

2026 Hunting and Trapping Regulation Changes Summary

On June 16, 2026, amendments to various regulations under the Wildlife Act were enacted by the B.C. government. Changes were made to address safety and conservation concerns, uphold First Nations rights, advance reconciliation and to provide a diversity of licensed hunting opportunities.

The amendments include changes related to Hunting Regulation, Motor Vehicle Prohibition Regulation (MVPR), Closed Area Regulation, Designation and Exemption Regulation, Wildlife Act Commercial Regulation and the Wildlife Act General Regulation.

These are additional regulation changes related to Limited Entry Hunting (LEH), which were enacted on May 25, 2026, and are summarized in the [2026 LEH Regulation Changes Summary](#).

Motor vehicle prohibition changes can be reviewed in the maps posted on the [Motor Vehicle Prohibitions webpage](#), some of the closed area maps can be found on the [Hunting and Trapping Regulations website](#); and the remainder of the changes will be listed in the [2026-2028 Hunting and Trapping Synopsis](#).

These regulations support advancing reconciliation through deeper collaboration, combining Indigenous Knowledge and science to achieve shared objectives and working together with hunters and the community to obtain the best available information to inform these decisions.

Of note, the B.C. government has made the decision not to pursue the lead shot ban for the purposes of hunting at this time, which was posted for public engagement on the [Angling, Hunting and Trapping Engagement website](#) earlier this year. This delay will allow time for hunters and hunting supply stores to transition to non-toxic shot in a less disruptive way. However, it remains government's intent to phase out lead shot, and hunters are encouraged to choose non-toxic shot whenever possible.

This regulation package includes changes to snowmobile access areas in the northern Rockies, extending some motor vehicle restriction areas, expanding and extending some white-tailed deer general open seasons in the Thompson, Cariboo, Skeena and Omineca regions, and creating more youth grouse hunting opportunities. A full list of regulation changes can be reviewed in the following pages.

Fisher Exclusion Boxes

Regulations were updated to require the use of fisher exclusion devices when 120 size traps are set within box sets on land within Management Units (MUs) 3-30 and 3-31 in the Thompson Region, and MUs 5-1, 5-2, 5-12, 5-13, and 5-14 in the Cariboo Region (including areas near Clinton, 100 Mile House, Williams Lake, and Quesnel). This targeted approach focuses on areas with high-quality habitat for female fishers and a history of fisher harvest, where this measure was expected to have the greatest conservation benefit.

Although trapping seasons for fishers within the Columbian population range were closed in August 2021, incidental capture (bycatch) in traps set for other furbearers has remained an ongoing concern. Fisher exclusion devices, which reduce the entrance size of marten box traps while still allowing access for target species, have been encouraged for many years as an effective method to reduce bycatch. While voluntary use and education efforts contributed to some reduction, the introduction of this regulatory requirement for fisher exclusion devices is intended to further reduce incidental harvest, supporting the conservation of the Columbian fisher population while maintaining trapping opportunities for other species.

Remaining regulation changes

The remaining regulation changes, listed by region, are summarized in the following tables.

Province-wide Changes

Regulation change	Rationale
Implement Mandatory Hunter Reporting (MHR) for elk	This regulation change replaces compulsory inspection and reporting requirements with MHR for elk. It is expected to improve the reliability of harvest data, reduce administrative burden, and align with the existing MHR framework. Because some licensed elk hunting seasons extend to March 1, the reporting deadline for licensed elk hunting activity would be set to March 31 to coincide with the end of the licence year. It also extended the moose and caribou MHR reporting deadline to March 31, to align them all.
Remove Sheep Tooth Compulsory Inspection Requirements	In 2016, the province enacted a regulation requiring hunters to submit an incisor tooth when presenting a harvested thimhorn sheep for compulsory inspection to support age determination by wildlife managers and enforcement officials. The required data collection objectives have since been met, and the continued requirement provided minimal additional benefit.
Require Evidence of Sex for Cougar to be Naturally Attached for Compulsory Inspections	When hunters submit wildlife for compulsory inspection, they are required to provide specific parts, which in many cases included reproductive organs. This requirement for evidence of sex to be naturally attached to the carcass improves data integrity during inspection, reduces enforcement challenges, ensures that samples corresponded to the inspected animal, and improves overall harvest monitoring accuracy.
Addition of Specified Traps to Certified Trap List	Regulations were updated to include newly certified traps approved under the Agreement on the International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS). This change aligned British Columbia with its commitments under the AIHTS, ensured that trappers had access to current approved equipment, and supported humane and ethical trapping practices. Please refer to the synopsis for a full list of certified traps.



