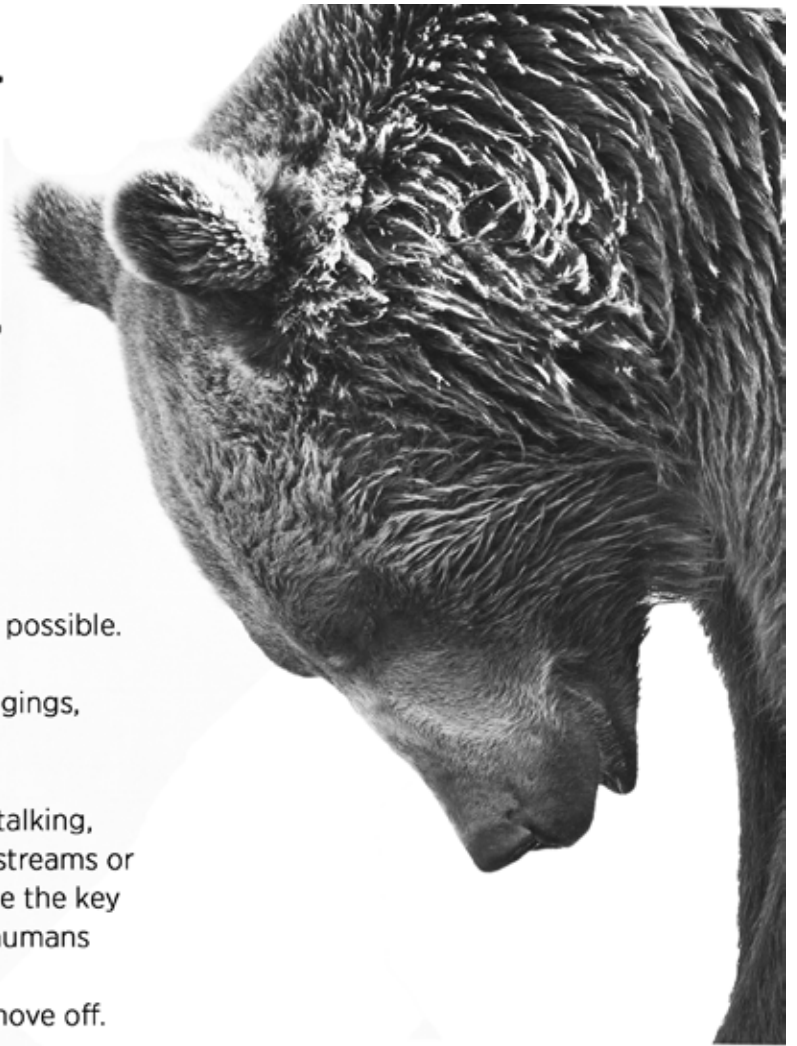
HUNTING DISTRICT 395:

Gallatin Watershed Portion - Closed to hunting; Those portions of Gallatin and Madison Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the intersection of Buck Creek and the Gallatin River, then up Buck Creek to the Madison-Gallatin Rivers divide, then south and east along said divide to the Yellowstone National Park boundary, then northerly along said boundary to its intersection with the Gallatin-Yellowstone Rivers divide, then in a northerly direction along said divide to Eaglehead Mountain, then in a westerly and northerly direction along the Portal Creek-Porcupine Creek divide and along the Porcupine Creek-Levenski Creek divide to the Gallatin River near the mouth of the West Fork of the Gallatin River, then southerly up the Gallatin River to Buck Creek, the point of beginning.

AND

Madison Watershed Portion - Those portions of Gallatin County lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning where the western boundary of Yellowstone National Park intersects the Montana-Idaho border, then northerly along the Yellowstone National Park boundary to the Gallatin-Madison Rivers watershed divide, then northwesterly along said divide to the headwaters of Beaver Creek, then south along Beaver Creek to its confluence with Earthquake Lake, then along the south shore of Quake Lake and Hebgen Lake to the South Fork of the Madison River, then southerly and easterly along the west shore of said river to Forest Road 478, then southwest along Forest Road 478 to Reas Pass at the border of Idaho, then south and east along the Montana-Idaho border to the point of the beginning.

HOW TO HUNT SAFELY IN Bear Country



Tips on how to prepare for safe outings.

