

Limited Big Game Permit Drawing Explanation

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission utilizes drawings for limited big game permits to help distribute permits in an impartial manner. Variations in drawing methods are used based largely on permit demand and the desire for drawings to be more predictable, while giving long-term applicants priority to permits, when applicable.



The Application

Applicants may not submit more than one application for each individual species (i.e. applicants may submit one application for deer, one for elk and one for pronghorn during the application period.) Species limits do not apply to multispecies lottery drawings (Combo and Super Tag permits). Each applicant for a limited permit must select a “First Choice” on their application and may also select an optional “Second Choice” on their application.

Nebraska allows hunters to apply as “buddies” to ensure that both or neither of their party will draw a permit in the same unit. These “buddy” applications are treated as one application in the drawing. The preference or bonus point level used will be determined by the lowest point total of the party (e.g. Applicant A has 3 points and Applicant B has 4 points, the application will be credited with 3 points). Buddy applications are limited to two applicants.

Regulations require the following information from each applicant: full name, mailing address, date of birth, gender, height, weight, hair color, eye color, daytime phone number and last four digits of Social Security number.

Drawing Types:

1. Lottery

Drawings: Bighorn Sheep, Multispecies Combo, Multispecies Super Tag, Landowner Antlerless Elk, General Antlerless Elk

In lottery drawings, each application has exactly one chance in the drawing. All applications have the same chance of being drawn. Lottery drawings are typically used in drawings where a very limited number of permits is being drawn among a very high number of applicants. Some lottery drawings allow applicants to submit multiple entries/applications (Resident and Non-resident Super Tag and Combo).

2. Preference Point

Drawings: Deer, General Pronghorn, Landowner Pronghorn, Landowner Bull Elk

In preference point drawings, unsuccessful applicants receive a preference point for each year that they are unsuccessful in the permit drawing. Applicants with the most preference points are given priority in the drawing process and those with the most points are drawn first. Drawing a second choice permit will result in the loss of preference points, with the exception of antlerless elk since preference rules do not apply to that drawing.

3. Bonus Point

Drawings: General Bull Elk

In bonus point drawings, applicants receive a bonus point for each year that they are unsuccessful beginning with the implementation of the bonus point process. Bonus points began in 2014 for general bull elk permits. Each applicant has $n + 1$ applications in the drawing, where n = the number of bonus points. Drawing a second choice permit will result in the loss of bonus points, with the exception of antlerless elk since bonus rules do not apply to that drawing.

Drawing Process

While each drawing type has variations in how applications are prioritized, the overall drawing process is the same.

1. Applications are randomly assigned a drawing number (with applicable preference or bonus points applied).
2. The list of applications is sorted by drawing number from lowest to highest (1 to n , where n = number of applications).
3. Applications are evaluated sequentially, starting with the first choice of the top applicant. If the quota of the first choice of an applicant is filled, the second choice will be evaluated, and so on down the list until all applications are processed.
4. Any unfilled permit quotas will be available “first-come-first-serve” and available for purchase during the “Buy” period.

Please see the diagram on the following page to see how the system progresses through the applications.

One variation is the elk drawing. Applicants are allowed to put in for both bull and antlerless permits on the same application, but since different rules apply for those permits, two separate drawings are held with a single set of applications. The bull permits are drawn first with the appropriate rules (preference for LO and bonus for General) applied. The applicant list is then reset and the antlerless permits are drawn with basic lottery rules applied. This allows all applicants the same opportunity at bull and antlerless permits, should they choose to apply for both.

1st Choice/2nd Choice Explained

The system evaluates the applicant list once. Each application is evaluated to see if the applicant’s 1st choice is available, if so, the permit is awarded and the system moves to the next application, if not, their 2nd choice is evaluated, a permit is awarded or denied and the system then moves to the next application. Selecting a permit as a 1st choice does not give priority in drawing that permit over another applicant that selects it as a 2nd choice. It simply prioritizes your permit selections.

Diagram of Draw Process

After the list has been randomly sorted the program evaluates the applications in the following manner. The permit name is irrelevant, only that if there is quota available and the permit is awarded or that the quota has been met and the application will be denied that option.

