

2026–2027 Hunting Proclamation

Southern Ute Indian Reservation

Includes information on:

- Season dates and bag limits
- Tagging and validation requirements
- Mountain lion hunting quotas and hunt area



Meskviwv Wesley 2025

Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Division of Wildlife Resource Management
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<http://www.southernute-nsn.gov/WRMweb/>



Hunt Date Summary

	<u>Pick-up</u>	<u>Season Dates</u>
Deer, Elk, Fall Turkey	Aug. 10 th	Aug. 22 nd – Aug..30 th
Early Archery		Aug. 31 st – Dec. 31 st
General		Dec. 1 st – Dec. 31 st
First Descendant	Nov. 16 th	
Upland Game Birds	Aug. 10 th	Aug. 31 st – Dec. 31 st
Mountain Lion	Sept. 14 th	Nov.1 st 2026– Aug.3 rd , 2027
Spring Turkey	March 9 th	March 21 st – May 24 th
Small Game	Anytime	Calendar Year
Waterfowl and Migratory Game birds	Aug. 10 th	See CPW season dates

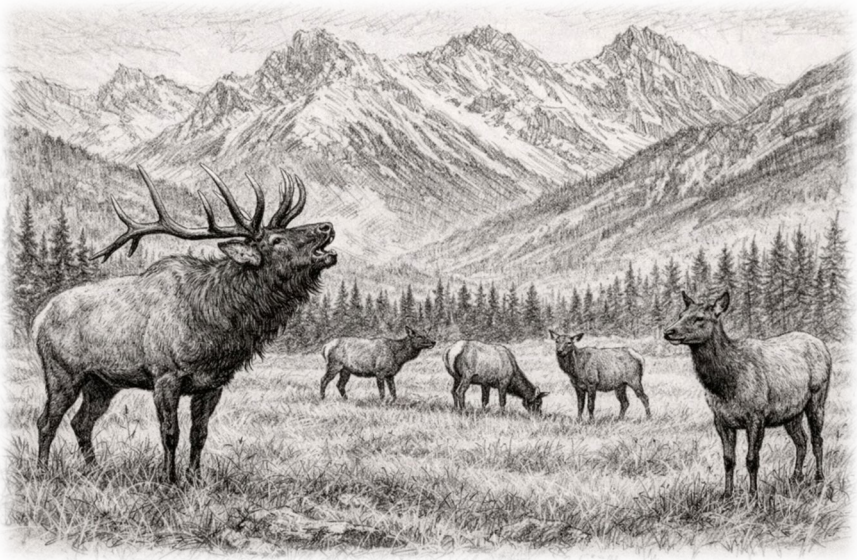


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Reminders and Updates for 2026-2027

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a degenerative brain disease of deer and elk that takes time to progress but is always fatal to the infected animal. CWD is most prevalent in male deer greater than two years old. In 2025, a considerable increase in CWD prevalence was detected in GMU 72, which is in the far southwest corner of the state, bordering Utah and New Mexico. The prevalence of CWD in our local mule deer herd is currently very low (less than 1%), however the Wildlife Division (Division) is seeking to increase sampling of harvested adult buck deer. Division staff may ask to sample hunter's deer during a validation, and tribal members may request having any deer or elk sampled at any time; testing is voluntary and free of charge. There is no evidence that CWD can spread between infected animals and humans, however the Division recommends not consuming meat of tested animals until the results are obtained. Consuming meat from CWD positive animals is not recommended.

Mountain Lion Research Project

Colorado Parks and Wildlife in cooperation with the Southern Ute Indian Tribe is conducting research on the mountain lion population in SW Colorado. CPW, supported by tribal staff and tribal houndsmen will be capturing and collaring mountain lions on tribal lands 2025-2027. Radio collared mountain lions will remain **legal** to harvest during the duration of the research project.

Gray Wolves

In December 2023 the state began releasing gray wolves into northern Colorado. It is unknown when wolves will migrate south onto the Reservation. Tribal Members should be aware of the state's reintroduction effort and that wolves are now present in Colorado. Gray wolves are a federally protected species, and the Tribe does not currently issue permits to hunt, trap or kill wolves for sport. Please contact the Wildlife Division for more information on gray wolves.

