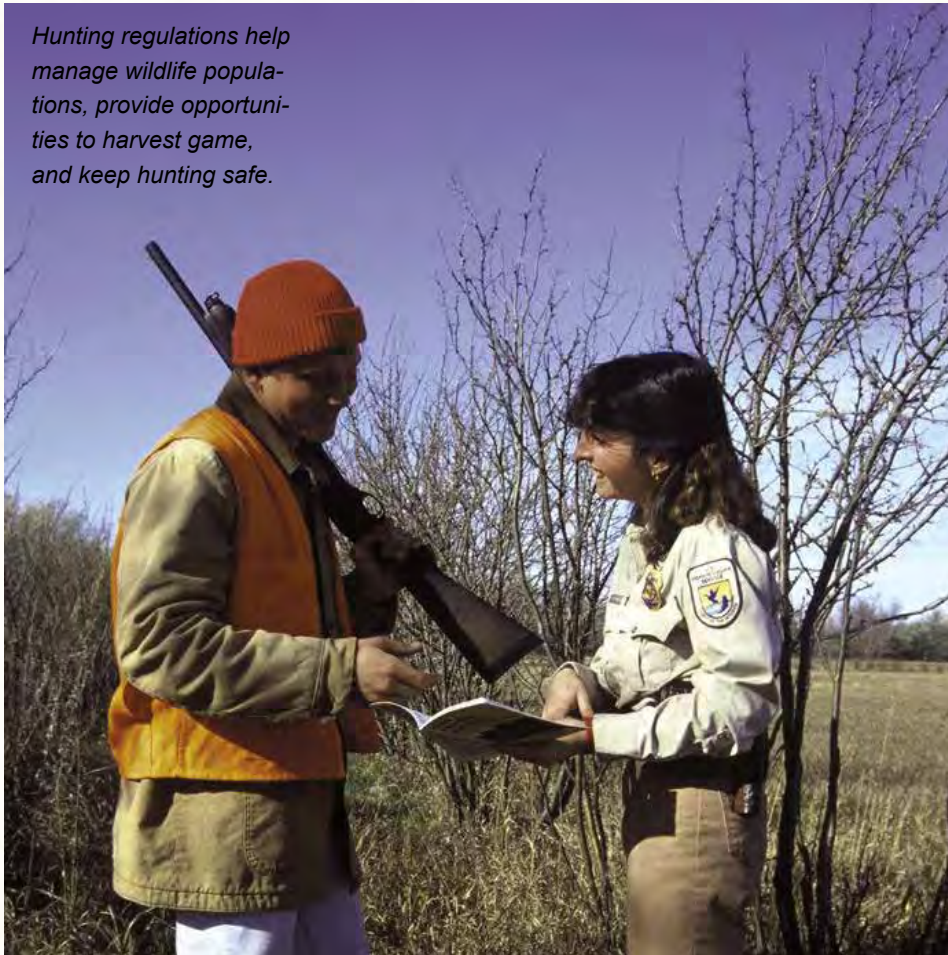


# LAWS AND REGULATIONS FOR HUNTING

Goal: To promote hunter responsibility for hunting laws, activities, wildlife and resources.

*Hunting regulations help manage wildlife populations, provide opportunities to harvest game, and keep hunting safe.*



animals, which would harm wildlife and their habitats.

During 1800s in North America, market hunting was widespread. This was unregulated, large-scale hunting of wild game for the dinner table, restaurant trade, hat industry, live capture for animal trade and extermination. At the time, there were no laws or regulations to govern the taking of wild animals. As a result, the passenger pigeon and the Carolina parakeet became extinct. Deer and buffalo herds nearly vanished.

*Carolina Parakeet*



*Passenger Pigeon*



*In the late 1800s, unregulated market hunting was responsible for causing the Carolina parakeet and passenger pigeon to become extinct.*

## Lesson 1: Federal Laws

Objective

In this lesson you will:

- Explain the reasons for federal hunting laws.

## Overview of Hunting Laws

Laws are collections of rules that promote orderly and civil behavior. Without laws life would be hectic and confused. Laws make it possible to survive and thrive in a complex world. They

shape almost every aspect of human life:

- Health
- Education
- Business and industry
- Taxation
- Technology

Laws also provide guidelines for hunting. They tell people what they can and cannot do when pursuing game. If there were no hunting laws people would do whatever they wanted with game and nongame

## Federal Governance of Hunting

By the late 1800s in the United States, hunters and conservationists began to see the need for federal laws to govern the taking of wild animals.

