

Instructions:

The data provided in text areas of these forms will be used to generate a notice of rulemaking in the portal of “Proposed Rule Postings” online, and the newspapers of record if the rule is marked for publication. Publication of notices will be charged back to the promulgating agency.

10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule

(signature)

(date)

Andrea Shortsleeve, Interim Commissioner
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Secretary, Fish and Wildlife Board

RECEIVED BY: _____

- ☐ Coversheet
- ☐ Adopting Page
- ☐ Economic Impact Analysis
- ☐ Environmental Impact Analysis
- ☐ Strategy for Maximizing Public Input
- ☐ Scientific Information Statement (if applicable)
- ☐ Incorporated by Reference Statement (if applicable)
- ☐ Clean text of the rule (Amended text without annotation)
- ☐ Annotated text (Clearly marking changes from previous rule)
- ☐ ICAR Minutes
- ☐ Copy of Comments
- ☐ Responsiveness Summary

1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule

2. PROPOSED NUMBER ASSIGNED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

25P013

3. ADOPTING AGENCY:

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board

4. PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON:

(A PERSON WHO IS ABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THE RULE).

Name: Hannah Smith

Agency: Department of Fish and Wildlife, Agency of
Natural Resources

Mailing Address: 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2,
Montpelier Vermont, 05620

Telephone: 802-461-8187 Fax: 802-828-1250

E-Mail: hannah.smith@vermont.gov

Web URL *(WHERE THE RULE WILL BE POSTED)*:

<https://vtfishandwildlife.com/about-us/fish-and-wildlife-board/board-rules>

5. SECONDARY CONTACT PERSON:

(A SPECIFIC PERSON FROM WHOM COPIES OF FILINGS MAY BE REQUESTED OR WHO MAY ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT FORMS SUBMITTED FOR FILING IF DIFFERENT FROM THE PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON).

Name: Nick Fortin

Agency: Department of Fish and Wildlife, Agency of
Natural Resources

Mailing Address: 271 North Main Street, Suite 215
Rutland, Vermont 05701

Telephone: 802-786-0040 Fax: 802-828-1250

E-Mail: nick.fortin@vermont.gov

6. RECORDS EXEMPTION INCLUDED WITHIN RULE:

(DOES THE RULE CONTAIN ANY PROVISION DESIGNATING INFORMATION AS CONFIDENTIAL; LIMITING ITS PUBLIC RELEASE; OR OTHERWISE, EXEMPTING IT FROM INSPECTION AND COPYING?) No

IF YES, CITE THE STATUTORY AUTHORITY FOR THE EXEMPTION:

PLEASE SUMMARIZE THE REASON FOR THE EXEMPTION:

7. LEGAL AUTHORITY / ENABLING LEGISLATION:

(THE SPECIFIC STATUTORY OR LEGAL CITATION FROM SESSION LAW INDICATING WHO THE ADOPTING ENTITY IS AND THUS WHO THE SIGNATORY SHOULD BE. THIS SHOULD BE A SPECIFIC CITATION NOT A CHAPTER CITATION).

10 V.S.A. §4082(a), 10 V.S.A. §4084

8. EXPLANATION OF HOW THE RULE IS WITHIN THE AUTHORITY OF THE AGENCY:

10 V.S.A. §4082(a) states that the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board is authorized to adopt rules "for the regulation of fish and wild game and the taking thereof" and that the rules "shall be designed to to maintain the best health, population, and utilization levels of the regulated species . . . In addition, under 10 V.S.A. §4084, the Board has broad authority to establish: seasons; possession limits; territorial limits; the manner and means of taking any species; reporting and tagging of game; and restrictions on taking based upon sex, maturity, or other physical distinction of the species.

9. THE FILING HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE THE FILING OF THE PROPOSED RULE.

10. THE AGENCY HAS NOT INCLUDED WITH THIS FILING A LETTER EXPLAINING IN DETAIL WHAT CHANGES WERE MADE, CITING CHAPTER AND SECTION WHERE APPLICABLE.

11. SUBSTANTIAL ARGUMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS WERE NOT RAISED FOR OR AGAINST THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL.

12. THE AGENCY HAS INCLUDED COPIES OF ALL WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS AND SYNOPSES OF ORAL COMMENTS RECEIVED.

13. THE AGENCY HAS INCLUDED A LETTER EXPLAINING IN DETAIL THE REASONS FOR THE AGENCY'S DECISION TO REJECT OR ADOPT THEM.

14. CONCISE SUMMARY (150 WORDS OR LESS):

The proposed rule amendments include technical and substantive changes, including updated language related to moose permit allocation through the auction to bring the rule language in compliance with statute, the creation of a Special Opportunity Season concurrent with the current archery season to allow Special Opportunity permit holders to hunt with a gun during this time period, the extension of the regular season

from six to nine days, and technical changes for consistency and clarity.

15. EXPLANATION OF WHY THE RULE IS NECESSARY:

The rule changes are necessary to make the rule language related to auction allocations consistent with the statutory language, and to improve hunting opportunities for regular season and Special Opportunity season hunters.

16. EXPLANATION OF HOW THE RULE IS NOT ARBITRARY:

The rule is explicitly authorized by statute, and the proposed changes are consistent with the Board's authority under 10 V.S.A. § 4084, authorizing the adoption of rules concerning wild game that establish: seasons; possession limits; territorial limits; the manner and means of taking any species.

17. LIST OF PEOPLE, ENTERPRISES AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS RULE:

Hunters and their families, Department staff including wardens; Vermonter's eligible for Special Opportunity permits; and businesses that sell hunting equipment.

18. BRIEF SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC IMPACT (150 WORDS OR LESS):

The rule proposes to extend the regular moose season, which may result in a nominal economic benefit to businesses that sell hunting equipment and businesses patronized by moose hunters during the season. In particular, lodging establishments in and around Essex County may experience a nominal economic benefit as a result of the extended season.

19. A HEARING WAS HELD.

20. HEARING INFORMATION

(THE FIRST HEARING SHALL BE NO SOONER THAN 30 DAYS FOLLOWING THE POSTING OF NOTICES ONLINE).

IF THIS FORM IS INSUFFICIENT TO LIST THE INFORMATION FOR EACH HEARING, PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET TO COMPLETE THE HEARING INFORMATION.

Date: 5/6/2025

Time: 06:30 PM

Street Address: Winooski Middle and High School, 60 Normand St., Winooski VT

Zip Code: 05404

URL for Virtual:

Date: 5/8/2025

Time: 06:30 PM

Street Address: Springfield High School, 303 South St.,
Springfield VT

Zip Code: 05156

URL for Virtual:

Date:

Time: AM

Street Address:

Zip Code:

URL for Virtual:

Date:

Time: AM

Street Address:

Zip Code:

URL for Virtual:

21. DEADLINE FOR COMMENT (NO EARLIER THAN 7 DAYS FOLLOWING LAST HEARING):

5/25/2020

KEYWORDS (PLEASE PROVIDE AT LEAST 3 KEYWORDS OR PHRASES TO AID IN THE
SEARCHABILITY OF THE RULE NOTICE ONLINE).

Moose

Moose hunting

Moose permit

Auction

Special opportunity permit

Adopting Page

Instructions:

This form must accompany each filing made during the rulemaking process:

Note: To satisfy the requirement for an annotated text, an agency must submit the entire rule in annotated form with proposed and final proposed filings. Filing an annotated paragraph or page of a larger rule is not sufficient. Annotation must clearly show the changes to the rule.

When possible, the agency shall file the annotated text, using the appropriate page or pages from the Code of Vermont Rules as a basis for the annotated version. New rules need not be accompanied by an annotated text.

1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule

2. ADOPTING AGENCY:

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board

3. TYPE OF FILING (*PLEASE CHOOSE THE TYPE OF FILING FROM THE DROPDOWN MENU BASED ON THE DEFINITIONS PROVIDED BELOW*):

- **AMENDMENT** - Any change to an already existing rule, even if it is a complete rewrite of the rule, it is considered an amendment if the rule is replaced with other text.
- **NEW RULE** - A rule that did not previously exist even under a different name.
- **REPEAL** - The removal of a rule in its entirety, without replacing it with other text.

This filing is **AN AMENDMENT OF AN EXISTING RULE** .

4. LAST ADOPTED (*PLEASE PROVIDE THE SOS LOG#, TITLE AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE LAST ADOPTION FOR THE EXISTING RULE*):

SOS Log # 19-046 (12-010-049), Moose Management Rule, effective January 1, 2020.

Economic Impact Analysis

Instructions:

In completing the economic impact analysis, an agency analyzes and evaluates the anticipated costs and benefits to be expected from adoption of the rule; estimates the costs and benefits for each category of people enterprises and government entities affected by the rule; compares alternatives to adopting the rule; and explains their analysis concluding that rulemaking is the most appropriate method of achieving the regulatory purpose. If no impacts are anticipated, please specify “No impact anticipated” in the field.

Rules affecting or regulating schools or school districts must include cost implications to local school districts and taxpayers in the impact statement, a clear statement of associated costs, and consideration of alternatives to the rule to reduce or ameliorate costs to local school districts while still achieving the objectives of the rule (see 3 V.S.A. § 832b for details).

Rules affecting small businesses (excluding impacts incidental to the purchase and payment of goods and services by the State or an agency thereof), must include ways that a business can reduce the cost or burden of compliance or an explanation of why the agency determines that such evaluation isn’t appropriate, and an evaluation of creative, innovative or flexible methods of compliance that would not significantly impair the effectiveness of the rule or increase the risk to the health, safety, or welfare of the public or those affected by the rule.

1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule

2. ADOPTING AGENCY:

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board

3. CATEGORY OF AFFECTED PARTIES:

LIST CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE, ENTERPRISES, AND GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE ADOPTION OF THIS RULE AND THE ESTIMATED COSTS AND BENEFITS ANTICIPATED:

Hunters who participate in the regular season, and hunters eligible for Special Opportunity permits will be affected. The extended regular season will provide hunters who receive a permit more opportunities to hunt since they will have more flexibility to hunt on weekend days, and schedule their hunt around inclement weather. This will allow them more opportunities to

potentially fill their tag. The proposed Special Opportunity season will take place the first week of October during the moose rut, allowing participants a better chance of success while the moose are active. The economic impact on hunters is anticipated to be nominal.

The proposed extended season may provide an economic benefit to businesses selling hunting equipment throughout the state. In particular lodging facilities in and around Essex County, Vermont may see a negligible economic benefit as a result of the season extending across two weekends.

4. IMPACT ON SCHOOLS:

INDICATE ANY IMPACT THAT THE RULE WILL HAVE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS CLEARLY STATING ANY ASSOCIATED COSTS:

The proposed rule will not have an impact on schools.

5. ALTERNATIVES: CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES TO THE RULE TO REDUCE OR AMELIORATE COSTS TO LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHILE STILL ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVE OF THE RULE.

The proposed rule will not have an impact on schools.

6. IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES:

INDICATE ANY IMPACT THAT THE RULE WILL HAVE ON SMALL BUSINESSES (EXCLUDING IMPACTS INCIDENTAL TO THE PURCHASE AND PAYMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES BY THE STATE OR AN AGENCY THEREOF):

The proposed extended season may provide an economic benefit to small businesses selling hunting equipment and providing lodging to hunters.