White-tailed Deer

White-tailed deer are beginning to show up in southwest Colorado and on tribal lands. These deer are not native to this part of Colorado and may negatively impact the native mule deer population. Continuing in 2026, Reservation deer hunting permits will not specify mule deer or white-tailed deer allowing harvest of either. For example, a tribal member hunter may harvest either a white-tailed or mule deer doe with their Doe Deer hunting permit.

Continued Mandatory Validation on Bucks and Bulls

All bucks and bulls harvested on the Southern Ute reservation or within the Brunot Treaty Area are subject to mandatory validation by the Wildlife Division. Bucks and bulls must be validated **within 5 business days of harvest**. Hunters can call the Wildlife Division or stop by our offices for validation. Division staff are flexible on when and where we perform validations. Please be prepared to answer some basic questions about where and when the animal was harvested.

First Descendant Hunting Opportunity

A limited number of Southern Ute first descendants may receive a permit to harvest one antlerless elk from tribal land December 1 – 31, 2026. See details under the list of hunts.

Agricultural Land Depredation Hunts

The Wildlife Division and Wildlife Advisory Board have been directed by Tribal Council to develop a hunting framework to assist tribal member agricultural producers with elk conflicts on tribal agricultural lands. These hunts, once developed, and approved by Tribal Council will be incorporated into the 2026/2027 hunting seasons and information will be provided by a supplemental information sheet.

Hunting Permits

Southern Ute Tribal Members

Reference Title 13 the Wildlife Conservation Code for age eligibility requirements to pick up permits and for age requirements for presenting a Hunter Education card. The following conditions must be met to obtain Southern Ute Tribal Member hunting permits:

1. Must be an enrolled Southern Ute Tribal Member and be able to present an enrollment card when picking up permits.
2. Hunters required to possess a hunter education card must present it at the time permits are picked up.
3. Issued permits must be signed by the applicant.
4. Mail-out permits will be provided to non-resident Tribal Members only after receiving a letter including the Tribal Member's name, date of birth, copies of their enrollment card and hunter safety education card (if applicable), and a list of permits desired. Permits will not be valid until signed by the applicant.

First Descendants

The following conditions must be met to obtain a First Descendant hunting permit:

1. Must present paperwork from Tribal Information Services certifying that they are a first descendant of an enrolled Southern Ute Tribal Member
2. Hunters under the age of 21 must possess a hunter safety card and must present it at the time permits are picked up.
3. Issued permits must be signed by the applicant.

Duplicate Permits

Lost or destroyed hunting permits will be replaced by the Division of Wildlife Resource Management for a cost of **\$5.00 per permit**.

New Address / Telephone Number / Driver's License Information

If you held a previous year's hunting permit and your home address, telephone number, or driver's license information has changed, you are required to provide the new information to the Division of Wildlife Resource Management.

Legal Weapons

Legal weapons for **deer, elk, and mountain lion** shall include:

1. Shotguns of 20 gauge or larger firing a single slug.
2. Any bow with at least 40 pounds of draw weight. Hunting arrows must include a broadhead with an outside cutting diameter of at least 7/8" with at least 2 blades. Each cutting edge must be within the same plane throughout the length of the cutting surface.
3. Crossbows with a minimum draw weight of 125 lbs, and a minimum draw length of 14" from the front of the bow to the nocking point of the drawstring. A positive mechanical safety device is required. Bolts must be a minimum of 16" long, having a broadhead a minimum of 7/8" wide and a minimum of 2 cutting blades. Cutting edges of broadheads must be in the same plane for the entire length of the cutting surface. Unless specifically approved by the Management Division, crossbows are illegal during the early archery season.
4. Muzzleloading rifles with a single barrel of at least .40 caliber for deer, and .50 caliber for elk.
5. .357 magnum or larger handguns with a barrel length of 6 inches or longer, using .357 magnum or larger caliber ammunition with soft nose or hollow point bullets.
6. Center-fire rifles or center-fire handguns chambered for a center-fired cartridge, a minimum of .23 caliber. No fully automatic firearm may be used. All bullets must be soft nose or hollow pointed and not weigh more than 350 grains.

