

HOW PLAYING THE RIGHT HAND CAN LAND YOU THE HUNT OF A LIFETIME



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Ask any Oklahoma sportsman and they will tell you the Sooner State offers some truly first class hunting opportunities, and many have even been so lucky as to draw out for one or more of the most sought after hunts in Oklahoma through the Wildlife Department's Controlled Hunts program. But then again, luck is only part of the winning equation.

A total of 6,960 individual hunt permits were available in 2007, and many of those who applied will turn around and do the exact same thing when the 2008 Controlled Hunts applications are made available later this year. And that is the first and obvious major key to getting drawn for a hunt — making certain that you fill out and submit an application. But applying is not the only thing you can do to increase your odds. With a limited number of permits available, the large number of hunters who apply can do a

few things to increase their chances of being drawn for what could be the hunt of a lifetime.

Opportunities offered through the Controlled Hunts program include, among others, hunting elk at the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge or pronghorn antelope in Cimarron and Texas Counties. And though elk and antelope hunts can be more difficult to draw, Controlled Hunts applicants also have a shot at a number of exclusive deer and turkey hunts held at prime hunting locations all across the state. Upland bird hunters have a chance at one of several quail hunts at Four Canyon Preserve in western Oklahoma, and furbearer hunters are not forgotten either, with raccoon hunts available in a highly desirable hot-spot in northeast Oklahoma. But again, you can't be selected for a hunt if you fail to "put your name in the hat."

Winners of the Controlled Hunts are

randomly selected through a computerized process that draws applications from the pool of those that applied, but the good thing is that you can apply for several hunts and increase your chances of being selected for a hunt. Additionally, if you are not drawn for a hunt category for which you applied, you gain a preference point toward future years' drawings. Not only that, but some hunt categories allow you to apply with a group of other hunters. We all know that when it comes to hunting, the only thing better than being in the woods is being there with friends and family.

In the pages that follow, you'll gain some insight into how the Controlled Hunts program works, insight that may just give you the edge you need to get drawn for a

RELY ON MORE THAN JUST LUCK IN THE OKLAHOMA CONTROLLED HUNTS PROGRAM



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hunt that you won't forget. You'll also read the stories of several hunters who have previously been drawn for one of the Department's controlled hunts, and you will learn just a little about what makes them so special to sportsmen who participate.

The Controlled Hunts application process usually begins in late March, when you will be able to log on to the Wildlife Department's Web site at wildlifedepartment.com to download, complete and submit an application. We here at *Outdoor Oklahoma* and the Wildlife Department encourage you to participate in the application process. It's done completely online, and it's both easy and fast. Not only that, but you get immediate confirmation when your application is processed. No hassles. No worrying about whether you applied correctly. No regrets of not getting your name in the drawing.

Oklahoma is rich in outdoor opportunities, and the Wildlife Department's Controlled Hunts are just one more way you might be able to add to a successful year afield. And who knows, it may be

your ticket to a truly unforgettable "Outdoor Oklahoma" experience.

—*Michael Bergin*

BUILD A CONTROLLED HUNTS RESUME

The most important factor in increasing your odds of getting drawn, particularly on some of the more popular hunts, is to make sure you apply each and every year like clockwork. Your odds of drawing a controlled hunt will improve with each year that you apply.

Each preference point you earn acts like an extra application the next time you apply. For example, if you have put in for an antelope hunt five years in a row and not been drawn, you will be five times more likely than a first-time applicant to be selected in the antelope category next year. Those who say they have stopped applying because they "never get drawn," are actually giving you an advantage, as long as you just keep on applying. Your chances only get better each year that you apply and they don't.

Although hunters with more preference points have greater chances of being

drawn for one of Oklahoma's Controlled Hunts, the system still doesn't guarantee that those with the most points will be drawn for a hunt — only that their odds improve. In fact, first-time applicants with no preference points can and do get drawn over those with many points.

In some categories, hunters may apply in groups of up to four people. For group applications, the preference points of each hunter in the group will be averaged. If four hunters put in together — one with no points, one with two points, and the other two with three points each — the group's preference points will be two, which is the average of all four hunters on the application. If not drawn in that category, each applicant in the hunt group will be given a single preference point.

Once you are selected for a hunt category, all preference points that you had built up for that category are lost; however, you can begin building preference points with the next year's application.

Regardless of whether or not you've been drawn, it's important to keep applying, if for no other reason than to gain preference points.