- Inquire about recent bear activity in the area.
- Carry and know how to use bear spray.
- Let someone know your plans and time frame.
- Travel in groups of three or more people when possible.
- Stay on trails or rural roads.
- Watch for signs of bears such as bear scat, diggings, torn-up logs and turned over rocks, and partly consumed animal carcasses.
- Make your presence known by making noise - talking, singing, carrying a bell - especially when near streams or in thick forest where visibility is low. This can be the key to avoiding encounters. Most bears will avoid humans when they know humans are present.
- Don't approach a bear; respect its space and move off.

Hunters

Bears have expanded to areas where they previously may not have not been. They can now be found throughout Western and Central Montana.

Be aware that the act of hunting puts you at risk of encountering bears and that elk bugling, game calls and cover scents may attract bears.

When hunting, the golden rule is "get the elk or deer out of the area as quickly as possible." The longer a carcass remains lying on the ground, hung up in hunting camp, or in the back of a truck, the more likely it will be discovered by a bear. The sooner elk and deer are taken home the better.

If you must leave the carcass, hang it, in pieces if necessary, at least 10' above the ground. Leave the carcass where you can see it from a distance, and when you return, observe the carcass with binoculars before approaching. If a bear has claimed the carcass, leave the area and report the incident to the proper authorities. It's not worth risking your safety or the bear's safety.

Bears are opportunists and change their behavior in order to take advantage of new food sources. So if you are hunting always assume that bears are in the area and make sure your camps, cabins and homes are bear proof, and that bear attractants are unavailable or contained.



2020 Sunrise-Sunset Tables for Determining Hunting Hours

These tables, including adjustments for daylight savings time, are the official sunrise-sunset tables adopted by the Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission for hunting in Montana. Authorized hunting hours for the taking of bison begin one-half hour before sunrise and end one-half hour after sunset each day of the hunting season. **(Do not use other sources).**

ZONE 2

INCLUDES: Beaverhead, Broadwater, Cascade, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Glacier, Hill, Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, Liberty, Madison, Meagher, Park, Pondera, Powell, Silver Bow, Teton and Toole Counties.

Day	Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb	
	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.
01	6:49	8:06	7:28	7:07	7:11	5:12	7:52	4:42	8:12	4:52	7:51	5:33
02	6:50	8:04	7:29	7:05	7:12	5:10	7:54	4:42	8:12	4:53	7:50	5:34
03	6:51	8:02	7:30	7:03	7:14	5:09	7:55	4:42	8:12	4:54	7:49	5:36
04	6:53	8:00	7:32	7:01	7:15	5:08	7:56	4:41	8:12	4:55	7:48	5:37
05	6:54	7:58	7:33	6:59	7:17	5:06	7:57	4:41	8:12	4:56	7:46	5:39
06	6:55	7:56	7:34	6:57	7:18	5:05	7:58	4:41	8:12	4:57	7:45	5:40
07	6:57	7:54	7:36	6:55	7:20	5:04	7:59	4:41	8:11	4:58	7:43	5:42
08	6:58	7:52	7:37	6:53	7:21	5:02	8:00	4:41	8:11	4:59	7:42	5:43
09	6:59	7:50	7:38	6:51	7:22	5:01	8:01	4:41	8:11	5:00	7:40	5:45
10	7:00	7:48	7:40	6:49	7:24	5:00	8:02	4:41	8:10	5:02	7:39	5:46
11	7:02	7:46	7:41	6:48	7:25	4:59	8:03	4:41	8:10	5:03	7:37	5:48
12	7:03	7:44	7:42	6:46	7:27	4:57	8:04	4:41	8:09	5:04	7:36	5:49
13	7:04	7:42	7:44	6:44	7:28	4:56	8:04	4:41	8:09	5:05	7:34	5:51
14	7:05	7:40	7:45	6:42	7:30	4:55	8:05	4:41	8:08	5:07	7:33	5:52
15	7:07	7:38	7:47	6:40	7:31	4:54	8:06	4:41	8:08	5:08	7:31	5:54
16	7:08	7:36	7:48	6:38	7:33	4:53	8:07	4:41	8:07	5:09	7:30	5:55
17	7:09	7:34	7:49	6:37	7:34	4:52	8:07	4:42	8:06	5:11	7:28	5:57
18	7:11	7:32	7:51	6:35	7:35	4:51	8:08	4:42	8:06	5:12	7:26	5:58
19	7:12	7:30	7:52	6:33	7:37	4:50	8:09	4:43	8:05	5:13	7:25	6:00
20	7:13	7:28	7:54	6:31	7:38	4:49	8:09	4:43	8:04	5:15	7:23	6:01
21	7:14	7:26	7:55	6:30	7:40	4:48	8:10	4:44	8:03	5:16	7:21	6:03
22	7:16	7:24	7:56	6:28	7:41	4:48	8:10	4:44	8:02	5:18	7:19	6:04
23	7:17	7:22	7:58	6:26	7:42	4:47	8:11	4:45	8:01	5:19	7:18	6:06
24	7:18	7:20	7:59	6:24	7:44	4:46	8:11	4:45	8:00	5:21	7:16	6:07
25	7:20	7:19	8:01	6:23	7:45	4:45	8:11	4:46	7:59	5:22	7:14	6:09
26	7:21	7:17	8:02	6:21	7:46	4:45	8:12	4:47	7:58	5:24	7:12	6:10
27	7:22	7:15	8:04	6:20	7:47	4:44	8:12	4:47	7:57	5:25	7:10	6:12
28	7:24	7:13	8:05	6:18	7:49	4:44	8:12	4:48	7:56	5:27	7:09	6:13
29	7:25	7:11	8:06	6:16	7:50	4:43	8:12	4:49	7:55	5:28		
30	7:26	7:09	8:08	6:15	7:51	4:43	8:12	4:50	7:54	5:30		
31			8:09	6:13			8:12	4:51	7:53	5:31		

