



POLICY MANUAL

| VOLUME | SECTION | SUBSECTION | PAGE |
|-------------------------|---------|------------|--------|
| 4 | 7 | 01.07 | 1 of 5 |
| SUBJECT | | | |
| Game Harvest Management | | | |

Ministry of Environment

This Policy Replaces:

Previous policy "Wildlife Harvest", September 30, 1985.

Staff, Organizations Directly Affected:

Director
Regional Managers
Wildlife Management Staff
First Nations
Resident Hunters
Guide Outfitters
Trappers

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Ministry that:

1. Sustainable harvest of game species is a legitimate use of British Columbia's wildlife resource that provides social and economic benefits to the province.
2. Harvest opportunities will be well regulated commensurate with conservation and the high importance of the wildlife resource to British Columbians.
3. Harvest management strategies and regulations will be developed and reviewed in an objective, scientifically defensible, and transparent manner and in doing so will strive to maintain broad public support for hunting.
4. Species-specific harvest management strategies and regulations will be developed with consideration of other game species management objectives.
5. Where harvest is sustainable, the first priority for harvest will be First Nations use, the second priority will be resident use, and the third priority will be non-resident use. Attempts will be made to accommodate all levels of use.
6. Licensed harvest of category A species is allocated according to the harvest allocation policies and procedures.

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| | | DATE EFFECTIVE March 1, 2010 | REVISION NO. |

| VOLUME | SECTION | SUBSECTION | PAGE |
|-------------------------|---------|------------|--------|
| 4 | 7 | 01.07 | 2 of 5 |
| SUBJECT | | | |
| Game Harvest Management | | | |

Ministry of Environment

7. Harvest management decisions will ensure that the following principles are maintained:
- hunting and trapping regulations will be developed to implement harvest strategies that achieve management objectives;
 - hunting regulations will be developed to maximize a variety of hunting opportunities (including opportunities to harvest specific ages, classes and sexes of animals) within the constraints of conservation;
 - hunting and trapping regulations will be harmonized within and between adjacent resource management regions, where such harmonization supports the achievement of management objectives;
 - hunting and trapping regulations will be easy to interpret, and will create simple and coherent harvest frameworks that are stable, effective and enforceable;
 - management costs will be taken into consideration during the development of hunting and trapping regulations, and where possible, approved regulations will minimize or reduce government management costs;
 - hunting and trapping regulations will recognize harvest ethics such as fair chase and the humane treatment of wildlife;
 - game populations will be managed on a spatial scale that is appropriate to the species' biology, while recognizing practical limitations for the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of harvest regulations;
 - the viability or genetic variability of native game populations will not be compromised by harvest activities;
 - the risk of harvesting to the conservation of game populations must be evaluated and acceptable within the context of available inventory information and species biology;
 - red-listed game will not be harvested, unless allowed for through an accepted recovery strategy or a legal entitlement for First Nations;
 - hunting and trapping practices will consider the safety of wildlife users and others;

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| VOLUME | SECTION | SUBSECTION | PAGE |
|-------------------------|---------|------------|--------|
| 4 | 7 | 01.07 | 3 of 5 |
| SUBJECT | | | |
| Game Harvest Management | | | |

Ministry of Environment

- l. game populations cannot be stockpiled;
 - m. the interests of First Nations and stakeholders will be recognised and considered in all harvest management decisions;
 - n. conservation of other native species and ecosystems will be considered when developing harvest objectives and strategies;
 - o. the harvest of non-native species (with the exception of populations of species listed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) is encouraged where required to minimize their impacts on native wildlife and ecosystems;
 - p. harvest will generally be more conservative in provincial parks and will reflect management direction provided by park plans; and
 - q. for controversial regulations, and where more than one viable management option exists for harvesting a game population, a principled decision making process, such as Structured Decision Making, may be used to ensure stakeholder interests and values are considered in the evaluation of options. The Ministry of Environment may ask stakeholders to engage in this process, as well as solicit broader public opinions to inform the evaluation of options.
8. Approved harvest management decisions should ensure that harvest regulations are reviewed and monitored on a regular basis to determine if management objectives are being achieved, and for category A species that allocation splits between licensed hunter groups are being met.
 9. Stakeholder involvement in game harvest policy issues and provincial regulatory decisions will be encouraged and facilitated.

