



ZONE D3

2017 General Deer Hunting Information (Includes Additional Hunts G-7, G-12, J-8, J-9, and J16)

GENERAL INFORMATION

This information sheet has been prepared to assist deer hunters applying for, or planning to hunt in, Zone D-3 located in portions of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, Sutter and Yuba counties. The following information should be useful to hunters for archery and general seasons as well as any “additional hunts” within this geographic area. For more specific information or additional questions regarding this area, contact the following Department office(s):

- **North Central Region Office (Region 2), 1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 (916-358-2900)** encompassing Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Lake, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, northeastern Sacramento, eastern San Joaquin, Sierra, Sutter, northern Yolo and Yuba counties.

REGULATIONS

Laws and regulations are designed to conserve wildlife and to provide for an equitable distribution of game mammals. All hunters should read and be familiar with the current hunting regulations available online at: www.fgc.ca.gov/regulations/current/mammalregs.aspx. Remember, if you are hunting on private property you must obtain, and have in your possession written permission to hunt on private property. Hunter trespass laws are strictly enforced.

NONLEAD RESTRICTIONS

Following reports that the ingestion of lead projectiles and fragments associated with hunting may be contributing to high lead levels documented in wild condors, the Legislature passed the Ridley-Tree Condor Preservation Act into law (Fish and Game Code, Section 3004.5). Effective July 1, 2008, the Fish and Game Commission (FGC) adopted regulations (Sections 353 and 475, Title 14, CCR) which prohibit the use and possession of any lead projectiles/ammunition in firearms while taking, or attempting to take (hunting) any big game mammal (including deer), or non-game bird or mammal in most of the deer A Zone-South Unit 110 and all of deer zones D-7, D-8, D-9, D-10, D-11 and D-13.

Only FGC/Department certified projectiles/ammunition may be used or possessed when taking, or attempting to take big game mammals. Simply put, when hunting big game in these areas you may only use certified nonlead projectiles/ammunition in firearms (includes centerfire rifles, pistols and revolvers; shotguns and muzzle-loading rifles) legal for big game. In addition, while hunting big game in these areas hunters may not possess any lead projectiles/ammunition and a firearm capable of firing that lead projectile or ammunition.

In April 2015, the Fish and Game Commission adopted CDFW's proposed regulations, which will implement the nonlead requirement in the following three phases:



NONLEAD AMMUNITION IMPLEMENTATION



- **Phase 1** – Effective July 1, 2015, nonlead ammunition will be required when taking Nelson bighorn sheep and all wildlife on CDFW lands.
- **Phase 2** – Effective July 1, 2016, nonlead shot will be required when taking upland game birds with a shotgun, except for dove, quail, snipe, and any game birds taken on licensed game bird clubs. In addition, nonlead shot will be required when using a shotgun to take resident small game mammals, furbearing mammals, nongame mammals, nongame birds, and any wildlife for depredation purposes.
- **Phase 3** – Effective July 1, 2019, nonlead ammunition will be required when taking any wildlife with a firearm anywhere in California.

Existing restrictions on the use of lead ammunition in the California condor range remain in effect while implementation proceeds.

For more information including a list of certified non-lead projectiles/ammunition that may be used in firearms for the taking of deer or other big game mammals; a map detailing the non-lead area; and links to other related topics go to the following web address: www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Nonlead-Ammunition

DEER HARVEST REPORTING

USED AND UNUSED TAGS MUST BE REPORTED

Accurate harvest information is a crucial element in developing population estimates, tag quotas, assessment of current hunt programs, and in the development of new opportunities. Regulations require all deer hunters to submit a harvest report card (online or by mail) to CDFW. Any deer hunter who does not submit a harvest report for each deer tag issued will be required to pay a non-reporting fee upon application for the next hunt season.

Successful hunters are reminded to immediately fill out both portions of the tag and permanently mark the date of kill; record the appropriate "Unit Number" where the deer was killed; attach the tag to the antlers, or ear, if antlerless; have the tag validated and countersigned; and return the completed report card portion.

WHEN TO REPORT

Successful deer hunters must report the take of a deer within 30 days of harvest or by January 31 – whichever date is first. Unsuccessful deer hunters (including hunters that received a tag but did not hunt) must report that they were unsuccessful or did not hunt by January 31.