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Region 1: West Coast

There were no proposed non-LEH related regulation changes for region 1.

Region 2: Lower Mainland

The private property black bear hunt that was engaged on the Angling, Hunting, and Trapping Engagement website earlier in the year was not approved as part of these regulation changes.

There were no other proposed non-LEH related regulation changes for region 2.

Region 3: Thompson

Regulation change	Rationale
Amend the Red Mountain and French Mountain Motor Vehicle Prohibitions	This amendment allows motor vehicle access along specified roads by exempting the sections of the Poison Mountain Saddle Road and the Yalakom/Big Bar Road that cross through the closure to allow motor vehicle passage on these existing roads only. (3-32 and 5-3) while maintaining off-road restrictions to protect habitat. It improves connectivity and access to recreation areas and aligns with broader access management planning.
Implement Bow-Only Either-Sex White-tailed Deer Hunt	White-tailed deer populations in the Thompson region increased in both abundance and distribution due to favourable habitat conditions and high reproductive capacity. A short, bow-only, either-sex late hunting season (December 11–20) has been introduced to expand harvest opportunities while limiting overall harvest pressure. Restricting the hunt to bow-only reduces harvest efficiency and enhances safety, particularly in areas with higher human use or access. This approach supports increased recreational opportunity while maintaining sustainable population management and regional consistency.

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Implement Youth-Only Grouse Season	A September 1–9 youth-only grouse season will be implemented to provide an early and accessible hunting opportunity. This initiative supports the recruitment of new hunters and fosters long-term participation in hunting and conservation activities. Timing the season prior to the school year increases accessibility and the likelihood of participation for youth hunters, and it aligns with similar youth hunting opportunities in neighbouring regions
Prohibit Feeding/Baiting of Ungulates Near Dwellings	The feeding or baiting of ungulates within 200 meters of residences, schools, and playgrounds in regions 3 and 8 is now prohibited. This measure reduces the risk of disease transmission, including Chronic Wasting Disease associated with artificial aggregation, helped prevent human–wildlife conflict and property damage, and aligned with similar regulations in other regions.

Region 4: Kootenays

Regulation change	Rationale
Extend Cougar Compulsory Inspection timeline in Kootenays	The requirement to submit a cougar for compulsory inspection in the Kootenays was extended from 4 days to 30 days after the kill. This change reflects the removal of the quota-based management system, aligns with inspection timelines for other species, while maintaining necessary data collection.

Region 5: Cariboo

Regulation change	Rationale
Extend Single Projectile Buffer – West Fraser Area	This amendment addresses repeated unsafe shooting incidents across roads and river corridors, where high levels of non-compliance and safety risks have been documented. It expands the already existing buffer area to improve clarity and enforcement, creating a safer travel corridor for both the public and local residents between Quesnel and Fraser River Banks, including Soda Creek.

Remove the North Churn Motor Vehicle Prohibition (M.U. 5-3)	This closure overlaps with BC Parks jurisdiction, which has created confusion particularly as the current MVPR wording indicates that snowmobiles may be used throughout the protected area after December 1, which is inconsistent with the protected area plan. The existing regulation therefore conflicts with the plan, and its removal eliminates confusion while maintaining protections. This change is supported by BC Parks as an administrative improvement. Please refer to BC Parks for specific vehicle prohibitions.
Remove Motor Vehicle Hunting Closures in MU 5-3 (Gaspard Creek-West Churn Creek FSR) and MU 5-4 (Groundhog Creek FSR. and Rocky Lake FSR).	Landscape changes in the area since the early 1990s, including increased road development, have reduced the effectiveness of this closure, as road networks have significantly expanded. The removal is intended to modernize and update regulations that no longer meet management objectives, as harvest is now managed through LEH and quotas.
Expand White-tailed Deer Hunting	White-tailed deer have expanded their distribution into new areas, including the Bella Coola Valley (MUs 5-8 and 5-11). These MUs were incorporated into existing regional seasons to reflect their current distribution. Increasing harvest opportunities helps manage population growth and mitigate impacts on mule deer through competition, supporting balanced wildlife management while providing additional recreational hunting opportunities.
Update Grouse Hunting Regulations in Region 5 (Cariboo)	Grouse species are now separated into distinct regulatory categories to improve clarity and enable more targeted management, distinguishing blue (sooty and dusky) grouse from spruce (Franklin) and ruffed grouse. Daily bag limits for blue (dusky/sooty) grouse were reduced in response to long-term population concerns and uncertainty in trends. A September 1-9 youth-only season was introduced to support hunter recruitment and participation. Overall, these changes balance conservation needs with continued hunting opportunity while simplifying regulations.

