

Ohio Wildlife Council to Consider New Deer Muzzleloader Season, Extended Hunting Hours and Bag Limit Proposals

FEB 7

COLUMBUS, OH – An October antlerless-only white-tailed deer muzzleloader hunting season, extended hunting hours and new bag limits were proposed to the Ohio Wildlife Council on Wednesday, Feb. 6, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR).

The proposed antlerless-only muzzleloader hunting season would be Oct. 12-13 and scheduled for the second weekend of October in subsequent years. The proposal includes making the October muzzleloader season for antlerless deer only, regardless of the method of take, and eliminating both the bonus gun weekend in December and the early muzzleloader season at three public hunting areas (Salt Fork Wildlife Area, Shawnee State Forest and Wildcat Hollow).

Hunting hours are proposed to be extended 30 minutes past sunset for all deer firearms seasons, including the weeklong deer-gun season, youth season and muzzleloader seasons. This will make the hours the same as archery season.

County bag limits are proposed to replace deer zones. Proposed bag limits will be two, three or four deer, determined by county. The proposed statewide bag limit is nine deer with additional controlled hunt opportunities, which do not count against the statewide bag limit. The nine deer bag limit is reduced from last season's 18 deer limit.

It is also proposed that antlerless permits will only be valid until the Sunday before the deer-gun season. Urban deer zones would be eliminated. Hunters may harvest only one buck in Ohio, regardless of the method of take or location.

Proposed deer bag limits, from the following counties combined:

- **One either-sex permit, one antlerless permit (eight counties):** Darke, Erie, Fayette, Hancock, Madison, Ottawa, Sandusky and Wood.
- **Two either-sex permits, one antlerless permit (23 counties):** Auglaize, Butler, Champaign, Clark, Gallia, Harrison, Henry, Hocking, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Logan, Meigs, Mercer, Miami, Monroe, Montgomery, Perry, Preble, Ross, Shelby, Van Wert and Washington.
- **Three either-sex permits, one antlerless permit (57 counties):** Adams, Allen, Ashland, Ashtabula, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Carroll, Clermont, Clinton, Columbiana, Coshocton, Crawford, Cuyahoga, Defiance, Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Fulton, Geauga, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Hardin, Highland, Holmes, Huron, Knox, Lake, Licking, Lorain, Lucas, Mahoning, Marion, Medina, Morgan, Morrow, Muskingum, Noble, Paulding, Pickaway, Pike, Portage, Putnam, Richland, Scioto, Seneca, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Tuscarawas, Union, Vinton, Warren, Wayne, Williams and Wyandot.

Proposed seasons for 2013-2014:

- **Deer archery:** Sept. 28, 2013 - Feb. 2, 2014.
- **Deer antlerless muzzleloader:** Oct. 12-13, 2013.
- **Youth deer gun:** Nov. 16-17, 2013.
- **Deer gun:** Dec. 2-8, 2013.
- **Deer muzzleloader:** Jan. 4-7, 2014.

The start of fall turkey hunting season is proposed to be moved to the Monday following the antlerless deer muzzleloader season. The proposed fall turkey hunting season is Oct. 14 - Dec. 1, 2013. Butler, Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Hamilton, Huron, Seneca and Warren counties are proposed to be added to the existing list of counties open for fall turkey hunting, which would bring the total to 56 counties.

Deer and fall wild turkey permits would go on sale June 1, instead of March 1.

Changes in hunting regulations are proposed by ODNR Division of Wildlife biologists and wildlife management staff. These proposed changes, if approved by the Ohio Wildlife Council, will take effect for the 2013-2014 hunting seasons. Open houses will be held statewide March 2 for public input on the proposals, and public comments are welcome online at wildohio.com. After receiving public input, the Ohio Wildlife Council will vote at its April 17 meeting.