Cranbrook January 2026 Deer Hunt – Fact Sheet

Hunt Rules

Bag limit

You can harvest a **maximum of one deer** (mule deer or white-tailed deer, either sex) during the new deer hunt around Cranbrook from January 5-31, 2026. This deer may be in addition to the regional bag limit of 2 deer but may not exceed the provincial bag limit of 3 deer for the 2025-26 season. Your harvest must comply with the bag limits described on page 14 of the Hunting Synopsis.

This means:

- Hunters cannot harvest more than one deer during the January hunt
- Hunters who have already reached the provincial bag limit are not eligible to participate in the January hunt

Species license

You must have an uncancelled species license (mule deer or white-tailed deer) for the species you are harvesting during this hunt. You cannot use a mule deer species license (i.e. tag) to harvest a white-tailed deer, or vice versa.

Permit to Accompany

You cannot apply for a Permit to Accompany for this hunt. Only B.C. residents are allowed to participate.

Hunt Area

You can find the hunt boundary (map D27) on page 41 of the Hunting & Trapping synopsis. A geo-referenced map and a KMZ are also posted online at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/sports-culture/recreation/fishing-hunting/hunting/regulations-synopsis#maps. You can download these to your mobile device to navigate in the field.

Note that:

- Shooting is not allowed within Cranbrook city limits
- Permission is required to hunt on private land and
- There are restrictions on hunting within established Recreation Sites and Trails (see below)

Regulations

Other than adding one additional deer to the regional bag limit (as described above), all regular hunting season regulations still apply. Key information is summarized on pages 11-12 of the Hunting & Trapping synopsis.

Of note, it is unlawful to:

- Kill wildlife while in the process of committing offences against any statute including, but not limited to, the Wildlife Act
    - For example, wildlife taken while trespassing on private property or on mine property in violation of the Mine Safety Code
- Discharge, carry or possess a firearm containing live ammunition in its breech or magazine, while in or on a motor vehicle, railway car, sleigh, aircraft, bicycle or other conveyance
- Hunt game (except migratory game birds) from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise. To check local sunrise and sunset times, consult a local newspaper or use the National Research Council of Canada's Sun Calculator: https://nrc.canada.ca/en/research-development/products-services/software-applications/sun-calculator/. Hunters are responsible for determining sunrise and sunset in the field based on existing terrain and circumstances
- Interfere with or obstruct a person who is lawfully hunting, guiding or trapping under a license or permit

Chronic Wasting Disease

About Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

CWD is a fatal, contagious disease that affects cervid species including deer, elk, moose and caribou. It is caused by abnormal proteins called prions that build up in an animal's tissues, most significantly in the brain.

CWD spreads through direct contact between animals or when an animal comes into contact with a contaminated environment. Soil and vegetation can become contaminated by urine, feces or by the remains of an infected animal. Prions can remain infectious in the environment for years after an infected animal has died.

There is no vaccine or treatment for CWD, and the disease is always fatal. Although there is currently no direct evidence that CWD can be passed to humans, health authorities advise people not to consume meat from animals that test positive for CWD.

Rationale for January 2026 Deer Hunt

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) has been confirmed in 8 deer within B.C.'s CWD management zone. Six of these cases were identified in deer harvested near Cranbrook, including one case in the urban deer population. This cluster presents a health risk to surrounding deer and elk populations. The objectives of this hunt are:

- To remove CWD infected animals from the area
- Reduce the density of deer in the immediate and surrounding area of Cranbrook
- Reduce the outward movement of deer from within the hunt boundaries to surrounding areas
- Collect additional samples to monitor CWD prevalence

Replacement Tags

If you harvest a deer and it tests positive for CWD, you will not be issued a replacement tag.

Recreation Sites and Trails

Recreation Sites and Trails Within the Hunt Zone

The January 2026 deer hunt zone overlaps with the Cranbrook Interpretive Forest Site, Southstar Recreation Site and the Cranbrook-Wardner (Chief Isadore) Recreation Trail. More information and maps for these areas are available here - Recreation Orders - Province of British Columbia.

Hunting Restrictions for Recreation Sites and Trails

Unless authorized by a recreation officer, a person must not set a trap, discharge a firearm or shoot a bow or crossbow:

- Within the developed portion of a recreation site, trail-based recreation area, or interpretive forest site or
- Onto any portion of a recreation trail if a prohibition against doing so has been posted at the trail

The developed portion includes any area with structures associated with day-use area, campsites, cabins, trail staging areas or similar facilities and includes a 100-metre buffer zone in all directions from those structures.

A structure means any long-term or permanent improvement, including roads, parking areas, boat launch ramps, campsites, cabins, trail surfaces, bridges, litter barrel shelters, corrals, picnic tables, signs, outhouses and fire pits.

Motorized Access

Within the hunt zone, the Cranbrook Community Interpretive Forest Site, South Star Recreation Site, and Cranbrook-Wardner (Chief Isadore) Recreation Trail, are designated as non-motorized.

In the South Star Recreation Site, significant volunteer hours are spent grooming trails for cross-country skiing and fat biking. Driving motorized vehicles on groomed trails can damage the trail for the remainder of the ski and fat-bike season.

Harvesting Deer Within a Recreation Site

If you harvest a deer within the **non-developed** portion of a recreation site, trail-based recreation area or interpretive forest site, you may gut the animal and leave the entrails on site.

However, the legislation states that a person must not dispose of game offal, entrails, hides, or bones within the developed portion of a recreation site, trail-based recreation area, or interpretive forest site. This restriction also applies within 100 m of any structure, including trails.

Recreational Activities in January

Recreation activities are ongoing during January in the Cranbrook Community Interpretive Forest Site, South Star Recreation Site, and the Cranbrook-Wardner (Chief Isadore) Recreation Trail. These areas can have hundreds of recreational users per day on established trail networks, including cross country skiing, fat biking, hiking, dog walking, trail running, and horseback riding. Use is particularly high weekends.

Reporting Violations

To report violations, contact the BC Conservation Officer Service Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line by calling at 1-877-952-7277(RAPP) or reporting online at rapp.bc.ca.

Do not confront suspected violators. Record information about the people or vehicles involved, the type of violation, the location, the date and time, and report it as soon as possible.