

Arrowhead Bowhunters Alliance  
Deer Management Hunt for  
Duluth, Minnesota

RULES & INFORMATION MANUAL

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**Part I. INTRODUCTION**

**A. Purpose.** The purpose of this document is to outline the rules governing archery deer hunting within the city limits of Duluth, Minnesota.

Archery deer hunting within the City of Duluth is permitted only for hunters who have registered with the Arrowhead Bowhunters Alliance, and successfully completed the application and selection process described in this document and on the Arrowhead Bowhunters Alliance Website, prior to the application deadline for that season. Detailed information can be found at <http://www.bowhuntersalliance.org/> The rules contained in this manual are consistent with those approved by the City of Duluth, authorizing the taking of deer with archery equipment within the City Limits of Duluth, Minnesota as part of its Deer Management Hunt.

The rules outlined in this manual are intended to facilitate a safe, ethical, and effective archery deer hunt within the city limits of Duluth, Minnesota, while minimizing the potential for conflict with the non-hunting public, landowners, or other land users. While all hunters must follow all applicable municipal, local, federal and state laws, including Minnesota game laws, all hunters must also abide by the rules outlined in this manual.

Anyone found in violation of any rule in this manual, or any other applicable law in conjunction with participation of this hunt or other hunting activities, may lose their eligibility to participate in the hunt in the current and/or upcoming season(s). In addition to specific hunt rules stated in this manual, all hunters shall also abide by the Bowhunter's Creed.

**B. Bowhunter's Creed.** The National Bowhunter Education Foundation (NBEF) Bowhunter's Creed sets the ethical standard that all Hunters participating in this Hunt must follow. The Bowhunter's Creed states:

*I firmly resolve, without reservation, to uphold the following bowhunting principles:*

- *I will support the national, state, and provincial regulatory agencies and conservation organizations in the propagation and management of all game.*
- *I will, at all times, actively support and promote hunting with the bow.*
- *I will abide by current game regulations and at all times conduct myself as a sportsman so as not to bring discredit to the bowhunting community.*

- *I will respect all landowners' rights.*
- *I will assist all bowhunters in locating places to hunt, but I will not impose myself knowingly on another bowhunter.*
- *I will enjoy the challenge of the hunt and will study the habits of the game I hunt.*
- *I will use legal archery equipment and will search long and diligently to track down and recover any wounded game.*
- *I will not undertake or commit any act that could be considered as detrimental to the ancient and honorable art of bowhunting.*

## Part II. GENERAL INFORMATION

**A.** All hunters shall comply with all relevant portions of the current MNDNR "Hunting and Trapping Regulations Handbook" (MNDNR Regulations), and shall possess a current, valid Minnesota archery deer license.

**B.** In addition to the MNDNR Regulations, hunters shall comply with the rules and regulations contained within this City of Duluth Rules and Information Manual (ABA Manual). In the event there is a conflict between the MNDNR Regulations, the ABA Manual and the City of Duluth Ordinance that pertains to this hunt, the more restrictive regulation will prevail unless an official written communication from the ABA is obtained.

**C.** The official means of communication in this hunt is email. Hunters are responsible to check email regularly for various notifications.

**D.** The official source for City of Duluth hunt information is located on the ABA web site located at: <http://www.bowhuntersalliance.org/>

**E.** The official mailing address of the ABA is:

PMB 346, 23 West Central Entrance, Duluth, MN 55811.

**F.** Entry into this archery-only hunt requires the completion of the steps identified in the ABA Application Process Requirements section on the ABA web site. These requirements include: passing an annual proficiency test, online application, paper application materials being received at the official ABA mailing address by June 30<sup>th</sup>, (or postmarked by June 23<sup>rd</sup>), and attending a mandatory hunter orientation session.

**G.** Hunters requesting clarification of any hunt rule may send an email to the official ABA email address. All official communication with the ABA must come through the official ABA email address. The email address is [infoduluthhunt@gmail.com](mailto:infoduluthhunt@gmail.com)

**H.** Any hunter finding what they suspect is an illegal stand, or a stand they suspect is on public land after January 15<sup>th</sup> should send an email to the official ABA email address describing the date the stand was found, the DHA, GPS coordinates of the stand, a photo of the stand, Hunter ID #, stand tag #, and any other pertinent information. **DO NOT** take the stand down.