Legal weapons for **turkey** shall include:

Turkeys may be hunted with shotguns except .410 gauge; bow and arrow, crossbow; rifles and handguns, center-fired cartridges only; and muzzleloading rifles and handguns;

Legal weapons for **waterfowl** shall include:

Any shotgun 10 gauge or smaller and not capable of holding more than 3 shotshells in the chamber and magazine combined. Shotshells must not contain lead pellets;

Legal weapons for **small game** (including upland birds) shall include:

Any rimfire or center-fire rifle or handgun, any shotgun, any bow and arrow or crossbow.

Hunter Safety Requirements

Hunter Safety Requirements

Refer to Title 13 the Wildlife Conservation Code for Hunter Education requirements. Required hunters must have successfully completed a Hunter Education course prior to issuance of permits. The DWRM offers hunter education classes twice per year. Please contact the office for more information.

Designated Hunting

Designating Enrolled Southern Ute Tribal Members

Enrolled Southern Ute Tribal Members over the age of 12 may designate another enrolled Southern Ute Tribal Member who meets the hunting permit requirements to hunt for them during the regular hunting season. Southern Ute Tribal Members who wish to designate another Southern Ute Tribal Member must pick up and sign their own permits, and the Division of Wildlife Resource Management will place the name of the designated hunter on permits at that time. Designated hunters will only be allowed to harvest **female deer and elk, or turkey of either sex** during the general fall hunting season. Designated hunters will not be allowed for any other form of hunting.

Designating Division of Wildlife Resource Management

The Division of Wildlife Resource Management will provide designated hunting services to enrolled Southern Ute Tribal Member elders (55 years of age or older), single women, or physically disabled individuals. Requests must be made to the Division of Wildlife Resource Management, and all animals will be harvested during the regular Southern Ute Tribal Member hunting season. If the Division delivers the animal to a processor, the requesting Tribal Member is responsible for all processing fees. If fees are not paid to the processor, the Division reserves the right to deny designated hunting services to that Tribal Member in the future.



Tagging and Validation Requirements

All big game animals must be tagged by the person who harvested the animal. The hunter must physically notch (cut) the **Month** and **Day** of harvest on the carcass tag and sign the permit in **Ink** immediately after harvesting the animal. The hunter must then affix the carcass tag to the carcass. All big game animals must be securely tagged with the carcass tag prior to transportation. If numerous trips are required to remove the carcass from the field, the tag should remain attached to the portion of the carcass left in camp or in a vehicle.

Validation Requirements

Validation is the inspection of a harvested animal and may or may not be required depending on the species or hunt type. Part of the validation process may also require the hunter obtaining a validation tag as proof of inspection prior to the hunter leaving the reservation with the harvested animal. Guidelines vary and are given in detail by species and hunting season below. For further information regarding validations and validation tags, please contact the DWRM.

Mandatory Validation:

- **Early Archery Deer, Elk, and Turkey**
- **Buck Deer and Bull Elk** - Tribal Member hunters are required to have buck deer and bull elk validated within 5 business days of harvest. Please call the DWRM to make arrangements.
- **Mountain Lion** - Validation must take place **within 24 hours** of the kill. Contact the Division of Wildlife Resource Management or Southern Ute Tribal Rangers during regular business hours or contact Southern Ute Dispatch outside of regular business hours to arrange validation.
- **First Descendant Antlerless Elk**

Optional Validation:

- **Doe Deer and Cow Elk** - Hunters planning to obtain a second doe tag or a second cow elk tag must have their first doe or cow validated prior to picking up additional tags.
- **Spring Turkey** - Hunters planning to obtain a second turkey permit must have their first turkey validated prior to picking up additional tags.
- **Fall Turkey**
- **Upland game birds**
- **Waterfowl**
- **Small Game**

Evidence Of Sex Requirements

Evidence of sex of harvested deer, elk, wild turkeys, and mountain lions must remain *naturally attached* to carcasses while transporting animals from the field, while in camp, or until the animal is validated (if necessary). Evidence of sex for deer and elk include the head and/or the testicles or udder. Evidence of sex for wild turkeys is the beard (for males). For mountain lions, the reproductive organs of both males and females must be left attached for sex identification purposes.