In 1900, Representative John Lacey of Iowa convinced Congress to pass the Lacey Act, which protects plants and wildlife by providing civil and criminal penalties for trade in wildlife, fish and plants that are illegally taken, possessed, transported or sold.



In 1900, Representative John Lacey convinced congress to pass the first federal law protecting game. The Lacey Act prohibits the interstate shipment of illegally taken wildlife and the importation of species.

In 1918, a coalition of hunters and conservationists persuaded the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) to sign the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. This law made it illegal to hunt, pursue, wound, kill, possess or transport any migratory bird, nest, egg—or

even a part. True international migratory bird protection occurred when the following countries joined the treaty:

- Mexico in 1936
- Japan in 1972
- The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (now Russia) in 1976.

## Federal Laws Fund Wildlife Conservation

In 1937, at the urging of leaders in the hunting and firearms communities, Congress passed the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration



Revenue from an excise tax on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment goes to the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Account. Funds from this account are available to states to help support wildlife restoration projects, shooting range development and hunter education.

Act, commonly called the Pittman-Robertson Act. The legislation was a cooperative effort between state and federal government, conservation groups and the firearms industry. It placed an excise tax on ammunition and firearms with revenues going to the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Account. Funds from that account are available to states in the form of grants, which support wildlife restoration projects, hunter education and shooting range development.

The original Pittman-Robertson Act has been amended several times. A 1970 amendment created an excise tax on pistols and revolvers, while the excise tax was extended to archery equipment via a 1972 amendment.

Today, these federal laws and treaties are the legal foundation for hunting in North America and internationally.

## Lesson 2: State Laws and Regulations

Objective

In this lesson you will:

- Explain the reasons for state hunting laws and regulations.

## Governance of Hunting by States and Provinces

Hunting regulations are primarily the responsibility of states or provinces. Their legislative bodies establish specific laws and regulations to govern all aspects of hunting within their boundaries that are not governed at the federal level.

Hunting regulations provide detailed explanations of the equipment and practices that hunters may use to take game. Personnel who work in state wildlife agencies, typically wildlife managers, write these regulations.

The purpose of hunting laws and regulations is to:

- Manage hunting of nonmigratory game species (deer, turkey, pheasants, etc.).
- Provide opportunities for hunters to harvest game, which helps manage wildlife populations.
- Keep hunting safe for hunters and nonhunters.

Hunting regulations are an important tool for managing wildlife to ensure their populations are healthy while providing hunters with opportunities to harvest surplus game animals.



## Outcomes of Legislation

The legislative bodies and state and provincial wildlife agencies produce the laws and regulations for hunting that do the following:

- Prima facie evidence of hunting: what counts as evidence proving an individual is pursuing game or hunting?
- Firearms: what rifles, handguns, shotguns, muzzleloaders and air guns are legal for hunting particular species?
- Ammunition: what ammunition is legal for hunting particular species, including what ammunition hunters may have in their possession when hunting?
- Loaded firearm: what shows that a firearm is loaded?
- Target shooting: what distinguishes target shooting from hunting?
- Bows and arrows: what types and sizes of bows and arrows are legal for hunting?
- Hunting-related equipment: what equipment and accessories may be used to hunt game legally?
- Landowner: what are the legal conditions for land ownership?
- Private property: what is private property?
- Public property: what is public property?

*Hunting regulations define what private property is and what public property is.*



*Legislative bodies and state and provincial wildlife agencies produce laws and regulations outlining hunter education requirements.*

## Establish Hunter Education Requirements

- Minimum age: the youngest age for completing a hunter education course.
- Hunting by minors: the youngest age for hunting with a firearm or bow.
- Exemptions for armed forces personnel: exceptions from licenses or tags for individuals due to their military service.
- Provisions for people with disabilities: personal conditions that make individuals eligible for special licenses or permits.

*Laws and regulations establish hunting requirements, such as the wearing of blaze orange.*



## Establish Prohibited Practices

- What days hunting may be prohibited (for example, some states don't allow hunting on Sunday).
- Hunting while under the influence or impaired.
- Hunting near roads, buildings, people and domestic animals.
- Hunting with a motor vehicle, ATV or snowmobile.