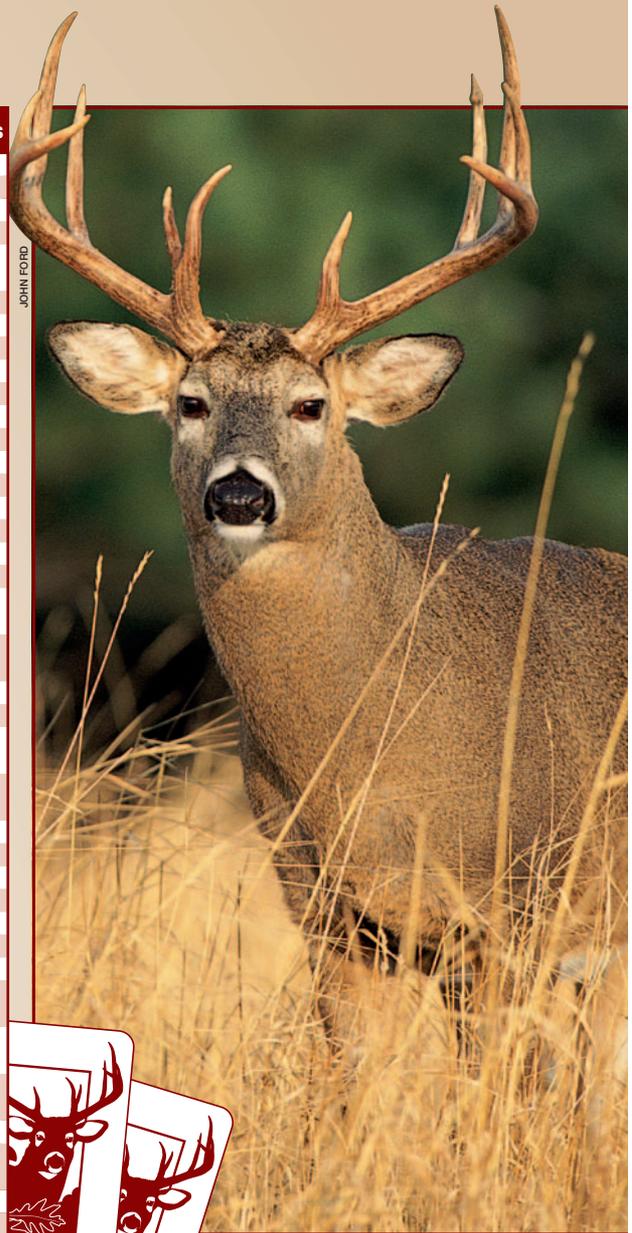
DEER HUNTS

HINTS

- The most popular hunts include the Wichita Mountains buck gun hunt, Salt Plains NWR hunts that allow either sex hunting and the Sandy Sanders buck gun hunt. If you avoid these, your odds go up for getting drawn.
- Many hunters already have their regular season hunting plans set in stone and marked on the calendar. Therefore, controlled hunts held during the regular muzzleloader and gun seasons, especially those held during the opening weekends, often offer better odds of getting drawn than those held outside the regular statewide season dates.
- Antlerless-only hunts traditionally see fewer applicants compared to buck-only or either-sex hunts.
- Areas in the northeast such as Cherokee, Cookson Hills, Gruber and Spavinaw WMAs typically have higher numbers of applicants, so even if you live in the northeast, consider applying for hunts in other parts of the state.
- History shows that the archery hunts are easier to draw on average than muzzleloader or gun hunts.

Deer Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Atoka WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/03/07	11/04/07	301	1,626	75
Beaver River WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	302	751	20
Beaver River WMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	303	47	20
Canton WMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	10/27/07	10/28/07	304	830	125
Canton WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	305	1,403	150
Cherokee GMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/03/07	11/03/07	306	1,382	50
Cherokee GMA	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/03/07	11/03/07	307	202	75
Cherokee GMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/04/07	11/04/07	308	938	50
Cherokee GMA	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/04/07	11/04/07	309	128	75
Cherokee GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/10/07	11/10/07	310	1,964	50
Cherokee GMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/10/07	11/10/07	311	263	75
Cherokee GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/11/07	11/11/07	312	1,262	50
Cherokee GMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/11/07	11/11/07	313	163	75
Cookson WMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/03/07	11/04/07	314	1,155	25
Cookson WMA	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/03/07	11/03/07	315	132	50
Cookson WMA	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/04/07	11/04/07	316	56	50
Cookson WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/10/07	11/11/07	317	1,797	25
Cookson WMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/10/07	11/10/07	318	163	50
Cookson WMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/11/07	11/11/07	319	114	50
Cooper WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	320	509	15
Cooper WMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	321	48	15
Deep Fork NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	10/05/07	10/07/07	322	471	40
Deep Fork NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Muzzleloader	11/02/07	11/04/07	323	829	40
Four Canyon Preserve	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	10/20/07	10/21/07	324	39	6
Four Canyon Preserve	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	10/20/07	10/21/07	325	338	2
Four Canyon Preserve	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/16/07	11/17/07	326	35	6
Four Canyon Preserve	Either-Sex	Gun	11/16/07	11/17/07	327	414	2
Ft. Cobb WMA and SP	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	10/13/07	10/14/07	328	373	50
Ft. Gibson WRP	Either-Sex	Archery	10/23/07	10/23/07	329	673	50
Ft. Gibson WRP	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	10/24/07	10/24/07	330	205	50