7. SMALL BUSINESS COMPLIANCE: EXPLAIN WAYS A BUSINESS CAN REDUCE THE COST/BURDEN OF COMPLIANCE OR AN EXPLANATION OF WHY THE AGENCY DETERMINES THAT SUCH EVALUATION ISN'T APPROPRIATE.

The rule does not impose requirements on small businesses and there are no anticipated burdens or costs to small businesses to comply with the proposed rule change.

8. COMPARISON:

COMPARE THE IMPACT OF THE RULE WITH THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO THE RULE, INCLUDING NO RULE ON THE SUBJECT OR A RULE HAVING

SEPARATE REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS:

The economic impacts of the rule will be nominal.

9. *SUFFICIENCY: DESCRIBE HOW THE ANALYSIS WAS CONDUCTED, IDENTIFYING RELEVANT INTERNAL AND/OR EXTERNAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED.*

The analysis reviewed all relevant information. Given that the rule does not significantly modify the opportunities for or methods of moose hunting, the economic impact is expected to be negligible.

Environmental Impact Analysis

Instructions:

In completing the environmental impact analysis, an agency analyzes and evaluates the anticipated environmental impacts (positive or negative) to be expected from adoption of the rule; compares alternatives to adopting the rule; explains the sufficiency of the environmental impact analysis. If no impacts are anticipated, please specify “No impact anticipated” in the field.

Examples of Environmental Impacts include but are not limited to:

- Impacts on the emission of greenhouse gases
- Impacts on the discharge of pollutants to water
- Impacts on the arability of land
- Impacts on the climate
- Impacts on the flow of water
- Impacts on recreation
- Or other environmental impacts

1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule

2. ADOPTING AGENCY:

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board

3. GREENHOUSE GAS: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS THE EMISSION OF GREENHOUSE GASES (E.G. TRANSPORTATION OF PEOPLE OR GOODS; BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE; LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT, WASTE GENERATION, ETC.):*
The proposed rule will not impact the emission of greenhouse gases.

4. WATER: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS WATER (E.G. DISCHARGE / ELIMINATION OF POLLUTION INTO VERMONT WATERS, THE FLOW OF WATER IN THE STATE, WATER QUALITY ETC.):*
The proposed rule will not impact water quality.

5. LAND: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS LAND (E.G. IMPACTS ON FORESTRY, AGRICULTURE ETC.):*
The proposed rule will not impact land use.

6. **RECREATION:** *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS RECREATION IN THE STATE:*

For hunters who receive a moose tag, the proposed rule will extend the season by three days, allowing for more opportunities to hunt.

7. **CLIMATE:** *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS THE CLIMATE IN THE STATE:*

The proposed rule will not impact climate.

8. **OTHER:** *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACT OTHER ASPECTS OF VERMONT'S ENVIRONMENT:*

None.

9. **SUFFICIENCY:** *DESCRIBE HOW THE ANALYSIS WAS CONDUCTED, IDENTIFYING RELEVANT INTERNAL AND/OR EXTERNAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED.*

The analysis is based on an assessment of all available information. The rule proposes changes to the length of the season, but does not change means of take or modify the approach to moose management, and is not expected to have an environmental impact.

Public Input Maximization Plan

Instructions:

Agencies are encouraged to hold hearings as part of their strategy to maximize the involvement of the public in the development of rules. Please complete the form below by describing the agency's strategy for maximizing public input (what it did do, or will do to maximize the involvement of the public).

This form must accompany each filing made during the rulemaking process:

1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule

2. ADOPTING AGENCY:

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board

3. PLEASE DESCRIBE THE AGENCY'S STRATEGY TO MAXIMIZE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED RULE, LISTING THE STEPS THAT HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE TAKEN TO COMPLY WITH THAT STRATEGY:

The Board meetings regarding all rulemaking are open to the public and the public is allowed to comment at every Board meeting. The Board votes to initiate the rulemaking process before filing with ICAR, votes after the public comment period, and then again before final adopted rules are filed with the Secretary of State. The public is free to comment to individual Board members and to the Department at any time during the rulemaking process. In addition, the board will hold two public hearings on the rule in addition to public meetings held at the beginning of the public comment period, and have a public comment period that exceeds thirty days. The proposed rule language was posted on the Board's rulemaking website on February 22nd, and the Department will publicize the rule amendments in social media and press releases.

4. BEYOND GENERAL ADVERTISEMENTS, PLEASE LIST THE PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED RULE:

Public Input

Board members, Department staff including wardens and biologists, the petitioner who requested the creation of the Special Opportunity season.

§ 33. Moose Management Rule

1.0 Authority.

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(a). In adopting this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and furbearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the moose herd.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board may: establish open seasons; daily, season and possession limits for game; territorial limits; prescribe the manner and means of taking moose; establish territorial limits for the taking of moose; and establish restrictions on taking based upon sex, maturity and other physical distinctions.

1.4 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i)(1), this rule establishes a process to auction up to six (6) moose permits to be awarded to the highest bidders.

1.5 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i)(2), this rule establishes a separate drawing for eligible Vermont veterans through a special priority drawing through the permit lottery system.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to establish two annual moose seasons, to establish the procedures to be used in applying for and issuing moose permits, and to establish the administrative framework for regulating the taking of moose.

3.0 Definitions.

3.1 “Antlered moose” means a moose which has at least one antler 6 inches or more in length measured from the tip of the main beam along the distal edge of the antler to the base of the antler burr at the skull.

3.2 “Antlerless” means those moose without antlers or antlers less than six inches in length.

3.3 “Applicant” means a person who has submitted a completed legal application to the lottery.

3.4 “Application” means the form provided by the Department that allows a person to be entered into the lottery.

3.5 “Board” means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board.

3.6 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.7 “Crossbow” means a device consisting of a bow mounted to a rigid stock for discharging bolts or arrows and having a mechanical means to hold and release the drawn string, which must be fired from the shoulder. A bolt means a short projectile for a crossbow that resembles an arrow and has a head that measures no less than 7/8 inch at its widest point. A crossbow shall have a minimum pull of 125 pounds, a working mechanical safety and a stock no less than 23 inches in length.

3.8 “Department” means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.9 “Either sex” means a moose of any sex.

3.10 “Guide” means a person authorized to accompany, direct, aid, assist, and/or instruct a Permittee during a moose hunt.

3.11 “Guide Permit” means a document, provided by the Department to the Permittee, to allow for a guide to assist in a moose hunt.

3.12 “Legal means” means the taking of a moose by muzzleloader, rifle, handgun, shotgun, a crossbow, or bow and arrow in conformance with this rule.

3.13 “Permit” means a document issued by the Department authorizing the taking of a moose.

3.14 “Permittee” means a person who has successfully acquired a legal permit through the lottery or auction as described in this rule.

3.15 “Subpermittee” means an individual designated by a Permittee, whose name has been provided to the Department in conformance with this rule, who may be permitted to take a moose.

3.16 “Wildlife Management Unit” (WMU) means a geographical area in Vermont established for managing wildlife through regulation and defined in 10 App. V.S.A § 2b.

4.0 Moose Seasons

There shall be three moose seasons annually.

4.1 Archery.

(a) This season shall be open for seven consecutive days, beginning the first day of October.

(b) To take an animal during this season a person must possess a valid archery moose permit as prescribed in Section 8 of this rule.

4.2 Regular.

(a) This season shall be open for six consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in October. Beginning on October 1, 2026, this season shall be open for nine consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in October.

(b) To take an animal during this season a person must possess a valid regular season moose permit as prescribed in Section 8 of this rule.

4.3 Special Opportunity

(a) This season shall be open for seven consecutive days, beginning the first day of October.

(b) To take an animal during this season a person must possess a valid special opportunity moose permit as prescribed in Section 17 of this rule.

Commented [HS1]: Instead of creating a third season, could we specify that the holders of Special Opportunity Permits can hunt during either season? It's a small number of permit holders.

5.0 Possession Limit.

5.1 The bag limit for moose shall be one moose per moose hunting permit.

5.2 The possession limit for moose shall be one moose per moose hunting permit.

6.0 Permit Application Process

6.1 Applications must be made on an official moose hunting application form provided by the Department.

6.2 Only applications received by the Department's central office during the official application period will be considered. Applications must be received prior to the deadline established by the Department.

6.3 The Department will consider only complete applications. For an application to be complete it must be legible, must contain all the information requested by the Department, must bear the applicant's original signature, or, in the case of electronic or facsimile applications, attestation under the pains and penalties of perjury. To be considered complete the form must be accompanied by any required application fee, or means of payment, such as a valid credit card payment.

6.4 The Department will consider no more than one complete application from any applicant per year for each of the two separate lotteries held. A lottery will be held for both the regular and archery seasons. Only one permit may be issued per person per calendar year.

6.5 Ten (10) percent of the moose hunting permits may be issued to non-resident hunters.

6.6 No person who has held a valid Vermont moose hunting permit in any of the previous five (5) years may apply for a moose hunting permit or a bonus point in the current calendar year.

7.0 Permit Selection Process.

7.1 All those who have submitted completed applications and who wish to be entered into the lottery will be entered into the lottery. The Department will hold, or cause to be held, a transparent, random drawing to include all persons who have submitted a complete application.

7.2 Selected regular season applicants will receive a permit for their WMU of preference until the permit quota for their preferred WMU is filled at which time a permit will be awarded for their second choice WMU, and so on.

7.3 Selected regular season applicants will be notified by mail, and will receive a permit form to complete. Successful applicants have 15 calendar days to return the completed forms with the appropriate fee, and their Subpermittee's name, if any.

7.4 Selected archery season applicants will be notified by mail, and will receive a permit form to complete. Successful applicants have 15 calendar days to return the completed forms with the appropriate fee and indicate the name of their Subpermittee, if any.

8.0 Moose Hunting Permits

8.1 An applicant who is chosen by lottery, or is a successful auction bidder may purchase a moose hunting permit from the Department.

8.2 At the time of issuance, all moose hunting permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must hold a valid Vermont big game hunting license.

8.3 At the time of issuance, archery season permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must show proof of having held an archery deer license and/or a certificate of satisfactory completion of a bowhunter education course from Vermont or another state or province of Canada which is approved by the Commissioner.

8.4 Moose hunting permits are valid only within the WMU or WMUs designated on the permit, for the specified season, and for the type (either sex, antlered, or antlerless) specified on the permit.

9.0 Deferments

9.1 The Commissioner may grant a one-time, one-year deferment to successful applicants for reasons of personal or family illness, temporary disability, or military deployment.

9.2 Requests for deferment shall be made on the Department-issued form to the Commissioner and received no later than the first day of the moose season for which a permit has been issued. Requests shall contain information required by the Commissioner to substantiate the request.

9.3 Deferred permits shall be issued for the same WMU and permit type (either sex, antlered, antlerless, archery or regular) as the originally issued permit.

10.0 Subpermittees

10.1 A person holding a valid moose hunting permit may designate one (1) Subpermittee who shall be permitted to hunt moose pursuant to the permit.

10.2 The Subpermittee must always be accompanied by the permit holder. For these purposes, "accompanied," means being able to communicate without the aid of artificial devices except medically-prescribed eyeglasses or hearing aids.

