



2024 BIGHORN SHEEP, ELK AND MOOSE HUNTING GUIDE



This guide is provided for informational purposes and is not intended as a complete listing of regulations. If you desire specific information on regulations and laws, visit the Game and Fish Department website (for season proclamations) or for North Dakota state laws go to legis.nd.gov/cencode/T20-1.html

SEASON INFORMATION

MOOSE

UNITS M5, M6, M8, M9, M10, M11

Bow Season: September 6 - 29

Regular Season: October 11 - November 3

Restrictions: All moose license holders are able to hunt during the regular season (any legal firearm or bow) and the bow season (bows only) but are restricted to unit and type of moose designated on license. Orange clothing required during regular season.

BIGHORN SHEEP

UNITS B1, B3, B4, B5

Regular Season: November 1 - December 31

Restrictions: Male bighorn sheep only. Orange clothing required.

ELK

UNITS E1E, E1W, E2, E6

Bow Season: September 6-29

Restrictions: Must use legal archery equipment during bow season. Restricted to unit and type of elk as designated on license. License holders are also able to hunt during the regular season (any legal firearm or bow).

UNITS E1E, E1W, E2

Regular Season: October 4 - January 5

Restrictions: Any legal firearm or bow. License holders are also able to hunt during the bow season (bows only) but are restricted to unit and type of elk designated on license. Orange clothing required.

UNITS E3, E4

Regular Season:

September 6 - January 5

Restrictions: Any legal firearm or bow. Lottery license holders may hunt in either unit beginning September 9. Landowner preference license holders may hunt only in their unit. Orange clothing required.

UNIT E5

Regular Season:

September 6 - January 5

Restrictions: Any legal firearm or bow. Open to all general lottery license holders from all units. Hunters may take only the type of elk described on their license. Landowner preference licenses are not valid. Orange clothing required.

UNIT E6

Regular Season:

October 4 - November 7

November 25 - January 5

Restrictions: Restricted to unit and type of elk designated on license. Any legal firearm or bow. License holders are also able to hunt during the bow season (bows only). Orange clothing required.

NORTH
Dakota | Game and Fish
Be Legendary.



100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, North Dakota 58501-5095
Phone: 701-328-6300 | ndgf@nd.gov

Apply Online at gf.nd.gov

QUICK – CONVENIENT – EASY

Purchase Licenses and Submit Lottery Applications Online

Regular license fees apply with no service charge added.

VISA, DISCOVER, MASTERCARD AND AMERICAN EXPRESS ACCEPTED

INFORMATION FOR ALL SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

- **Hours of hunting** for all species are 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.
- Be prepared to hunt the entire season. Good physical conditioning is desirable because of weather variables and difficult terrain.
- Bighorn sheep, moose and elk are found on both private and public lands. Permission is required before entering posted private land. The Game and Fish Department strongly encourages hunters to make arrangements ahead of time.

ELIGIBILITY

Who May Apply – North Dakota residents are eligible to apply for bighorn sheep, moose and elk licenses. Nonresidents can apply for only a bighorn sheep license. No one may apply for a species for which he/she received a lottery license in previous years. (*Exception: certain preferential landowner licensees.*)

Hunter Education Requirement – Hunters born after December 31, 1961, must complete a certified state or provincial hunter education course and present the certification card to a license vendor to purchase a North Dakota hunting license. Persons who hunt only on land they own or operate are exempt from this requirement. The apprentice license is not valid for bighorn sheep, moose or elk.

Minimum Age – The minimum age for hunting bighorn sheep, moose or elk is 14, and when afield with firearms must be under direct supervision of a parent, legal guardian or other adult authorized by a parent or guardian.

LICENSES

Valid in paper or electronic format and must immediately be shown to a game warden or other law enforcement officer upon request.

General – Licenses are nontransferable. No person may give away, barter or sell an issued license.

BAG LIMIT

Bighorn Sheep – One male bighorn sheep.

Elk – One elk of the type designated on license. Type of elk includes “antlerless” or “any” elk.

Moose – One moose of the type designated on license. Type of moose includes “antlerless” or “any” moose.

All elk or moose with at least one visible antler are considered “antlered.”

HUNTING BIG GAME OVER BAIT

Placing of bait for any purpose is prohibited on Department wildlife management areas. Hunting over bait is defined as the placement and/or use of bait(s) for attracting wildlife to a specific location for the purpose of hunting. Baits include but are not limited to grains, seeds, minerals, salts, fruits, vegetables, hay, or any other natural or manufactured foods.