Deer Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Ft. Gibson WRP	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/07/07	11/07/07	331	201	50
Ft. Gibson WRP	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/08/07	11/08/07	332	1,353	50
Ft. Supply WMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	333	105	50
Ft. Supply WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	334	601	25
James Collins WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/03/07	11/04/07	335	1,506	50
Lexington WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/10/07	11/10/07	336	909	125
Lexington WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/11/07	11/11/07	337	500	125
Lexington WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/14/07	11/14/07	338	415	125
Lexington WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/15/07	11/15/07	339	371	125
Little River NWR	Either-Sex	Gun	11/02/07	11/04/07	340	345	30
Little River NWR	Either-Sex	Gun	11/09/07	11/11/07	341	393	30
McAlester AAP (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	10/05/07	10/07/07	342	486	100	
McAlester AAP (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	10/12/07	10/14/07	343	1,817	275	
McAlester AAP (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	10/19/07	10/21/07	344	2,162	275	
McAlester AAP (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	10/26/07	10/28/07	345	2,782	275	
McAlester AAP (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	11/02/07	11/04/07	346	3,733	275	
McAlester AAP (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	11/09/07	11/11/07	347	4,012	275	
McCurtain Co. WA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/02/07	11/04/07	348	225	16
McGee Creek WMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	10/27/07	10/28/07	349	1,150	100
McGee Creek WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/03/07	11/04/07	350	1,306	75
Okmulgee GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	351	812	60
Okmulgee GMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	12/14/07	12/14/07	352	175	40
Osage-Western Wall WMA	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/10/07	11/11/07	353	106	30
Osage-Western Wall WMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/10/07	11/11/07	354	1,047	15
Packsaddle WMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	355	119	40
Packsaddle WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	356	696	10
Pushmataha WMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/03/07	11/04/07	357	1,458	100
Pushmataha WMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	11/10/07	11/11/07	358	1,814	100
Salt Plains NWR (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	10/12/07	10/15/07	359	415	10	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Only 1 Antlered	Archery	10/12/07	10/14/07	360	392	15	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Only 1 Antlered	Muzzleloader	10/19/07	10/22/07	361	982	10	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Antlerless or Spike Only	Muzzleloader	10/19/07	10/21/07	362	189	24	
Salt Plains NWR (2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Muzzleloader	10/19/07	10/21/07	363	870	15	
Salt Plains NWR (2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Gun	10/12/07	10/14/07	364	1,302	10	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Only 1 Antlered	Gun	11/02/07	11/05/07	365	1,413	10	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Antlerless or Spike Only	Gun	11/02/07	11/04/07	366	273	24	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Only 1 Antlered	Gun	11/16/07	11/19/07	367	1,061	10	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Antlerless or Spike Only	Gun	11/16/07	11/18/07	368	266	41	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Only 1 Antlered	Gun	11/23/07	11/26/07	369	709	10	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Antlerless or Spike Only	Gun	11/23/07	11/25/07	370	122	24	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Only 1 Antlered	Gun	11/30/07	12/03/07	371	803	10	
Salt Plains NWR (2) Antlerless or Spike Only	Gun	11/30/07	12/02/07	372	109	17	
Sandy Sanders WMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	10/27/07	10/28/07	373	657	25
Sandy Sanders WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	374	689	10
Sandy Sanders WMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/17/07	11/18/07	375	74	25
Sequoyah NWR (2) Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	10/24/07	10/25/07	376	512	30	
Sequoyah NWR (2) Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/07/07	11/08/07	377	442	30	
Sequoyah NWR (2) Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/28/07	11/29/07	378	256	30	
Sequoyah NWR (2) Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	12/12/07	12/13/07	379	377	30	
Spavinaw GMA	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	10/27/07	10/28/07	380	798	20
Spavinaw GMA	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	10/27/07	10/28/07	381	156	40
Spavinaw GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/10/07	11/11/07	382	1,505	25
Spavinaw GMA	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/10/07	11/11/07	383	290	55
Tishomingo NWR (2) Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader	11/15/07	11/15/07	384	219	20	
Tishomingo NWR (2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Archery	12/12/07	12/14/07	385	394	25	
Walnut Creek SP Area 2 (2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Archery	12/28/07	01/01/08	386	333	10	
Washita NWR (2) Antlerless Only	Gun	10/17/07	10/18/07	387	518	25	
Wichita Mts. NWR	Antlered	Gun	11/06/07	11/08/07	388	7,043	35
Wichita Mts. NWR	Antlerless Only	Gun	11/06/07	11/08/07	389	653	65



Several of the Wildlife Department's controlled deer hunts are widely known for providing some of the best deer hunting land in the state, not to mention some of the nicest bucks.

DEER HUNTS

Total applicants (includes first, second, third, fourth and fifth choice preferences): 72,731

Total permits available: 4,992

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 15

If everyone who applied put in for all five choices, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): 1 in 3



Deer Hunts for Persons With Disabilities	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Cherokee GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/06/07	10/07/07	401	55	40
Cookson WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/06/07	10/07/07	402	56	40
Deep Fork NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Muzzleloader	11/02/07	11/04/07	403	19	5
Hugo Lake COE	(2) 1 Doe, 1 Buck	Rifle	12/07/07	12/09/07	404	47	16
Oologah Lake COE	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Gun	11/02/07	11/04/07	405	46	8
Salt Plains NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Muzzleloader	10/19/07	10/21/07	406	8	2
Salt Plains NWR	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Gun	11/02/07	11/04/07	407	12	2
Salt Plains NWR	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Gun	11/16/07	11/18/07	408	11	2
Salt Plains NWR	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Gun	11/23/07	11/25/07	409	10	2
Salt Plains NWR	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Gun	11/30/07	12/02/07	410	7	2
Tishomingo NWR	(2) Antlerless Only	Gun	10/23/07	10/23/07	411	21	10
Waurika Lake COE	Either-Sex	Gun	10/13/07	10/14/07	412	17	6

DEER HUNTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Total applicants (includes first, second and third choice preferences): 309

Total permits available: 135

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 2

If everyone who applied put in for all three choices, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): Nearly 100 percent

WARREN WILLIAMS

With several of the draw hunts issuing either-sex permits and still others offering antlerless only hunts, applying for a doe hunt could be a productive way to put meat in the freezer.