10.3 Once the applicant has provided the name of their selected Subpermittee to the Department, no change to this selection will be allowed except for personal or family illness, temporary physical disability, or military deployment.

10.4 Any request for change of Subpermittee must be made in writing to the Commissioner and received no later than three (3) days prior to the start of the moose season for which a permit has been issued.

10.5 Subpermittee Ineligibility

(a) No person who has held a Vermont moose hunting permit in any of the previous five (5) years may be designated as a Subpermittee in the current calendar year.

(b) No person who holds a valid moose hunting permit in one year may be designated as a Subpermittee in the same year.

(c) No person may be named as a Subpermittee on more than one permit during the same year.

11.0 Guides and Guide Permits.

11.1 The Guide shall be allowed to direct, aid, assist and instruct the Permittee and Subpermittee during the hunt.

11.2 A Guide may not carry any other firearm, muzzleloader, or archery equipment.

11.3 Each Permittee shall be issued a Guide Permit by the Department. The Guide Permit must be carried by the guide at all times while accompanying the Permittee while hunting moose.

11.4 A person serving as a Guide must hold a current valid Vermont big game hunting license.

11.5 A Guide Permit may be carried by different persons at any time during the moose hunt, but only one person at a time may serve as a Guide for each moose hunting party.

11.6 A person may simultaneously serve as a Guide for more than one moose Permittee but must be carrying the proper Guide Permit for each guided party.

12.0 Control Measures

12.1 In addition to all relevant laws and regulations pertaining to the hunting and taking of big game in Vermont, the following additional restrictions apply:

- (a) No persons other than the Permittee, Subpermittee and Guide shall participate in a hunt to take moose.
- (b) Portable radio transceivers, GPS, and/or cell phones shall not be used to communicate during the hunting or taking of moose. Such devices may be used, however, after the moose is legally tagged.
- (c) No electronic devices such as radio telemetry equipment shall be used to take moose.
- (d) No electronic devices may be used to attract moose.
- (e) No person shall shoot or attempt to shoot a moose when the moose is within 100 yards of any town, state, or federal highway as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 4705(f).
- (f) Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. App. § 12, notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. App. § 12, Section 1(g), a person may employ the licensed handler of an authorized leashed tracking dog to track a moose wounded while lawfully hunting under this rule.

12.2 Means of take, Regular Season and Special Opportunity Season: Moose may be taken only with the following implements and restrictions:

- (a) Centerfire rifles or handguns not less than .25 caliber.
- (b) A muzzleloading firearm of not less than .45 caliber, with a minimum barrel length of 20 inches and designed to be fired from the shoulder, or a muzzleloading handgun of not less than .45 caliber and with a minimum barrel length of 10 inches.
- (c) Bows of not less than 50 pound draw weight, based on the archer's normal draw length for traditional bows, and using arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with two or more cutting edges. A person taking moose may use a crossbow as a means of take during any season that permits the use of a bow and arrow-only; and the crossbow is used in accordance with this subsection.
- (d) Shotguns not less than 20 gauge and utilizing slugs only.

12.3 Means of take, Archery Season: Moose may be taken only with the following implements and restrictions:

(a) Bows of not less than 50 pound draw weight, based on the archer's normal draw length for traditional bows, and using arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with no fewer than two or more cutting edges.

(b) Crossbow bolts shall have arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with two or more cutting edges.

(c) No person may possess a firearm or muzzleloader while hunting moose during the archery season, except for a handgun in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4252(b). No person taking moose may do so by means of firearms or muzzleloader in the archery season.

13.0 Tagging and Reporting

13.1 The transporting of moose shall be in accordance with current regulations and statutes pertaining to big game.

13.2 Once a moose is legally tagged, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 2a., there is no limit to the number of persons that can assist with the field dressing and removal of the moose from the kill site.

13.3 Moose taken under this rule must be reported, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 2, by exhibiting the eviscerated carcass, or parts thereof, to a Department official at a Department-authorized moose check station during its scheduled days and hours of operation within 48 hours of tagging.

13.4 A moose carcass may be quartered or deboned in the field prior to reporting provided all requirements of 10 V.S.A. App. § 2 and 10 V.S.A. §§ 4921 through 4925 are met. The viscera, hide, upper and lower leg bones, backbone, pelvis, and ribs may be left in the field. Evidence of sex (genitalia, antlers of moose) must be retained for reporting. All other required biological samples must also be retained for reporting.

13.5 The permittee shall bring the following to the biological check station:

- (a) The lower jaw, including incisors, one of which shall be taken for aging purposes;
- (b) The intact antler rack on an antlered moose;
- (c) The portion of the skull on a male antlerless moose where antlers would be attached;
- (d) The female reproductive tract including both of the ovaries; and
- (e) The udder

13.6 No moose shall be transported out of the State without first being reported as required herein.

13.7 The Permittee and/or Subpermittee must identify the exact kill site on a Department map, and if requested, shall be required to take Department personnel to the kill site and/or the site of

carcass evisceration for purposes such as, but not limited to, verification of the cause of death and site of kill, or to obtain ovaries or other biological samples left behind.

14.0 Permit Allocation

14.1 The number and type (either sex, antlered, or antlerless) of permits to hunt and take moose during both the regular and archery seasons will be set by the Board.

15.0 Special Priority for Eligible Vermont Veterans.

15.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i), eligible Vermont veterans will receive special priority drawing in the regular moose season lottery drawing.

15.2 If the Board establishes a moose hunting season, the Commissioner shall set aside not more than 10 percent of the total number of annual moose permits authorized by the Board for Vermont residents who have served on active duty in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces provided that they have not received a dishonorable discharge. The total number of annual moose permits set aside for Vermont veterans shall not exceed six.

15.3 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing must submit a complete application approved by the Department. A person applying for the special priority drawing permits must have marked the appropriate box on the application indicating that they comply with the provisions of this section.

15.4 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing and who are not drawn for a moose permit in that special priority drawing shall be entered into the subsequent regular drawing.

15.5 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing and who do not receive a moose permit shall be awarded preference points for the subsequent special priority drawing.

16.0 Moose Permit Auction

16.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i), if the Board establishes a moose hunting season, not more than 10 percent of the total number of annual moose permits authorized by the Board shall be set aside to be auctioned. The total number of annual moose permits set aside to be auctioned shall not exceed six. The moose permits, if any, set aside for auction shall be included in the total number of annual moose permits authorized by the Board.

16.2 Complete bids must be received by the Department's central office prior to the deadline established by the Department.

16.3 Permits will be awarded to individuals that submit the highest bids. Individuals submitting the next highest bids will be eligible, in order of declining bid value, to receive a permit if higher-ranked bidders do not submit payment within 15 calendar days following notification.

16.4 An individual may submit more than one bid; however he/she may only receive one moose permit. If an individual submits multiple bids, only the highest value bid will be included in the auction as an official bid.

16.5 Once notified of winning a moose permit, successful bidders have 15 calendar days to submit their bid payment, and to indicate: the season they will hunt in, the Wildlife Management Unit they will hunt in; and their Subpermittee, if any.

16.6 If an individual receives a moose permit from the regular moose lottery or archery moose lottery, and is also a successful auction bidder, the person may choose either permit. Should a person choose the regular moose lottery permit or the archery moose lottery permit, the bid amount will be refunded and the next highest unsuccessful bidder will be offered the auction permit.

16.7 Individuals who have held a valid moose permit acquired by the regular or archery moose lottery or auction are ineligible from participating in the moose permit auction for five years.

17.0 Special Opportunity Moose Permits

17.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4255(j), if the Board determines that a moose season will be held in accordance with the rules adopted under sections 4082 and 4084 of this title, the Commissioner annually may issue three no-cost moose licenses to persons who have a life-threatening disease or illness and who is sponsored by a qualified charitable organization, provided that at least one of the no-cost annual moose licenses awarded each year shall be awarded to a child or young adult 21 years of age or under who has a life-threatening illness.

17.2 Special Opportunity permit holders may choose to hunt during the Regular season or the Special Opportunity Season

Changes Included in this Document

1. Updating language related to permit allocations to veterans and the auction so it is consistent with statute. This rule hasn't been updated since statute was changed in 2019.

2. Adding language to allow Special Opportunity Permit holders to choose to hunt during the archery season with a gun. This is in response to a petition requesting this change. This is accomplished by creating a "Special Opportunity Season" solely for these permit holders that is concurrent with the archery season, avoiding complications of allowing guns to be used during an archery season.

3. Extending the length of the regular season from six days to nine days.

4. Miscellaneous changes for consistency and clarity (not highlighted)

§ 33. Moose Management Rule

1.0 Authority.

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(a). In adopting this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and furbearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the moose herd.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board may: establish open seasons; daily, season and possession limits for game; territorial limits; prescribe the manner and means of taking moose; establish territorial limits for the taking of moose; and establish restrictions on taking based upon sex, maturity and other physical distinctions.

1.4 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i)(1), this rule establishes a process to auction ~~five (5)~~ up to six (6) moose permits to be awarded to the highest bidders.

1.5 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i)(2), this rule establishes a separate drawing for eligible Vermont veterans through a special priority drawing through the permit lottery system.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to establish two annual moose seasons, to establish the procedures to be used in applying for and issuing moose permits, and to establish the administrative framework for regulating the taking of moose.

3.0 Definitions.

3.1 “Antlered moose” means a moose which has at least one antler 6 inches or more in length measured from the tip of the main beam along the distal edge of the antler to the base of the antler burr at the skull.

3.2 “Antlerless” means those moose without antlers or antlers less than six inches in length.

3.3 “Applicant” means a person who has submitted a completed legal application to the lottery.

3.4 “Application” means the form provided by the Department that allows a person to be entered into the lottery.

3.5 “Board” means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board.

~~3.6 [Repeated.]~~

3.67 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.78 “Crossbow” means a device consisting of a bow mounted to a rigid stock for discharging bolts or arrows and having a mechanical means to hold and release the drawn string, which must be fired from the shoulder. A bolt means a short projectile for a crossbow that resembles an arrow and has a head that measures no less than 7/8 inch at its widest point. A crossbow shall have a minimum pull of 125 pounds, a working mechanical safety and a stock no less than 23 inches in length.

3.89 “Department” means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.910 “Either sex” means a moose of any sex.

3.104 “Guide” means a person authorized to accompany, direct, aid, assist, and/or instruct a Permittee during a moose hunt.

3.112 “Guide Permit” means a document, provided by the Department to the Permittee, to allow for a guide to assist in a moose hunt.

3.123 “Legal means” means the taking of a moose by muzzleloader, rifle, handgun, shotgun, a crossbow, or bow and arrow in conformance with this rule.

3.134 “Permit” means a document issued by the Department authorizing the taking of a moose.

3.145 “Permittee” means a person who has successfully acquired a legal permit through the lottery or auction as described in this rule.

3.156 “Subpermittee” means an individual designated by a Permittee, whose name has been provided to the Department in conformance with this rule, who may be permitted to take a moose.

3.167 “Wildlife Management Unit” (WMU) means ~~one of twenty-five~~ geographical areas in Vermont established for managing wildlife through regulation and defined in 10 App. V.S.A § 2b.