Hunting over bait is also not allowed on all U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service national wildlife refuges and waterfowl production areas; U.S. Forest Service national grasslands; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers managed lands; and all North Dakota state trust, state park and state forest service lands.

TAGGING REQUIREMENTS

Immediately after an animal has been killed, the hunter must indicate the date of kill by cutting out the appropriate month and day from the tag provided with the license, and securely attach it to the antler on an antlered animal, the horn on a horned animal, or in a slit in the ear on an antlerless animal. A bighorn sheep may be tagged on the leg or rear quarter with evidence of sex naturally attached.

In no case is it legal to possess or transport a moose, elk or bighorn

sheep unless it is properly tagged. The meat tag must remain with the edible flesh during any transportation and until it is cut up and packaged as food. No person may reuse or attempt to reuse any tag issued. Tags are nontransferable. When any part of an animal is mounted, if the tag is removed from the horns, antlers or ear, the tag must be securely fastened to the back or bottom of the mount and remain there.

Anyone who harvests a bighorn sheep in North Dakota must have it plugged by North Dakota Game and Fish Department personnel.

Mandatory Elk and Moose Harvest Reporting – Elk and moose lottery license holders are required to provide hunter harvest information no later than January 15, 2025. Failure to do so will result in loss of eligibility for all lottery licenses in 2025.

TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE

Hunters cannot transport into North Dakota the whole carcass or carcass parts of moose or elk except the following lower risk portions of the carcass: quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached, meat that has been boned out, meat that is cut and wrapped either commercially or privately; hides with no heads attached; skull plates with antlers attached having no brain tissue present; intact skulls with no visible brain or spinal cord tissue present that has the eyes, lower jaw, tongue, salivary glands, tonsils, and lymph nodes removed; antlers separated from the skull plate; upper canine teeth, also known as buglers, whistlers, or ivories; and finished taxidermy heads. This requirement does not apply to heads dropped off at Game and Fish CWD collection site, or lymph nodes submitted for CWD surveillance. Taxidermists or game processors may accept intact carcasses harvested within North Dakota but assume responsibility for specified disposal requirements.

The carcass waste (material not used for consumption, preserved for taxidermy, or defined as lower risk portions as stated above) transported out of its respective unit of origin must be disposed of via landfill or waste management provider.

License holders must accompany their own game animal, or parts thereof, (excluding hide) during transportation, except that a permit for the transportation of game may be issued by the Department upon request. Game may be shipped by common carrier in receipt of proper bill of lading. No resident of the state may ship big game parts or parts thereof (other than hides) out of state without a permit from the Department. An elk, moose or bighorn sheep carcass or boned-out meat must be accompanied by the head to the final place of storage. (*Exception: Tag as currently required, then take two photographs using a cellphone with location, date and time stamp turned on. One photograph of the entire animal at the kill site with tag attached, and a second photo of a closeup of the tag so that tag information is readable. If you leave the head in the field at the kill site, after taking photos and saving them, the ear or antler with the tag attached must be cut off and accompany the meat or carcass while in transport. The photographs of the tagged animal must be shown to any game warden or other law enforcement officer upon request.*) It is illegal to possess or transport another's big game animal or parts thereof (excluding hide) without the license holder accompanying or as otherwise permitted. Processed and packaged meat (cut, ground and wrapped meat) of legally harvested game may be gifted to another (but not sold, traded or bartered). Unprocessed, unpackaged meat of legally harvested game may be gifted (but not sold, traded or bartered) as follows: 1) Prior to reaching the licensee's permanent residence a transportation permit must be obtained and accompany the game meat; 2) After reaching the licensee's permanent residence if accompanied by the name and address of the licensee.

Commercial processors and common carriers may possess any person's legally taken possession limit of game.

FIREARMS AND ARCHERY EQUIPMENT

Regular Season – Centerfire rifles of .25 caliber or larger are legal for elk and moose, while a .243/6 mm caliber is the minimum for

bighorn sheep. Muzzleloading rifles or single shot muzzleloader pistols of .50 caliber or larger having all components loaded through the muzzle, with flint or percussion ignition, firing black powder or black powder substitutes are legal. Rifles must have a minimum barrel length of 16 inches. Rifled slugs of 20 gauge or larger are legal for shotguns. All legal bow equipment as listed in the bow season section is legal during the regular season.