HOW TO SUBMIT A REPORT

- Online – Both successful and unsuccessful hunters are encouraged to submit their harvest reports online. Hunters will be able to report their hunt results online via CDFW's Online License Service at www.wildlife.ca.gov/tagreporting. Hunters logging into the system will be able to view all of their tags requiring reports. Reporting through the Online License Service is easy, fast and convenient. When you report online, you receive instant confirmation that your harvest report card has been received and accepted. You must record the confirmation number in the space provided on the harvest report card and retain the harvest report card until March 1 of that year. Tags reported online must be surrendered to CDFW upon demand.
- By Mail – Any deer tag holder who does not submit a harvest report for their deer tag online, must return the report card portion to CDFW to the following address: CDFW – Wildlife Branch, PO Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94299-0002.

ADDITIONAL DEER HUNTS

There are five additional hunt opportunities within Zone D-3: 1) G-7 (Beale Either-Sex Deer Hunt; military only); 2) G-12 (Gray Lodge Shotgun Either-Sex Deer Hunt); 3) J-8 (Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area Apprentice Either-Sex Deer Hunt); 4) J-9 (Little Dry Creek Apprentice Shotgun Either-Sex Deer Hunt); and 5) J-16 (Bucks Mountain/Nevada City Apprentice Either-Sex Deer Hunt). For general maps detailing the individual hunt area boundaries, go to the following link: www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Deer#54774-zones--hunts

OBTAINING DEER TAGS

Beginning in late 2010, CDFW began implementation of the new Automated License Data System (ALDS). Under this computer data system, all licenses, stamps and tags are applied for, and issued through online Point-of-Sale terminals (IPOS) located at various CDFW license offices, over 1,400 license agents statewide or online at www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing. Under ALDS much less paperwork is required to apply for, and receive tags. In addition, licenses, tags and entry into the Big Game Drawing can all be accomplished with one trip to a license agent. Once your personal information is entered and stored in the database, the database controls and tracks what you have applied for, or been issued, as well as preference points. For more specific information on ALDS, application procedures and zone/hunt information, check out the current Big Game Hunting Digest available at most CDFW offices and license agents or online at: www.wildlife.ca.gov/Publications/Hunting-Digest.

For deer tag distribution purposes, zones and hunts are classified based upon the date in which the zone or hunt tag quota is filled in the prior year. The three tag categories include:

- 1) "**Premium**" zone/hunt tags are only issued through the Big Game Drawing using a First-Deer Tag Drawing Application, except that junior hunters may use their Second-Deer Tag Drawing Application to apply for Apprentice (J) Hunts. Hunters will lose all accumulated deer preference points if drawn for their first choice in the Big Game Drawing.;
- 2) "**Restricted**" zone/hunt tags are available upon application with a First-Deer Tag, or a Second-Deer Tag after August 1.; and
- 3) "**Unrestricted**" zone/hunt tags are available at any time using either a First- or Second-Deer Tag.

For Zone D-3 and associated hunts within the zone, the tag categories are as follows:

- 1) **Premium** Deer Hunts – **G12, J8, J9 and J16**
- 2) **Restricted** Deer Hunts – None
- 3) **Unrestricted** Deer Hunts – **D3-5 and Archery Only (AO)**

Note: Additional Hunt G-7 tags are distributed by the military and are only available to military personnel.

The deer hunting regulations specific to Zone D-3 (archery and general season) and any additional hunts are listed at the end of this sheet. To hunt deer in Zone D-3, hunters must possess a Zone D3-5 deer tag which is valid in Zone D-3, D-4 or D-5 during the archery or general season using the appropriate method of take. Additionally, Archery Only Tags (AO Tags) are valid during the Zone D-3 archery or general season using archery equipment only.

Typically, tags for additional deer hunts are in high demand and distributed through CDFW's Big Game Drawing held in June. To receive tags for many of these hunts, hunters must plan ahead and apply before the midnight **June 2, 2017 deadline**. Information regarding application procedures and restrictions, ALDS, zone and hunt seasons, prior year drawing and hunt statistics are contained in the 2017 Big Game Hunting Digest available at most CDFW offices, license agents and online at: www.wildlife.ca.gov/Publications/Hunting-Digest

HARVEST INFORMATION

Information on deer harvest for this area is available in tables contained on the Department's Deer Harvest Data page available on-line www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Deer#5477272-harvest-statistics. For the purpose of applying for hunts in a specific area, tables containing harvest success, antler class information, and Big Game Drawing statistics are the most useful in selecting a zone or hunt in which to apply. The harvest tables found on this web page may also contain more recent harvest analyses than information contained in the Big Game Hunting Digest due to the early production deadline dates for the publication.