4.0 Moose Seasons

There shall be ~~two~~three moose seasons annually.

4.1 Archery. ~~The first moose season shall be by archery only:~~

(a) This season shall be open for seven consecutive days, beginning the first day of October.

(b) To take an animal during this season a person must possess a valid archery moose permit as prescribed in Section ~~89~~ of this rule.

4.2 Regular. ~~The second moose season shall be for any legal means of take:~~

(a) This season shall be open for six consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in October. Beginning on October 1, 2026, this season shall be open for nine consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in October.

(b) To take an animal during this season a person must possess a valid regular season moose permit as prescribed in Section 89 of this rule.

4.3 Special Opportunity

(a) This season shall be open for seven consecutive days, beginning the first day of October.

(b) To take an animal during this season a person must possess a valid special opportunity moose permit as prescribed in Section 178 of this rule.

5.0 Possession Limit.

5.1 The bag limit for moose shall be one moose per moose hunting permit.

5.2 The possession limit for moose shall be one moose per moose hunting permit.

6.0 Permit Application Process

6.1 Applications must be made on an official moose hunting application form provided by the Department.

6.2 Only applications received by the Department's central office during the official application period will be considered. Applications must be received prior to the deadline established by the Department.

6.3 The Department will consider only complete applications. For an application to be complete it must be legible, must contain all the information requested by the Department, must bear the applicant's original signature, or, in the case of electronic or facsimile applications, attestation under the pains and penalties of perjury. To be considered complete the form must be accompanied by any required application fee, or means of payment, such as a valid credit card payment.

6.4 The Department will consider no more than one complete application from any applicant per year for each of the two separate lotteries held. A lottery will be held for both the regular and archery seasons. Only one permit may be issued per person per calendar year.

6.5 Ten (10) percent of the moose hunting permits may be issued to non-resident hunters.

6.6 No person who has held a valid Vermont moose hunting permit in any of the previous five (5) years may apply for a moose hunting permit or a bonus point in the current calendar year. The application of the five (5) year waiting period shall only be effective for persons who hold a moose hunting permit after January 1, 2016.

7.0 [Repeated.]

78.0 Permit Selection Process.

78.1 All those who have submitted completed applications and who wish to be entered into the lottery will be entered into the lottery. The Department will hold, or cause to be held, a transparent, random drawing to include all persons who have submitted a complete application.

78.2 Selected regular season applicants will receive a permit for their WMU of preference until the permit quota for their preferred WMU is filled at which time a permit will be awarded for their second choice WMU, and so on.

78.3 Selected regular season applicants will be notified by mail, and will receive a permit form to complete. Successful applicants have 15 calendar days to return the completed forms with the appropriate fee, and their Subpermittee's name, if any.

78.4 Selected archery season applicants will be notified by mail, and will receive a permit form to complete. Successful applicants have 15 calendar days to return the completed forms with the appropriate fee and indicate the name of their Subpermittee, if any.

99.0 Moose Hunting Permits

89.1 An applicant who is chosen by lottery, or is ~~the a~~ successful auction bidder may purchase a moose hunting permit from the Department.

89.2 At the time of issuance, ~~all~~ moose ~~season hunting~~ permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must hold a valid Vermont big game hunting license.

89.3 At the time of issuance, archery season permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must show proof of having held an archery deer license and/or a certificate of satisfactory completion of a bowhunter education course from Vermont or another state or province of Canada which is approved by the Commissioner. ~~Archery season permit recipients and designated Subpermittees must hold a valid Vermont big game hunting license.~~

89.4 Moose hunting permits are valid only within the WMU or WMUs designated on the permit, for the specified season, and for the type (either sex, antlered, or antlerless) specified on the permit.

910.0 Deferments

910.1 The Commissioner may grant a ~~one-~~time, one-year deferment to successful applicants for reasons of personal or family illness, temporary disability, or military deployment.

910.2 Requests for deferment shall be made on the Department-issued form to the Commissioner and received no later than ~~three days prior to the start of the first day of~~ the moose season for which a permit has been issued. Requests shall contain information required by the Commissioner to substantiate the request.

~~910~~.3 Deferred permits shall be issued for the same WMU and permit type (either sex, antlered, antlerless, archery or regular) as the originally issued permit.

~~101~~.0 Subpermittees

~~101~~.1 A person holding a valid moose hunting permit may designate one (1) Subpermittee who shall be permitted to hunt moose pursuant to the permit.

~~101~~.2 The Subpermittee must always be accompanied by the permit holder. For these purposes, “accompanied,” means being able to communicate without the aid of artificial devices except medically-prescribed eyeglasses or hearing aids.

~~101~~.3 Once the applicant has provided the name of their selected Subpermittee to the Department, no change to this selection will be allowed except for personal or family illness, temporary physical disability, or military deployment.

~~101~~.4 Any request for change of Subpermittee must be made in writing to the Commissioner and received no later than three (3) days prior to the start of the moose season for which a permit has been issued.

~~101~~.5 Subpermittee Ineligibility

(a) No person who has held a Vermont moose hunting permit in any of the previous five (5) years may be designated as a Subpermittee in the current calendar year.

(b) No person who holds a valid moose hunting permit in one year may be designated as a Subpermittee in the same year.

(c) No person may be named as a Subpermittee on more than one permit during the same year.

~~112~~.0 Guides and Guide Permits.

~~112~~.1 The Guide shall be allowed to direct, aid, assist and instruct the Permittee and Subpermittee during the hunt.

~~112~~.2 A Guide may not carry any other firearm, muzzleloader, or archery equipment.

~~112~~.3 Each Permittee shall be issued a Guide Permit by the Department. The Guide Permit must be carried by the guide at all times while accompanying the Permittee while hunting moose.

~~112~~.4 A person serving as a Guide must hold a current valid Vermont big game hunting license.

~~112~~.5 A Guide Permit may be carried by different persons at any time during the moose hunt, but only one person at a time may serve as a Guide for each moose hunting party.

~~112~~.6 A person may simultaneously serve as a Guide for more than one moose Permittee but must be carrying the proper Guide Permit for each guided party.

123.0 Control Measures

123.1 In addition to all relevant laws and regulations pertaining to the hunting and taking of big game in Vermont, the following additional restrictions apply:

- (a) No persons other than the Permittee, Subpermittee and Guide shall participate in a hunt to take moose.
- (b) Portable radio transceivers, GPS, and/or cell phones shall not be used to communicate during the hunting or taking of moose. Such devices may be used, however, after the moose is legally tagged.
- (c) No electronic devices such as radio telemetry equipment shall be used to take moose.
- (d) No electronic devices may be used to attract moose.
- (e) No person shall shoot or attempt to shoot a moose when the moose is within 100 yards of any town, state, or federal highway as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 4705(f).
- (f) Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. App. § 12, notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. App. § 12, Section 1(g), a person may employ the licensed handler of an authorized leashed tracking dog to track a moose wounded while lawfully hunting under this rule.

~~(g) Unless it is uncocked, a person shall not possess or transport a crossbow in or on a motor vehicle, motorboat, airplane, snowmobile, or other motor-propelled vehicle except as permitted in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4705.~~

123.2 Means of take, Regular Season and Special Opportunity Season: Moose may be taken only with the following implements and restrictions:

- (a) Centerfire rifles or handguns not less than .25 caliber.
- (b) A muzzleloading firearm of not less than .45 caliber, with a minimum barrel length of 20 inches and designed to be fired from the shoulder, or a muzzleloading handgun of not less than .45 caliber and with a minimum barrel length of 10 inches.
- (c) Bows of not less than 50 pound draw weight, based on the archer's normal draw length for traditional bows, and using arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with two or more cutting edges. A person taking moose may use a crossbow as a means of take during any season that permits the use of a bow and arrow-only; and the crossbow is used in accordance with this subsection.
- (d) Shotguns not less than 20 gauge and utilizing slugs only.

123.3 Means of take, Archery Season: Moose may be taken only with the following implements and restrictions:

(a) Bows of not less than 50 pound draw weight, based on the archer's normal draw length for traditional bows, and using arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with no fewer than two or more cutting edges.

(b) Crossbow bolts shall have arrowheads with a minimum of 7/8 of an inch in width with two or more cutting edges.

(c) No person ~~taking moose~~ may possess a firearm or muzzleloader while hunting moose during the archery season, except for a handgun in accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4252(b). No person taking moose may do so by means of firearms or muzzleloader in the archery season.

134.0 Tagging and Reporting

134.1 The transporting of moose shall be in accordance with current regulations and statutes pertaining to big game.

134.2 Once a moose is legally tagged, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 2a., there is no limit to the number of persons that can assist with the field dressing and removal of the moose from the kill site.

134.3 Moose taken under this rule must be reported, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 2, by exhibiting the eviscerated carcass, or parts thereof, to a Department official at a Department-authorized moose check station during its scheduled days and hours of operation within 48 hours of tagging.

134.4 A moose carcass may be quartered or deboned in the field prior to reporting provided all requirements of 10 V.S.A. App. § 2 and 10 V.S.A. §§ 4921 through 4925 are met. The viscera, hide, upper and lower leg bones, backbone, pelvis, and ribs may be left in the field. Evidence of sex (genitalia, antlers of moose) must be retained for reporting. All other required biological samples must also be retained for reporting. The moose head, hide, lower legs, and boned-out ribcage and/or and bones need not be reported, however, both complete central incisors must be presented.

134.5 The permittee shall bring the following to the biological check station:

(a) The lower jaw, including incisors, one of which shall be taken for aging purposes;

(b) The intact antler rack on an antlered moose;

(c) The portion of the skull on a male antlerless moose where antlers would be attached;

(d) The female reproductive tract including both of the ovaries; and

(e) The udder; ~~and~~

~~(f) All edible portions of the moose not including organs.~~

134.6 No moose shall be transported out of the State without first being reported as required herein.

134.7 The Permittee and/or Subpermittee must identify the exact kill site on a Department map, and if requested, shall be required to take Department personnel to the kill site and/or the site of carcass evisceration for purposes such as, but not limited to, verification of the cause of death and site of kill, or to obtain ovaries or other biological samples left behind.

145.0 Permit Allocation

145.1 The number ~~of either sex and/or antlerless permits or bull only~~ and type (either sex, antlered, or antlerless) of permits to hunt and take moose during both the regular and archery seasons will be set by the Board.

156.0 Special Priority for Eligible Vermont Veterans.

156.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i), eligible ~~for~~ Vermont veterans will receive special priority drawing in the regular moose season lottery drawing.

156.2 ~~If the Board establishes a moose hunting season, the Commissioner shall set aside not more than 10 percent of the total number of annual moose permits authorized by the Board for Vermont residents who have served on active duty in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces provided that he or she has~~ they have not received a dishonorable discharge. The total number of annual moose permits set aside for Vermont veterans shall not exceed six. A total of five (5) regular season permits will be allocated for this special priority drawing. These five permits will be included in the total permits authorized by separate Board Rule.

156.3 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing must submit a complete application approved by the Department. A person applying for the special priority drawing permits must have marked the appropriate box on the application indicating that they comply with the provisions of this section.

156.4 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing and who are not drawn for a moose permit in that special priority drawing shall be entered into the subsequent regular drawing.

