

Amending 19-31-10 NMAC

Hunting and Fishing - Manner and Method of Taking

Use of Crossbows



Law Enforcement Division

Amendments to the Rule:

- Amends use of crossbows by Mobility Impaired (MI) Hunters.
- Redefines the type of sights that are allowed on crossbows.
- Allows for the use of crossbows during regular muzzleloader hunts.
- If approved, these changes will become effective Sep. 1, 2012.



Use of Crossbows by Mobility Impaired Hunters during Archery Hunts

- Until 2004 Commission rule allowed for MI hunters to use crossbows during archery seasons.
- This was extremely popular with archery hunters with a limited ability to draw a bow.
- This provision was unintentionally omitted from the current rule.
- Provides for the Director to issue reasonable accommodations for use by temporarily impaired hunters.



Sights on Crossbows

- Current rule does not allow for the use of magnifying sights (scopes) on crossbows.
 - Note: Most modern crossbows are generally sold with mounted scopes.
- Proposed amendment allows for the use of scopes during muzzleloader and “any legal sporting arm” type hunts.
- Proposed amendment clarifies the legality of illuminated sights that do project light onto the target.



Use of Crossbows during Muzzleloader Hunts

- Preferred Alternative #1 allows for use of crossbows during regular muzzleloader hunts.
 - The Big Game Rules and Information book states that crossbow use is legal during “Muzzleloader” hunts (hunt codes containing “-3-”).
 - This reflects the Commission’s intent to allow the use of “more primitive” weapon types but was omitted from the current rule.
 - Preferred alternative #1 clarifies the rule, and establishes this opportunity, thus meeting public expectations.
- It does not allow for the use of bows or crossbows during restricted muzzleloader hunts.



Public Comment

- Department received three written comments.
- Additionally, the Department has received numerous inquiries and/or comments by telephone during the regular course of business.
- All of the comments received support the proposed changes although some questions were raised concerning the definition of lights on crossbow sights.



Commission Direction

The Department respectfully suggests the following motion unless Commission discretion indicates a different course of action:

“Move to accept the Department’s recommendation of the preferred alternative 1, and amend the Manner and Method of Taking Rule (19.31.1 NMAC) as presented.”



Discussion



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