

# **Colorado Wildlife Laws**

## **Chapter 9**



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1. **Colorado wildlife law is derived from two sources:**
  - a. Legislative Statutes under Title 33, Colorado Revised Statutes
  - b. Colorado Division of Wildlife Regulations
  
2. **Applicable laws/regulations dealing with youth hunting and fishing:**

CRS 33-1-101: Legislative declaration.

(1) It is the policy of the state of Colorado that the wildlife and their environment are to be protected, preserved, enhanced, and managed for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of this state and its visitors. It is further declared to be the policy of this state that there shall be provided a comprehensive program designed to offer the greatest possible variety of wildlife-related recreational opportunity to the people of this state and its visitors and that, to carry out such program and policy, there shall be a continuous operation of planning, acquisition, and development of wildlife habitats and facilities for wildlife-related opportunities.

(2) All wildlife within this state not lawfully acquired and held by private ownership is declared to be the property of this state. Right, title, interest, acquisition, transfer, sale, importation, exportation, release, donation, or possession of wildlife shall be permitted only as provided in articles 1 to 6 of this title or in any rule or regulation of the wildlife commission.

(3) In order to foster the welfare of the inhabitants of the state of Colorado, it is further declared to be the policy of this state to protect and encourage full development of absolute and conditional water rights created under state law and to develop and maximize the beneficial use of the waters to which Colorado and its citizens are entitled under interstate compacts.

(3.5) (a) The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that it supports the recommendation of the Lower Arkansas river commission in its plan dated March 25, 1993, to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources at the Great Plains Reservoirs, and further finds that a joint funding effort, which includes funds appropriated from the wildlife cash fund created in section 33-1-112 to carry out such recommendation,

would further the public interest by establishing recreational opportunities in southeastern Colorado.

(b) The general assembly further declares that the joint funding effort described in paragraph (a) of this subsection (3.5) shall not be solely a division responsibility and that the appropriation from the wildlife cash fund shall be used to maximize matching funds from other sources to ensure full implementation of the recommendation.

(4) The state shall utilize hunting, trapping, and fishing as the primary methods of effecting necessary wildlife harvests.

CRS 33-4-117: Youth licenses- special restrictions and privileges- repeal.

(1) On or after January 1, 1995, any person under the age of eighteen years may obtain a combination youth small game hunting and furbearer, issued pursuant to section 33-4-102 (1.4) (x), for a fee of one dollar upon showing a hunter education certificate as required by section 33-6-107 (8). Said one-dollar fee includes the search and rescue fund surcharge imposed under section 33-1-112.5 (2) (a).

(2) Every person hunting with a combination youth small game hunting, furbearer, and fishing license shall at all times be accompanied by a person eighteen years of age or older as required by section 33-6-107 (3.5); except that a person of any age who purchases a small game hunting license issued pursuant to section 33-4-102 (1.4) (f) or a furbearer license issued pursuant to section 33-4-102 (1.4) (h) is exempt from this restriction.

(3) Possession of a combination youth small game hunting, furbearer, and fishing license entitles the holder to the full bag and possession limits of fish as set by the commission.

(4) Youth big game licenses, entitling the holder to hunt deer, elk, or antelope, may be purchased by persons twelve to seventeen years of age for the fees specified in section 33-4-102 (1.4) (w). Said fees include the search and rescue fund surcharge imposed under section 33-1-112.5 (2) (a). Persons under eighteen years of age hunting deer, elk, or antelope must be accompanied by a person eighteen years of age or older as required by section 33-6-107 (4).

(4.5) The commission is authorized to establish a special licensing program for hunters eligible for a youth license under the provisions of this section and to adopt rules that establish hunting license preference for youth hunters. In connection with such a program the commission is also authorized, within its discretion, to establish a special licensing

program for adult mentors of youth hunters and to adopt rules that establish a hunting license preference for such adult mentors.

(5) This section is repealed, effective January 1, 2005.

## **Wildlife Commission Regulations**

### **#206 Youth Preference**

**Youth preference** - up to 15 percent of the number of the limited doe pronghorn antelope licenses, either-sex and antlerless deer licenses and antlerless elk licenses established for each GMU shall be made available for purchase by qualified youth applicants. Licenses shall be made available through application and computer selection from the Division of Wildlife headquarters, 6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216. Licenses not allocated to youth shall be made available to the general public in the remaining drawings.