156.5 Vermont residents who qualify for the special priority drawing and who do not receive a moose permit shall be awarded preference points for the subsequent special priority drawing.

167.0 Moose Permit Auction

167.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4254(i), ~~if the Board establishes a moose hunting season, not more than 10 percent of the total number of annual moose permits authorized by the Board shall be set aside to be auctioned. The total number of annual moose permits set aside to be auctioned shall not exceed six. The moose permits, if any, set aside for auction shall be included in the total number of annual moose permits authorized by the Board. five moose permits shall be set aside to be issued by auction. These permits are in addition to the permits authorized by separate Board rule.~~

167.2 Complete bids must be received by the Department's central office prior to the deadline established by the Department.

167.3 Permits will be awarded to individuals that submit the ~~five (5)~~ highest bids. Individuals submitting the next ~~five (5)~~ highest bids will be eligible, in order of declining bid value, to receive a permit if higher-ranked bidders do not submit payment within 15 calendar days following notification.

167.4 An individual may submit more than one bid; however he/she may only receive one moose permit. If an individual submits multiple bids, only the highest value bid will be included in the auction as an official bid.

167.5 Once notified of winning a moose permit, successful bidders have 15 calendar days to submit their bid payment, and to indicate: the season they will hunt in, the Wildlife Management Unit they will hunt in; and their Subpermittee, if any.

167.6 If an individual receives a moose permit from the regular moose lottery or archery moose lottery, and is also a successful auction bidder, the person may choose either permit. Should a person choose the regular moose lottery permit or the archery moose lottery permit, the bid amount will be refunded and the next highest unsuccessful bidder will be offered the auction permit.

167.7 Individuals who have held a valid moose permit acquired by the regular or archery moose lottery or auction are ineligible from participating in the moose permit auction for five years.

17.0 Special Opportunity Moose Permits

17.1 Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4255(j), if the Board determines that a moose season will be held in accordance with the rules adopted under sections 4082 and 4084 of this title, the Commissioner annually may issue three no-cost moose licenses to persons who have a life-threatening disease or illness and who is sponsored by a qualified charitable organization, provided that at least one of the no-cost annual moose licenses awarded each year shall be awarded to a child or young adult 21 years of age or under who has a life-threatening illness.

17.2 Special Opportunity permit holders may choose to hunt during the Regular season or the Special Opportunity Season



INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE RULES (ICAR) MINUTES

Meeting Date/Location: March 10, 2025, virtually via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Chair Nick Kramer, Diane Sherman, Jared Adler, Jennifer Mojo, Michael Obuchowski and Natalie Weill

Members Absent: Nicole Dubuque and John Kessler

Minutes By: Melissa Mazza-Paquette

- 2:00 p.m. meeting called to order, welcome and introductions.
- Review and approval of [minutes](#) from the February 10, 2025 meeting.
- Agenda approved as drafted apart from moving the Supervised Billing proposed rule to be presented first.
- No public comments made.
- Presentation of Proposed Rules on pages 2-6 to follow.
 - 1) Supervised Billing, Agency of Human Services, page 2
 - 2) 10 V.S.A. App. § 17, Rule governing the importation and possession of cervids from chronic wasting disease endemic areas and captive hunt or farm facilities, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board, page 3
 - 3) 10 V.S.A. App. § 22, Turkey Seasons Rule, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board, page 4
 - 4) 10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board, page 5
 - 5) 10 V.S.A. App. § 37 Deer Management Rule, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board, page 6
- Other business: Revisit 2024 draft ICAR guidance document after legislative session. A suggested subcommittee of Diane, Natalie and John could incorporate any necessary edits as an outcome of a publicly warned future meeting.
- Next scheduled meeting is April 14, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.
- 3:11 p.m. meeting adjourned.

Proposed Rule: Supervised Billing, Agency of Human Services

Presented By: Grace Johnson

Motion made to accept the rule by Mike Obuchowski, seconded by Jared Adler, and passed unanimously except for Natalie Weill who abstained, with the following recommendations:

1. Proposed Filing – Coversheet:
 - a. #7: Consider rewording – potentially removing the first sentence and including the appropriate statute.
 - b. #8: Distinguish this proposed rule as one of a larger subset known as the Health Care Administrative rules and this rule is on supervised billing and clarifies what it does.
 - c. #12: Explain why there isn't an impact.
2. Economic Impact Analysis, #3: Coincide with #10 of the Proposed Filing – Coversheet and provide clarification that there aren't additional costs due to it already being in practice.

DRAFT

Proposed Rule: 10 V.S.A. App. § 17, Rule governing the importation and possession of cervids from chronic wasting disease endemic areas and captive hunt or farm facilities, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board

Presented By: Hannah Smith and Nick Fortin

Motion made to accept the rule by Diane Sherman, seconded by Natalie Weill, and passed unanimously except for Jen Mojo who abstained, with the following recommendations:

1. Proposed Filing – Coversheet:
 - a. #8: Remove ‘technical correction’ language if appropriate.
 - b. #9: Insert a parenthetical reference (CWD) for ‘chronic wasting disease’.
 - c. #13 & 14: Update per Hannah’s comment that hearings have been scheduled.
2. Economic Impact Analysis #5: Capitalize ‘the’.
3. Environmental Impact Analysis #6: Include any applicable positive impacts.
4. Public Input Maximization Plan #3: In the last sentence, clarify that it’s the proposed rule amendment or proposed rule language that will be posted.

Proposed Rule: 10 V.S.A. App. § 22, Turkey Seasons Rule, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board

Presented By: Hannah Smith and Toni Mikula

Motion made to accept the rule by Diane Sherman, seconded by Natalie Weill, and passed unanimously except for Jen Mojo who abstained, with the following recommendations:

1. Proposed Filing – Coversheet:
 - a. #13 & 14: Update per Hannah’s comment that hearings have been scheduled.
2. Economic Impact Analysis #9: Correct spelling of ‘dall’ to ‘fall’.
3. Environmental Impact Analysis:
 - a. #5 and #8: Change case of first word to uppercase.
 - b. #9: Include clarification around harvest data. Add a period at the end of the last sentence.
4. Public Input Maximization Plan #3: In the last sentence, clarify that it’s the proposed rule amendment or proposed rule language that will be posted.

DRAFT

Proposed Rule: 10 V.S.A. App. § 33, Moose Management Rule, Agency of Natural Resources,
Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board

Presented By: Hannah Smith

Motion made to accept the rule by Diane Sherman, seconded by Natalie Weill, and passed unanimously except for Jen Mojo who abstained, with the following recommendations:

1. Proposed Filing – Coversheet:
 - a. #8: Correct spelling of 'langauge'.
 - b. #13 & 14: Update per Hannah's comment that hearings have been scheduled.
2. Economic Impact Analysis: For consistency, choose to use either "nominal" or "negligible" if the intent is to quantify as too small to be measurable or meaningful.
3. Environmental Impact Analysis #8: Include any potential favorable impacts.
4. Public Input Maximization Plan #3: In the last sentence, clarify that it's the proposed rule amendment or proposed rule language that will be posted.

DRAFT

Proposed Rule: 10 V.S.A. App. § 37 Deer Management Rule, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Board

Presented By: Hannah Smith

Motion made to accept the rule by Diane Sherman, seconded by Natalie Weill, and passed unanimously except for Jen Mojo who abstained, with the following recommendations:

1. Proposed Filing – Coversheet:
 - a. #8: Spell out 'WMU' before parenthetical.
 - b. #12: Include 'favorably' when referring to 'should reasonably impact business...'.
 - c. #13 & 14: Update per Hannah's comment that hearings have been scheduled.
2. Public Input Maximization Plan #3: In the last sentence, clarify that it's the proposed rule amendment or proposed rule language that will be posted.
3. Scientific Information Statement #5: Include an option to obtain a hard copy as well.

DRAFT

Responsiveness Summary

for

Public Comments Received
on proposed changes to

10 App. V.S.A. § 33

Moose Management Rule



Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department
Agency of Natural Resources
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3208
802-828-1000

Introduction

On February 19, 2025, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (VFWD) presented proposed changes to 10 App. V.S.A. § 33 and other big game rules to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board (Board). The Board gave initial approval to the proposed changes and voted to begin rulemaking. Following review by the Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules on March 10th, notice of the draft rule was posted by the Secretary of State on March 27, 2025.

Proposed changes to 10 App. V.S.A. § 33, Moose Management Rule, included:

- 1) Updating language related to permit allocations to veterans and the auction so the rule is consistent with statute (10 V.S.A. § 4254(i)).
- 2) Allowing special opportunity permit (i.e., permits issued pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4255(j)) holders to hunt during the moose archery season with a gun. This is accomplished by creating a “special opportunity season” concurrent with the archery season that is only for these permit holders.
- 3) Extending the length of the regular moose season from 6 days to 9 days.

VFWD began accepting public comment immediately following the February 19 Board meeting, and comments were due by May 25, 2025. This provided 95 days for the public to comment, including 60 days after the rule was published by the Secretary of State. Additionally, VFWD held 5 public hearings at the dates and locations listed below. These hearings were combined with annual hearings required by 10 V.S.A. § 4081 and 10 App. V.S.A. § 2b to maximize public participation.

- March 17, Mt. Anthony Union High School, Bennington, VT
- March 18, Lakes Region High School, Orleans, VT
- March 20, Union 32 Middle & High School, Montpelier, VT
- May 6, Winooski Middle & High School, Winooski, VT
- May 8, Springfield High School, Springfield, VT

Approximately 295 members of the public participated in these hearings. Comments on this rule were provided by 162 hearing participants (see **Appendix A**). An additional 15 comments were received by email (see **Appendix B**).

The VFWD has prepared this responsiveness summary to address the comments that were received on the draft Moose Management Rule. Comments have been grouped by topic to simplify responses. All individual comments are provided in the appendices.

Comments

Comment 1: Allowing special opportunity permit holders to use guns during the archery season may pose additional safety risks.

Response: Hunting is a very safe activity, and VFWD always considers potential safety risks when developing hunting regulations. Concurrent archery and gun seasons already occur regularly in Vermont. For example, the moose archery season occurs during the firearm seasons for black bear and ruffed grouse, both of which are commonly hunted in the area where moose hunting is currently allowed. No more than 3 special opportunity permits are issued each year, and these individuals are always accompanied by an experienced guide.

Comment 2: Will a longer season and resulting increase in harvest result in fewer permits being allocated?

Response: While it is reasonable to assume that a longer season would result in higher success rates, that is not expected. The primary reason for the season extension is to provide more consistent success rates each year by moderating the impacts of poor weather. Success rates will likely be higher than the past two seasons, which were heavily impacted by poor weather conditions, but they are expected to remain close to longer-term averages.

The number of moose harvested each year is controlled by adjusting the number of permits available during the annual moose permit allocation procedure. If success rates are higher as a result of the longer season, the number of permits would be reduced accordingly to achieve the target moose harvest.

Comment 3: Concern about the current status of the moose population and the impact of hunting moose on population size?

Response: Moose hunting is very closely regulated, with limited permit allocations that are adjusted annually. While there are fewer moose in Vermont today than there were 20 years ago, current moose densities are typical of other parts of moose range in North America and the population is stable. Moose hunting is currently only permitted in wildlife management unit E (essentially Essex County), where moose remain abundant and as a result are impacted by parasites like winter tick. Harvesting an appropriate number of moose each year is critical to maintaining a healthy, sustainable moose population in Vermont.

