

The Nebraska Game and Parks Board of Commissioners tabled big game regulation recommendations at its March 8 meeting in Kearney. Agency staff will make minor amendments to the recommendations for the board to consider at its May 24 meeting in Chadron.

The recommendations brought to the commissioners March 8 included a significant reduction of antlerless deer bonus tags in an effort to lower harvest in 2013. That reduction in permits reflects a white-tailed deer population that was depleted by a major outbreak of epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD) in 2012.

A summary of the other big game recommendations the board tabled:

Deer

Remove 25,900 antlerless bonus tags from November Firearm permits.

Remove antlerless bonus tags from unlimited Archery, Muzzleloader, Youth, Statewide Buck permits (56,221 issued in 2012).

Add 600 antlerless-only permits with antlerless-only whitetail bonus tags to Frenchman (400), Pine Ridge (100) and Sandhills (100) units.

River Antlerless permit quota increased from 4,500 to 5,500.

Limit Nonresident Statewide Buck permit to one per person.

Medicine Creek, Red Willow, Enders and Swanson State Recreation Areas/Wildlife Management Areas are closed to use of Season Choice Area permits.

Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge closed to harvest of antlerless mule deer.

DeSoto December Muzzleloader season is closed.

No antlerless mule deer harvest allowed north of U.S. Highway 20 and west of Nebraska Highway 71.

Boundaries expanded for River Antlerless, Season Choice Area Frenchman West and Season Choice Area Platte North.

Antelope

There are 1,152 firearm and muzzleloader permits authorized.

Add eight either-sex permits in the Box Butte East Unit and four in the Cheyenne Unit.

Remove six buck-only permits in the Eastern Sandhills Unit and six either-sex permits in the Garden Unit.

Close the Dismal Late antlerless season.

Establish a Box Butte West River Late season along Niobrara River with 10 doe/fawn permits.

Elk

There are 327 permits authorized (129 bull and 198 cow).

Expand elk landowner zones in the Bordeaux Creek and Hat Creek units.

Add nine cow permits in the Box Elder Unit, six in the Bordeaux Unit and three in the Ash Creek Unit.

Add three bull permits each in the Boyd and Box Elder units.

Terminate reciprocal agreement with South Dakota that allows elk hunters in Boyd County, Neb., and Gregory County, S.D., to hunt in adjacent state.

Add 13 days to the archery bull season by opening on Sept. 15.

Add 44 days to cow season by opening on Aug. 15 (on private land only).

In other business, the commissioners added Ash Hollow and Rock Creek Station state historical parks to the list of parks that allow some hunting.