LAND OWNERSHIP/PUBLIC LAND OPPORTUNITIES

Zone D-3 contains a mixture of both public and private lands however most of the public land is in the eastern portion of the zone. Remember you must obtain and have in your possession written permission to hunt on private property. Hunter trespass laws are strictly enforced. Public lands within the zone are administered by the Plumas and Tahoe National Forests (USFS). For information regarding these lands contact the following:

USFS Offices:

Plumas National Forest, 159 Lawrence Street, Quincy, CA 95971-6025 (530-283-2050)

Tahoe National Forest, 631 Coyote St., P.O. Box 6003, Nevada City CA 95959 (530-265-4531)

There are some public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in the western portion of the zone, but access is extremely limited. Hunting is also allowed on Spenceville and Daugherty Hill Wildlife Areas, administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. For more information and maps of these areas contact the Sacramento Valley and Central Sierra Region Office, 1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 (916-358-2900).

In Zone D-3 and other zones throughout California, additional deer hunting opportunities may exist on private property licensed through the Department's Private Lands Management Program (PLM). For more information on the PLM and to obtain a list of participating ranches, go to the following link: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/PLM>

MAPS

For general maps detailing individual zone or additional deer hunt boundaries, go to the following Department web page: www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Deer#54774-zones--hunts

The most comprehensive maps of the area are the Plumas and Tahoe National Forest maps. USFS maps are available locally at most USFS offices; by contacting the USFS Pacific Southwest Regional Office at: 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592 (707-562-8737); or ordered by phone (406-329-3024), fax (406-329-3030), or mail at USDA Forest Service, National Forest Store, P.O. Box 8268, Missoula, MT 59807; or on-line at: www.nationalforestmapstore.com/Default.asp

BLM surface management maps may also be useful. These maps can be purchased at local BLM district offices; the BLM at 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1834, Sacramento, CA 95825 (916-978-4400); or order on-line at: www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/iac/maps_pubroom

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps are very helpful, especially for topographic features that are not displayed on USFS or BLM maps. USGS maps may be available from many sporting goods, backpacking or engineering stores; by contacting the USGS directly at: Rocky Mountain Mapping Center, Branch of Information Services, Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225 (888-ASK-USGS); or on-line at: [store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/b2c/start/\(xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd\)/.do](http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/b2c/start/(xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd)/.do)

ACCESS/MAJOR ROADS

Major highways include Highway 70 on the north, Highway 80 on the south, Highway 20 and Highway 49. Access to the Bullards Bar Reservoir area is via Highway 49 or, from Marysville, via Highway 20 to Marysville Road.

WEATHER CONDITIONS/TRAVEL TIPS

The weather in this zone can be highly variable, so BE PREPARED. The weather is usually quite hot and dry during archery and early general season, but early storms are not uncommon. The chance for significant snowfall increases throughout the season, but heavy rains can make many roads very difficult, if not impossible, to travel. You should be prepared with appropriate clothing and equipment for a variety of weather conditions.

Zone D-3 covers a large geographic area. The terrain can be very steep and rugged and vegetation can be extremely dense. As you should do in all remote areas, hunters are urged to bring a shovel, a good spare tire, extra water, etc. Use care with any off-road vehicle and check with the BLM or USFS for rules and regulations regarding vehicle and travel restrictions in the area. Horses can be useful in some portions of D-3. However, remember that it may be necessary to carry supplemental horse feed into the back country. Contact the local USFS and BLM office for more information regarding forage conditions for livestock.

CAMPING

There are several USFS campgrounds within the hunt zone and these are shown on USFS maps. Informal camping is allowed on both USFS and BLM lands, but campfire permits are required. Permits may be obtained from any USFS, BLM or California Department of Forestry (CDF) office. During fire season, special regulations may apply and it is best to contact the local USFS, BLM or CDF office for the latest information.

Please, DO NOT camp or hunt for prolonged periods near water sources important to wildlife and livestock. Remaining for over 30 minutes and within 200 yards of an artificial water source including guzzlers or horizontal wells on public lands within California is a Fish and Game violation (Title 14, Section 730). You can pack water, wildlife can't.

HERD CONDITIONS AND HABITATS

The deer population in Zone D-3 is considered stable to declining, yet considerably below levels seen in the late 1960's and 1970's. As with most deer herds in California and other western states, the long-term population trend has been on a steady decline since the 1960's and 1970's. These long-term declines have been due to land management practices that have precluded fire, resulting in changes toward more mature and less diverse habitats, and reduced quality and quantity of deer habitats. Short-term fluctuations in deer populations are usually attributed to weather events that affect forage production.