Deer Hunts for Persons With Disabilities	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Atoka WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/27/07	10/28/07	501	143	50
Cherokee GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/13/07	10/14/07	502	256	50
Cookson WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/13/07	10/14/07	503	230	50
Ft. Cobb WMA and SP	Antlerless Only	Muzzleloader/ Shotgun	10/06/07	10/07/07	504	69	50
Deep Fork NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Muzzleloader	10/12/07	10/14/07	505	71	25
Ft. Gibson COE	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	10/19/07	10/20/07	506	48	10
Ft. Gibson WRP	Either-Sex	Muzzleloader	12/08/07	12/08/07	507	113	25
Hugo WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/12/07	10/14/07	508	109	35
James Collins WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/19/07	10/21/07	509	177	50
James Collins WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/26/07	10/28/07	510	126	50
Keystone COE	Either-Sex	Gun	12/08/07	12/09/07	511	69	4
McAlester AAP	Antlerless Only	Shotgun	11/23/07	11/25/07	512	78	25
Okmulgee GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/03/07	11/04/07	513	98	24
Okmulgee GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/10/07	11/11/07	514	108	24
Osage-Western Wall WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/03/07	11/04/07	515	76	20
Pine Creek WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/09/07	11/11/07	516	31	12
Pushmataha WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/20/07	10/21/07	517	148	35
Pushmataha WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	10/27/07	10/28/07	518	74	35
Salt Plains NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Gun	10/12/07	10/14/07	519	177	12
Salt Plains NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Gun	11/02/07	11/04/07	520	153	12
Sequoyah NWR	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Muzzleloader	10/18/07	10/20/07	521	188	22
Sequoyah Park Resort	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Muzzleloader	12/08/07	12/09/07	522	233	20
Sequoyah Park Resort	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Muzzleloader	12/15/07	12/16/07	523	177	20
Spavinaw GMA	Either-Sex	Gun	11/02/07	11/04/07	524	198	60
Tenkiller COE	Either-Sex	Gun	11/10/07	11/11/07	525	82	10
Texoma COE	(2) Only 1 Antlered	Rifle	11/10/07	11/11/07	526	63	12
Tishomingo NWR	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Rifle	11/02/07	11/03/07	527	88	20
USDA Grazing-lands R.L.	(2) Antlerless Only	Rifle	11/02/07	11/03/07	528	74	25
USDA Grazing-lands R.L.	(2) 1st Antlerless, 2nd E-S	Rifle	12/07/07	12/08/07	529	185	25
USDA Grazing-lands R.L.	(2) Antlerless Only	Rifle	01/05/08	01/05/08	530	54	25
Washita NWR Youth Exemption	(2) Antlerless Only	Gun	10/12/07	10/13/07	531	97	20
Washita NWR Youth Exemption	(2) Antlerless Only	Gun	12/07/07	12/08/07	532	85	20

YOUTH DEER HUNTS

Total applicants (includes first, second and third choice preferences): 3,878

Total permits available: 877

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 4

If everyone who applied put in for all three choices, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): Nearly 100 percent



BILLEA

PURSUIT WITH HOUNDS

RUSSELL GRAVES

Raccoon Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Cookson WMA	Raccoon	Gun	01/11/08	01/13/08	601	74	20
Cookson WMA	Raccoon	Gun	01/25/08	01/27/08	602	70	20

PURSUIT WITH HOUNDS (RACCOON HUNTS)

Total applicants (includes first, second and third choice preferences): 144

Total permits available: 40

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 4

If everyone who applied put in for a first and second choice, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): About 1 in 2.

Top: Raccoon hunters have as good a shot as anybody at drawing out for a controlled hunt, and maybe better. With two separate hunts, each offering 20 available permits, the 70-75 applicants that put in for each hunt have fairly good odds of being drawn.

Right: Hunters have a unique opportunity to hunt their dogs at a premier coon hunting location in northeast Oklahoma through the Controlled Hunts program.



NOSE TO NOSE ON A

One Oklahoman's Once-in-a-Lifetime Encounter With a Bull Elk By Wayne C. Turner

The bull had smelled me and for some reason decided to follow my track. I had never seen one do this before. He followed my trail straight to the tree where I had climbed to the first limb, and he literally followed me up the tree with his nose by going from limb to limb until there we were, nose to nose, at less than 30 inches. I watched his nostrils pulsate with breath as he tried to figure what that smelly lump was, or perhaps he already had and was trying to intimidate me. But I was busy hunting deer with my recurve bow on one of the Wildlife Department's controlled hunts...

Before I finish that story, let's get the hunt started. The weekend started off rather miserably in the Cookson Hills of eastern Oklahoma. Early fall and one of the first cold fronts of the year was bringing winds out of the northwest with a ferocity that only the plains can produce. This was a deer hunt that we had planned for about six months; so the cold front might stop the deer but not us.

Clint Christenson and I, both of Stillwater, Okla., decided to go on with our scheduled hunt since it was a special draw and we had both drawn tags. We expected beautiful country, good camaraderie, and perhaps a chance at a deer. This was an archery hunt.

We are very fortunate to live in a state with as many hunting opportunities as we experience. Each year, some of my friends and I apply for the Controlled Hunts program conducted by the Wildlife Department. I have successfully been drawn for several such hunts over the years and have thoroughly enjoyed every single one of them. With the liberal preference point system, I know that if I don't get drawn this year, my chances go up for next year. This is the story of one of those hunts that gave me a memory that I shall carry the rest of my life.

The Cookson Hills are a beautiful part of Oklahoma. Mostly hardwoods with some pines tossed in for color. The Hills are one of my favorite places to hunt. The area has been good to me, always

producing a good archery hunt and often a deer for the freezer. This hunt was no exception to the beauty. It was early fall; but the colors were starting to turn and the streams were crystal clear. I found myself often wanting to just look.