Comment 4: Why not move the season earlier if the goal is to kill more moose?

Response: Killing more moose is not a goal of the proposed rule changes. While our current management objective in wildlife management unit E is to reduce moose abundance, the proposed

rule changes aim to create a season structure that will work for any current or future management objective (increase, stabilize, or decrease).

An earlier season timing, closer to the moose rut, could increase success rates for hunters pursuing bull moose. However, it is unlikely to substantially increase success rates for hunters pursuing cows, and the number of cows taken each year is what drives changes in population size. Additionally, ovulation data from cows, which is critical for assessing population health and understanding population dynamics, can only be collected after the breeding season.

Appendix A: Public Hearing Feedback

Bennington:

- Number that left question blank/no comment: 32 out of 64
- Yes/Support (x14 similar responses)
- No
- I don't/won't hunt moose.
- Sounds like it should work.
- Looks good, like it.
- Fine with it.
- Awesome.
- Again you have the data, I would trust your changes.
- Only thing I would say to allowing the special tags is in regard to bow hunters out in camo, then you have kids/shooting people potentially the same animal without ever knowing.
- Shoot all of them.
- Excellent recommendation/proposed change.
- Should leave it alone.
- No issues "Hunt of a lifetime."
- Good reasoning and recommendation.
- Extending season would be okay. The use of guns during archery season might pose hunting dangers between archery and rifles.
- Great job! 100% agree.
- Find a state with more moose to do it in.
- Longer season is probably good idea.
- Don't have moose in the south.

Orleans:

- Number that left question blank/no comment: 13 out of 51
- Yes/Support (x26 similar responses)
- Don't hunt Moose.
- Add a few days.
- Changes will have a minimal impact.
- Keep it the same.
- Let the Moose recuperate for a season then resume hunting.
- Stabilize the population.
- SOP hunters should be granted the opportunity to use firearms in either season.
- Too many Moose have been killed. They are being overhunted.
- Why isn't increasing Moose populations in areas other than E1 and E2 a goal?

East Montpelier:

- Number that left question blank/no comment: 14 out of 58
- Yes/Support (x33 similar responses)
- SOP "seems odd" but no impact so fine. Good accessibility option. Extended – will increase harvest result in fewer permits. Want to see balance with harvest rates.
- No comment, seems very reasonable.

- Question about allocation of permits – will there be less tag availability? Increase the odds of success – agree with rationalization. Support SOP.
- Proposal is okay – extended season makes up for some bad weather etc.
- No problem.
- In archery season, it is comforting to know there are not firearms in the woods.
- Any reason not to extend archery through the weekend.
- SOP changes are odd, but worth a try. Extend should be fine.
- Makes sense to me.
- SOP holders ☐ Thank you for considering this. Extended regular season ☐ Very weather dependent and well explained.
- Seems logical, I don't have personal thoughts otherwise.

Winooski:

- Number that left question blank/no comment: 17 out of 40
- Yes/Support (19 x similar responses)
- Makes sense due to the weather issues, hunted 23 & we were successful, felt bad for 24 hunters w/the weather. Will say, in terms of time of when successful & butchering yourself.
- No
- Great idea to harvest a desired amount.
- Like the changes for the moose. Make the season even later. Give the veterans whatever they want.
- Agree, also veterans should be able to choose archery season. Hold Vet draw earlier & adjust #'s for regular draw accordingly. Tags need to be awarded earlier-see NH & ME schedules.
- Agree (No auction only favors the rich).

Springfield:

- Number that question left blank/no comment: 10 out of 34
- Yes/Support (17 x similar responses)
- The SOP is a very good idea.
- I think hunt only archery during archery season. (No guns), use cross bow if not able to use other bows.
- I believe the SOP should be able to do the early hunt with a gun.
- Let them do it, give them a chance.
- Okay, Make-a-Wish kids deserve the opportunity.
- I think it's a good idea. I was in on the hunt last year and it was 70 degrees and terrible hunting.
- It will get more hunters out and harvesting animals.
- I agree, I have involved in moose hunts, since it started weather has huge effect on success.
- They sound good. I'm for more consistent harvest numbers.

Appendix B: Other Feedback

Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 3:46 PM
To: Fortin, Nick <Nick.Fortin@vermont.gov>
Subject: VT deer and moose proposed regulation changes

Hello Nick, I'm writing in regards to my thoughts on the proposed regulation changes as I cannot make the public hearing. Some background on myself: I was born and raised in Addison county VT (Monkton) and I have been an avid hunter, trapper, fisherman and archer since I was 9 starting with small game and eventually getting very passionate about tracking and still hunting mature whitetail bucks on public lands. I hunted mostly on National Forest and A.

Johnson Co. lands growing up. I now spend most of my hunting season in Maine, NH and the ADKs mostly because of the large amount of public lands to roam without much hunting pressure. I deer hunt on average 30

+/- days of the season. I mostly hunt VT during the late muzzleloader season in the green mts or on Industrial timberlands of Essex county.

For work I'm a consulting forester for private landowners. I have been doing this for 12 years now and have worked for companies like E.B Campbell Forest Management and Landvest before starting my own business from Craftsbury VT in 2020. I have clients in most counties and have seen first hand the areas of high deer densities and agree we need to reduce the doe population in those areas. I remember the 1990's where I would see 25 does a season and no bucks. I think muzzleloader doe season laws and one buck has certainly helped balance the herd in some areas, although hunting pressure seems to be the key factor in getting heavier older deer. Essex county is somewhat crowded these days with technology making people feel safer traveling deeper into the woods.

I believe the primary problem in high deer density areas is lack of public access. FPR should be brought into this conversation as they could change some rules with the UVA program to incentivize landowners to open up posted properties for hunting. Increasing hunter opportunities with extra tags and different seasons will likely only reduce the herd in public access areas. Hunting does with a rifle ended with poor results the last time we tried that so I would not do it again. We could also do more timber sales on state lands to increase the carrying capacity... Look out for standing trees!

I believe in 1 buck a year with no antler restrictions because this works in other northeastern states and I believe antler restrictions put more pressure on the 2-3 yr old bucks not letting more of them get to 4 when they become way more difficult to harvest for the avg.

hunter resulting in more "mature" bucks. Example, a hunter passes up spike to shoot a 4 pt or 2-3yr old deer following the same doe. Many hunters would have shot the spike letting the mid age deer get older.

I like having the youth season early but we could give them a few more days to work around poor weather. Kids are a great chance to kill more does and we need more youth hunters!

MOOSE, I think if the intent is to reduce the moose population we need to move the rifle season during the peak rut (Oct. 1). Maybe extend archery to cover more of the early rut (Sept. 15).

Although, more money from increased lottery and license sales to achieve the same result is a better financial approach in a time of difficult budget balancing...

I would really like to see more F&W staff and more game wardens. It's alarming to me when all deer do not need to be weighed in at a check station and data is collected. In Maine, every other deer has a tooth pulled and their antler bases measured. I assume this combined data with weight tells us

something about the quality of habitat and carrying capacity... Why can't VT partner with UVM or another school to do the data organizing to get a better sense of our local herd numbers, age and health? I'm not confident in the small sample size we currently have. Is there statistical data available for our population estimates?

Sorry to rant but I think this is important stuff! Keep up the good work.

Thanks for reading.

Best

--

Tyler Pelland

Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 2:30 PM

To: ANR - FW Public Comment

Subject: Fwd: Comment on antlerless deer permits

To whom it may concern:

The head of the deer and moose hunting in Vermont have been over estimating the number of deer and moose in Vermont. Seasons have been extended and more people have been added by allowing different ways and lower ages to take deer. For example, using crossbows and now letting youths to use crossbows. The numbers have only stayed the same or gone down.

In the 80's doe were over harvested and there were four times as many deer. If Nick Fortin, Vermont's deer biologist, gets his way the same thing will happen again. In E1 and E2 the amount of deer has not improved in the last twenty years and there has not been a doe season since the over harvest years ago, but last year they added a doe season. With less deer and more predators every year there never should have been a doe season.

The moose harvest was the lowest ever and what does Nick want to do, (extend the season by 4 days). Don't over do it !

Some places probably could use a doe season, and rifle season should also be used to make it fair for every hunter. However I'm afraid too many does would be taken

Thank you,
Rick Joyal

Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 6:13 AM

To: Fortin, Nick <Nick.Fortin@vermont.gov>

Subject: Averill Deer Hunting - Boxcar Camp

Hello Nick,

I don't think we have actually met before but have probably passed by each other several times. My name is Bill Gray from the Boxcar Camp in Averill, my dad Max Gray and my uncle Steve Gray bought the camp in 1979 and I have been going there since I was 6, now at 52 years old I have a few years of experience hunting in that area. I've work for The Vermont Agency of Transportation for 28 years and am very fortunate to be able to take all of November off. I also get to work 4, 10 hour days,

giving me Fridays off. I take ever Thursday off in October. SO, for years I have been there every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in October to scout for deer. I spend all my time scouting and feel like I have a pretty good handle on that area. I have been fortunate enough to shoot some really nice buck over the years, in both Vermont and northern Maine. 6 over 200lbs, and it probably has made me into a pretty picky hunter you might say. 😊

In the past I have never gone to, or attended a F&W public meetings as I kind of was under the impression they were just a formality. I also don't post my hunts on YouTube, or get on the internet and get involved in tooting my own horn so to speak. However with the new proposal/rule changes I felt I just couldn't set back anymore. I needed to say something even if it falls on death ears. I am hoping that isn't the case. I did got to U-32 the other evening and attended the meeting. You did an EXCELLENT job with your presentation and as someone who has done public meetings for the Vermont Agency of Transportation I know how hard that is. I had to laugh every time you said, "I don't want to be up here saying this..." because I know how that feels all too well.

Anyway, for the most part I understand what you are proposing and I will trust your judgement, and go along with the changes. However I have to say I do not agree with it in E1 or E2. I would beg you to please consider including the Antler Restriction of 3 points per side not only to D but for E as well! The deer population is in very rough shape up there. I also feel that given the lack of antler restrictions in that area several guys are just shooting too many small bucks and it has had a tremendous effect on the herd in the last few years. Not just the numbers of deer but I also feel it is exponentially reducing the number of "trophy" bucks that people would have the opportunity to hunt in that area. 10 years ago if you shot a buck in E1 there was a pretty good chance it was going to be a 200lb buck, now your lucky if you can find one buck that will go over 200lbs. Vermonters don't go to Maine or Northern NH to shoot 140lb 4 pointers. NH and Maine people aren't going to come here to hunt if that is all Vermont has to offer. Not that I want more hunters in that area, but if you increase the number of trophy deer in that area I do believe you will draw more out of state hunters to Vermont. E1 is also a unique area as most of it is timber country as you know and really is one of the few places you can seriously track deer and don't have to worry about getting into posted land. Also there really isn't many car/deer collisions, or any of the urban conflicts you are trying to avoid. Also given the fact that there is less then 1 deer per sq. acre shooting the one smaller buck has a large percentage of impact on the deer population.