Minimum barrel length for shotguns is 18 inches. Handgun (pistol, revolver or single shot) cartridge cases under .40 caliber must be at least 1.285 inches in length and bullets must be at least .257 inches in diameter. Handgun cartridge cases of .40 caliber or larger must be at least .992 inches in length. In addition, any handgun designed to fire a legal rifle cartridge is legal. Fully automatic firearms, full metal jacketed bullets which are nonexpanding, and altered projectiles are prohibited.

Pre-charged pneumatic air guns, charged from an external high compression source such as an air compressor, air tank or an external hand pump are legal for elk, moose and sheep but must fire a projectile (excluding air bolts) of at least .45 caliber in diameter and at least 350 grains in weight with a minimum muzzle velocity of 600 feet per second.

Bow Season – A compound, recurve or longbow must be pulled, held and released by hand. Any release aid may be used providing it is hand operated, the shooter supports the draw weight of the bow, and the release is not attached to any part of the bow other than the bowstring. Bows used for hunting moose, elk or bighorn sheep must have at least 50 pounds of draw at 28 inches or less draw length. Arrows must be at least 24 inches long, tipped with a metal broadhead, with at least two sharp cutting edges, and have a cutting diameter of at least 3/4 inch (i.e., not able to pass through a 3/4 inch ring). Broadheads used for hunting moose, elk and bighorn sheep must be unbarbed (barbed refers to an arrowhead with any fixed portion of the rear or trailing edge of the arrowhead forming an angle less than 90 degrees with the shaft) and have fixed blades (i.e., broadheads with mechanical or retractable blades manufactured to stay open are illegal). Telescopic sights, range finding devices, battery-powered or electronically lighted sights or other electronic devices attached to the bow, or the arrow, are not permitted, except a lighted nock and recording devices which do not aid in range finding, sighting or shooting the bow are permitted.

Handheld range-finding devices are legal. Arrows capable of causing damage or injury to the animal in excess of that inflicted by the cutting edges of the broadhead are prohibited while hunting big game with a bow (e.g. explosive arrow points, arrows tipped with drugs or chemicals, and pneumatic or hydraulic shafts are illegal). Hunters may possess handguns while hunting big game with a bow license. However, handguns may not be used to assist in the harvest of the big game animal. Crossbows are not legal, except with a permit from the Game and Fish director. When permitted, crossbows must: a) have a minimum draw weight of 75 pounds, b) be equipped with a working safety to prevent accidental firing, c) use bolts or arrows at least 14 inches in length. Crossbows equipped with pistol grips and designed to be fired with one hand are illegal. Telescopic sights attached to a crossbow with a maximum power of 8x32 are legal.

Nonlicensees – No bighorn sheep, moose or elk licensee hunting in the field during the bighorn sheep, moose or elk season may be accompanied by a nonlicensee carrying the same type of firearm or bow as the licensee. For the purpose of this section “type of firearm or bow” means one of the following: a) centerfire rifles; b) handguns; c) muzzleloading firearms; d) archery equipment; or e) shotguns. A nonlicensee is a person not having a bighorn sheep, moose or elk license for the same season and unit as the person with the license.

ORANGE CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

All big game hunters are required to wear a head covering and an outer garment above the waistline of solid daylight fluorescent

orange color, totaling at least 400 square inches. This requirement doesn't apply during the elk and moose bow seasons.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS

- It is illegal to go afield with a firearm or bow while intoxicated.
- Firearms must be unloaded and encased within the boundaries of any national park.
- It is illegal to hunt upon the premises of another within 440 yards of any occupied building without the consent of the person occupying the building. This does not prohibit hunting on land owned by neighbors (private or public) even if the land is less than 440 yards from the occupied building.
- Trail cameras may not be installed on private property without written permission from the landowner, or an individual authorized by the owner and the camera must have an equipment registration number, or the individual's name, address and telephone number.

USE OF ANIMALS

It is illegal to use any animal except horses or mules as an aid in the hunting or taking of big game.