Guiding and Outfitting

Guides and outfitters must be permitted by the Division of Wildlife Resource Management before operating on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. To obtain a guiding and outfitting permit or to acquire a list of permitted guides and outfitters, contact the Division of Wildlife Resource Management. Illegal guiding and outfitting on the reservation is a serious offense with consequences for both the hunter and the person providing the guiding or outfitting services. Please contact the Wildlife Division

immediately if you suspect illegal guiding and outfitting is taking place on the reservation.

Accompany Crossing Permits

The Division of Wildlife Resource Management issues crossing permits to non-Southern Ute Tribal Members to accompany permitted hunters while hunting. Persons holding crossing permits may not hunt or carry a firearm of any type while accompanying a permitted hunter. **Persons holding a crossing permit may not provide specialized guiding and outfitting-type assistance to permitted hunters.** Contact the DWRM for more details on crossing permits or to have crossing permits issued.

Non-Southern Ute Tribal Members who are not in the immediate family of a Southern Ute Tribal Member hunter must acquire a crossing permit so that they may accompany the permitted Southern Ute Tribal Member while hunting. **Non-Southern Ute Tribal Members who are in the immediate family of a permitted Southern Ute Tribal Member hunter may accompany the hunter without obtaining a crossing permit.** For the purposes of accompany crossing permits, immediate family is considered a spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, son in-law, daughter in-law or legal guardian of the permitted Southern Ute Tribal Member hunter. Note that a maximum of two permittees at a time are allowed per Southern Ute hunter and the crossing permit will be valid for 30 days or until the end of the hunt season, whichever comes first. Cost for crossing permits will be \$20.00 per permittee, and each permit is valid for accompanying a single specified Tribal Member hunter.



Season Dates and Bag Limits

Southern Ute Tribal Season Dates and Bag Limits (Enrolled Southern Ute Tribal Members Only, unless specified)

Deer and Elk

Season Dates: Archery: August 22nd - August 30th, 2026
General: August 31st - December 31st, 2026
Permits Issued: August 10th, 2026
Bag Limits: 3 Deer (1 Buck and 2 Does*)
3 Elk (1 Bull and 2 Cows*)

** Tribal Members must have their first doe or cow validated to receive their second doe or cow tag.*



First Descendant Antlerless Elk

Season Dates: December 1st – 31st, 2026
Weapon Type: Any Legal Weapon
Application: Apply through the Wildlife Division*
Permits Issued: November 16th, 2026
Bag Limits: 1 Antlerless Elk

** Permits available by limited draw only. Successful first descendant hunters must have their elk validated**

Application Fee: \$25 (non-refundable)
Permit Fee: \$75
Total Fees: \$100

Applications must be submitted by October 23rd, 2026. If there are more applicants than permits, then permits will be issued through a random draw. If there are fewer applicants than available permits, all the applicants will receive a permit to hunt.

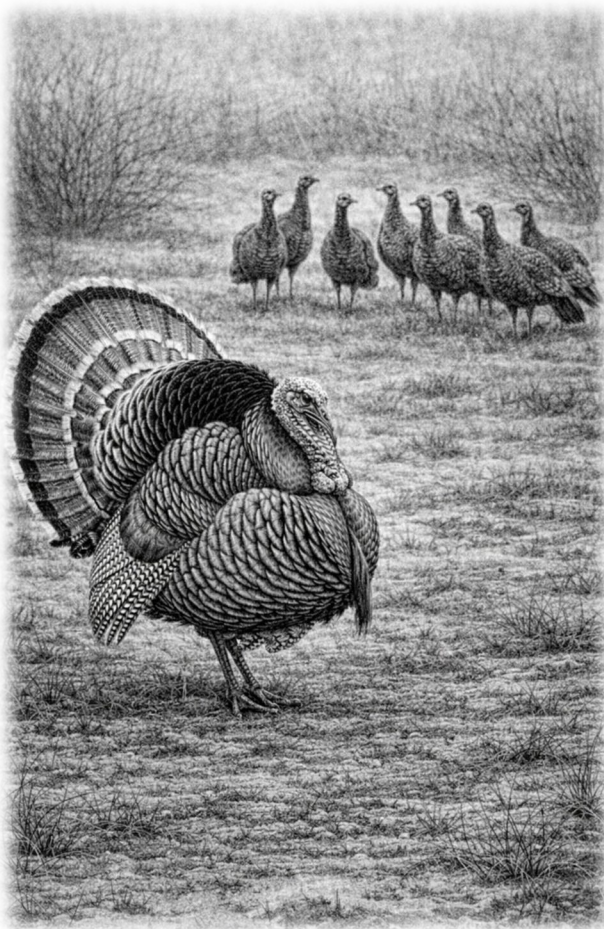
The Wildlife Division will be accepting online applications from October 1st – October 31st. To apply, please visit the Southern Ute Indian Tribe Online Store.