In conclusion I won't argue with extending the Archery and Muzzleloader seasons and I have no problem with moving youth season back to where it was the weekend before the rifle season. I am totally good with the Moose recommendations and commend you for you efforts to control the moose population. However I have major concerns that 30% of the bucks that were shot in E1 were yearling deer. Then you couple that with the mortality rate for that area it is detrimental to the deer population. That area does have the ability to sustain a larger population of deer, and given that the current population is less then 1 per sq acre I am pleading that we do more to try and protect what deer are there more. I strongly recommend reinstating the 3 points per side as well as not allowing any does to be shot in WMU E1 and maybe even E2.

Additionally I would consider increasing the bag limit on turkeys statewide. As a land owner in Calais Vermont I have an overabundance of turkeys in my area. My lawn looks like you took a manure spreader, filled it with turkey poop and spread it all over my lawn. I can't even walk on my lawn without stepping in it. Traveling around the state daily for work I see turkeys everywhere. I think there is an opportunity for Vermont F&W to generate some extra revenue by selling extra turkey tags

without really hurting the population of turkeys in any way. Instead of a 2 bird limit in the spring, consider increasing it to 4? Also given that the bear population has grown exponentially over the years I wonder if there is an opportunity for Vermont F&W to increase the limit from one bear a year to two? This may be a way for F&W to generate some revenue to offset the money generated from not selling doe tags in E1 & E2?

My main concern is with the deer population in WMU E, and I only hope that you will consider imposing the antler restrictions for that WMU same as you are in WMU D?

If I should be sending this email to some one else please let me know who, or if you would like to discuss please do not hesitate to give me a call on my cell phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx. I am on the road most days so that is the best way to get a hold of me.

Thank you,

BILL

William Gray

Sent: Thursday, May 1, 2025 4:12 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Antlerless deer and moose proposals

Shooting off antlerless deer during the November rifle season would be irresponsible and detrimental to the herd. The early antlerless muzzleloader season should be utilized better for what it was created to do. HARVEST DOE! If the state wants to harvest more antlerless deer then stop giving them out to landowners that refuse to use them and just choose to burn the tag to save a doe. Happens every year. To enforce this, if some one goes two consecutive years without filling an antlerless tag then make them ineligible to get one for another two years and give them instead to the people that do consistently fill them every year.

DO NOT extend the regular moose season to a 9 day season unless the states goal is to total wipe out the moose herd!!! If we get one year with cold weather so the moose move a lot most of the 180 permits will get filled. NO MOOSE TAGS SHOULD BE FOR ANTLERLESS! TAKE OUT BULLS ONLY! In e1 and e2 antlered bulls outnumber antlerless moose at a rate of at least 3 bulls to every cow. One cow may or may not produce one calf in the spring then be lucky if it survives the bear predation or its first winter. One bull can breed 6-8 cows if he can find them(which he can't) so if you want to control and manage a better herd ALL tags should be for bulls only! This is not rocket science and just because a family has a hate for moose, blaming them for driving the deer out of the lewis pond area years ago is no reason to put so much pressure on the already stressed herd.

Cory Curtis

Island pond, VT

Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 8:07 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Changes to Deer, Moose and Turkey Hunting Regulations

Greetings,

I write to express my support for science based management of our wildlife and the setting of hunting seasons and bag limits proposed by the professional biologist working for the VDFW. It is in the best interest of the state to place management decisions in the hands of professionals who have the expertise and knowledge necessary to make management decisions in the best interest of

wildlife without emotional or political influence. Management of natural resources must be made based on the best available science and not for emotional or political reasons.

Thank you for your consideration,

Seth Clifford
Starksboro, VT

Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 7:26 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comments

I just read the States proposal for some deer, turkey and moose changes. I agree with them. One thing is apparent to me. People may buy hunting licenses, but they don't actually hunt much. I've see fewer hunters in the last 20 years. Again, I like the idea of two bucks a season. One must be taken with bow.

Steve
Addison Vt.

Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 1:35 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Turkey, moose and deer

To Whom It May Concern:

Turkeys,

Under "TITLE 10 APPENDIX CHAPTER 1. GAME Subchapter 1. General Provisions § 22. Turkey Seasons", it states "6.2 Only number 2 through number 8 shot shall be used or possessed." I would remind the board that a lot of people I know hunt with .410 use #9 shot with TSS loads. Current Vermont Law states, "only number 2 and smaller shot shall be used or possessed." Error or a change?

4.2 Shooting hours: One-half hour before sunrise to twelve noon.

QUESTION? Why can't we hunt till 5 pm?

All other sections I agree with in regards to changes for turkeys.

10 V.S.A. Appendix §17 Cervid Carcass Importation Rule – Annotated. I totally agree!

Moose,

Regarding # 1. Updating language related to permit allocations to veterans and the auction so it is consistent with statute. This rule hasn't been updated since statute was changed in 2019. I agree.
2. Adding language to allow Special Opportunity Permit holders to choose to hunt during the archery season with a gun. This is in response to a petition requesting this change. This is accomplished by creating a "Special Opportunity Season" solely for these permit holders that is

concurrent with the archery season, avoiding complications of allowing guns to be used during an archery season. I disagree with

3. Extending the length of the regular season from six days to nine days. I agree with.

DEER,

3.4 3 “Bait”: For the purposes of this regulation, ‘bait’ is defined as any animal, vegetable, fruit or mineral matter placed with the intention of attracting wildlife. Natural and artificial scents and lures that are not prohibited under Section 14 of this regulation and are not designed to be consumed by eating or licking shall not be bait for the purposes of this rule.

Will this change the use of food plots where vegs and or fruit is grown for animal use only? If this passage ends food plots then no I don't agree.

4.3 No person may purchase or possess more than two antlerless deer permits at one time, only one of which may be acquired pursuant to subsection 4.2(a) or (b) of this section. No person may purchase or possess more than one antlerless deer permit for an individual wildlife management unit at one time. A person may purchase additional antlerless deer permits after the person has harvested an antlerless deer.

I disagree with is section.

(b) A person shall be allowed to take one additional buck, not to exceed the annual limit of four white-tailed deer, provided they have: (1) Purchased a second buck tag, (2) Previously taken and reported an antlerless deer in the current year, and (3) Previously taken and reported an antlered buck in the current year that had at least one antler with 3 or more antler points. 5.2 No person shall take deer in a WMU unless they are licensed, permitted or explicitly authorized to do so by the Board rules, or procedures adopted in accordance with 10 V.S.A § 4082 (c).

Will this extra buck tag be allowed by any methods? So, If I shoot an antlerless deer and then shoot a deer with three points on one side during muzzleloaders would I be able to buy another buck tag for the muzzleloader season? Erase muzzleloaders and replace with bow or compound. Same rules apply? Or was this for regular deer season only?

All other measures that the board has come forward with regarding deer management for 2026 I agree with.

Thank you for your time,
Sincerely,
Jeremy Ayotte
Fletcher Vermont

Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 1:30 PM
Subject: Message from WIRELESS CALLER (+18023790117)

Changes for deer, moose, and turkey hunting

I'm all for it. I haven't hunted in a couple years because I have been hospitalized twice for tick bites. It would certainly increase the chance of getting a deer. Moose I would love to hunt, but not myself.

Would go with my brother in law. Of course lottery online, take a chance that you'd wind up getting a license.

Claudia

Called back, in support of the rule changes
"All rules sounds like a good idea to me"

Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 4:52 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Changes to Deer, Moose and Turkey Hunting Regulations

I'm writing to express my frustration with the new proposals. This to me just seems like a way for hunters to extend their season and shoot more animals. I don't see the "science" behind this proposal. As a land owner who doesn't currently post their land, I can assure you that if this goes through I will be posting.

- Mike Sivalis (Bethel VT)

Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 8:59 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Hunting regulations

I am in favor of proposed changes to deer and moose regulations. Vt hunter for 43 years and father of 10 yo new generation hunter.

Vaughn Comeau

Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 11:06 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Opposed to new regulations

Hello,
I am opposed to the new regulations being proposed for the hunting of deer and moose.
Specifically:

- allowing hunters to take antlerless deer during the regular Nov. season
- increasing archery season from Oct. 1-Dec. 15
- creating additional archery zones with Sept. 15 as the opening date
- allowing 2 antlerless permits from different WMU at the same time
- allowing hunters to take a second buck (with different points)
- allowing moose hunting season to be extended from 6 to 9 days, and expanding firearms for certain hunters.

Why am I opposed to these new regulations?

--I am tired of not being able to walk on my 63 acres of land, or even on the road, during hunting season. I don't feel safe. And if the season is extended, then that's more time when I can't enjoy my walks in the woods.

--I do not agree that taking more does is the best way to regulate the deer population. Animals will regulate their own population depending on the food available, and the number of natural predators in the area. I see a lot less deer than I did over the last 55 years, so I am not convinced that there is a problem with the deer population, at least not in my area.

The same is true for moose—I don't want people hunting the few moose that remain in my area at all, and certainly don't want the season extended.

If these regulations are passed, I will be forced to post my land.

Sincerely,
Marge Christie
Plainfield, VT

Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 5:45 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Deer/moose proposal

My name is Cory Curtis. I live in Westmore and have guided moose now for almost 25 years. Most of my time is spent in e1 and e2 from victory all the way to Canaan. The recommendations from Nick Fortin are absurd. Nick's family have always hated the moose as they remember the old days of hunting deer up in the lewis pond area and then the moose came along and ate the lower browse so the deer moved out. A 9 day rifle season is to long. We shouldn't have ANY antler less tags at all for moose as we have 3-4 bulls to every cow right now and if we get a normal October with cool temps the cows will get massacred. If the goal is to reduce the herd then we should only have bull only tags and take some of the bulls out. A cow can potentially have a calf in the spring but a bull will breed several cows and with the severely unbalanced ratio this proposal makes zero sense. This is not just my opinion but comes from someone who spends most of his fall in the woods with the moose instead of guessing from behind a desk like Nick. AGAIN NO ANTLER LESS TAGS FOR MOOSE SEASON. Go back to the bull only tags like we had for quite a few years. I'm not against shooting cows if the herd can sustain it but right now it CANNOT!

As far as the deer recommendations, it's also a bit twisted. I'm 100% for antler restrictions but taking doe during rifle just to kill doe is off the wall. AR's shouldn't be only reinstated in d1. Reinstate them back in all of the nek, d1 d2 e1 e2. Since the antler restrictions were lifted 5 years ago the bucks have went backwards with a ton of spikes getting killed here every fall so they don't reach the next age class. This is backwards from great outcome we had before when the spike ban was in effect. I'd love to see 3 points to a side for all f the NEK. The early muzzle season was put in to fill this purpose. The problem is people getting tags just to burn them and save a doe because they think they are doing a great thing. How about if a person doesn't fill their doe permit then they aren't eligible for another one for at least a year And instead give them to the people that are willing to take doe's for their freezer?

I didn't attend the meeting at Lake region because after years of going to these "feel good meetings" I find a person can't voice their full thoughts at them. The best way is to reach out direct. Feel free to call if I can answer any of your thoughts on the moose situation or your welcome to come scouting with me anytime in the fall to see what we are really dealing with.

