



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY GARRISON WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE
100 HEADQUARTERS AVENUE
WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, NEW MEXICO 88002-5000

IMWS-ZA

12 FEB 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Garrison Policy Letter #12: White Sands Missile Range Installation Hunting Program

1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this guidance is to identify policies and procedures for hunting on White Sands Missile Range, hereinafter referred to as the Range or WSMR. Many of the hunting opportunities on WSMR are unique to New Mexico and are important to not only Range employees and to the local community, but are valued regionally and nationally. Hunting can only occur on the WSMR as long as it is consistent with military mission priorities. Hunter and visitor compliance with all stated safety, security, access, and regulatory requirements will ensure continued hunting opportunities on the Range.

2. **SCOPE:** This guidance applies to all personnel visiting and assigned to WSMR, including Department of Defense civilian and military personnel, tenants, contractors, customers, state and federal employees, WSMR residents, guests, volunteers, and outfitters. This guidance identifies hunting requirements and restrictions specific to the Range, and is not an official reference for state hunting rules and policies. Persons planning to participate in hunting activities must become familiar with and knowledgeable of the applicable state hunting laws. This guidance supersedes all previous Range hunting guidance and policies.

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a. **The Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division, Conservation Branch.** The Conservation Branch is the proponent for this guidance and serves as the single point of contact for Range hunting and natural resource management. The Conservation Branch is responsible for coordination of hunting policies with local, state, and federal governmental agencies and civilian conservation organizations as needed.

b. **Directorate of Emergency Services.** The Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) is responsible for Range access, security policies and procedures, and coordination with the Conservation Branch for all conservation law enforcement activities.

c. **Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security.** The Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security is responsible for operational security.

4. **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:** Hunting on the Range is regulated in accordance with state, federal, Army and Range regulations; Army and Range policies; and with the Range Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan. Hunting seasons, dates, areas, closures, species, licensing, weapons restrictions, and bag limits are established by and in compliance with state regulations. State hunting regulations and requirements are identified annually in the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) Hunting Rules and Information booklet, available from their offices, license vendors, and the internet at <http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/hunting/>.

a. **Range Hunting.** Fishing and sport trapping, and the collection and/or killing of reptiles and amphibians are prohibited. The Range is currently closed to bear, Barbary sheep, deer, elk, and turkey hunting. Changes to the status of any of these species may occur within the authority of this policy based on sustainable harvest and/or population conditions. Due to WSMR security restrictions, foreign nationals cannot participate in hunting activities on the Range without prior approval from the WSMR Foreign Disclosure Office. The entire Range or portions of the Range are subject to closure without notice due to mission or security concerns. Hunting occurs on the Range under two structures, General Public Big Game Hunts and Restricted Access Hunts.

(1) *General Public Big Game Hunts.* Big game species currently available for hunting on WSMR are oryx, pronghorn, and desert bighorn sheep. General Public hunts are security controlled opportunities, where escorts are not required, and are available to all U.S. residents and foreign nationals with prior approval. Licenses are only available through a lottery draw process conducted annually by the Department. Application information is available at <http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/hunting/applications-and-draw-information/>. Oryx hunt opportunities include once-in-a-lifetime (OIL), youth, broken-horn, veteran, mobility impaired hunts, and official escort Standard oryx population management hunts. The Range also offers limited hunting opportunities for desert bighorn sheep and pronghorn annually, depending on population conditions. General Public hunts are, primarily, scheduled weekend events that occur within specific areas of the Range, where access is strictly controlled. Hunt frequencies and dates typically change on an annual basis. Occasionally, the Range conducts escorted oryx population management hunts in areas where oryx conflicts with the military mission exist.

(2) *Restricted Access Hunts.* Restricted Access Hunts are available only to WSMR personnel who have long-term Uprange access authority and a Range Hunting Permit (see section 4.b.), and to guests who are escorted by properly permitted volunteers, hereinafter referred to as Volunteer Sponsors. DES controls Long-term Uprange access in accordance with Range security regulations and policies. Personnel with temporary Uprange access cannot be Volunteer Sponsors, but can participate in Restricted Access Hunts as guests. Volunteer Sponsors and guests must be registered with the DES-Physical Security Branch and the Conservation Branch. In accordance

with Range security policies, only guests who pass a criminal background check, conducted by DES, will be granted access to hunt. Only the Garrison Commander may grant waivers of the above background check requirement.

