



**State of Utah**  
**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
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*Executive Director*  
**Division of Wildlife Resources**  
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**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Wildlife Board Members

FROM: Lindy Varney, Wildlife Licensing Coordinator

DATE: Aug. 1, 2025

**SUBJECT: Relief options for hunters on the Monroe unit due to the Monroe Canyon Fire**

An emergency board meeting has been called by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to address the Monroe Canyon Fire, which was discovered on July 13 and has since consumed over 46,000 acres. The purpose of this meeting is to review a proposal offering relief to buck deer, bull elk and black bear hunters that have Monroe unit hunting permits.

The Monroe Canyon Fire's location and intensity have led the land management agencies to issue area closures, impacting access to significant portions of wildlife habitat. Specifically, 43% of mule deer habitat, 45% of elk habitat and 32% of the entire Monroe unit are currently inaccessible.

For elk, over 70% of the animals are located in the closed areas during most of the hunting seasons (archery, early rifle, muzzleloader and mid-rifle). Some elk will migrate to open areas in mid-October and November.

For deer, about 70% of the animals stay in closed zones during the archery and muzzleloader seasons, with 60-70% of the population in closed areas during October's general season hunt. More land might open by mid-October.

The DWR requests board approval for relief options concerning the following Monroe permits:

- General-season buck deer
  - Archery (Aug. 16–Sept. 12)
  - Muzzleloader (Sept. 24–Oct. 2)
- Dedicated Hunters (in all three years of the program)
- Limited-entry bull elk
  - Archery (Aug. 16–Sept. 16)
  - Early any legal weapon (Sept. 17–21)
  - Muzzleloader (Sept. 22–Oct. 3)
  - Mid any legal weapon (Oct. 4–16)
- Limited-entry black bear\*
  - Fall (Aug. 1–31 and Nov. 3–9)
- Landowner, conservation permit, and LOA vouchers for the hunts in this list

The DWR requests the following options be available for permit holders for the hunts listed above:

**Option 1:** The permit holder may keep their permit and hunt where access is available.

**Option 2:** The permit holder may surrender their permit up to the day before their hunt starts. If this occurs, the DWR will reinstate bonus/preference points (including one for the current year), waive the waiting period, and provide a refund (minus the \$25 handling fee).

**Option 3:** The permit holder may request that their hunt be extended to the 2026 hunting season. With this option, the permit holder must notify the DWR in writing of their decision up to the day before their hunt starts, and must also surrender their permit to the DWR up to the day before their hunt starts, to be eligible to extend their hunt.

**Options for Dedicated Hunters:**

- First year: They can surrender out of the program (full points and refund, minus \$25) or extend a year.
- Second year: They can surrender out of the program (2/3 points and refund) or extend a year.
- Third year: They can surrender out of the program (1/3 points and refund) or extend a year.

**\*Exception for bear permit holder:** Allow the single black bear permit holder to select one of the first three options by Aug. 8, 2025, even though the hunt opens on Aug. 1, 2025.

In addition, the DWR also requests the Wildlife Board's approval to apply the options discussed above to the additional hunts listed below if conditions on the Monroe unit do not improve. If the Wildlife Board gives the DWR this flexibility, the DWR will monitor conditions and notify permit holders of their options in a timely manner.

- General-season buck deer
  - Any legal weapon (Oct. 18–26)
- Limited-entry buck deer
  - Muzzleloader hunt on general-season unit (Oct. 29–Nov. 6)
- Limited-entry bull elk
  - Late any legal weapon (Nov. 8–16)
  - Late archery (Nov. 29–Dec. 14)