

Bear

Licenses, applications, harvest reporting and general information: www.wildlife.state.nm.us

Bear Draw Permits and Over-the-Counter (OTC) Licenses

(See 'Big Game Rules: While in The Field You Must Have All of the Following', page 18.)

License Fees (pages 5, 7): Before purchasing an Over-the-Counter Bear License, hunters must purchase or possess a Game-hunting License or Game-hunting & Fishing License. A Habitat Stamp is required for hunting on Forest Service and BLM lands. A Habitat Management & Access Validation is required (page 8).

Harvest Limits for All Zones (map, page 116): New Mexico is divided into 14 Bear Management Zones, enabling NMDGF to better manage regional bear populations. Each zone has two harvest limits: 1, the total number of bears that may be harvested; and 2, the number of female bears that may be harvested. Harvest limits for each Bear Management Zone are listed in the table on pages 114–115. This table first lists the total limit of bears that may be harvested, followed by the number of female bears that may be harvested ('Total Limit / Female Limit'). Bear Management Zones close when harvests reach 90% of the sustainable total limit, 90% of the sustainable female sublimit, or when the season has ended—whichever occurs first. This is to maintain healthy bear populations and avoid exceeding sustainable bear harvests.

Zone Closure for All Zones: Before hunting, hunters **must verify the zone is open** by checking online or telephoning:.

- www.wildlife.state.nm.us/hunting/information-by-animal/big-game/bear/
- 1-877-950-5466

Bear Draw Permits

Bear Draw Permits are available for the areas listed in the table on pages 114–115. Only New Mexico residents may apply for WMA Bear Draw Permits. Application must be made by Feb. 8, 2017. Only one hunter may apply on each application. Hunters who successfully draw a Bear Permit also must purchase a Game-hunting License or Game-hunting & Fishing License and an Over-the-Counter Bear License. Hunters may hunt during the over-the-counter season if they have not taken a bear during their draw hunt. **Bear Licenses must be purchased at least two calendar days before hunting.**

Over-the-Counter Licenses (OTC)

An OTC Bear License may be purchased at license vendors, NMDGF offices, online: www.wildlife.state.nm.us or by telephone: 1-888-248-6866. **Bear Licenses must be purchased at least two calendar days before hunting.**

What You Must Know Before You Hunt

Closed Areas: Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River Area, including Taos Valley Overlook; All Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs are open only to hunters with a valid Bear Draw Permit and Bear Hunting License during draw seasons for that area.); and Subunit 6B (Valles Caldera National Preserve). **Archery Only:** Sugarite Canyon State Park.

What You Must Know Before You Hunt—continued.

Youth Hunters: Hunters younger than 18 years of age must possess a Hunter Education Certification number. **Blaze-Orange Clothing:** Hunters must wear at least 244 square inches of blaze orange while hunting on military property. **Restricted Areas:** It is unlawful to hunt bears in the Valle Vidal and Greenwood Area (except as noted on pages 114, 'Valle Vidal'). Grapevine Canyon and McGregor Range Buffer area in Unit 34 of Zone 12 are accessible by permit and military permission only. Unit 10 of Zone 9 and Units 13, 18 and 20 of Zone 10 are subject to closure by the Forest Service and/or the military during missile firings.

Zones 8 and portions of 14: Hunters must use bows only (crossbow may be used by certified mobility-impaired hunters) to hunt bears in the Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest.

No Electronic Calls: Electronic calls are not allowed for bear hunting.

Legal Sporting Arms

Centerfire rifle or handgun; shotgun no smaller than 28 gauge, firing a single slug; muzzleloading rifle; bow and arrow or crossbow and bolt. In the Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest, only bow and crossbow may be used. **Crossbow may not be used during the Sept. 1–24 Archery Only Season**, except by certified mobility-impaired hunters (page 10).

Baiting and Trapping

Baiting and trapping are **not legal methods** for taking bear. If accidentally trapped, the bear must be released. Should assistance be needed to release a bear, contact NMDGF.

Bag Limit

The bag limit is one bear. A hunter may not take any cub younger than one-year old or any female accompanied by a cub(s). New Mexico law does not require bear meat to be taken from the field.

Tagging of Bear Hides

Harvested bears must be accompanied with both a license and a pelt tag. The license includes a space which must be properly blacked out or punched immediately after the animal is killed and a line for the date and time of kill to be permanently written. The hunter must then present the license and hide for pelt tagging to any District Conservation Officer or any NMDGF office **within five days** of killing the bear or before transporting the hide outside New Mexico—which ever comes first. **All hunters who appoint a designee to bring the harvested bear to get pelt tagged are required to contact a conservation officer prior to inspection and pelt tagging.** For any bear killed, **hunters are required** to present to any NMDGF office the unfrozen skull with mouth fixed open for removal of a premolar tooth. The pelt tag must remain attached to the hide until the hide is processed. Improperly tagged hides may be seized by NMDGF.

Proof of Sex

The testicles, penis and/or baculum of a male, or the vulva of a female, must remain attached to the hide and be visible to the NMDGF tagging official. NMDGF will only pelt tag a harvested bear if proof of sex is attached to the hide and readily visible to the tagging official. Bears presented to NMDGF for tagging without proof of sex attached may be seized.

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Use of Dogs

Dog use is not allowed during any archery season. Dog use is **not allowed** on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) or to pursue bears during bow seasons. Dog use is **allowed** to hunt bear elsewhere during hunts for any legal sporting arm (see table below). When dogs are used to hunt bears, the licensed hunter that harvests the bear must be present continuously from the time any dog is released. Dogs may only be released during legal hunting hours. There is no “pursuit” or “training” season outside the regular open season.