AIRCRAFT, MOTOR-DRIVEN VEHICLES, LIGHTS

- It is illegal to use all types of aircraft, manned or unmanned, for spotting game 72 hours prior to and during the hunting season. During hunting season a licensee cannot hunt the same day he/she is airborne over their hunting unit, with the exception of a scheduled passenger airline flight. It is illegal to drive, concentrate, rally, raise, stir up or disturb game with all types of aircraft, manned or unmanned.
- Motor-driven vehicles may not be used to pursue game.
- It is illegal to shoot with a bow or firearm while in or on a motor-driven vehicle.
- Unless otherwise authorized under N.D.C.C., no person may carry a firearm with a cartridge in the chamber in or on a motor-driven vehicle. The entire cylinder of a revolver is considered the chamber, requiring a revolver to be completely unloaded. Handguns with removable magazines or clips must have the magazine or clip removed from the firearm if the magazine or clip contains any loaded shells. It is illegal to carry any muzzleloading firearm in or on a motor-driven vehicle with a percussion cap or primer on the nipple or powder in the flash pan.
- Motor-driven vehicles may only be used on established roads or trails. (*Exception: After an animal has been killed and properly tagged, a motor-driven vehicle may be used to retrieve the animal by leaving the established road or trail and proceeding to the carcass by the shortest accessible route and returning to the road or trail immediately by the same route.*)
- Motor-driven vehicles may not be used off established roads and trails for retrieval on state wildlife management areas, U.S. Forest Service national grasslands, U.S. Bureau of Land Management lands, federal waterfowl production areas, federal refuges, state trust lands, and any other areas where motor-driven vehicles are restricted. Except for hunters having a special disability permit, no person may use a motor-driven vehicle while in the process of hunting big game, or aid another in the process of hunting big game, including travel to and from the hunting location unless the motor-driven vehicle is on an established road or trail.
- Established roads or trails do not include temporary trails made for agricultural purposes.
- No person may use motor-driven vehicles on North Dakota Game and Fish Department Conservation PLOTS (Private Land Open To Sportsmen) property without permission from the landowner. These areas have been entrusted to the public for walking access through written agreements with private landowners. The boundaries of these properties are identified by large yellow triangular signs.
- It is illegal to use any artificial light for the purpose of locating or observing big game between sunset of one day and sunrise

of the next. State law prohibits any harassment of big game animals.

- The use of night vision equipment, electronically enhanced light-gathering optics or thermal imaging equipment for locating or hunting big game is prohibited.

AREAS CLOSED TO HUNTING

Unless specifically authorized, federal or state properties such as refuges, sanctuaries, military installations, parks and historic sites posted to trespassing or hunting are closed to hunting.

School trust lands are open to nonvehicular public access, including hunting, unless posted with ND Department of Trust Lands signs. The only established trails on Department of Trust Lands available for public use are those that are signed with Game and Fish Department trail markers. See the ND Department of Trust Lands website for additional information.

When hunting near the boundaries of closed refuges, sanctuaries, military installations, parks or historic sites – make sure you are familiar with any retrieval restrictions that may apply.

POSTING AND TRESPASS

- Only the owner or tenant, or an individual authorized by the owner, may post land electronically or by placing physical signs giving notice that no hunting is permitted on the land. The name of the person posting the land must appear on each sign in legible characters. Physical signs must be readable from the outside of the land and must be placed conspicuously not more than 880 yards apart. As to land entirely enclosed by a fence or other enclosure, posting of signs at or on all gates through the fence or enclosure constitutes a posting of all the enclosed land.
- Hunting on posted land without permission from the owner or tenant is illegal and punishable by suspension of hunting, fishing and trapping privileges for a period of at least one year.
- Hunting on posted land without permission can be prosecuted even if the land is not posted to the letter of the law.
- Any person may enter upon legally posted land (without a firearm or bow) to recover game shot or killed on land where he/she had a lawful right to hunt.
- It is illegal to deface, take down or destroy posting signs.
- Failure to close gates upon exit or entry is a criminal violation punishable by forfeiture of hunting licenses.

ROAD RIGHTS OF WAY

Do not hunt on road rights of way unless you are certain that they are open to public use. Most road rights of way are under control of the adjacent landowner and are closed to hunting when the adjacent land is posted closed to hunting.

WANTON WASTE

No person shall kill or cripple any big game animal without making a reasonable effort to retrieve and retain the big game animal in his/her actual custody. No person shall waste, destroy, spoil or abandon the edible flesh of a big game animal at the place where taken or between that place and either (a) his/her personal residence; (b) a taxidermist; (c) a common carrier; or (d) a commercial processor.

HUNTING BY NONTRIBAL MEMBERS ON NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN RESERVATIONS

If an individual hunts exclusively on Indian lands within an Indian reservation, a tribal license is required and a state hunting license is not required. Hunting on nontribal lands within an Indian reservation requires a state hunting license. Game taken legally with a tribal license within an Indian reservation may be possessed and transported anywhere in North Dakota.