(a) Hunting opportunities under the Restricted Access Hunt process include Secure-hunt Area oryx population management, lottery draw javelina, cougar, and small game hunting. Special restrictions, described within this guidance, are in place for these hunt opportunities to ensure compliance with Range security and safety policies. Oryx population management hunts are conducted in an effort to reduce animal numbers in remote areas of the Range, i.e., primarily outside of OIL oryx hunt areas. Although it is the responsibility of all hunt participants to understand and comply with Range hunting and security policies, Volunteer Sponsors are ultimately responsible for ensuring that they and their guests comply with Range regulations and policies. Hunters who do not have approved Uprange access or who are not an authorized guest of a Volunteer Sponsor cannot access the Range to hunt.

(b) The Department issues licenses for Secure-hunt Area oryx hunts through their population management lottery draw system. Applicants must apply for any General public oryx hunt and then additionally select the 5th choice option for the management hunts. Population management oryx hunts are described in the Departments Hunting and Rules Booklet as either a Standard or Secure-hunt Area hunt. Those applicants that are unsuccessful in the lottery draw general public hunts will automatically be included on the population management hunt list. The general public will be included in the Standard Hunt list, while authorized WSMR Sponsor applicants and their guests will included on the Range Secure-hunt Area list.

(c) The Range permits lottery draw javelina hunts, small game and cougar hunting during the states regulated open seasons, in any of the established hunt units identified on the Range's Small Game Hunting Map. For the purpose of this guidance, small game species include upland game birds, waterfowl, furbearers, and non-protected species. It is the hunter's responsibility to have the appropriate New Mexico hunting license. Migratory bird hunters are also required to have a Migratory Harvest Information Program number, and waterfowl hunters over 16 must have a Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (duck stamp). Cougar hunters must observe and monitor Department unit harvest quotas.

b. Range Hunting Permits. To participate in Secure-hunt Area oryx, javelina, cougar and small game hunts, hunters must have a Range Hunting Permit or be a guest of a Volunteer Sponsor. Hunting Permits are only issued to DOD, Federal and State Government personnel, and Range contractors with approved long-term Uprange access. The Conservation Branch will issue permits, coordinated with the DES, to qualified personnel after completion and approval of a permit application. If it is determined by DES that Uprange access is not required due to a lack of security

justification, permits can and will be revoked or denied. A Hunting Permit is not a hunting license; it only authorizes access to the Range to hunt and/or to serve as a Volunteer Sponsor to escort hunting guests.

c. Guests. Up to three (3) guests may accompany licensed hunters during General Public Big Game Hunts and Volunteer Sponsors during Restricted Access Hunts. Guests on the public big game hunts will be non-hunting visitors. Guests of Volunteer Sponsors, with valid hunting licenses, can hunt during Restricted Access oryx, javelina, small game, and cougar hunts. All guests of Volunteer Sponsors must be registered with the Conservation Branch through a guest application process. Licensed hunters on the General Public hunts and Volunteer Sponsors will be responsible for the actions of their guests at all times, and all members of the hunting party must remain together while hunting on the Range.

d. General Access and Control.

(1) *General Public Big Game Hunts.* WSMR is a restricted public access Army Installation. General Public hunts are permitted only when sufficient control measures are in place to ensure hunt participant safety and Range security. Only hunters successful in the Department's lottery draw process, and their guests, will be granted access to the Range. Criminal background checks will be conducted as part of the pre-hunt registration process. WSMR and New Mexico vehicle, licensing and registration requirements will be enforced by DES and Department law enforcement officers. Pre-hunt safety and security briefing are mandatory for all hunt participants. Hunt parties will only have access to that portion of the Range covered by a specific hunt. Hunt controls will include law enforcement patrols, mandatory check stations, hunting prohibition signs, barricades, weapons registration, and roadblocks. Controls will be enforced by WSMR and Department officials.

