

Wind Cave Elk Requirements for Participation as a Trained Volunteer

Summary of Volunteer Responsibilities:

The National Park Service (NPS) seeks volunteers to assist in the reduction of elk within Wind Cave National Park to address Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in the herd. Volunteers will be part of an effort to determine if the reduction of elk density can result in a reduction in disease prevalence. Volunteers will be formed into teams that will locate and shoot and assist in field processing elk under the direction of a NPS Team Leader.

To participate, volunteers are required to commit to 5 consecutive days (Monday –Friday) of an available week they select between mid-November and February. Elk meat that has tested as non-detected for CWD will be made available to the participating volunteers at the conclusion of their volunteer experience.

To qualify for this opportunity the following criteria need to be met:

- Provide a pictured proof of identity (driver's license, passport).
- Be a United States citizen and a resident of South Dakota.
- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Pass a NCIC criminal background check and sign a volunteer applicant affidavit of criminal history and background investigation release.
- Sign up as an unpaid NPS Volunteer employee (NPS VIP Program) for five days.
- Self-certify physical fitness by stating their ability to walk up to 10 miles a day, and the ability to carry a 70 pound pack.
- Provide own equipment, lodging, food, rifle (firearms must be at least .25 caliber with a bottlenecked cartridge), and non-lead ammunition (non-toxic lead-free bullet that is at least 100 grains and is of a non-frangible design).
- Agree to take and pass a firearms proficiency test (place a minimum of 3 of 5 shots in an 8 inch circle at 200 yards).
- Understand they cannot participate in any reduction activities or carry firearms should they fail the background investigation or firearm proficiency test.
- Actively participate in all safety briefings and follow Team Lead instructions.
- When not in use, volunteers must secure their weapon at all times.

There will be 12 weeks of elk removal operations at Wind Cave:

There will not be removal operations on Thanksgiving week and the week after Christmas.

1. Nov. 14 – 18
2. Nov. 28 – Dec. 2
3. Dec. 5 – 9
4. Dec. 12 – 16
5. Dec. 19 – 23
6. Jan. 2 – 6
7. Jan. 9 – 13
8. Jan. 16 – 20
9. Jan. 23 – 27
10. Jan. 30 – Feb. 3
11. Feb. 6 - 10
12. Feb. 13 – 17