Portions of some units are located on Indian reservations. Contact reservation tribal offices for more information.

- **Fort Berthold.** Game and Fish Department, 404 Frontage Road, New Town, ND 58763, (701) 627-4760.
- **Standing Rock.** Game and Fish Department, Box 549, Fort Yates, ND 58538, (701) 854-7236.
- **Turtle Mountain.** Department of Natural Resources, Box 570, Belcourt, ND 58316, (701) 477-2604.
- **Spirit Lake.** Fish and Wildlife Department, Box 359, Fort Totten, ND 58335, (701) 766-1243.

MOOSE LANDOWNER GRATIS LICENSE

Any resident who owns, or leases for agricultural purposes and actively farms or ranches, a minimum of 150 acres of land in the following units is eligible to apply for landowner moose licenses: one in M5; one in M6; two in M8; 12 in M9; 12 in M10; and 6 in M11. Landowner licenses are valid for any moose. Landowner moose license holders may hunt only upon land described on their application in the unit applied for.

If a landowner moose license holder is unsuccessful in harvesting a moose, that person may return the unused license to the Department and apply for a license to hunt moose in future years.

ELK LANDOWNER PREFERENCE LICENSE

Any resident who owns, or leases for agricultural purposes and actively farms or ranches, a minimum of 150 acres of land in designated areas is eligible to apply for a landowner preference elk license. Allocation of these licenses is as follows: unit E1E, 23 licenses; unit E1W, 30 licenses; unit E2, 21 licenses; unit E3, 46 licenses; unit E4, licenses issued in accordance with exemptions provided under N.D.C.C. 20.1-03-11.7; unit E6, two licenses. Individuals who receive a landowner preference license must pay the appropriate big game license fee.

Preferential licenses for units E1E, E1W, E2 and E6 may be used until filled, in both bow and regular seasons subject to the rules of the season. Landowner preference licenses are valid for any elk. Landowner preference licenses are not valid in unit E5. Landowner elk license holders may hunt anywhere in the unit where their qualifying land is located. Unit E3 or E4 preferential elk licenses may be used to harvest an elk causing depredation from May 1–July 31. License holders intending to harvest a depredating elk must notify the Game and Fish Department at least 24 hours prior to harvesting an animal, and also must notify the Department within 24 hours after the harvest takes place.



RAP (REPORT ALL POACHERS) PROGRAM. This program encourages people to report wildlife violations, remain anonymous if they prefer, and receive monetary rewards for convictions based on their information. Anonymous callers will be given a special code number and are not required to give their name. Rewards range from \$100 to \$1,000 depending on the nature and seriousness of the crime. Call 701-328-9921. Call this number only to report game and fish violations. The reward fund is supported by private donations. If you wish to donate to the RAP program, tax deductible contributions can be sent to RAP, Box 1091, Bismarck, ND, 58502-1091.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

ELK

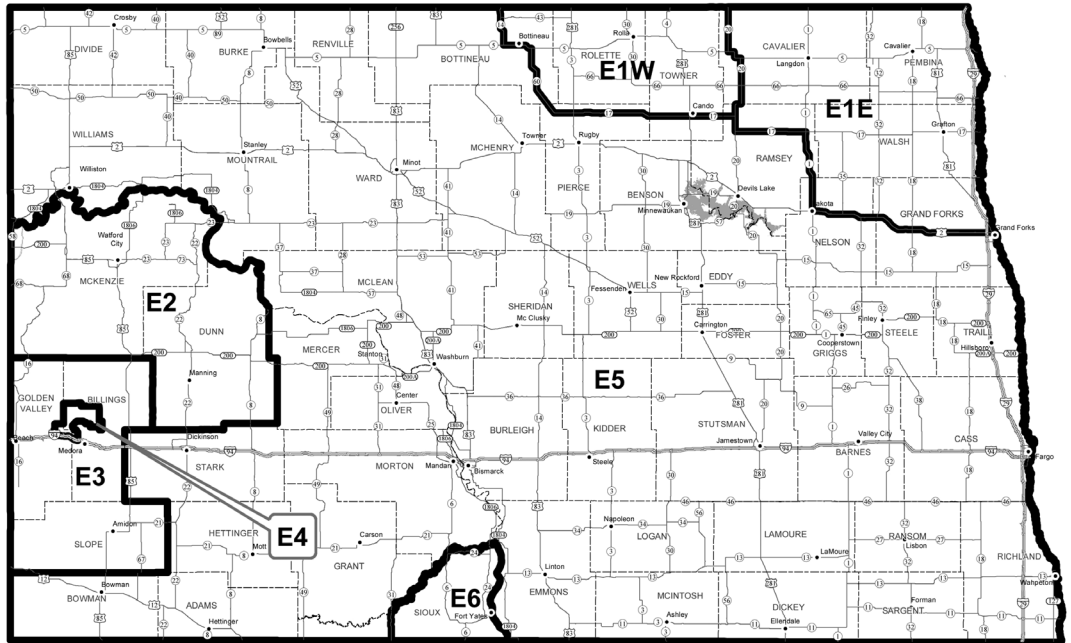
Unit E1E – Cavalier, Pembina and Walsh counties, and those portions of Grand Forks, Nelson and Ramsey counties bordered on the north by Canada, on the east by Minnesota, and on the south and west by a line starting where U.S. Highway 2 crosses the Red River, then west along U.S. Highway 2 to ND Highway 1, then north to ND Highway 17, then west to the junction of ND Highway 17 and ND Highway 20, then north to Canada.