(2) *Escorted Standard Oryx Population Management Hunts.* Due to safety and security requirements specific to the areas targeted for these hunts, oryx population reduction hunters must be escorted at all times while on the Range. Official escorts are designated on-duty WSMR hunt program personnel, including Department of the Army Civilian Police, identified Range civilian and contractor personnel, and Department employees with authorized security access. Prior to each hunt, escorts will provide hunters and guests with a Range safety and security briefing, and will conduct a vehicle, licensing, and registration inspection. Escorts will assist each hunter by guiding the hunter to the targeted area, assisting with locating oryx, and ensuring location and shot safety.

(3) *Restricted Access Hunting.* DES 911 Dispatch Center, with the support of the Conservation Branch, conducts hunter access and control for Restricted Access hunts. Daily hunt party access to the Range will be controlled and monitored by the Dispatch Center using a hunter database tracking system maintained by the Conservation Branch. The database tracking system contains Volunteer Sponsor and guest

authorization, vehicle, organizational, and contact information collected from the approved permit application. For each hunt party requesting access to the Range to hunt, the Dispatch Center will log entry times, hunt areas, vehicle descriptions, cell phone numbers, emergency contact information, and exit times. The tracking system assists Range officials to ensure hunters are clear from the Range at the end of each day.

e. Hunt Areas. The Conservation Branch, in coordination with the Department, establishes Range hunt areas based on safety, security, and mission parameters. Hunt instructions and maps are provided to all hunters prior to or at the beginning of each hunt.

(1) *General Public Hunt Areas.*

(a) General public oryx and pronghorn hunt areas are primarily located in the Tularosa Basin (Rhodes Canyon Range Center) and the northwestern portion of the Range (Stallion). General descriptions of the hunt areas are included in the New Mexico Big Game Information booklet.

(b) Desert Bighorn Sheep hunt areas include bighorn habitat in the San Andres Mountains on both the San Andres National Wildlife Refuge and on WSMR. Specific hunt areas may change on an annual basis, depending on bighorn sheep distribution, coordination between the Refuge and the Range, and ongoing Range mission testing and training activities.

(2) *Secure-hunt Oryx Hunt Areas.* The secure area oryx hunt areas are located within remote portions of the Range where WSMR and the Department have identified a management requirement to reduce oryx numbers. The four primary hunt areas are the Oscura Mountains, the San Andres Mountains, the Small Missile Range, and the area south of State Highway 70. Volunteer Sponsors will receive hunt maps prior to each hunt. Changes to hunt areas can occur during the course of the season due to access limitations that may exist. If changes are required, the Conservation Branch will notify and reassign hunters to alternative hunt areas.

(3) *Javelina, Small Game and Cougar Hunt Areas.* Javelina, small game and cougar hunt areas are identified on the Small Game Hunting Map, maintained by the Conservation Branch. Revisions to the maps and hunt units can occur without notice. It is the responsibility of Volunteer Sponsors to ensure that they have the most current maps, and to communicate with the Dispatch Center prior to their hunt to ensure they do not violate access restrictions. Hunt units are located in areas north and south of U.S. Highway 70, and sponsor and guest requirements apply to all units. The Conservation Branch will issue hunt maps to hunters during the hunt permitting process or upon request.

f. Hunt Safety and Security. For all hunting activities on the Range, participants must follow hunt safety and security procedures established by this guidance and other applicable Range policies. Hunters must be aware that all areas of the Range may contain hazardous items and adherence to established safety and unexploded ordnance procedures is critical. Hunt areas are delineated to avoid known unexploded ordnance hazards. Hunting is prohibited in all areas signed for hazards. WSMR and Department officials, to ensure compliance with hunting laws and safety and security procedures, will patrol closed areas along with the primary hunt areas.

(1) *Criminal Background Checks.* In accordance with Range security policies and Army regulations, criminal history background checks will be completed for all General Public hunt participants and for all Restricted Access hunt guests. Only the Garrison Commander can grant waivers of the background check requirement.

(2) *Unexploded Ordnance Orientation.* All hunters and guests must read and sign an unexploded ordnance Range Hazards Orientation Letter that summarizes the potential dangers to visitors on the Range. Hunters will mark the location and immediately call hunt officials or the DES Dispatch Center at (575) 678-1234 and report suspected unexploded ordnance discovered while in the field.

(3) *Hold Harmless Agreement.* All hunters and guests must read and sign a Hold Harmless Agreement, which releases WSMR from all claims and liabilities.

