



Director Delegated Petition Summary Sheet

Decision must be made on or before:

2/7/2025

Agenda item:

Beekman Crossbow Petition

Presenter(s):

Kyle Garrison

Background summary:

This petition recommends that the Department create a crossbow season separate from all other methods. Currently, deer and elk general seasons are separated by modern firearm, archery, and muzzleloader hunting methods. General season dates vary by species, year, and hunt area, but typically initiate in early September and run through mid to late December for some late seasons. Breaks between general seasons reduce most or all harvest pressure – the only hunting in these breaks is limited to relatively few special hunt opportunities – and provide important periods of respite for deer and elk populations.

The Department recognizes crossbow as a legitimate hunting method and crossbows are legal in deer and elk modern firearm seasons and allowed for hunters that have physical disabilities. Further, in recognition of crossbow user interests, in 2024 the Department modified rules to permit crossbow use during muzzleloader seasons. The Department cannot accommodate an additional general season without significantly reducing one or all of the existing seasons (i.e., modern firearm, archery, or muzzleloader). Department staff feel that crossbow user demand, relative to other hunting methods, is sufficiently met with existing opportunity (i.e., open during muzzleloader and modern firearm) and does not warrant a reduction in other seasons to accommodate a standalone crossbow season.

Staff recommendation:

Department staff recommend denying this petition.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

If this petition is denied, no rulemaking will take place to consider a crossbow-only general season.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

Creation of a crossbow season will require a reduction in other seasons, which may negatively impact license sales revenue.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Contingent of Director's decision.

Post decision communications plan:
