

Species: Mule Deer

Unit Group: 062, 067 - 068

Hunt Geometry ID: 97

Hunt ID: [936]

Access:

Access is good in most areas throughout the unit group, however there is some access blocked in the South Tuscarora Range (Unit 068) where mining is occurring, in the North Tuscarora Range around the IL Ranch and Spanish Ranch, and throughout portions of the Independence Range (Unit 062) where private lands and industry prevent public access. Departing from Interstate 80, primary access roads include the Maggie Creek Road (Highway 766 north out of Carlin) providing access to the east side of the South Tuscaroras (Unit 068), Highway 35 north from Battle Mountain for the majority of western Unit 068, Boulder Valley Road traveling north from the Dunphy Exit providing access to the eastern portions of Unit 068, and the Midas-Tuscarora Road (the Unit 067/068 boundary, between the towns of Midas and Tuscarora). Primary access to Unit 062 is from Highways 225 and 226, main routes would include Maggie Creek Summit Road through the Bull Run Basin (northern Unit 062), and Jacks Creek Summit Road (northern Unit 062). From all these primary access roads, there are numerous secondary roads with ample deer hunting opportunities. Most of the deer reside on public land administered by the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, however large tracts of private land exist throughout the unit group. Ask permission before hunting or crossing private land and be mindful of private property marked with no trespassing signs or regularly spaced orange topped fenceposts which also indicate restricted private land.

Recommended Hunting Areas:

Most deer will be found in the mountain brush/aspen zones where vegetation consists of some mixture of sagebrush, bitterbrush, mountain brushes (ex. service berry), aspen, subalpine fir, limber pine, pinyon/juniper, and mahogany. During this late antlerless season, mule deer may have begun their migration out of higher elevation summer ranges into transition habitats, meaning deer may be found across all three units of the unit group. If November conditions have been mild, with little snow accumulation and moderate temperatures, consider hunting summer ranges throughout the Independence Mountains (Unit 062), the North Tuscaroras (Unit 067), and in the northern portions of the South Tuscaroras (Unit 068). If winter conditions have begun to set in, with cold temps and snow accumulation, focus on lower elevations surrounding core summer ranges and the transition habitats between the above-mentioned summer ranges and winter habitats in the Izzenhood, Sheep Creek, and southern South Tuscarora Ranges of Unit 068. The severity and timing of winter conditions will be a determining factor in how far along deer are in their migratory path. It is unlikely that most deer will be at the terminal ends of their migrations by this season, so it is not necessary to focus efforts in those winter ranges.

Biologist Comments:

The purpose of this hunt is to maintain the mule deer population at or below the carrying capacity of the winter range. You will notice on your hunt that most of these winter habitats have been significantly impacted by wildfire and, in some cases, improper grazing. These compromised habitats have lost most of their shrub communities, which mule deer depend on during winter months for cover and forage, and thus cannot support the number of deer they historically have. Maintaining the herd in sync with the forage quality and availability of the landscape aims to avoid catastrophic winter die-offs, normally observed in years with heavy snow loads. Generally, deer during this season will begin forming larger groups on their paths to winter range. They will be spread widely across the three units, on concentrated migratory paths, but should be relatively easy to locate transitioning through habitats. By November, deer have experienced several months of hunting pressure and will largely be attempting to avoid roads with even moderate traffic. Since most of the area is BLM and USFS, livestock grazing of both sheep and cattle will be observed across the landscape. Contact the local BLM or USFS offices for any questions you may have regarding livestock use. Make sure that you are well prepared with extra water, gas, and spare tires. There are no gas stations north of Interstate 80 until you reach Owyhee. Most of the unit group is dispersed and primitive camping, however there are several developed campgrounds in the Wildhorse Reservoir area. This area is extremely susceptible to range fires so please be careful and use the utmost care to not park or drive over dried grasses. Other outdoor activities in the area include reservoir fishing and upland game hunting (both with seasonal restrictions), sight-seeing, and hiking. Other wildlife that may be observed while hunting includes antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, moose, sage-grouse, ruffed grouse, blue grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, chukar partridge, Hungarian partridge, a variety of rabbit, quail, dove and a host of other non-game birds and animals.