Spring Turkey

Season Dates: March 21st - May 24th, 2026
Permits Issued: March 9th, 2026
Bag Limit: 2 bearded turkeys. No beard length restrictions, but a harvested bird must have a beard naturally attached.
Validation: 1st bird must be validated prior to obtaining a 2nd permit

Fall Turkey

Season Dates: Early Archery: August 22nd - August 30th, 2026
General: August 31st - December 31st, 2026
Permits Issued: August 10th, 2026
Bag Limit: 1 Turkey (either sex)



Mountain Lion



- Season Dates: November 1st, 2026 - August 3rd, 2027,
or until the harvest quota is filled
- Permits Issued: September 14th, 2026
- Bag Limit: 1 mountain lion (either sex)
- Dogs: Using trained hunting dogs in the take and
attempted take of mountain lions will be allowed.
- Restrictions: It is unlawful to kill mountain lion kittens or
female mountain lions accompanied by kittens.
Kittens are defined as mountain lions exhibiting
visible spotting of the fur. Female mountain
lions accompanied by kittens are defined as
female mountain lions that have kittens traveling
with them or dependent on them.
- Harvest Quotas: 7 mountain lions total or 4 female mountain
lions

It is the hunter's responsibility to call the harvest quota information line to check the status of harvest quotas and hunt area closures prior to hunting. Call (970) 563-0130 any time for quota status.

*****The mountain lion hunting season will remain open until the season ending date or until the harvest quota is filled, whichever comes first.**

Crossing Permits and Guiding and Outfitting for Mountain Lions

Non-members accompanying Tribal Member lion hunters must possess a Hunter Accompany Crossing Permit, which can be purchased from the Wildlife Division. The Crossing Permit is specifically to accompany a permitted hunter while hunting on Tribal land. The permittee is expressly prohibited from carrying a firearm, or providing hunter assistance in the form of equipment, specially trained dogs, pack animals, or other similar types of hunting aids commonly provided by professional guides and outfitters.



Black Bear

Season Dates: There is no open season for black bear.

**The Tribe designates the black bear as a protected, culturally sensitive species that shall not be subject to harvest by Tribal Member hunters either on-reservation or within the Brunot Treaty area under a Southern Ute Tribal-issued permit.

Gray Wolf

Gray wolves remain listed as *Endangered* under the federal Endangered Species Act. As such, they may not be hunted recreationally. When delisted the Tribe will retain full management control of gray wolves and may establish hunting seasons at that time. Please report wolf conflict to the Wildlife Division

Upland Game Birds

(Including Dusky Grouse and Quail)

Season Dates: August 31st – December 31st, 2026

Permits Issued: August 10th, 2026

Bag Limit: Dusky (Blue) Grouse: 3 birds per day

Gambel's Quail: 8 birds per day

Dogs: Using trained hunting dogs in the take and attempted take of upland game birds will be allowed.

Migratory Game birds

(including doves, pigeons, rails and snipe)

Permits Issued: Beginning August 10th, 2026

Dogs: Using trained hunting dogs in the take and attempted take of migratory game birds will be allowed.

Migratory game bird season dates and bag limits will coincide with the State of Colorado migratory bird hunting seasons. Please obtain and read the *Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2026 Small Game Hunting Brochure* for more information regarding migratory game birds.