Region 6: Skeena

Regulation change	Rationale
Convert Shaman Island Moose Closure to No Shooting/Hunting Area	Shaman Island is a culturally significant and sacred site with heritage values and burial sites. The previous regulation only restricted moose hunting rather than all hunting activity. This new regulation converts this from a no moose hunting area to a full no hunting and no shooting area. It improves clarity, aligns with Indigenous priorities, and strengthens long-term protection.
Establish No Hunting and Shooting Area Along Hwy 113 (Nisga'a Highway)	This regulation expands the existing single projectile shooting area and introduces a no hunting area along portions of Highway 113. It aligns provincial regulations with the Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Act. The change addresses safety concerns raised by the Nisga'a Lisims Government, reduces regulatory inconsistencies, and improves safety for highway and land users.
Increase White-tailed Deer Opportunities	White-tailed deer populations in the Skeena region increased due to habitat change and climate factors. Extended general open seasons and new antlerless opportunities, along with additional youth and bow-only options, were introduced to help manage population growth and reduce competition with mule deer. These changes also improve regulatory consistency across MUs and enhanced alignment with other regions.
Align Wolf Seasons in Tweedsmuir Park with the rest of the Skeena region	Wolf hunting seasons within Tweedsmuir Park differed from those in surrounding Skeena region MUs (they were shorter previously). The season dates were aligned with the broader regional seasons to improve consistency. Given that predator management was already in place in this area to support caribou recovery efforts, this change helps ensure a more consistent approach to predator management. It also improves regulatory clarity for both hunters and enforcement.
Shorten Wolverine Trapping Season – Skeena	Wolverines are a species of special concern, with overharvest through trapping identified as one of the possible primary threats to their populations. February represents a critical period, as pregnant females begin selecting natal dens where they give birth and nurse their young. To reduce the risk of trapping pregnant

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	females during this denning period, the trapping season was shortened to end January 31. This change responds to concerns regarding potential overharvest and limited population data, while maintaining the majority of harvest opportunity, as most trapping occurs earlier in the season. Overall, it supports precautionary population management while retaining access for trappers.
Remove Moose Compulsory Inspection Export Exemption (Skeena)	Compulsory inspection of moose was removed in the Skeena Region through the LEH Ministerial Order in May 2026. As a result, the associated export exemption was no longer required for moose, although it remains in place for other species, including caribou, cougar, mountain goat, and mountain sheep. This change improves regulatory clarity and consistency and was administrative in nature, with no impact on harvest management.

Region 7A: Omineca

Regulation change	Rationale
Extend the Morkill River FSR motor vehicle for hunting prohibition from Apr 15-Jun 30 and Aug 15-Nov 30 to Apr 15-Jun 30 and Aug 15-Dec 10.	The closure timing aligns with the extended white-tailed deer hunting season that has been implemented. It maintains the intent of limiting vehicle-assisted hunting and provides consistency across regulatory tools.
Amend White-tailed Deer Seasons	White-tailed deer populations in region 7 have increased in both abundance and distribution. Hunting opportunities were expanded in region 7A. Increased harvest supports population management and helps reduce competition with mule deer, while improving clarity and alignment across M.U.s.
Extend Coyote Season	The start date for the coyote hunting season was extended from September 1 to August 15. This change aligns coyote hunting opportunities with the timing of the fall black bear season and provides additional opportunity for hunters already active on the landscape. As coyotes are resilient to harvest, the change is not

expected to affect population sustainability.