Early the first day, we went to the check station, got our tags, and drove to our pre-scouted site. It was a ridge that always has rubs and scrapes during gun season and that had always given me deer to see until this day. With the wind strongly blowing out of the north, we spent a great morning in two trees overlooking a nice trail. As the sky lighted in the east and day crept up on night, I snuggled deep inside my coveralls and stocking cap. My nose stung cold with each breath; but the discomfort was well worth it. The reds, yellows and rust colors backed by the blue clear sky that normally follows a cold front were spectacular. Blue Jays were screaming as they worked acorns. We saw many squirrels, some raccoons, and lots of bird life; but nothing brown on four feet with antlers. We decided to scout some more.

I found another less remote field that had an isolated corner with lots of sign, some rubs and a few early season scrapes. I placed a tree stand low in a pecan tree and declared that home.

I was settled in my tree stand by 4:30 p.m. Since the field was exposed, I put on a full suit of camouflage. I had a face net, camo gloves, and normal camo overclothing. I was literally a bump on the tree that smelled a little bad. The campground is primitive, so showers were not an option, and the creek was awfully cold. I normally use very good personal hygiene when bow hunting, so this time, I liberally applied baking soda to try to destroy any odor. As will be seen, it was good, but not good enough.

About 5:15 p.m., a bull elk started bugling behind me on a ridge about a half mile off. There is no sound that will raise adrenaline, bring the hairs up on your neck and draw the predator from within more than the bugle of a bull elk. This sounded like a fully mature bull. I believe he was being challenged, and I was actually hearing two bulls. If so, they were very close to each other.

I have applied every year for over 25 years for an Oklahoma elk tag and never drawn, so I could not hunt him. However, I know that each unsuccessful year gives me another preference point and that eventually, I could be cruising the Wichita Mountains or one of the other elk hunting sites chasing huge bugling elk.

Yes, it was a little early for the whitetail rut, but perfect for the elk. He bugled every 10 minutes or so for about an hour as he and (I assume) his cows moved down the ridge behind me. I didn't hear them for a while; but later, he started again (this time very close to me) and moved on across the ridge to the next valley.

CONTROLLED HUNT:

“Now, the hunt is successful; this is the first bull elk I have heard bugle in Oklahoma,” I thought to myself. I settled in my stand for the rest of the evening.

About 10 minutes later, I heard what sounded like an army coming through the woods. Deer don't travel like that, so I knew it was turkeys, elk, or a clumsy hunter. I turned in that direction and suddenly, I realized the tree branches were moving; then, a mature 6 X 7 bull elk materialized about 50 yards away. He was a beauty — probably scoring around 330, which was enough to truly excite this ole fellow.

Already facing him, I settled down to enjoy the show, wishing I could be elk hunting, but knowing that this sighting alone was enough. He trotted straight toward my tree and got within about 15 yards when he scented me. He froze, and I studied him carefully. He did not smell very good to me; but I think a cow would have loved it. His hide was ragged, muddy, and sweaty.

The bull had smelled me and for some reason decided to follow my track. I had never seen one do this before. He walked straight to my tree, and he literally followed me up the tree with his nose, going from limb to limb until we were nose to nose at less than 30 inches. Remember, he is pretty tall, especially with his neck extended to full length. I watched his nostrils pulsate with breath as he tried to figure what that smelly lump was, or perhaps he already had and was trying to intimidate me.

If I had been on the ground, I would have yelled and he and I both would have bolted. The tree being my security, I just continued watching. He studied me for about five minutes before deciding I wasn't worth the trouble. He then walked under my tree and stepped out quartering away at less than 10 yards. Geeze, if only!

I wished I could be hunting him, for this was an opportunity we dream of; but I was happy to just experience an elk so close. I applied for an elk tag the next year and have every year since then. Soon!

He fed off another 10 yards to where the breeze hit him from my direction, and he slammed on the brakes, whirled and looked directly at me. He suddenly knew exactly what I was and where I was. Then he put his head down again and continued feeding until he was up the ridge and out of sight.

“Wow!” I thought. “It doesn't get any better than that.”

But almost immediately the show continued. I heard the deer coming before the bull was out of sight. Further up the hill, I heard the “tick, tick” of an approaching deer. Of all the sounds in the woods, nothing is more distinctive than the dainty walk of a deer that I describe as “ticking.”

A doe and a large fawn came in to view. They were feeding my way and there was one lane where I could possibly shoot before they smelled me. To make a long story very short, they fed for about 15 minutes and stepped out about 30 yards from my tree. She smelled something she didn't like, turned facing me, stretched her neck in my direction and, just like the elk, her nostrils flared.

She snorted a couple times, stomped her front foot and tried what

I call the “fake feed routine.” She would put her nose down and look like she was going to feed and then immediately throw her head up and stare at me. That has caught me enough times over the years that I knew it was coming. However, my recurve and I are less than 100 percent at 30 yards, so I never brought the bow up and once again just enjoyed the show. A third deer joined them. She was larger. She didn't stay long before bolting. The young doe decided to leave also and followed the old doe up the hill. The fawn went along reluctantly.

By this time I was shaking; but for some reason I still didn't move. That was great, for I caught movement in my side vision, and then almost directly under my tree came a

whole family of coyotes. There were two larger animals and four almost fully-grown pups.

Sunset came soon after. Never before had I been so near to so much wildlife in such a short, intense period of time. I reflected on this quite a bit the rest of that day and have since then. Even though I didn't take a deer, I will never forget that afternoon.