The subspecies of deer inhabiting Zone D-3 include both Columbian black-tailed deer and California mule deer. The deer are generally considered migratory however resident deer occur at lower elevations. Deer in this area move to higher elevations in late spring and will remain there until the first heavy fall storms force them down below the snow line. This downward movement often occurs during the hunting season, so hunters should be prepared to move to lower areas later in the season after stormy weather.

The vegetation is highly varied throughout Zone D-3 ranging from oak-woodland, mixed and montane chaparral, hardwood, hardwood-conifer, aspen and dense conifer to alpine habitats. Generally speaking, deer populations in this area respond favorably to vegetation disturbances that enhance brush species (wildfire and timber harvesting). Brush stands comprised of buckbrush, deerbrush and bitter cherry are good areas to hunt. Riparian areas (areas along watercourses), recently burned areas or clear cuts that have re-sprouted with brush are good areas to hunt. Areas where oaks are producing acorns may also attract deer. Typically, lower densities of deer are observed in the more densely forested areas or in older, more decadent brushlands.

HUNTING TIPS AND WHERE TO LOOK FOR DEER

Successful hunters often spend a considerable amount of time scouting pre-season, locating individual or groups of deer, recently used deer trails, and feeding and bedding areas. You may not see many deer from the roads in this area and generally the more successful hunters do more hiking to locate deer. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes can be very helpful for locating and identifying deer at greater distances. In general, attempt to hunt areas that are away from other activities such as concentrations of hunters, vehicles, and/or livestock.

Historically, some of the more popular and productive deer hunting areas in Zone D-3 include:

Butte County: Feather Falls area: This is largely winter range and hunting is best during the latter portion of the season. Specific areas include: Fields Ridge, southeast of Feather Falls; Sunset Hill, Camp 18 and Watkins Ridge.

Brush Creek area: This is largely winter range and hunting is best during the latter portion of the season. Specific areas include: Merrimac and Coyote Gap.

Mooreville Ridge Road/Sly Creek Reservoir: Migratory deer are generally present in mid-October.

Nevada County: Specific areas include: Bowman Lake, Grouse Ridge and Red Mountain. Migratory deer can still be found at these high elevations early to mid-season.

Plumas County: La Porte area: Access is via the La Porte Road from Marysville. Hunting has been poor for several years, but areas around Little Grass Valley Reservoir, Camel Peak, Stag Point and Onion Valley have historically been better areas.

Bucks Lake area: Access is via the Quincy-Oroville Highway. Specific areas include the area between Bucks Lake and the Middle Fork of the Feather River, Bear Creek and Willow Creek.

Eureka Ridge area: Access is from Highway 70 at Sloat and Highway 89 at Graeagle. Specific areas include White Cap and Big Hill.

Sierra County: Haypress Meadows, Jackson Meadows Reservoir: Access is via the Jackson Meadows Highway from Highway 89. Best hunting in this area is early in the season.

Lakes Basin, Sierra Buttes: Access is via the Gold Lake Road from Highways 89 and 49. In good years, hunting success is favorable throughout the season. Late in the season, deer migrate to the west down Pig and Hog Canyons.

Yuba County: Challenge/Peterson Ridge Road/Pike County Peak Lookout area: Migratory deer are generally present in mid-October. Several thousand acres of USFS and private timber company land east of Oregon Hill Road and west of Bullards Bar Reservoir.

North of Bullards Bar Reservoir: Migratory deer are generally present in mid-October. Several thousand acres of USFS and private timber company land mixed with a few private ranches. Specific areas include: Strawberry Valley/Slate Creek (south of La Porte Road), Pendola Road, Garden Valley Road, McClain Roads. Access is from Highway 49 near Camptonville.

Bullards Bar Reservoir: Migratory deer are generally present in mid-October. Boats can be launched from ramps located along Marysville Road. Best areas to hunt are the black oak groves along the north arm of the lake.

Spenceville Wildlife Area: Resident deer are present throughout the year. Migratory deer generally do not arrive until late October. Access from Wheatland is via Spenceville Road to Camp Far West Road to Long Ravine Road. Access from Marysville/Grass Valley is via Highway 20 to Smartville Road.

Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area: Resident deer are present throughout the year. Migratory deer generally do not arrive until late October. Access from Marysville/Grass Valley is via Highway 20 to Marysville Road to the parking lot on Dolan Harding Road. Local camping facilities are available at the Collins Lake Recreation Area (530-692-1600).

For additional information about deer hunting in California, see CDFW's publication "Guide to Hunting Deer in California" at the following web site, under "Related Information":

www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Deer

**** **GOOD LUCK!** ****