Region 7B: Peace

Regulation change	Rationale
Amend year-round snowmobile prohibitions in specific Access Management Areas in the Northern Rockies	This proposal replaces a permit-based system with regulated seasonal access in the Northern Rockies snowmobile closed areas. It retains existing year-round closures of Holsworth and Windfall while using GPS data to better align access with caribou presence. The approach improves clarity for users and enforcement officers. It also includes a housekeeping map correction for the Iver Lake access trail, to provide public access to a stocked lake for fishing.
Implement No Hunting Area – Lower Burnt River FSR (7-22)	This amendment establishes a no hunting closure along a portion of the Lower Burnt River FSR and the immediate adjacent area. The area is actively used for cultural activities and youth programming. Hunting activity near the camp has raised safety concerns. The closure supports safe cultural use and reduces conflict between land users.
Correct Peace Alpine MVPR Map	This amendment corrects mapping errors introduced during modernization of the Motor Vehicle Prohibition Regulation , including the removal of a portion of MU 7-21 that was identified as an error. It reinstates the intended boundaries and removes unintended closures while adding the correct road exemptions, including Onion Lake Trail. It also rescinds the MVPR for Bullmoose and Chamberlain Mountain that was missed in 2024, as it is no longer needed as it overlapped the Peace alpine MVP area. Overall, the changes improve regulatory accuracy and enforceability.
Correction to Turnagain MVPR Map	This proposal corrects a missing road segment from a prior map update. It ensures that intended access routes are properly included, responds to known enforcement issues, and improves overall map accuracy and clarity.
Allow Snowmobile Access Through Klingzut Motor Vehicle	This amendment addresses access into part of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (MKMA) through the Klingzut MVP area by aligning MVP rules with existing MKMA snowmobile provisions. It allows access along two designated connector routes, reduces

Prohibition (MVP)	confusion and unintended non-compliance, and supports legal access into adjacent managed areas.
Allow all motor vehicles to operate on the Sikanni River Trail from the boundary of the MKMA to the Sikanni Ranch	The road that provides access to the Sikanni River Ranch (private land) within the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area was restricted to vehicles less than 750 kg. Visitors and residents of the ranch required an exemption to use vehicles that exceed this limit. The weight restriction created logistical challenges, including issues with transporting supplies, supporting day-to-day operations, and maintaining the ranch.
Amend Antlerless Elk Opportunities	MU 7-49 was added to antlerless elk hunting opportunities to address population growth and associated agricultural conflicts. Season length in MU 7-58 was adjusted to correct an administrative inconsistency and align with regional timing. These changes support the management of elk-related crop depredation and livestock conflicts while improving consistency in elk management across the Peace Region.
Extended GOS for Lynx	The lynx season in the Peace was extended from Nov 15 to Feb 15 to Nov 1 to Feb 15 and serves to harmonize lynx seasons with neighbouring region 7A, enhance hunter opportunity, and is not expected to impact current harvest rates.
Provide Exemption for Export of Bighorn Sheep/Mountain Goat from 7-19 (Peace) for the purpose of Compulsory Inspection	Hunters in remote areas of MU 7-19 that are accessible only through Alberta are now permitted to export harvested sheep or goats without an export permit and prior to conducting compulsory inspection, for the purpose of travelling along designated roads back to British Columbia to complete the compulsory inspection. This change addresses access challenges where inspection facilities were not reasonably available, aligning with similar provisions already implemented in the Skeena Region.
Extend Lynx Trapping Season – Region 7B (Peace)	The lynx trapping season was extended to align with neighbouring regions, including the Omineca and Skeena. This change provides increased opportunity for licensed trappers and is expected to have minimal biological impact due to the modest extension. It also improves consistency across regions and enhances regulatory

clarity.

Region 8: Okanagan

Regulation change	Rationale
Remove the Underdown Creek Motor Vehicle Closed Area MU 8-1	This closure was originally implemented in 1988 to limit hunter access during a bighorn sheep season that is no longer in place. Bighorn sheep harvest is now managed through LEH rather than a general open season, as previously was the case in the 1980s and 1990s. Harvest is now restricted, and there is no longer a need to limit hunter access in these areas.
Remove the Derenzy Forest Service Road & South Ellis Creek Motor Vehicle Hunting Closed Area MU 8-9	This closure was originally implemented in 1995 to limit hunter access during a bighorn sheep season that is no longer in place. Bighorn sheep harvest is now managed through LEH rather than a general open season, as was the previous case in the 1980s and 1990s. Harvest is now restricted, and there is no longer a need to limit hunter access in these areas.
Expand Turkey Hunting Opportunities and harmonize season dates	Turkey hunting was expanded into additional MUs (8-13, 8-23, 8-24, and 8-25) where populations are established. Season dates were aligned across MUs to improve consistency and reduce complexity. Fall seasons have been shortened in select areas where extended dates were no longer required, seasons in MUs 8-1 and 8-2 remain unchanged. These changes support increased hunting opportunity while maintaining clear and consistent regulations.
Prohibit Feeding/Baiting of Ungulates Near Dwellings	The feeding or baiting of ungulates within 200 meters of residences, schools, and playgrounds in Regions 3 and 8 is now prohibited. This measure reduces the risk of disease transmission, including Chronic Wasting Disease associated with artificial aggregation, helped prevent human-wildlife conflict and property damage, and aligned with similar regulations in other regions.