



## ZONE D6

### 2017 General Deer Hunting Information (Includes Additional Hunts G-37, J-15 and A-21)

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

This information sheet has been prepared to assist deer hunters applying for, or planning to hunt in, Zone D-6 located in portions of Alpine, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus and Tuolumne 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):

- **Central Region Office (Region 4), 1234 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno, CA 93710 (559-243-4005 ext. 151)** encompassing Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Stanislaus, Tulare and Tuolumne 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](http://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](http://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](http://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 three additional hunt opportunities within Zone D-6: 1) G-37 (Anderson Flat Buck Hunt); 2) J-15 (Anderson Flat Apprentice Buck Hunt); and 3) A-21 (Anderson Flat Archery Buck Hunt). For general maps detailing the individual hunt area boundaries, go to the following link:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Deer#54774-zones--hunts](http://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](http://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](http://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-6 and associated hunts within the zone, the tag categories are as follows:

- 1) **Premium** Deer Hunts – **D6, G37, J15 and A21**
- 2) **Restricted** Deer Hunts – **None**

### 3) Unrestricted Deer Hunts – Archery Only (AO)

The deer hunting regulations specific to Zone D-6 (archery and general season) and any additional hunts are listed at the end of this sheet. To hunt deer in Zone D-6, hunters must possess a Zone D6 deer tag which is valid during the archery or general season using the appropriate method of take. Additionally, Archery Only Tags (AO Tags) are valid during the Zone D-6 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](http://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](http://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-6 contains a mixture of both public and private lands. 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 Zone D-6 are administered by the Sierra and Stanislaus National Forests (USFS), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). For information regarding these lands contact the following:

### USFS Offices:

Sierra National Forest, 1600 Tollhouse Road, Clovis Ca 93611 (559-297-0706)  
Stanislaus National Forest, 19777 Greenley Rd., Sonora, CA 95370 (209-532-3671)

### BLM Offices:

Mother Lode Field Office, 5152 Hillsdale Circle, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762; (916-941-3101)

Wilderness lands have been established within two portions of the Stanislaus National Forests. The Carson-Iceberg Wilderness lies north of Highway 108 and the Emigrant Wilderness is south of the Highway 108 corridor. These wilderness areas are accessible by hiking and by pack stock. Public use of the wilderness is regulated by permit. Wilderness Permits may be obtained by contacting the Stanislaus National Forest, Summit Ranger District office at: #1 Pinecrest Lake Road; Pinecrest, CA 95364 (209-965-3434).

Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) also owns large blocks of land within the Stanislaus National Forest in zone D-6. Much of SPI land is behind locked gates; however SPI allows public hunting on their property. Access to their land is by foot only and no written permit is required. No camping or fires are allowed on SPI property. Remember you are a guest on SPI land, please carry out all refuse, be fire safe and respect their property.

In Zone D-6 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>

**Reminder:** Lands within Yosemite National Park and State Game Refuge 1-R are closed to hunting. Hunters should be aware of State Game Refuge 1-R, located between the North and Middle Forks of the Stanislaus River. This area is well-defined on the Stanislaus National Forest map and is also well posted. Please note that there are travel restrictions through the Game Refuge for hunters transporting hunting weapons (See Fish and Game Code Section 10506).

## 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](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Deer#54774-zones--hunts)

The most comprehensive maps of the area are the 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); 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](http://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](http://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

Access to most public lands within Zone D-6 is very good. Major access routes are along Highways 4, 108, 120 and 140. On opening weekend, most of the areas accessed by roads are popular with hunters and it is difficult to find solitude, due to the concentration of hunters near these access roads. However, hunting pressure drops off significantly until storms occur, usually in mid to late-October.

## WEATHER CONDITIONS/TRAVEL TIPS

The weather in this region is highly variable so BE PREPARED. Early in the season, temperatures are usually mild to hot with cold nights. Snow can occur anytime during the deer season, especially at higher elevations, and hunters should always be prepared for this possibility with appropriate clothing and equipment for a variety of weather conditions.

Zone D-6 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 Zone D-6. 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 numerous Forest Service campgrounds within Zone D-6. The developed campsites are shown on the Forest Service maps. Informal camping is allowed on Forest Service lands, but campfires 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 always 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-6 is considered to be stable to increasing, although populations are still considerably below those 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.

Overall, fawn survival in Zone D-6 has been good for the past several years and it is expected a fair number of legal younger bucks will be entering the population in the next several years. Herd composition counts in Zone D-6 indicate that the overall buck-to-doe ratio was 44 bucks for every 100 does observed with a sample size of 476 in the fall of 2000. During these counts the number of bucks per 100 does ranged from a low of 39 bucks per 100 does in the Stanislaus herd to a high of 50 bucks per 100 does in the Yosemite herd.

