ZONE X7a and Area-Specific Archery Hunt A13

2023 General Deer Hunting Information

(Includes Additional Hunt J-19)

GENERAL INFORMATION

This information sheet has been prepared to assist deer hunters applying for, or planning to hunt in, Zone X-7a located in portions of Lassen, Nevada, Plumas, and Sierra counties. The following information should be useful to hunters for archery season (A-13; Zone X-7a Archery Hunt), Zone X-7a general season and 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. 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.

NON-LEAD RESTRICTIONS

As of July 1, 2019, all hunters must use nonlead ammunition when taking any wildlife in California, except when hunting with a pellet rifle for approved species.

- CCR T14 250.1(d)(3) Effective July 1, 2019, it shall be unlawful to use, or possess with any firearm capable of firing, any projectile(s) not certified as nonlead when taking any wildlife for any purpose in this state.

- CCR T14 475(f) The take or attempted take of any nongame bird or nongame mammal with a firearm shall be in accordance with the use of nonlead projectiles and ammunition pursuant to Section 250.1 of these regulations.

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, and links to other related topics, visit CDFW's Nonlead Ammunition in California web page.

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. Hunters logging into the system will be able to view all 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, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94299-0002.

ADDITIONAL DEER HUNTS

One additional hunt opportunity exists in Zone X-7a: 1) Hunt J-19 (Zone X-7a Apprentice Either-Sex Deer Hunt). For general maps detailing the individual hunt area boundaries, visit CDFW's Deer Hunting web page.

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 Internet Point-of-Sale terminals (IPOS) located at various CDFW license offices, over 1,400 license agents statewide or online at CDFW's Licenses and Permits page. 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 online at CDFW's California Hunting Digest page.

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 X-7a and associated hunts within the zone, the tag categories are as follows:

1) **Premium** Deer Hunts – **X7a, A13, and J19**

2) **Restricted** Deer Hunts – None

3) **Unrestricted** Deer Hunts – None

General Season Tags (Zone X-7a): The deer hunting regulations specific to Zone X-7a and any additional hunts are listed at the end of this sheet. To hunt deer during the general season in Zone X-7a, a hunter must possess a Zone X-7a tag. This tag is valid in Zone X-7a, but only during the prescribed general season. Zone X-7a tags may not be used to hunt deer during the Hunt A-13 archery season, even with archery equipment.

Archery Season Tags (Hunt A-13): To hunt deer during the archery season in Zone X-7a, hunters must possess an Area-Specific Archery Hunt A-13 tag. This tag is only valid during the Hunt A-13 archery season and may not be used to hunt deer during the general zone season, even with archery equipment. Additionally, Archery Only Tags (AO Tags) are not valid in any X zone or archery hunt within an X zone.

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, 2023 deadline**. Information regarding application procedures and restrictions, ALDS, zone and hunt seasons, prior year drawing and hunt statistics are contained in the 2023 Big Game Hunting Digest available online at CDFW's California Hunting Digest page.

HARVEST INFORMATION

Information on deer harvest for this area is available in tables contained on the Department's Deer Harvest Data page. 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 X-7a 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 X-7a are administered by the Humboldt-Toiyabe and Tahoe National Forests (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). For information regarding these lands contact the following:

USFS Offices:

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431 (775-331-6444)

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

BLM Offices:

Carson City Field Office, 5665 Morgan Mill Road, Carson City, Nevada 89701 (775-885-6000)

In Zone X-7a 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, visit CDFW's PLM web page.

MAPS

For general maps detailing individual zone or additional deer hunt boundaries, visit CDFW's Deer Hunting web page.

The most comprehensive map of the area is the Tahoe National Forest map. 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 online at the National Forest Map Store website.

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 online at BLM's California Maps web page.

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 online at the USGS Store website.

ACCESS/MAJOR ROADS

Major access to Zone X-7a is provided by Highways 80 and 89. North of Highway 80 and west of Highway 89, private lands are checker boarded throughout much of the Tahoe National Forest.

WEATHER CONDITIONS/TRAVEL TIPS

The weather in this region is highly variable, so BE PREPARED. In most years, storms arrive during the deer season. Although storms are usually not serious, hunters should always be prepared for the event of a storm. Snow may fall at higher elevations, but normally lasts only a short time. Roads usually dry out quickly. Most of the area is accessible with a two-wheel drive vehicle. Four-wheel drive may be required in some locations. Due to the complex road system in the Tahoe National Forest, horse packing

and backpacking are not necessary. However, if you choose to horse pack in, remember that it may be necessary to carry supplemental horse feed into the backcountry. Contact the local USFS and/or BLM office for more information regarding forage conditions for livestock. You should be prepared with appropriate clothing and equipment for a variety of weather conditions.

Zone X-7a 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 when operating any vehicle off-road and check with the BLM or USFS for rules and regulations regarding vehicle and travel restrictions in the area.

CAMPING

There are several USFS campgrounds within the Zone X-7a and these are shown on the map of the Tahoe National Forest. 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. Commercial lodging facilities are available in Truckee and Portola.

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 X-7a 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 X-7a is primarily the Rocky Mountain mule deer; however, you may encounter some Columbian black-tailed deer. Deer in Zone X-7a are considered migratory. Hunter success has been better at lower elevations since the drought in the late 1980's. Early storms may result in some deer movement, but deer generally do not migrate down towards winter ranges until serious storms with moderate to heavy snowfall hit later in the season.