Valle Vidal and Greenwood Area

It is unlawful to hunt bear on the Valle Vidal and Greenwood Area, except for hunters who successfully draw a Bear Draw Permit and purchase a Game-hunting License or Game-hunting & Fishing License and an Over-the-Counter Bear License. Dogs are allowed during the April 15–May 20 and the Aug. 1–31 hunts.

In addition to the above, elk hunters also may hunt bear in the Valle Vidal and Greenwood Area provided they:

- 1, Possess a Valle Vidal rifle, muzzleloader or bow elk license; 2, Posses an OTC bear license; 3, Use the sporting arm type specified for their elk hunt; 4, Hunt only during the dates of their elk hunt; and 5, The harvest limit in Bear Zone 5 has not been met and the season is still open.

The Greenwood Area is a privately owned 11,790 acre property adjacent to the Valle Vidal Unit of the Carson National Forest. The owner, Vermejo Park Ranch, has graciously allowed the Department to lease the Greenwood Area for hunting and fishing access for ten years at no cost. The Department would like to thank Vermejo Park Ranch for this successful partnership and the benefit it provides to New Mexico’s hunters and anglers.

Livestock Damage

Landowners, lessees or their regular employees may without a license kill a bear that has killed domestic livestock or presents an immediate threat to human life or property. Any person taking such action **must report the incident** to NMDGF within 24 hours. Pelts, claws and other parts of depredated animals taken under this provision are the property of the State of New Mexico and must be delivered to NMDGF.

Seasons for Over-the-Counter Bear Hunts

Zone: Open Units	Hunt Dates	Sporting Arm Type	Dog Use	Total Limit/Female Limit
Zone 1 Units: 4–7, 51, 52	Sept. 1–24 Sept. 25–Nov. 15	Archery Only Any Legal	Not Allowed Allowed	158 / 63
Zone 2 Unit 2	Sept. 1–24 Sept. 25–Nov. 15	Archery Only Any Legal	Not Allowed Allowed	15 / 6
Zone 3 Units: 49, 50, 53	Aug. 16–31 Sept. 1–24 Sept. 25–Nov. 15	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	65/26
Zone 4 Units: 45, 46, 48	Aug. 16–31 Sept. 1–24 Sept. 25–Nov. 30	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	109/43
Zone 5 Units: 54, 55	Aug. 16–31 Sept. 1–24 Sept. 25–Nov. 15	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	92/37

Seasons for Over-the-Counter Bear Hunts—continued.

Zone: Open Units	Hunt Dates	Sporting Arm Type	Dog Use	Total Limit/Female Limit
Zone 6 Units: 39-43, 47, 59	Aug. 16-31 Sept. 1-24 Sept. 25-Nov. 15	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	33 / 13
Zone 7 Units: 56-58	Aug. 16-31 Sept. 1-24 Sept. 25-Nov. 15	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	35 / 14
Zone 8 Unit 8	Sept. 1-24 Oct. 15-Nov. 15	Archery Only Any Legal	Not Allowed Allowed	11 / 4
Zone 9 Units: 9, 10	Aug. 16-31 Sept. 1-24 Sept. 25-Nov. 15	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	36 / 14
Zone 10 Units: 12, 13, 15-18, 20-24 26, 27	Aug. 16-31 Sept. 1-24 Sept. 25-Nov. 30	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	146 / 58
Zone 11 Units: 37, 38	Aug. 16-31 Sept. 1-24 Sept. 25-Nov. 30	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	36 / 14
Zone 12 Unit 34	Aug. 16-31 Sept. 1-24 Sept. 25-Nov. 30	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	33 / 13
Zone 13 Unit 36	Aug. 16-31 Sept. 1-24 Sept. 25-Nov. 15	Any Legal Archery Only Any Legal	Allowed Not Allowed Allowed	16 / 6
Zone 14 Unit 14	Sept. 1-24 Oct. 15-Nov. 15	Archery Only Any Legal	Not Allowed Allowed	19 / 7

Seasons for Bear Draw Permits

Area	Date	Hunt Code	Permits
Unit 55 Valle Vidal and Greenwood . . .	Apr. 15-May 20 . . .	BER-1-106 . . .	20
Unit 2 - Youth Only	Aug. 1-31	BER-1-100	5
Unit 4 Sargent WMA ⁽¹⁾ NM Residents Only	Aug. 1-31	BER-1-101	10
Unit 4 Humphries WMA ⁽¹⁾ - NM Residents Only	Aug. 1-31	BER-1-102	5
Unit 9 Marquez WMA - NM Residents Only	Aug. 1-31	BER-1-103	5
Units 54 Barker and Colin Neblett WMAs - NM Residents Only	Aug. 1-31	BER-1-104	12

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Seasons for Bear Draw Permits—continued.

Area	Date	Hunt Code	Permits
Unit 55 Valle Vidal and Greenwood . . .	Aug. 1–31 . . .	BER-1-105 . . .	20
Unit 57 Sugarite Canyon State Park ⁽¹⁾ . . .	Aug. 1-31 . . .	BER-2-107 . . .	5

⁽¹⁾ Bear hunting in Sargent and Humphries WMAs and Sugarite Canyon State Park is open Aug. 1–31 only through Special Draw Hunts. These WMAs are closed Sept. 1–Nov. 15 during regular bear hunts in Bear Management Zones One and Seven.

Bear Management Zones and Game Management Units