The subspecies of deer inhabiting Zone D-6 is the California mule deer. The deer that occupy the higher elevations of Zone D-6 are migratory. They reside on their summer ranges until they are stimulated to migrate down slope to their wintering habitats. Habitat quality and quantity, temperature, day length and weather conditions all play a part in determining when these deer will complete their fall migrations. Generally, from mid-October, or later, any significant winter storm has the potential to cause some migratory deer to move from summer range to lower elevations. Deer are capable of sensing significant impending storms. They frequently migrate just prior to those storms, perhaps due to substantial changes in atmospheric pressure. If storms are mild, some deer may delay in intermediate range, seeking acorns and other available fall forage. If severe, a single storm may result in the migration of a large percentage of the animals from the higher elevations, down slope to winter range habitat. Most of the areas considered summer range, particularly those areas between 5,000 and 8,000 feet, are also good areas to hunt during early migrations. When these deer migrate, they frequently follow ridge tops and stream corridors. When driving along forest roads, look for freshly-made trailing off cut banks, adjacent to the roads.

The vegetation is highly varied throughout Zone D-6 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). 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.

Start looking in areas which have been burned in the last five to ten years or where the oak acorns are mature and abundant. Although meadows provide good forage for deer, especially does and fawns, bucks should utilize areas with better cover during hunting season: rougher terrain (ridges, etc.), denser vegetation, etc. After heavy snow storms, deer will rapidly move toward the winter range or hold in transitional areas. Look in areas with shrubs or preferred browse plants at intermediate elevations.

No one location is guaranteed to have deer on any given date, however the following areas have historically been some of the more popular and productive areas to hunt:

### SUMMER RANGE

Summer range habitat for the migrant herds may be found anywhere from 5,000 feet to the Sierra Crest within Zone D-6.

**Alpine County area** (most locations are within the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness): Arnot Creek; Iceberg, Airola and Disaster Peaks; Paradise Valley; Clark Ford drainage; the Dardanelles Basin, including the Dardanelles and Dardanelles Cone; Jenkins, Hiram and Champion Canyons; Fence and Drew Creek areas; and Stanislaus and Sonora Peaks.

**Tuolumne County** (areas within the Emigrant Wilderness): Kennedy Lake; Grouse Canyon; Grizzly Meadow and other areas adjacent to the Sierra Crest; willow runs and huckleberry oak brushfields associated with most high mountain peaks; Buck and Emigrant Lakes; Whitesides, Horse and Spring Meadows; Louse Canyon; Brown Bear Pass; and Lunch and Cooper Meadows.

**Tuolumne County** (areas outside the Emigrant Wilderness): Red, Bald and Night Cap Peaks; Clark Fork Meadow; meadow complexes from Niagara Creek to Silver Mine Creek; Eagle Peak; Big and Little Rattlesnake Creeks; Liberty Hill; Peyton Saddle; Bummers Flat; Wheats Meadow; Herring Creek; Hammil Canyon; Pinecrest Peak; Niagara, Mill, Cascade, and Lily Creeks; Fraser Flat; the Strawberry Fuelbreak; Bourland, Fahey and Bell Meadows; Dodge Ridge; Crabtree Camp; Mud Lake; Wrights Creek Burn (near Long Barn); Granite Creek Burn (near Cherry Lake); Camp Clavey; Wolfin Meadow; Big and Little Reynolds Creeks; Jawbone Pass; Hells Mountain; and Crocker Ridge.

**Mariposa County:** Hazel Green Ranch; Twin Bridges; Buena Vista; Little Nellie Falls; and Iron and Chowchilla Mountains.

### INTERMEDIATE RANGE

Deer usually move into and through the intermediate range with the advent of October storms. Intermediate range areas are generally between 4,000 and 5,500 feet. Frequently, areas within intermediate range have all the habitat components (food, water and cover) necessary to provide summer habitat for some deer, while acting as transitional range for numerous other animals. Many of the areas previously listed as summer range, such as Peyton Saddle and Bummers Flat (near Refuge 1-R), Wrights Creek Burn (near Long Barn), Granite Creek Burn (near Cherry Lake), Crocker Ridge and Buena Vista (near Yosemite National Park), and Chowchilla and Iron Mountain (near Mariposa) are examples of intermediate range.

### WINTER RANGE

Within Zone D-6, areas between 2,000 feet and 4,300 feet frequently are utilized as winter range for migrant deer. Typically, wintering habitat is characterized by warm southern openings (including lava cap

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areas), stands of mature oak, stands of brush (particularly areas vegetated with different age classes and species of brush), stands of large conifers (to escape from storms and cold wind), and available water. In general the more diverse the habitat composition, the better the winter range.

**Tuolumne County:** Schoettgen Pass; Ruby Fire area; Mount Knight; Grant Ridge; Bald, Marble, and Duckwall Mountains; Walton Cabin Springs; Paper Cabin Ridge; Jawbone Ridge; Plum Flat; Woods Ridge; North Mountain; Middle Fork; Drew Meadow; Gravel Range; Sawmill Mountain; Spinning Wheel area; Packard Canyon; Big Creek Basin and Pilot Ridge.

**Mariposa County:** Moss Canyon; Anderson Flat; Soapstone Ridge; Scott Ridge; Wagner Valley; Devil Gulch; Ferguson Ridge; Footman Ridge and Sweetwater Ridge.

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](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Deer)

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