The Controlled Hunts program gave me that opportunity, and I will apply every year as long as I am able. One of my favorite with my recurve is the primitive bow hunts in McAlester. I have taken two deer on that hunt, and one of these days, I will take a huge, rutting whitetail buck. We are fortunate to have these available to us.

I waited until well after dark so as to not spook any deer that might be nearby. After dark, I climbed down my tree and hiked to the truck. Clint was waiting when I got there.

“They write stories about the type of evening I just had,” I told him.

I guess I just did. 🌿

WAYNE C. TURNER

Editor's

Note: Wayne Turner lives in Stillwater, Oklahoma, with a wife that fishes better than he does but still loves him and he her. He has more bows, shotguns and fly rods than any man should have, and hunting dogs that also love him. He was raised in the swamps of eastern Virginia by a Dad that loved hunting almost as much as his family. In between hunting and fishing trips, he is a consultant in energy management.



TURKEY HUNTS

SPRING TURKEY HUNT HINTS

- The hunts at the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant have some of the highest application rates and are some of the hardest spring turkey hunts to draw.
- The second hunts (later in the season) at areas offering two hunts are usually easier to draw than the first hunts.

SPRING TURKEY HUNTS

Total applicants (includes first, second and third choice preferences): 12,715

Total permits available: 164

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 77

If everyone who applied put in for a first, second and third choice, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): 1 in 26

Turkey Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Cherokee GMA	Tom	Gun	04/11/08	04/13/08	701	2,105	25
Cookson WMA	Tom	Gun	04/11/08	04/13/08	702	1,815	25
Deep Fork NWR	Tom	Gun	04/04/08	04/06/08	703	455	5
Ft. Gibson WRP	Tom	Gun	04/29/08	04/29/08	704	770	5
Four Canyon Preserve	Tom	Gun	04/10/08	04/11/08	705	404	4
Four Canyon Preserve	Tom	Gun	04/19/08	04/20/08	706	290	4
Little River NWR	Tom	Gun	04/12/08	04/20/08	707	487	20
McAlester AAP	Tom	Gun	04/18/08	04/20/08	708	2,752	20
McAlester AAP	Tom	Gun	04/25/08	04/27/08	709	2,284	20
McCurtain Co. WA	Tom	Gun	04/11/08	04/13/08	710	423	16
Sandy Sanders WMA	Tom	Gun	04/18/08	04/20/08	711	930	20

Youth Turkey Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Cherokee GMA	Tom	Gun	04/04/08	04/06/08	801	360	25
Cookson WMA	Tom	Gun	04/04/08	04/06/08	802	362	25
Deep Fork NWR	Tom	Gun	03/28/08	03/30/08	803	169	7
Ft. Gibson WRP	Tom	Gun	04/25/08	04/27/08	804	235	5
Sandy Sanders WMA	Tom	Gun	04/04/08	04/06/08	805	148	10

YOUTH TURKEY HUNT HINTS

- The Ft. Gibson hunt, because of the low permit numbers, was much harder to draw than other hunts, even though more youngsters applied for the other areas.



JOHN HARRER/NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

The wild turkey makes a worthy quarry for any hunter. Oklahoma is home to two species—the Rio Grande and the Eastern (pictured)—both of which hunters can pursue on a Controlled Hunt depending on their choice of hunt locations.