#### **01/09/03**

1. Any eligible hunter, ages 12-15 is entitled to youth hunt preference for the regular rifle and private land only rifle seasons, for the license types listed above, except that public Ranching for Wildlife; muzzle-loading and Air Force Academy licenses shall not be included in this preference. The applicant must submit an individual application for the desired, eligible license on forms provided by the Division. Group applications will not be accepted for youth preference. Where more than one (1) hunt code choice is shown on the application, both first and second choice hunt codes must be youth preference-eligible hunt codes.
2. **Youth Outreach Hunting Licenses** – The Director may make additional youth outreach program deer, elk, turkey and pronghorn licenses available to qualified organizations sponsoring youth hunting activities.
  1. Youth Outreach licenses will be available for selected game management units. There will be no more than 100 elk licenses (30 either sex, 70 antlerless), no more than 50 deer licenses (20 either sex, 30 antlerless), no more than 50 bearded turkey and no more than 60 doe pronghorn licenses issued annually under this subsection.
  2. Licenses in game management units with at least one hunt code requiring 10 or more resident preference points to draw, excluding Ranching for Wildlife properties, will not be authorized for use under this subsection.

3. Licenses are issued on a first come, first served basis to qualified organizations. No more than five licenses per species may be issued to any single requesting organization.
4. Organizations who wish to request a Youth Outreach license must submit the request in writing to the Division of Wildlife, Hunter Outreach Coordinator, 6060 Broadway, Denver, Colorado 80216 no later than 60 days prior to the proposed hunting activity.
5. Licenses are limited to youth hunters 12 to 17 years of age.

**#206 Dream Hunt Hunting Licenses** – The Director may make available additional deer, elk, pronghorn, mountain lion and black bear licenses to individuals qualified under this subsection.

1. Applicants for Dream Hunt licenses must be between the ages of 12 and 21, and must have a terminal illness or a life-threatening disease or injury.
2. A request for a Dream Hunt license must be made, in writing, by a sponsoring organization, documenting the individual's life-threatening or terminal condition, desired, hunt experience, desired location, time frame and logistical considerations. Requests should be sent to the Division of Wildlife, Hunter Outreach Coordinator, 6060 Broadway, Denver, Colorado 80216.
3. The Dream Hunt license must be issued for a time and location where a season is open for the desired species.
4. Written landowner permission must be obtained prior to issuance of a license under this subsection if the individual will be hunting on private land.
5. Except on private land, licenses in game management units with at least one hunt code requiring 10 or more resident preference points to draw, excluding Ranching for Wildlife properties, will not be authorized for use under this subsection

**#207 Season Participation**

Youths ages 12-17 may participate in any late or Private Land Only (PLO) antlerless elk hunt scheduled between November 16 and January 31, provided they possess an unfilled antlerless elk license from a season which has already been completed for any other unit, comply with applicable regulations for the specific late or PLO hunt in which they participate, and are accompanied by a mentor. A mentor must be at least 18 years of age and comply with hunter education requirements. The mentor may not hunt except in units for which they possess a late or Private Land Only elk license valid for the same dates.

Youths with unfilled either-sex elk licenses who wish to hunt in the late antlerless youth elk hunt may do so provided that they must bring their license to the Division and have it converted to an antlerless elk license prior to hunting. Youths who possess an unfilled extended season or late season antlerless elk license may hunt in a late antlerless elk season in another unit between November 16 and January 31, provided the season on the original license has ended.

3. **When a law violation has occurred.** While every attempt should be made not to violate the laws or regulations of the state, sometimes a hunter does make a mistake. As representatives of the Colorado Division of Wildlife, all Huntmasters must strictly follow program policy when dealing with a law violation. The following actions will be taken in event a law violation has occurred:

- Personally assess the circumstances of the violation
- Discuss the violation with the hunter, guide and parent. Calmly address the situation. Do not assess blame to the young hunter but do not disregard the violation.
- Contact the local wildlife officer and provide detailed information about the nature of the violation. Ask for his/her guidance on actions to take.
- If a big game animal, properly field dress the animal if necessary to prevent spoilage. Do not move the animal unless instructed to do so by the wildlife officer.
- Allow the wildlife officer to determine the violation and determine legal action that will be taken.
- If hunting on private land, inform the landowner of the violation, circumstance and the actions taken by you and the wildlife officer. Give the landowner a complete story.