Bison Hunt Information

1-406-577-7889

Mandatory Harvest Reporting

1-877-FWP-WILD

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Contacts

Bison hunt information is available by calling 1-406-577-7889.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks State Headquarters

1420 East 6th Avenue, PO Box 200701,
Helena, MT 59620-0701 406-444-2535

Harvest Reporting1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) or 406-444-0356

Hunter Education 406-444-9948
Wildlife Division 406-444-2612
Enforcement Division 406-444-2452
Parks Division (Montana State Parks) 406-444-3750
Special drawings 406-444-2950
Licensing 406-444-2535
Hearing Impaired (use Montana Relay)...7-1-1 or 1-800-253-4091

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS



REGION 4
4600 Giant Springs Rd
Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 454-5840

LEWISTOWN Area Res Office (LARO)
333 Airport Rd, Ste. 1
Lewistown, MT 59457
(406) 538-4658

REGION 1
490 N Meridian Rd
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 752-5501

REGION 2
3201 Spurgin Rd
Missoula, MT 59804
(406) 542-5500

REGION 3
1400 South 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718
(406) 577-7900

HELENA Area Res Office (HARO)
930 Custer Ave W
Helena, MT 59620
(406) 495-3260

REGION 5
2300 Lake Elmo Dr
Billings, MT 59105
(406) 247-2940

REGION 6
1 Airport Rd
Glasgow, MT 59230
(406) 228-3700

HAVRE Area Res Office (HVARO)
2165 Hwy 2 E
Havre, MT 59501
(406) 265-6177

BUTTE Area Res Office (BARO)
1820 Meadowlark Ln
Butte, MT 59701
(406) 494-1953

REGION 7
352 I-94 Business Loop
PO Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301
(406)234-0900

CONTACTS OUTSIDE FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Montana State Agencies

Agriculture
406-444-3144
Guides & Outfitters
406-841-2300
Livestock
406-444-7323
State Lands (DNRC)
406-444-2074
Tourism
406-841-2870

Federal Agencies

US Department of Interior
202-208-3100
US Fish & Wildlife Service
406-449-5225
US Forest Service
406-329-3511
Bureau of Land Management
406-896-5000
National Weather Service
406-329-4840 (Missoula)

Land Maps

Bureau of Land Management
406-896-5000
Topographical (USGS)
888-275-8747

Tribal Governments

Blackfeet Reservation
406-338-7276
Crow Reservation
406-638-2179
Flathead Reservation
406-883-2888
ext 7200 or 7273
Fort Belknap
406-353-2205
Fort Peck Reservation
406-768-5305
Northern Cheyenne Reservation
406-477-6526
Rocky Boy Reservation
406-395-4207