

5-Year Big Game Season Structure



Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) needs your help in developing the next 5-Year Big Game Season Structure for deer, elk, pronghorn, moose, and bear for the 2020-2024 seasons.

What is the 5-Year Big Game Season Structure?

Every five years, the Parks and Wildlife Commission (Commission) adopts a Big Game Season Structure to provide an overall framework for hunting regulations. The 5-Year Big Game Season Structure primarily addresses issues like the length and timing of seasons for different species, allowable hunting methods, the general proportion of licenses that will be limited or unlimited, and provides guidelines to balance different kinds of hunting opportunities. The current Big Game Season Structure ends in 2019, with the next cycle covering the time period of 2020-2024. Input and comments from the public are critical to informing this process.



Why does Colorado Parks and Wildlife have a 5-Year Big Game Season Structure?

The 5-Year Big Game Season Structure helps guide CPW's big game management in concert with herd management planning and annual license setting. In addition, it helps CPW provide a broad range of hunting opportunities to fit the varied preferences of different hunters.

The Commission adopts the Big Game Season Structure for a five-year time period for several reasons. First,

this timeframe provides consistency for CPW to assess the effectiveness of management actions and hunting seasons over time. Second, it is for YOUR convenience! It allows hunters the opportunity to request vacation time, plan hunts, and arrange schedules. It allows landowners to plan for seasons and hunting opportunities on their property. It allows guides and outfitters, restaurant and motel owners, and other service providers to make business plans with some certainty about hunting seasons for the next five years.

Visit cpw.state.co.us
Search for "Season Structure"

5-Year Big Game Season Structure

2020- 2024 Big Game Season Structure SCOPING - Summer 2018

Topic Areas

CPW is currently considering the following list of topics for regulatory or programmatic changes during the upcoming 5-year Big Game Season Structure:

Timing and length of seasons

Pronghorn: Increasing hunting opportunity through mechanisms such as extending the rifle pronghorn season to include two full weekends, or creating an optional second pronghorn rifle season. Also exploring options to extend dates for late season hunts in order to address game damage concerns.

Moose: Allowing licensed moose hunters to hunt any available moose seasons for their unit(s) with an unfilled license and appropriate method of take; providing maximum opportunity for a successful harvest. Additionally, broadening herd management tools, such as establishing an optional second rifle season for moose to increase harvest success in targeted areas of the state.

Whitetail Deer: Implementing a set date for the eastern rifle whitetail deer season(s) in order to avoid potential hunting during the rut.

Bears: Exploring ways to increase hunter harvest opportunity during the limited September season without affecting crowding, such as creating multiple September seasons.

Youth Outreach & Participation

Increasing youth opportunity and participation. Potential options could include creating new combo licenses and/or increasing existing youth preference for select hunts.

Archery Season

Exploring options to address increasing participation during the archery season. This could include consideration of limiting some or all archery licenses or setting caps on over-the-counter licenses.

Considering season changes to address the overlap and timing of the archery and muzzleloader deer and elk seasons.

How you can participate

Your opinions will help the Commission decide on a 5-Year Big Game Season Structure that best addresses current hunter preferences and desires.

Public Forums – CPW will use a mix of existing meetings and special forums throughout the process to give you the chance to discuss different ways to structure the hunting seasons. Public meetings will take place around the state during January and February 2019. Check the CPW website for schedules and locations.

July - September 2018 – CPW will identify and finalize topic areas to consider during this process.

January and February 2019 - CPW will hold public forums to gather input on potential changes.

By September 2019 – The Commission will adopt changes for the 2020-2024 Big Game Season Structure.

Stay Updated - Postings to the Big Game Season Structure webpage will provide the most current news and information throughout this year-long process. Refer to this site for public forums and other opportunities to offer input. Visit cpw.state.co.us, and search for “Season Structure”. You can also receive email notices by signing up for CPW eNews from the CPW homepage: cpw.state.co.us.