(4) *Vehicle Registration.* Vehicles entering the Range hunts must have proof of valid state registration and current insurance, and drivers must have a valid driver's license. Proof of registration and insurance must be available at all times for all vehicles entering the Range.

(5) *Personnel Identification.* All persons entering the Range must carry appropriate personal identification such as a driver's license or other form of government identification. Children under the age of 16 are not required to have identification as long as a parent or legal guardian accompanies them.

(6) *Hunter Education.* All hunters under the age of 18 must have proof of completion of New Mexico's or another state's hunter education course prior to hunting on the Range, or be a qualified Mentored-youth hunter in accordance with Department requirements. All youth hunters must carry their hunter identification card on them while hunting or have proof under the Mentored-Youth hunting program.

(7) *Hunters Orange.* All big game participants are required to wear solid or camouflage style fluorescent orange (hunter's orange) clothing at all times while away from the vehicle, with a minimum of 144 square inches appearing on both the chest and back (a typical blaze orange hunting vest). Hunter's orange is not required for javelina, small game and cougar hunting activities.

(8) *Cell Phones.* All hunting parties entering the Range to hunt are required to carry and monitor a personal cellular telephone.

(9) *Vehicle Searches.* Prior to entering the Range, owners and/or operators of motor vehicles are subject to vehicle searches.

(10) *Off Road Vehicular Travel and ATV's.* For the purpose of this policy, UTVs are included within the description of ATVs. For General Public big game hunts, off-road vehicular travel is only allowed to retrieve harvested game. ATVs may be used as hunting vehicles during the Secure-hunt Area oryx hunts when road conditions limit other vehicles types. Use of ATVs for the these oryx hunts will only occur on non-maintained dirt roads identified on hunt maps, and only after coordination and approval of the WSMR hunt administrator. ATV operators must provide proof of completion of an ATV safety training class and use appropriate ATV safety equipment, such as helmets, gloves, and boots. All ATVs must have a valid New Mexico registration.

(11) *Access Points.* Access to the Range for the General Public Big Game Hunts will only be through the gates designated for each respective hunt. Access to the Range for Restricted Access Hunts will be through all electronic and manned gates, and through combination gates as authorized.

(12) *Camping.* Camping on the Range during hunts will only be permitted on a case-by-case basis, and after consideration of all safety aspects of the request.

(13) *Horses and Dogs.* Hunters who want to use horses must provide proof of a health certificate and a Coggin's test within 10 days prior to their hunt. Use of dogs during small game hunting also requires proof of vaccination.

(14) *Weapons.* Legal weapons for hunting on the Range will correspond to legal weapon types identified in the New Mexico Rules and Information Proclamations. Hunters must register their weapons with the Conservation Branch and or DES prior to being allowed access to the Range to hunt.

g. Restricted Access Big Game Hunt Requirements.

(1) Restricted Access Volunteer Sponsors must participate in a pre-hunt briefing provided by the Conservation Branch. Sponsors must contact the Conservation Branch to schedule a briefing in advance of the start of the hunt period. Briefings will reiterate requirements, procedures, and safety and security policies identified within this guidance. It will be the responsibility of the Volunteer Sponsor to brief their guests on Range safety and security policies.

(2) It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Sponsor to ensure that all registration requirements for the licensed hunter and/or guests are completed.

(3) Volunteer Sponsors must report oryx harvests to the Dispatch Center on the day the kill occurs and to the Conservation Branch, at (575) 678-7909, as soon as possible after the hunt.

h. Restricted Access Hunt Notification Process.

(1) All Volunteer Sponsors must call the Dispatch Center, at (575) 678-1234, immediately prior to entering and upon exiting the Range on each hunt day.

(2) The Dispatch Center will login and record names of hunters and guests, entry and exit times, hunt areas, vehicle and cell phone information, and hunt information into the database system.

(3) Access to hunt will be denied to persons not in the database system.

(4) Secure-hunt area population management oryx hunt parties can only hunt in the area assigned to them by the Range.