Waterfowl

(including ducks, geese and coots)

Permits Issued: Beginning August 10th, 2026

Dogs: Using trained hunting dogs in the take and attempted take of waterfowl will be allowed.

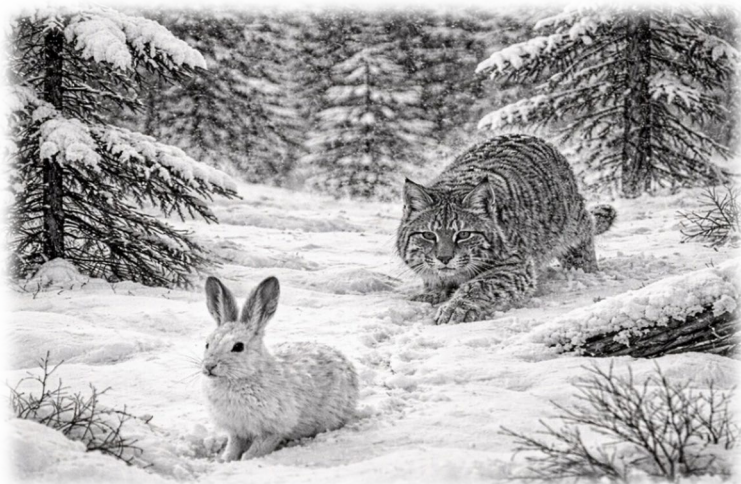
Waterfowl season dates and bag limits will coincide with the Pacific flyway season framework and the State of Colorado waterfowl hunting seasons. Please obtain and read the *Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2026 Waterfowl Hunting Brochure* for more information. Waterfowl hunters are required to obtain a federal duck stamp before hunting waterfowl (available at the Post Office).

Small Game

(including Furbearers)

Permits may be picked up at any time during the calendar year. The season runs year-round.

Refer to Title 13 the Wildlife Conservation Code for a complete list of small game species. Small game shall include, but is not limited to, beaver, badger, bobcat, fox species, muskrat, rabbits and hares, raccoon, ringtail, squirrel species, and weasel species (excluding river otters).



While no bag limits apply to small game species, certain rules and regulations do apply to trapping:

Important Regulations for Trapping:

1. Permission to trap. No person shall trap furbearers on private, assigned and allotted lands without the permission of the landowner, assignee or person in charge of the property.
2. Interference with traps. It is unlawful to interfere with, disturb, remove or otherwise molest any trap, snare or other device lawfully set by a trapper, or remove any furbearer from said devices.
3. Unattended traps. It is the duty of a trapper to endeavor to prevent undue suffering by wildlife captured or trapped. It is unlawful for any person to set a trap and leave it unattended in excess of twenty-four (24) hours unless chemical or mechanical methods are provided to prevent suffering of trapped animals.
4. Traps in the field must have identification of the trapper attached and available for Enforcement to see upon checking the trap. Identification must include the trapper's name and phone number. Identification methods can include engraving into a trap or attaching an identification tag (metal preferred). Other methods can be acceptable as long as the tag is visible for inspection.

Shed Antler Collection Season

No Permit Required

Season Dates: Year Round

Shed antler collection on Tribal Lands is open to Southern Ute Tribal Members only. There is no permit required or restrictions on Tribal Members pertaining to shed antler hunting/collecting. Non-members, including spouses, immediate family or others, may not pick up and possess shed antlers while on tribal lands.



Open and Closed Areas for Hunting on the Reservation:

Open Areas

Open areas for huntable species shall include all lands within the exterior boundaries of the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. For private, assigned and allotted lands, hunters must first obtain written access permission from the landowner. For USFS lands and Navajo State Park lands contact the respective agencies for information pertaining to access restrictions.

Closed Areas

Closed areas shall include all grounds immediately surrounding the Lake Capote Recreation Area including the campground and Indian Mesa (La Boca area). For precise boundaries contact the Wildlife Division.