YOUTH TURKEY HUNTS

Total applicants (includes first, second and third choice preferences): 12,715

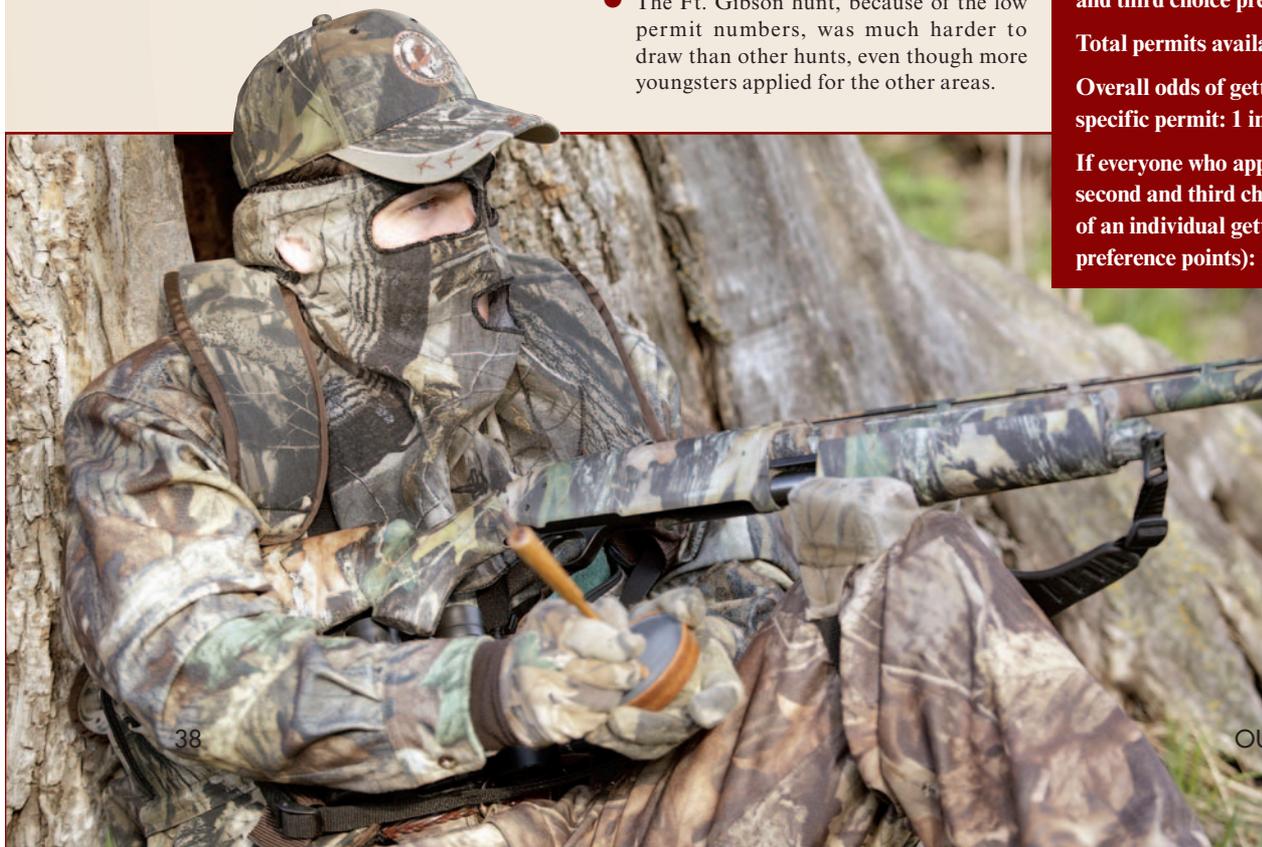
Total permits available: 164

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 77

If everyone who applied put in for a first, second and third choice, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): 1 in 26

As if Sooner gobbler hunters didn't already have some of the best turkey hunting opportunities available, the Controlled Hunts programs offers 236 draw permits, including hunts specifically designated for youth hunters.

NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION



QUAIL HUNTS

JOHN FORD

HINTS

- The quail hunts during weekdays offer much better odds than those on weekends.
- Apply as a group to increase your odds.

Quail Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Four Canyon Preserve	Quail	Gun	11/10/07	11/10/07	901	485	4
Four Canyon Preserve	Quail	Gun	11/13/07	11/13/07	902	424	4
Four Canyon Preserve	Quail	Gun	11/27/07	11/27/07	903	305	4
Four Canyon Preserve	Quail	Gun	12/04/07	12/04/07	904	287	4
Four Canyon Preserve	Quail	Gun	12/08/07	12/08/07	905	506	4
Four Canyon Preserve	Quail	Gun	12/11/07	12/11/07	906	404	4
Four Canyon Preserve	Quail	Gun	12/15/07	12/15/07	907	418	4

QUAIL HUNTS

Total applicants (includes first, second and third choice preferences): 2829

Total permits available: 28

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 101

If everyone who applied put in for a first and second choice, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): 1 in 51



A total of 28 permits are available to quail hunters hoping to draw out for one of several hunts at Four Canyon Preserve in western Oklahoma.

ALBERT LAVALLEE



ANTELOPE HUNTS

HINTS

- The best odds are obtained when you put in for both the buck and doe hunt.

Controlled antelope hunts are now offered in both Cimarron and Texas counties in the Oklahoma Panhandle.

Antelope Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Cimarron County	Either-Sex	Gun	09/20/07	09/23/07	201	4,445	50
Cimarron County	Doe Only	Gun	12/06/07	12/09/07	202	1,205	150
Texas County	Either-Sex	Gun	09/20/07	09/23/07	203	3,925	15
Texas County	Doe Only	Gun	12/06/07	12/09/07	204	424	50

ANTELOPE HUNTS

Total applicants (includes first and second choice preferences): 9,999

Total permits available: 265

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 38

If everyone who applied put in for a first and second choice, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): 1 in 13

JOHN FORD



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008

A HUNTER'S COMMON SENSE:

- Selecting hunts that happen on key dates of the regular statewide seasons, such as the opening weekend of muzzleloader or gun season, can increase your odds of being drawn.
- Hunts that are considered by some to be less desirable, such as antlerless deer hunts, may be just the right choice for a meat hunter looking to up his chances at getting to hunt at a premier location.
- By designating additional choices, you increase your overall odds of being selected for at least one of the choices, so make the most selections a category allows (five in the deer category, for example), rather than just three, two or only one.
- Rather than looking at the number of permits available for each hunt, it could be in your favor to consider the ratio of permits to applicants before making a decision on which hunts you think will give you the best chance.
- For those locations that offer multiple hunts in the same category, the second or third hunts (the later hunts) are often easier to draw than the first hunts offered at that location.
- You cannot submit more than one application form per category. Previously, when applications were completed through a booklet system, this would have resulted in disqualification. Now that applications are completed and submitted online, you will receive confirmation that your application was processed correctly. This system will help you avoid mistakes, so make sure you receive confirmation of a successful application.

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DILLON WORKMAN AND THE HUNT OF A LIFETIME

BY STEVE BURGE

Five dollars doesn't buy as much as it used to. A burger and fries. Not even two gallons of gas. A movie ticket (if you're lucky). Fortunately, five bucks still covers the cost of applying for the Pushmataha WMA Controlled Elk Hunt, a guided elk hunt with a very high success rate of tagging a trophy. In terms of hunting, five bucks can still buy you the experience of a lifetime.

Dillon Workman, a 14 year-old student from Yukon, discovered that fact this past summer. Russell Workman, Dillon's father, said Dillon was a calm, quiet and non-emotional kid until he found out he'd been drawn.