(5) Javelina, small game and cougar hunting parties can log in for up to three hunt units.

i. Hunt Photography. Hunters are permitted to take limited still photography during General Public Big Game and Restricted Access hunts. Photography is limited to photographs of hunters, guests and their respective harvested animals. Photography of general landscapes, wildlife, or manufactured features is prohibited. WSMR officials have the authority to review all photographs and will delete or confiscate any that are deemed sensitive.

j. Outfitters and Guides. The Range permits the use and operation of professional outfitters and guides only during General Public Big Game hunts, and prohibited their use for Restricted Access Hunts. Outfitters and guides must register with the Range prior to soliciting or booking hunts. To be an approved Range outfitter and/or guide, applicants must also be registered and be operating in good standing with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Outfitters on the Range must carry a minimum of \$500,000.00 in applicable liability insurance. The Range does not permit Outfitters and guides the ability to scout prior to scheduled hunts.

k. Hunt Fees. In accordance with the Sikes Act (16 USC 670 et seq.) and the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, the Range will collect access fees for all hunting opportunities. Fees will vary by species and will be commensurate with state license fees for the same species. By law, funds generated from these fees will remain available for use only by WSMR for natural resource and wildlife enhancement projects. Outfitters will pay an annual fee to operate on the Range during the public big game hunts.

I. Hunting Periods.

- (1) Hunting hours for all hunting activities are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.
- (2) Hunting days for javelina, small game, cougars, and for Secure-Area oryx population management hunts are during non-mission weekends, holidays, and Range designated compressed non-duty Fridays.
- (3) Escorted oryx and desert bighorn sheep hunts can occur during any day allowable by the mission schedule, within the season dates established by the Department and Range.
- (4) The Range will close or suspend hunting activities during mission periods or when other Range activities overlap hunt areas.
- (5) For Restricted Access hunts, it is the responsibility of the Volunteer Sponsor to check for and comply with Range closures.
- (6) The Range will close javelina, cougar, and small game hunting in units that overlap big game hunt areas during concurrent public big game hunts.
- (7) Hunters are required to exit the Range within two hour after sunset. If for any reason hunters are unable to exit in time, they must contact the check station during the public big game hunts or the DES Dispatch Center, at (575) 678-1234, during the Restricted Access hunts to inform them of the reason for the delay.

m. Prohibited Activities.

- (1) Touching, kicking or otherwise disturbing any debris found on the Range, since such debris could be unexploded ordnance or a protected item.
- (2) Possession or consumption of alcohol, or hunting under the influence of alcohol.
- (3) The discharge of a weapon within 150 meters of any WSMR infrastructure.
- (4) The collection, vandalism, and theft of historic or prehistoric artifacts or structures, metal detecting, woodcutting, mineral and fossil collection.
- (5) The collection of animals or plant materials, and/or the harm or harassment of wildlife during any hunting activity, other than those game animals being legally pursued by a licensed hunter, or while on the Range for other than WSMR authorized hunting activities. The definition of wildlife includes any bird, mammal, amphibians, and reptile species.

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(6) The use and possession of handguns and pistols in areas south of Highway 70, and concealed weapons in all areas.

(7) Off road travel during small game hunting activities.

(8) Use of video photography equipment for other than still photographs. Obtaining or recordings any type of video footage.

(9) Use of outfitters and guides during Restricted Access and escorted population management hunts.

(10) Volunteer Sponsor participating in hunts during their normal duty hours.

(11) Volunteer Sponsor receiving payment/compensation for services provided during hunts or providing recommendations for taxidermists or other services in connection with hunt activities.

5. ENFORCEMENT: Violations of this guidance, or other applicable laws or regulations, may result in the automatic revocation of WSMR hunting privileges, permanently being barred from the installation, and/or prosecution as a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including, but not limited to Articles 90, 92 and/or 134; and/or other applicable Federal or State laws or regulations. Additionally, a Volunteer Sponsor participating in hunts during their normal duty hours, receiving payment/compensation for services provided during hunts, or providing recommendations for taxidermists or other services in connection with hunt activities may face legal action for violations of 5 CFR §2635 and DoD 5500.7-R.

6. Organizations will disseminate this policy to all personnel and post a copy on official bulletin boards.

7. POINTS OF CONTACT: For information concerning the hunting policy, please contact Mr. Gilbert Villegas at (575) 678-7909, gilbert.j.villegas2.ctr@mail.mil, or Mr. Patrick Morrow at (575) 678-7095, patrick.c.morrow.civ@mail.mil.



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