Closure of Lake Capote Recreation Area

The Lake Capote Recreation Area will be closed to all hunting. Hwy 160 borders the closure area on the north and Hwy 151 on the west. The range fence directly south of the lake (running east/west) defines the southern boundary and the east boundary will follow the eastern bank of Stollsteimer Creek running north. The map on page 18 shows the restricted area. Contact the Wildlife or Lands Divisions with questions.

Closure of Indian Mesa

Indian Mesa (La Boca area) was closed by Resolution (2000-215) in December of 2000 and prohibits any activity which might jeopardize the cultural sensitivity of the area. Prohibited activities include firewood cutting, **hunting**, camping, leasing and grazing. The map on page 19 shows the restricted area. Contact the Wildlife or Lands Divisions with questions.

Additional Hunting Regulations

A complete listing of regulations pertaining to hunting on the Southern Ute Indian reservation is contained in Title 13: Wildlife Conservation Code. Contact the DWRM for a current copy of Title 13 or visit our website: <http://www.southernute-nsn.gov/wrmweb/>. Additionally, the Division has a limited number of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe Wildlife Laws Handbook 2008 available to Tribal hunters. Please ask about them in the Wildlife office.

Failure to wear Daylight or Fluorescent Orange or Pink Garments

During the big game hunting season, it is unlawful to hunt deer and/or elk with a firearm unless the person hunting is wearing a head covering and an outer garment above the waistline, both of solid daylight fluorescent orange or pink color, totaling five hundred (500) square inches or more of clothing. Penalties include fines and points towards permit revocation. Persons specifically hunting for fall turkey or specifically hunting for mountain lions when big game seasons are running concurrently are not required to wear blaze orange but are encouraged to do so for their own safety in the field.

Failing to Tag Wildlife Properly

It is unlawful for any person to fail to tag wildlife properly. In its simplest form, tagging means to sign and punch the dates on your tag and affix it to the animal's carcass. Penalties include fines and points towards permit revocation.

Shooting from a Motor Vehicle

It is unlawful for any person to shoot any type of firearm from a motor vehicle to take wildlife. Penalties include fines and points towards permit revocation.

Wastage of Game Meat / Abandoning a Carcass

It is unlawful to abandon any edible portion of wildlife or permit it to go to waste. Penalties for big game include fines and points toward permit revocation. Additionally, it is unlawful to take any wildlife and abandon the carcass or take wildlife only for the head, claws, teeth, hide, antlers, horns, tusks, or organs with the intent to abandon the carcass, or to mutilate any living wildlife. Penalties include fines and points towards permit revocation.

Off-road Travel on Tribal Lands

It is unlawful to travel off of established roads and two-tracks with any vehicle while on Tribal lands. This includes ATVs. Penalties include fines and points towards permit revocation.

Schedule of Civil Penalties Connected to Poaching Convictions on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation

Big Game

Deer

Trophy Buck (24" or greater inside spread)	\$10,000 + 15 Points
Buck	\$5,000+ 15 Points
Doe	\$1,000+ 15 Points

Elk

Trophy Bull (6 + points on one antler)	\$10,000+ 15 Points
Bull	\$5,000+ 15 Points
Cow	\$1,000+ 15 Points