Thanks
Cory Curtis
Westmore

Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 5:29 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Public comment

To whom this concerns,
I am writing in support of all proposed changes presented at the public hearings as well as I support to extend the late muzzleloader season having it start the Monday following the close of the regular rifle season extending it by 5 days it's my understanding there was already a petition for this with 350 signatures and I would like to be added to that. Thank you for working hard to conserve our hunting and fishing heritage.

Thank you,
Matthew Lynde
Halifax, Vt

Sent: Friday, March 14, 2025 1:05 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Support proposed changes

I think your changes make sense. I do not feel the need to attend a public comment session as I have no questions or concerns.

Thank you
Kevin Hawley
Jericho VT

Sent: Sunday, May 18, 2025 6:40 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Big Game Rule Change - Moose and Deer Comments

I am writing to submit comments on the proposed big game rule changes:

Moose

1. I support updating language related to permit allocations to veterans and the auction so it is consistent with statute.
2. I support adding language to allow Special Opportunity Permit holders to choose to hunt during the archery season with a gun by creating a "Special Opportunity Season"
3. I support extending the length of the regular season from six days to nine days

Deer

1. I support moving Youth Weekend
2. I support establishing Expanded Archery Zones
3. I support allowing antlerless permits to be used during the regular season.
4. I support hunters being able to hold two antlerless permits at a time, provided only one acquired through the lottery, and only one per WMU at a time.
5. I support removing the closure of archery season during the regular season, if antlerless permits can be used during the regular season.
6. I do not support reinstating the antler restriction in WMU D1.
7. I do not support allowing hunters to take a second buck if certain conditions are met.

Other

I support the proposed antlerless permit distribution for 2025

The F&W Board, in collaboration with the Department, should consider adding a spring bear hunting season.

Thank you for the work you do.

Matt

Matthew Breton
Charleston, VT

From: [Robert Thomson](#)
To: [ANR - FW Public Comment](#)
Subject: 2025 moose harvesting recommendation
Date: Sunday, March 30, 2025 4:16:03 PM

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Recommendation from VFWD to Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board on 2025 moose harvesting

The methodology for determining the annual number of hunting permits that will support a sustainable moose population is deeply flawed.

First, the basic data on moose population and distribution – dependent largely on hunters' reports of sightings – is far from reliable. Considering the iconic status of the species, and recognizing its increasing tenuous foothold in our state, far more effort should be addressed to applying the latest and most rigorous scientific approaches to population measurement - before further depleting the count based on historical guesstimates.

Second, the central assertion of a clear causal relationship between moose and tick densities is highly questionable unless the influence of numerous other environmental variables has been fully captured. From the tellingly thin description of the methodology in the proposed regulation, this is not the case. It is a considerable stretch to claim that altering the density of only one of the many 'host' species can significantly impact tick infestation levels. What proportion of total potential tick 'prey', per square mile of territory, can one single animal – or, in the case of moose, one fraction of an animal – account for? And would not the incursion of only one or two other host animals into that territory – say deer, or coyotes – effectively offset any loss of tick sustenance caused by the reduction in moose density? (The proposed adjustment to moose density is represented by a *fraction* of an animal per square mile.)

In my opinion the proposed 'moose cull' approach risks the elimination of the remaining moose population of the state long before there is any material impact on tick infestation levels. There are simply too many environmental, climatological and other variables to trust the effectiveness of a 'scorched earth' strategy. Let's get a better understanding of numbers and dynamics before adding sport harvesting to the depredations faced by our endangered moose population.

Robert Thomson

Braintree, VT

From: [Richard Maizell](#)
To: [ANR - FW Public Comment](#)
Subject: Kill moose to kill ticks?
Date: Sunday, March 9, 2025 7:00:14 PM

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To Whom it may concern,

This completely fails the common sense test. I would suggest focusing on killing the ticks rather than the host. Thank goodness that logic does not extend to our domestic pet population. I understand that there are promising options to find a way to control ticks. I would suggest to whatever private entity is funding the "it's a good idea to kill moose study," that they reallocate their resources toward research that protects the animals.

The Morris Animal Foundation funded a recent study at our own University of VT that found a fungal treatment was highly effective and showed great promise. Why aren't we at least piloting this strategy?

<https://www.morrisanimalfoundation.org/article/moose-winter-ticks>

Finally, do hunters closely examine the moose they kill prior to, in order to ascertain if there is a tick infestation? If killing tick laden moose is a way to mitigate the infestation they should only be killing the tick infested moose and not the ones that are tick free. How is that regulated?

I am not sure who is making the recommendation to kill more moose. If they are our biologists then they are an embarrassment to the department and to the state. There are apparently other options.

Regards,

Dr. Richard Maizell

Richard Maizell, Psy.D.



Calais, VT. 05648

"Doing nothing for others is the undoing of ourselves." - Horace Mann

From: [david.goodlin](#)
To: [ANR - FW Public Comment](#)
Subject: Moose Hunting
Date: Sunday, March 9, 2025 4:28:51 PM

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So if there is one moose left to shoot in n Vt. We should kill it because it has ticks. We need protection not supply the guiding service.

From: [MARCI DIAMOND](#)
To: [ANR - FW Public Comment](#)
Cc: jturneractor@gmail.com; [Marisa Diamond](#)
Subject: NO Moose Hunt and no doe hunting
Date: Friday, March 7, 2025 4:25:14 PM

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My family and I live and vote in the Northeast Kingdom, and we do NOT support Vermont Fish & Wildlife's recommendation for a 2025 moose hunt. Hunting moose will NOT result in less winter ticks on the landscape but WILL reduce the population of healthy moose, as many hunters target large, healthy moose who are sorely needed to reproduce and protect healthy offspring.

Moose are facing numerous threats from brainworm to heat stress. Fish & Wildlife must use extreme precaution when managing this vulnerable, iconic species. Relying on hunting industry-funded research and lobbying is highly suspect and corrupt, and is NOT supported by real science, nor the majority of your constituents. There are much better science based solutions, from specified safe fungi, opossums, etc, which have been used elsewhere to help control ticks without killing more of the very animals your are charged with protecting.

Please be responsive and representative of the non-corrupt science, and the majority of your VT constituents, and allow our VT wildlife to live in our woods, rather than on "recreational" (e.g. killing for "fun"?!) trophy hunters' walls. We and our visitors love seeing the awesome LIVE moose near our home, and wish to continue to do so for years to come.

Re: deer hunting, please do NOT allow the hunting of does during the regular rifle season - orphaning their babies is inexcusably cruel, and NO ethical subsistence hunters support this.

Thank you for your consideration,
Marci Diamond
Morgan, VT

From: [Tracylea Byford](#)
To: [ANR - FW Public Comment](#)
Subject: No Moose hunt until populations are more numerous
Date: Saturday, March 8, 2025 11:54:28 AM

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Dear Fish and Wildlife folks:

I am strongly in favor of not allowing moose hunts in Vermont until the population has returned to areas where it has vanished.

We used to have moose here in Tinmouth and they are gone. Mostly gone also from all around us due to Climate Change and development, and its resulting issues of ticks, disease transmission and habitat loss.

The science behind shooting moose to save them is invalid and speaks to an agency that is only concerned about their own pursuits and not the interests of conservation. Moose are moving north. Why encourage them to leave Vermont and instead of shooting them, perhaps use them as a tourism magnet?

Out of the 50 or so friends and acquaintances we have hosted in the last decade not one was interested in killing wildlife, but in seeing it, with the exception of a few deer hunters. (We could use a few less deer.) I think if you took a poll of residents in the State you would find that most people enjoy wildlife, not for blood sports, but for alternative forms of recreation. And, that the science does not warrant a moose hunt until and unless the population is increasing at a sustainable rate.

One would question indeed why a moose study was funded by SCI, who necessarily are wedded to the idea of trophy hunting over conservation efforts. Is that trophy really more important than the survivability of a species?

There is a reason that moose are vanishing in Vermont. Please consider the science over special interests and deny a hunt until moose are again numerous in all of Vermont..

Thank you.

Tracy Byford
Tinmouth, VT

From: [Maryam](#)
To: [ANR - FW Public Comment](#)
Subject: NO Moose Hunt
Date: Friday, March 7, 2025 4:34:49 PM

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I'm deeply disturbed and disappointed by your recent decision to manage moose populations under the justification of parasite control. While addressing parasite issues is important, intentionally reducing wildlife populations as a primary strategy is shortsighted and raises serious ecological, ethical, and logical concerns.

We all know this isn't genuinely about tick control, especially given the unpredictable fluctuations of tick populations year to year. What exactly is your long-term plan? Once you've reduced moose numbers, what's next? Have you already run out of deer to hunt? How far does this mindset extend?

It is disturbing how easily killing wildlife is justified as a solution, especially when the real culprits—habitat destruction and climate change—remain largely unaddressed. Instead of taking a science-based, ecosystem-focused approach, this decision caters to those who see wildlife as a resource to be exploited rather than a vital part of our environment.

I urge you to reconsider your approach and shift focus toward real solutions—ones that protect biodiversity and strengthen ecological resilience rather than undermine it.

Sincerely, Maryam

From: Vermont Wildlife Patrol <vtwildlifepatrol@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 3:05 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Moose Rule Changes & Harvest Recommendation

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PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED MOOSE RULE CHANGES & 2025 MOOSE HARVEST RECOMMENDATION

Rod Coronado
Vermont Wildlife Patrol & Sage Mountain Botanical Sanctuary
Town of Orange

I support the rationale and recommended harvest management objectives for the 2025 moose hunt. I am not opposed to hunting moose. I applied for a permit myself last year with the intent of hopefully harvesting a cow moose. I believe there are many subsistence hunters like me who would be happy to win an antlerless permit to harvest an adult cow moose.

VFW HARVEST RECOMMENDATION:

The Department recommends harvesting approximately 45 adult cow moose (11% of the cow population) in WMU E during the 2025 moose hunting seasons.

- What is the rationale for offering 72 either-sex moose permits if the objective is for cow moose only?
- In regards to proposed changes to the moose rules to establish a special opportunity season during the rut, why is the Department encouraging the hunting of bull moose, not cows to young hunters? What does this teach them about following harvest objectives?
- In addition, the auction permittees last year chose to also hunt during the rut, again harvesting bulls not cows, again contradicting the harvest objective.
- Last year 28 bulls were harvested and the harvest objective was the same. To the non-hunting public, this could look more like a trophy hunt than an effort to reduce moose density if the Department continues to encourage the harvest of bull moose with the current recommendation for 72 either-sex permits

Offering 72 either-sex permits will always attract hunters who would prefer to harvest a mature bull. Permit offerings should reinforce harvest objectives with only antlerless permits available

until harvest objectives are met and moose density levels are at desired levels. Only then should the Department consider issuing either-sex permits.

In addition to human harvests and fewer either-sex permits, we need the moose's natural predator to again play a role. We need wolves back in Vermont and the habitat connectivity and wildlife crossings that will help them recolonize Vermont. Especially if human hunter numbers continue to decline and ungulate populations continue to grow. That is the natural path towards a healthy moose population that I hope all wildlife stakeholders would support.

Thank you to Nick Fortin and all the Department staff dedicated to conserving our moose herd and addressing the winter tick infestation. Lastly, I support ongoing research into the use of fungal pathogens to address tick infestations and believe that funds derived from the sale of the three auction permits should only be used in moose related research.