The vegetation is highly varied throughout Zone X-7a ranging from low sage, sagebrush, bitterbrush, aspen, hardwood-conifer, conifer and juniper to alpine habitats. Generally, 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. 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.

Generally, the best hunting is near stands of bitterbrush, mountain mahogany, or tall sagebrush, and clear cuts that have re-sprouted with brush. The habitat varies from sagebrush flats at the lower elevations to mixed conifer forests to rimrock areas covered by mountain mahogany at the higher elevations. Historically, some of the more popular and productive areas in Zone X-7a include: Sardine Peak, Lemon Canyon, Dark Canyon, Lake of the Woods, Crystal Peak, and Babbit Peak.

For additional information about deer hunting in California, see CDFW's publication "Guide to Hunting Deer in California" under “Related Information”.

2023 ZONE AND ADDITIONAL HUNT SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

For more information, see the current Mammal Hunting Regulations.

§360. Deer.

Except as otherwise provided in Title 14, deer may be taken only as follows:

- (b) X-Zone Hunts.
    - (10) Zone X-7a.
        - (A) Area: In those portions of Lassen, Nevada, Plumas and Sierra counties lying within a line beginning at the junction of Highway 395 and the California-Nevada state line at Bordertown; south along the Long Valley Road (County Road S570) to its intersection with the Henness Pass Road (County Road S860); west on Henness Pass Road over Summit 2 to the intersection with County Road S450 (near Davies Creek at Stampede Reservoir); west on County Road S450 (the Henness Pass Road) through Kyburz Flat to its intersection with Highway 89; south on Highway 89 to its intersection with Interstate 80 at Truckee; west on Interstate 80 to

the Pacific Crest Trail near the Castle Peak-Boreal Ridge Summit; north on the Pacific Crest Trail to the new road to White Rock Lake (one mile west of White Rock Lake in section 21, T18N, R14E, M.D.B.M.); north on the new White Rock Lake Road below Bear Valley to the White Rock Lake Road; north on the White Rock Lake Road to the Jackson Meadows Highway (Fiberboard Road); east two miles on the Jackson Meadows Highway to the Yuba Pass Road at Webber Lake; north on the Yuba Pass Road (main haul road) through Bonta Saddle to Highway 49 at Yuba Pass; west on Highway 49 to the new Gold Lake Road at Bassetts; north on the new Gold Lake Road to Highway 89 near Graeagle; north on Highway 89 to Highway 70; east on Highway 70 to Highway 395 at Hallelujah Junction; south on Highway 395 to the point of beginning.

- (B) Season: The season in Zone X-7a shall open on the first Saturday in October and extend for 16 consecutive days.
- (C) Bag and Possession Limit: One buck, forked horn (See subsection 351(a)) or better, per tag.
- (D) Number of Tags: 230.

- (c) Additional Hunts.
  - (41) J-19 (Zone X-7a Apprentice Either-Sex Deer Hunt).
    - (A) Area: In those portions of Lassen, Nevada, Plumas and Sierra Counties within the area described as zone X-7a (see subsection 360(b)(10)(A)).
    - (B) Season: The season for additional hunt J-19 (Zone X-7a Apprentice Either-Sex Deer Hunt) shall be concurrent with the zone X-7a general season as defined in subsection 360(b)(10)(B).

- (C) Bag and Possession Limit: One either-sex deer (see subsection 351(c)) per tag.
- (D) Number of Tags: 25.
- (E) Special Conditions:
  - 1. Only junior license holders shall apply.
  - 2. Tagholders shall be accompanied by an adult chaperon 18 years of age or older while hunting.

- (44) Conditions for Additional Hunts.
  - (A) When hunting on military reservations or private lands, hunters shall have in their possession a written permit signed by the landowner, which may specify where and when the permittee may hunt.
  - (B) When required, tagholders shall check in and check out of designated check stations.

§361. Archery Deer Hunts.

- (b) Archery Hunting With Area-specific Archery Tags.
  Deer may be taken only with archery equipment specified in Section 354, only during the archery seasons as follows:
  - (11) A-13 (Zone X-7a Archery Hunt).
    - (A) Area: As described in subsection 360(b)(10)(A).
    - (B) Season: The archery season for hunt A-13 (Zone X-7a Archery Hunt) shall open on the third Saturday in August and extend for 23 consecutive days.

- (C) Bag and Possession Limit: One buck, forked horn (see subsection 351(a)) or better per tag.
- (D) Number of Tags: 45.

- (c) Archery Hunting with Archery Only Tags.
  Deer may be taken only with archery equipment specified in Section 354, during the archery seasons and general seasons as follows.
  - (1) Number of Archery Only Tags Permitted. A person may obtain an archery only tag using a one-deer tag application and a second archery only tag using a second deer tag application.
  - (2) Zones in Which Archery Only Tags are Valid. An archery only tag is valid for hunt G-10, and during the archery season and general season in all zones except C-1 through C-4 and X-1 through X-12.
  - (3) Areas: As described in subsections 360(a) and (c).
  - (4) Seasons: The archery season and general seasons are provided in subsection 361(a) above and in subsections 360(a) and (c).
  - (5) Bag and Possession Limit: All bag and possession limits per zone are the same as those described in subsections 360(a) and (c).
- (d) Hunting Area Limitations. Archers not in possession of an archery only tag may hunt only in the zone, zones, or areas for which they have a general tag or an area-specific archery tag. (Refer to subsection 361(c)(2) for zones in which archery only tags are valid).
- (e) Crossbow Prohibition. Except as provided in subsection 354(j), crossbows may not be used during any archery season or during the general season when using an archery only tag.

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