Mountain Lion

\$5,000+ 15 Points

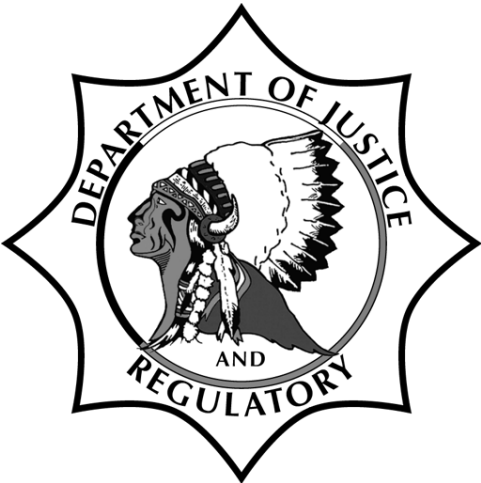
Shed Antlers

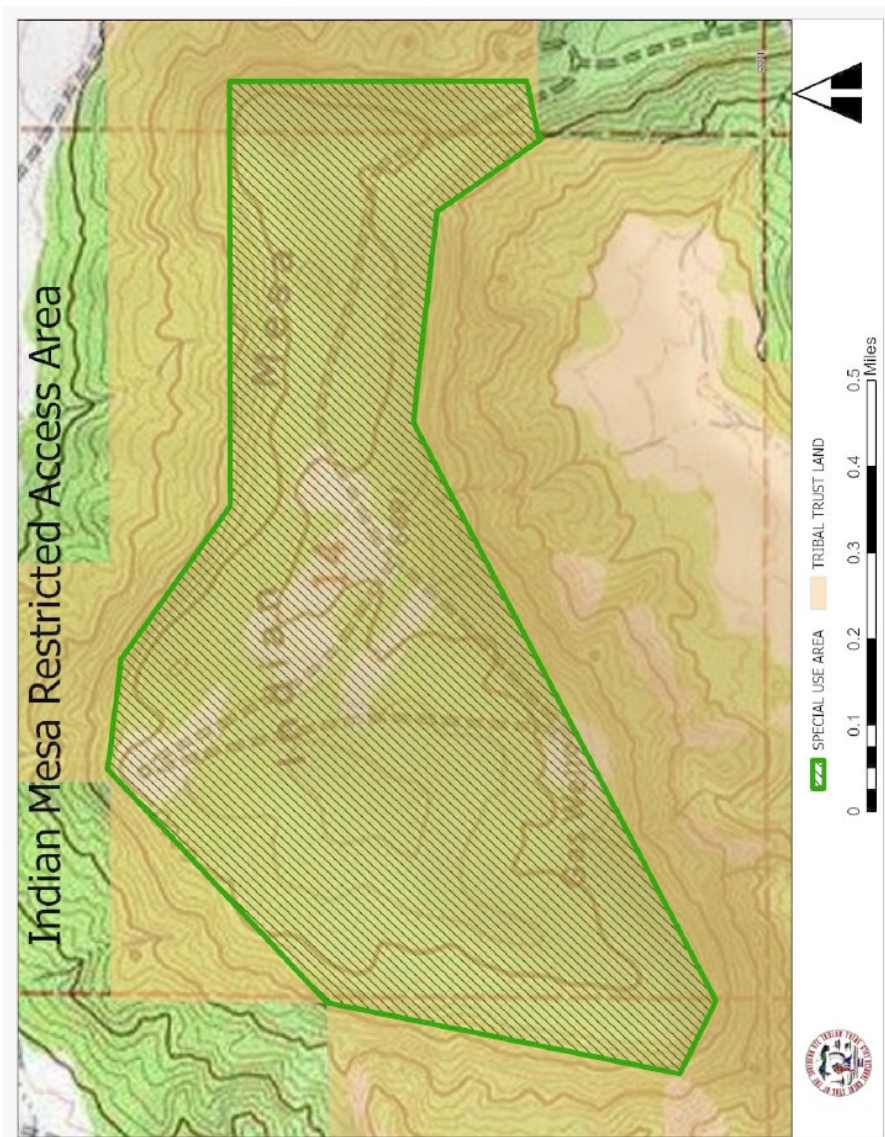
\$2,500+ 15 Points

Additional penalties associated with poaching convictions often include point accrual and revocation of hunting and fishing privileges on the Southern Ute Indian reservation for 2 – 5 years

Authority

These hunting regulations are approved by the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council under authority as outlined in Title 13, Article 1, Section 13-1-106, Subsections (1) through (3); Article 2, Section 13-2-101, Subsections (1) through (5); Article 2, Section 13-2-104; Article 2, Section 13-2-105, Subsections (1) through (3); of the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Code revised and amended by Tribal Resolution No's. 89-34, 01-69, and 02-215.





Indian Mesa Special Use Area has restricted access, and hunting is prohibited within the boundary depicted above.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Division of Wildlife Resource Management
P.O. Box 737 / 116 Memorial Drive
Ignacio, CO 81137
970-563-0130

Southern Ute Tribal Rangers
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970-563-0133

Southern Ute Police Department Dispatch
970-563-4401

Any questions regarding this proclamation should be directed to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife Resource Management.