"When Dillon first found out that he was drawn for the Pushmataha elk hunt, his eyes welled up with tears," Russell said.

The next day Dillon came alive with excitement over the hunt, to the point that his younger brother called his dad at work asking for Dillon to stop saying, "I've got an elk hunt, I've got an elk hunt!"

The Workman family headed east to the Pushmataha WMA in mid-August to meet with biologist Jack Waymire for an evening of riding along as he conducted his annual spotlight deer survey.

"Jack is an encyclopedia of information on Push WMA," Russell stated. "I could spend months with him and still not learn it all."

The next morning Dillon and his dad met with Jack and drove around the WMA for more elk scouting. While Jack was giving them a short presentation about the habitat and management of the area, two deer fawns came running out of the tall bluestem straight toward the group. One fawn ran by on the left side while the other fawn took to the right. Within a few minutes a young black bear came out of the curtain of bluestem grass, preoccupied with his own morning hunt. The bear lumbered within 20 short yards of Waymire and the Workmans. Calm and professional, Jack grunted and moved to alert the bear to their presence. The bear stopped, did a double take,

then quickly turned and ran for cover.

"Seeing a bear without any bars around it was awesome," Dillon said. "His black hair was thick and shining. That is something I'll never forget."

Two weeks later, Dillon and family returned on a Friday evening and met with



Dillon Workman, 14, Yukon, harvested this huge seven by six bull elk at the Pushmataha Wildlife Management Area after being drawn for the permit through the Wildlife Department's Controlled Hunts program.

Jack for a short drive through the area. On one food plot they saw five cow elk, and then something even better — a five by five bull. The excitement of the hunt was beginning to intensify so that Dillon found it hard to go to sleep that night. Finally morning came, and Dillon, his father and his brother met with Waymire and technician Leon Johnson for a morning cup of coffee and some words of encouragement for Dillon. Final plans were made, and the crew headed out.

"I've never seen Dillon sit so tall as he did that morning in the front seat of the truck," Russell Workman said. "He watched and listened to Jack while stealing a glance out of the truck every now and then."

After driving for a while, Waymire located an elk for Dillon.

"It was a monster elk, he was the biggest elk I have ever seen!" Dillon said. "He had this long drop tine, and he was so huge."

Dad and little brother dropped back and videoed, allowing Dillon and Jack to

get closer and set up for the shot.

The monster elk began to head back into the security of the timber when young Dillon decided to take a shot. After shooting, the elk was no longer visible. Waymire and the family walked around looking for signs of a wounded animal, but it soon became evident that Dillon had cleanly missed his shot. After all his practice at the shooting range, Dillon found himself frustrated.

To top things off, it started to rain. So the party called it a day and made plans for the following morning.

Sunday morning came quick but not quick enough. After a short review, the hunt began. Shortly after leaving the headquarters, as if choreographed, two five by five bulls and five cows crossed the road right in front of the truck. Dillon and Waymire got out and walked about a quarter of mile from the truck before they spied a bull elk and began to stalk closer for a shot.

Once the pair got close enough for the 30-06 to make a clean kill, Dillon slowly raised his firearm, took aim and fired his shot! And another shot.

Suddenly the gun jammed, and Dillon panicked, attempting to correct the jam. Once he cleared the problem, Waymire calmly told Dillon to shoot once more, and the elk fell.

"That thing was huge," Dillon said. "It was as big as a horse! It was a seven by six, and I was so happy I could hardly stand it."

Pushmataha WMA is recognized nationwide for its progressive habitat management, but none of that would have been possible if it were not for the dedicated Wildlife Department employees stationed there.

"The Wildlife Department could do no better than Jack Waymire and Leon Johnson," said Russell Workman.

After an experience like that, you can't get much luckier, right?

Well, Dillon can. He later discovered that he also drew out for the Salt Plains youth hunt, but these memories would not be possible had he not submitted his application for the Controlled Hunts program. 🌿

ELK HUNTS

HINTS

- Cow hunts offer much better odds of being selected than bull hunts.
- The second set of Wichita Mountains hunts (both bull and cow) offer better selection odds than the first set of hunts.



Elk Hunts	Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt #	# of Applications	Permits
Cookson WMA	Cow	Gun	10/06/07	10/07/07	101	402	1
Pushmataha WMA	Either-Sex	Gun	12/15/07	12/16/07	102	5,879	1
Wichita Mts. NWR	Bull	Gun	12/04/07	12/06/07	103	11,453	14
Wichita Mts. NWR	Cow	Gun	12/04/07	12/06/07	104	2,565	91
Wichita Mts. NWR	Bull	Gun	12/11/07	12/13/07	105	11,199	14
Wichita Mts. NWR	Cow	Gun	12/11/07	12/13/07	106	1,832	91

This bull elk, photographed at the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge, is a symbol of Oklahoma's past, but also the success of conservation in Oklahoma. Additionally, it might serve as a little motivation for hunters to apply for the Wildlife Department's Controlled Hunts program. The draw hunts for bull elk are once-in-a-lifetime permits, and putting in for the hunt each year insures that you will gain preference points toward future drawings.

ELK HUNTS

Total applicants (includes first, second and third choice preferences): 33,330

Total permits available: 212

Overall odds of getting drawn for any one specific permit: 1 in 157

If everyone who applied put in for a first, second and third choice, the pooled odds of an individual getting drawn (excluding preference points): 1 in 52



LARRY D. BROWN