Definitions:

“big game” – means big game as defined in the *Wildlife Act*, RSBC 1996 c.488.

“category A species” – means a big game species, population, or class for which guided hunters’ harvest is limited by quota in any portion of a region.

“game” – means game as defined in the *Wildlife Act*, RSBC 1996 c.488.

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| VOLUME | SECTION | SUBSECTION | PAGE |
|-------------------------|---------|------------|--------|
| 4 | 7 | 01.07 | 4 of 5 |
| SUBJECT | | | |
| Game Harvest Management | | | |

Ministry of Environment

“harvest” – means, for the purposes of this policy, the legal taking of game by hunting or trapping.

“harvest allocation policies and procedures” – means the set of policies and procedures designed to allocate the harvest opportunity of category A species between resident and non-resident hunters. Only licensed harvest of category A species is allocated under these documents. These policies and procedures include, but are not limited to policies: 4-7-01.03, 4-7-01.10, 4-7-01.11, 4-7-01.12 and 4-7-01.13; and procedures: 4-7-01.03.1, 4-7-01.05.1 and 4-7-01.05.2.

“population” – means a collective of individuals from a single species living in a defined area and sharing a common set of management objectives.

“red-listed game” – means game from a list of indigenous species or subspecies that are endangered or threatened in British Columbia or that are candidates for such designations that is prepared by the Conservation Data Centre.

“stakeholder” – means, for the purposes of this policy, direct users of the game resource, including the following groups:

- The BC Wildlife Federation representing resident hunters;
- The Guide Outfitters Association of BC representing licensed guide outfitters and non-resident hunters; and
- The BC Trappers Association representing licensed trappers in BC.

“stockpiling” – means when an allowable harvest is not achieved in a given period and the remainder is retained for harvesting in future years. Stockpiling does not refer to the natural contribution of unharvested animals to enable game numbers to increase in order to achieve population objectives.

“structured decision making” – means a structured and transparent approach for ensuring that ecological, social and economic values are considered when identifying and evaluating game harvest management options.

“sustainable harvest” – means the number of animals that can be harvested from a population year after year without reducing the population over time.

Reasons for Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to guide the development of defensible, scientifically sound harvest management procedures for wildlife species that are hunted and/or trapped as game.

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| VOLUME | SECTION | SUBSECTION | PAGE |
|-------------------------|---------|------------|--------|
| 4 | 7 | 01.07 | 5 of 5 |
| SUBJECT | | | |
| Game Harvest Management | | | |

Ministry of Environment

Procedure Manual Cross-Reference:

Ministry Procedure Manual, Volume 4, Section 7

Subsection:

— 01.07.1 Big Game Harvest Management

Other Cross-References:

Ministry Policy Manual, Volume 4, Section 7

Subsections:

- 01.01 Allowable Harvest
- 01.02 Open Seasons
- 01.03 Harvest Allocation
- 01.05 Quota Allocation – Guided Hunting
- 01.06 Limited Entry Hunting
- 01.10 Resident Hunter Priority
- 01.11 Commercial Hunting Interests
- 01.12 Allocation of Previously Unopened Hunts
- 01.13 Under-Harvest of Allocated Share
- 03.01 Management of Fur Bearers
- 04.01.3 Control of Species
- 13.01 Goal of Wildlife Management

Ministry Procedure Manual, Volume 4, Section 7

Subsections:

- 01.01.1 Allowable Harvest
- 01.02.1 Open Seasons
- 01.03.1 Harvest Allocation
- 01.05.1 Quota
- 01.05.2 Administrative Guidelines
- 01.06.1 Limited Entry Hunting
- 01.07.2 Southern Interior Mule Deer Harvest Management
- 01.07.3 Moose Harvest Management
- 03.01 Management of Fur Bearers
- 04.01.3 Protecting Species at Risk from Other Species
- 04.04 Grizzly Bear Harvest Management

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