

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS**

A Public Hearing will be held at the Days Inn Convention Center, 2500 E. 6th Street, Brookings, South Dakota, on April 1-2, 2015, at 2:00 o'clock P.M. (CDT), to consider adoption, amendment and repeal of Rules pertaining to:

1. ARSD 41:06:04 - Hunting Requirements and Prohibited Methods.

Effect: The proposed amendment would clarify that the 20 person limit on those who are engaged in party hunting only includes those persons in the party who are carrying a firearm, crossbow or bow and arrow.

Reason: Current rule provides that no more than 20 persons may cooperate as a party in hunting, except when hunting jackrabbits or predators. The department has interpreted and enforced the rule to count only those persons carrying firearms or bows and arrows; i.e., other party members who may have been involved as walkers, observers or drivers have not been counted against the limit on the party size. The department is recommending approval of this amendment to make the rule language consistent with how the rule has been interpreted and enforced.

2. ARSD 41:06:26 – Black Hills Elk Hunting Season.

Effect: The proposed amendments would adjust the number of licenses available from 420 “any elk” and 250 “antlerless elk” licenses (total of 670 licenses) to 430 “any elk” and 500 “antlerless elk” licenses (total of 930 licenses); allocate a pool of “antlerless elk” contingency licenses, up to 20% of antlerless elk licenses available from all Black Hills hunting units, which would be issued by GFP Commission resolution in August if summer range conditions dictate the use of contingency licenses; and repeal Unit BHE-ZZ1.

Reason: Provide hunting opportunity consistent with wildlife management objectives.

3. ARSD 41:06:27 – Custer State Park Elk Hunting Season (Any Elk)

Effect: The proposed amendments would adjust the number of licenses available

from 4 “any elk” to 8 “any elk” licenses, and repeal Unit CUE-ZZ1.

Reason: Provide hunting opportunity consistent with wildlife management objectives.

4. ARSD 41:06:29 – Mountain Goat Hunting Season.

Effect: The proposed amendments would offer 2 “any mountain goat” licenses and change the season dates from the first Saturday of October to October 31, to September 1 to December 31.

Reason: Provide hunting opportunity consistent with wildlife management objectives.

5. ARSD 41:06:43 – Archery Elk Hunting Season.

Effect: The proposed amendments would adjust the number of licenses available from 92 “any elk” and 15 “antlerless elk” licenses (total of 107 licenses) to 144 “any elk” and 56 “antlerless elk” licenses (total of 200 licenses), and repeal Unit AEE-ZZ1.

Reason: Provide hunting opportunity consistent with wildlife management objectives.

6. ARSD 41:06:59 - Prairie Elk Hunting Season.

Effect: The proposed amendments would adjust the number of licenses available from 57 “any elk” and 36 “antlerless elk” licenses (total of 93 licenses) to 48 “any elk” and 50 “antlerless elk” licenses (total of 98 licenses); no licenses would be issued for Unit 30A (portions of Gregory County); add that portion of Jackson County south of Highway 44 and BIA Highway 2 to Unit 11A, B, C, and D; adjust the season dates for Unit 11C from the second Sunday of October to December 31, to the second Sunday of October to November 30; and repeal Unit PRE-ZZ1.

Reason: Provide hunting opportunity consistent with wildlife management objectives.

7. ARSD 41:06:60 – Custer State Park Non-Trophy Bison Harvest

Effect: The proposed amendment would change the season length and season dates from 49 days beginning the first Saturday in October to 47 days beginning the 4th Monday in January.

Reason: Custer State Park has modified bison handling protocols and schedules because of changes in testing requirements and to reduce stress and associated injury and mortality. These changes have moved the primary sort of surplus sale animals to the end of October rather than the beginning. Previously, the sort of surplus animals including non-trophy harvest animals occurred at the beginning of October just after the roundup. With the move of the sort to the end of October, the non-trophy harvest needs to be moved to later in the year. Moving the non-trophy bison harvest to after the beginning of the year will remove any conflict with the fall roundup/auction schedule and the trophy bison harvest which occurs from late November until early January. Additionally, animals will have ample time to recover from any stress or injury sustained during roundup and handling.

The above rule proposals may be modified or amended following receipt of public comment at the hearing to include or exclude matters that are described in this Notice of Hearing. The hearing may be continued from time to time until its business has been completed and may be rescheduled.

Interested persons will be given reasonable opportunity to submit data, opinions, arguments, and their views, either orally or in writing (or both) at the hearing. Persons unable to attend the hearing may mail data, opinions, arguments, and their views to the office of the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, Foss Building, 523 East Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota 57501, or transmit by email to either wildinfo@state.sd.us or gfpadminrules@state.sd.us. All persons who desire to submit written data, opinions, arguments, and their views by mail or email are encouraged to mail or transmit the same in sufficient time so that it is received by and in the office of the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks on or before 12:00 o'clock P.M. on the date of the hearing. Interested persons will be given reasonable opportunity to submit data, opinions, arguments and their views, either orally or in writing (or both) to the Commission for their consideration.

All written and email comments must include the name, home town/city, and state of the person submitting the comments.

The above rule proposals are available for review on the internet by going to <https://rules.sd.gov/> and copies of the proposed rules may be requested from the office of the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, Foss Building, 523 East Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota 57501. Notice is further given to individuals with disabilities that this hearing is being held in a physically accessible place. Any individuals with disabilities who will require a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the hearing should submit a request to the undersigned at 605.773.3718 or 605.223.7684 (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf).

Dated this 6 day of March, 2015.

(SEAL)



Kelly R. Hepler, Secretary

This Notice of Public Hearing is published at the approximate cost of \$_____.