

Natural Resources and Energy Development
Fish & Wildlife Branch
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2023 Hunt & Trap – additions to the **New for 2023 section**

Effective September 1, 2023

Minimum age for Bear and Deer Hunting

- The minimum age for purchase of a Resident (Class 3) or Non-Resident (Class 1) Deer and Game Bird Licence has been reduced from 16 years to 12 years.
- The minimum age for purchase of a Resident or Non-Resident Bear Licence has also been reduced from 16 years to 12 years.
- As for other hunting licences, youth hunters aged 12-15 years must have a Firearms Safety/Hunter Education certificate and be accompanied by an adult while hunting.

Bag Limit for Bear Hunting

Residents:

- The bag limit for a Resident Bear Licence has been increased from one bear to two bears.
- Resident Bear Licence holders will now need to activate two tags during their licence purchase.
- Residents are now eligible to purchase only a single Bear Licence per calendar year.
- **Changes to the licensing system to allow the purchase of a Resident Bear Licence with two tags should be finalized by the end of September.**
- **Prior to these upcoming changes, resident hunters can continue to purchase a second Bear Licence following the harvest and registration of a first bear. The Fish and Wildlife Branch will automatically process refunds for second bear licences that are issued during this time. Contact jan.coulombe@gnb.ca or 506-453-7442 if you have any questions.**

Non-residents:

- *There are no changes to bag limits for Non-Resident Bear Licence holders.*
- *The bag limit for a Non-Resident Bear Licence remains at one bear per licence.*
- *Non-Resident Bear Licence holders will continue to have the option to purchase a second Bear Licence following the harvest of a first bear.*

Muzzleloader Deer Season

- A one-week muzzleloader-only season extension for white-tailed deer hunting has been established in certain Wildlife Management Zones (WMZs). It will immediately follow the regular firearms deer season. In 2023, the muzzleloader deer season will occur from November 20-26.
- A “muzzle-loading firearm” (muzzleloader) is defined as a firearm in which the powder and projectile may be loaded only from the muzzle of the barrel.
- A Muzzleloader Season Authorization will be required to participate in the muzzleloader deer season. Cost: \$9.00 + HST for residents; \$46 + HST for non-residents. These fees are non-refundable.
- A Muzzleloader Season Authorization may be purchased anywhere hunting licences can be obtained (online, authorized vendors, or Service New Brunswick centres).
- Applicants for a Muzzleloader Season Authorization must hold a valid Deer and Game Bird Licence (resident or non-resident). Applicants must have an unfilled deer tag from the current season.
- There is no additional deer bag limit for muzzleloader deer season.
- A Muzzleloader Season Authorization does not have to be purchased at the time of deer licence purchase. It can be purchased and associated with a valid Deer and Game Bird licence up to the last day of muzzleloader deer season.
- Muzzleloader deer season will be open only in those Wildlife Management Zones where antlerless deer hunting is permitted. In 2023, muzzleloader deer season will be open in WMZs 10, 16-17, and 19-27.
- Persons holding a Muzzleloader Season Authorization may only harvest an antlerless deer if they also hold an Antlerless Deer Authorization and are hunting in the single WMZ for which that Antlerless Deer Authorization is valid.
- Persons holding a Muzzleloader Season Authorization may hunt only with a muzzle-loading firearm during the muzzleloader deer season unless they have already registered a harvested deer.
- **Changes to the licencing system to allow purchase of a Muzzleloader Season Authorization should be finalized by the end of September.**

Deadline for Deer Harvest Registration

- In previous years, a harvested deer had to be registered within 24 hours of retrieval of the deer, with an exception for deer that were temporarily stored at a campsite occupied by the hunter.
- ***These requirements remain in effect.***
- A new deadline has been established that requires any deer harvested and stored at a campsite to be registered no later than 24 hours following the end of the hunting season for the Wildlife Management Zone where the deer was killed.
- This means that the campsite exemption does not extend past the end of deer season.

Deer Registration Agent Payment

- When registering a deer at a private deer registration station, hunters must now make a payment of \$4.00 + HST directly to the deer registration agent.
- This payment is intended to compensate deer registration agents for the services they provide, to help attract new agents and retain existing agents.
- This payment is consistent with deer registration payment methods in neighbouring jurisdictions.
- Online registration of deer harvest will remain a no-cost option for hunters.