

# Big Game Management Extended Hunt

## What is a Big Game Management Extended Hunt?

In some areas of Saskatchewan, landowners are experiencing unusually high damage to agricultural products because of elk populations. In addition to prevention measures landowners can take, Big Game Management Extended Hunt licences are being piloted as a short-term way to help reduce wildlife damage to your property.

## How are BGMEH going to be implemented?

Landowners need to report wildlife damage to agricultural products through Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) claims. This information is vital in the establishment of depredation hot spots.

- ✔ SCIC has identified a “hotspot” in a rural municipality (RM) based on claims data in September (see procedure 1).
- ✔ There is evidence that the wildlife population in the hotspot is strong enough to withstand an additional harvest without impacting species sustainability or rights-based harvest (see procedure 2).
- ✔ Landowners must provide access to their land during licensed hunting seasons, including a BGMEH (see procedure 3).

**Then, the Ministry of Environment will approve the BGMEH.**

## So, a BGMEH has been approved. Now what?

Licences will be available through HAL in October on a first come, first served basis through HAL. Fees are \$30, including GST.

### Here are a few things to remember:

- Only Saskatchewan residents are eligible for BGMEH licences. Hunters may only purchase one BGMEH licence.
- Holders of a regular or draw licence may also hold a BGMEH licence for that species. Big game draw pool status is not required or impacted by BGMEH licences.
- You must have a valid Wildlife Habitat Certificate.
- BGMEH licences are only for antlerless animals.
- Bag limit will be one animal per licence, unless otherwise noted in the licence conditions.
- You must report the results of your hunt through the Hunter Harvest Survey.
- Wastage of game is not permitted, and all other hunting regulations apply. You are responsible for proper care of your harvested animal.
- BGMEH will be limited to a specific WMZ or rural municipality as defined on the licence.
- Landowners experiencing losses in areas where BGMEH are offered must implement mitigations to prevent future losses within one year of the hunt.

## Procedures

- 1 Hotspots will be identified if:**
  - a. The number of claims for wildlife damage to stacked forage is more than 10 claims in an RM.
  - b. The number of claims for wildlife damage to stacked forage is more than 25 per cent greater than the 10-year average for the RM.
- 2 Species information validation:**
  - a. Ministry of Environment staff will review species population status in the corresponding WMZ.
    - i. Zones that had base or liberal harvest strategies during hunting season are eligible for a BGMEH.
  - b. Ministry of Environment staff will review hunter harvest survey results and set a quota.
  - c. Licence offerings will be made available in HAL.
  - d. The ministry will inform conservation officers that a hunt is being implemented.
  - e. An email will be sent to all SK residents that applied for the draw or bought a hunting licence in the current year.

- 3 Connecting hunters and landowners:**
  - a. SCIC will contact all producers who made a claim on staged forage to encourage them to provide their contact information to their RM office.
  - b. RM offices and Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation (SWF) central office will collect landowner information from all who are willing to allow hunters access.
  - c. Hunters will be encouraged to contact RMs and the SWF to get landowner contact information.

## Quotas

The BGMEH quotas will not be higher than the number of unused licences for that Wildlife Management Zone (WMZ). Where a regular licence is available during the regulated hunting season, the quota will be based on what is a scientifically reasonable harvest and will be no higher than 50.