Unit E1W – Rolette County and those portions of Bottineau, Towner, Ramsey, Pierce and Cavalier counties bordered on the north by Canada, on the east by ND Highway 20, on the south by ND Highway 17, then west to the junction of ND Highway 17 and ND Highway 60, then continuing west along ND Highway 60 to ND Highway 5, then west to ND Highway 14, then north to Canada.

Unit E2 – McKenzie and Dunn counties, excluding all of Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Unit E3 – Billings, Golden Valley, and Slope counties, except that portion of land known as unit E4 and Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Unit E4 – An area in Billings and Golden Valley counties north of Interstate 94 (excluding all of Theodore Roosevelt National Park), composed of the following land:



E4 Golden Valley County
T. 140 N. R. 103 W. All N. of I-94
T. 141 N. R. 103 W. Sec. 25-27
& 34-36

Billings County
T. 141 N. R. 100 W. Sec. 19, 30 & 31
T. 141 N. R. 101 W. All except T.R.N.P.
T. 142 N. R. 101 W. Sec. 25-36
T. 140 N. R. 102 W. All except T.R.N.P.
and south of I-94
T. 141 N. R. 102 W. All except T.R.N.P.
T. 142 N. R. 102 W. Sec. 19-36

Unit E5 – The remainder of the state not included in a designated unit.

Unit E6 – That portion of Sioux County east of ND Highway 31.

BIGHORN SHEEP

Unit B1 – All of Slope County and those portions of Billings and Golden Valley counties south of Interstate 94.

Unit B3 – Those portions of Golden Valley, Billings, Stark and McKenzie counties starting at a point where Interstate 94 enters North Dakota, then following Interstate 94 east to U.S. Highway 85, then north to McKenzie County Road 50, then west to McKenzie County Road 27 – Red Wing Road, then north to McKenzie County Road 38 – Hay Draw Road, then west and north to Montana state line, then south to point of origin.

Unit B4 – Those portions of McKenzie and Dunn counties starting at the intersection of McKenzie County Road 38 – Hay Draw Road and the Montana state line, then south and east to McKenzie County Road 27 – Red Wing Road, then south and east to McKenzie County Road 50, then east to U.S. Highway 85, then south to ND Highway 200, then east to ND Highway 22, then north to McKenzie County Road 53, then west and north to ND Highway 23 (excluding area within Fort Berthold Indian Reservation), then west to U.S. Highway 85, then west and north to the south bank of the Missouri River (Lake Sakakawea), then west along the south bank of the Missouri River to the Montana state line, then south to the point of origin.

Unit B5 – Those portions of McKenzie and Dunn counties starting at HWY 85 and HWY 200, then east on 200 to HWY 22 (Kildeer Bypass), then north on HWY 22 to Gap Road (4th St NW/5th St NW), then west and north on Gap Road (4th St NW/5th St NW) to 11th Ave NW, then north on 11th Ave NW to 7th St NW/10th St NW, then west on 7th St NW/10th St NW to Long X Road (9th B St NW), then west on Long X Road (9th B St NW) to Crosby Creek, then north on Crosby Creek to the Little Missouri River, then west on the Little Missouri River to the intersection of HWY 85 and TRNP North unit boundary, then west and south along the TRNP boundary to the intersection of Corral Creek and TRNP boundary, then east on Corral Creek to HWY 85, then south on HWY 85 to HWY 200.