## Establish Permitted Practices, Requirements, Restrictions and Illegal Practices

- Licenses, tags and stamps by species and seasons.
- Requirements for checking and transporting game to its final destination
- Legal firearms or bows by species.
- Legal ammunition or arrows by species.
- Fluorescent (blaze) orange requirement by species and hunting season.
- Baiting for hunting some game or no baiting.
- Calling when hunting game and legal and illegal calling devices.

## Establish Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

- Season start and stop dates for hunting all game species.

- Starting and ending times for hunting by time of day.

### Provide Law Enforcement

- Checking licenses, tags, stamps, and permits
- Arrests
- License suspensions
- Suspension hearings
- Remedial hunter education



Conservation law enforcement officers enforce hunting laws and regulations developed by legislative bodies and state and provincial wildlife agencies.

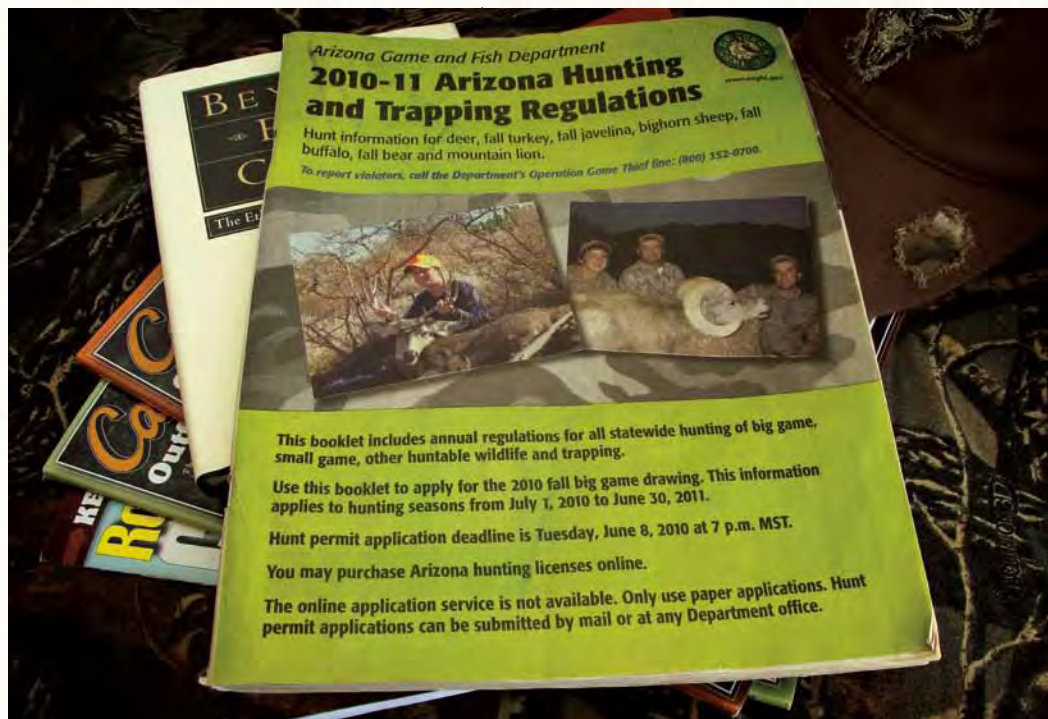
### Lesson 3: Relevant Regulations and Statutes

#### Objective

In this lesson you will:

- Determine how to locate hunting laws and regulations.

Every state and province publishes a summary of laws and regulations for hunting. When



you make a plan for hunting, you should read the handbook to determine what equipment and practices are legal for the game species you intend to hunt in that state or province.

Hunting regulations booklets are available from the following sources:

- Wildlife conservation office for the state or province
- Retail outlets for hunting equipment, firearms and bows, and licenses
- Website for the state or province

However, the information in the regulations booklet is typically only a summary of the actual legislation and regulations. To

Before you go afield, make sure you read the hunting regulations for the state you plan to hunt in.

know the full statement on any hunting laws or regulations, read the relevant statutes for the state or province. Also, hunting laws and regulations for states and provinces change over time; the current statutes provide the most up-to-date language for hunting.

Current statutes on hunting are available from the following sources:

- Wildlife conservation office for the state or province
- Website for the state or province



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