**I.** The following rules shall be followed:

**1. Baiting / Feeding of Deer.** The Duluth City Council has passed an Ordinance banning the feeding of white-tailed deer within the Duluth City limits. This applies to homeowners, landowners, and hunters. Any person that is caught feeding deer within the Duluth City Limits at any time of the year may immediately become ineligible to participate in the Duluth Deer Hunt for two years. If the individual is already a participating ABA bowhunter, they may immediately lose their hunting privileges, and may be ineligible to apply for a minimum of two seasons. All hunters are required to report any incidents of suspected deer baiting to the official ABA email address within 24 hours of

observation. Failure to do so may result in the hunter observing the suspected deer baiting losing their privileges as well. Baiting/Feeding of deer is a zero tolerance issue! A conviction for baiting may result in up to a 40-year removal from the Duluth Deer Hunt.

**2. Parking.** Hunters may not park in any area that might disturb the flow of traffic or damage public or private property.

**3. Off-highway Vehicles.** The use of Off-highway vehicles is prohibited on public lands by Duluth City Ordinance.

**4. Cutting of Shooting Lanes.** Hunters are required to be as discrete as possible when cutting vegetation for shooting lanes. No gasoline powered equipment may be used for cutting vegetation. On public lands, hunters may not prune woody vegetation larger than 3" diameter at ground level. On private lands, all trimming of shooting lanes must be discussed with the landowner in advance and done with the landowner's knowledge and consent.

**5. Stand Safety.** Hunters are required to wear a full body harness attached to the tree while on stand. Hunters are encouraged to use a climbing system which attaches to the tree or a safety line while climbing up to or down from their tree stands.

**6. Avoid Confrontation.** If a hunter is approached by anti-hunters or others who attempt to engage the hunter in a debate about hunting or the Deer Management hunt, participating hunters are not to argue or debate the public. Hunters are encouraged to document all alleged harassment with photographic or video equipment. All confrontations are to be reported to the ABA.

**7. Report Violations.** If a participating hunter observes another hunter violating any of the hunt rules, or if a suspected unauthorized hunter is observed within the DHA, hunters are required to report it as soon as possible to the HC for that DHA. Either the HC or hunter must notify the ABA through the official ABA email address within 24 hours of the incident.

**8. Earn-a-buck / First Antlerless.**

From the beginning of the season until Thanksgiving Day, hunters are required to first harvest and register an antlerless deer from Duluth Lands open to hunting prior to harvesting an antlered deer. Hunters are not allowed to harvest or tag another Hunter's first antlerless deer. Any hunter who is found to have registered a fictitious (or "phantom") deer will be removed from the hunt immediately. No Hunter will be allowed to harvest more than one antlered deer per year in this hunt. Beginning Thanksgiving Day until the end of the season, any current year ABA authorized hunter who has not harvested an antlerless deer in this hunt may harvest an antlered deer without having first harvested an antlerless deer.

**9. Retrieve all Deer.** All hunters must make every effort legally possible to recover deer they have shot. If a wounded deer's trail becomes sparse, know when to back out and wait, and/or ask others for help. If a wounded deer travels onto private property, hunters must contact the landowner for permission to enter their property to retrieve the deer. If permission cannot be obtained, hunters will need to contact the Duluth Police Department and have an officer accompany the hunter onto the private land. Deer are to be removed as quickly and as discretely as possible. If a deer is wounded and not recovered within 24 hours, you must notify the ABA through the official ABA email address to report the geographic area where the wounded deer, or wounded deer sign was last observed. Before tracking a deer outside of a DHA or Hotspot, the hunter is required to contact the ABA through the official ABA email address, and the Hotspot Coordinator if applicable. In addition, in all cases, the hunter must contact the Duluth Police Department via 911 and tell the dispatcher this is a non-emergency issue. Tell the 911 Dispatch the approximate location of the deer, and that there may be several individuals out looking. Failure to contact 911 will result in the hunter's immediate removal from the Hunt.

**10. Party Hunting.** Party hunting will only be allowed for hunters already having harvested and registered their first antlerless deer from within the City of Duluth. Hunters are not allowed to harvest deer for non-participating hunters, or non-current year authorized ABA hunters. All deer harvested must be tagged by current year ABA authorized hunters. **No party hunting for bucks is allowed.**

**11. Be Discreet in Transport.** Hunters are to avoid making dead deer visible to the general public while in transit. This includes covering deer with a tarp, if necessary, while in transport.

**12. Remove Gut Piles.** Hunters are required to remove the entire deer from the woods, including the entrails. This applies to all lands, public and private.

**13. Reporting Harvest.** Hunters are required to report their harvest within 48 hours of recovery. Registration of harvested deer is a two-step process: first with the MNDNR, second with the ABA through the official ABA web site.

### Part III. LANDS OPEN TO HUNTING

Hunting will **ONLY** be allowed in the lands described below. **ALL** other Public and Private lands are **CLOSED** to hunting.

**A. Designated Hunt Areas (DHAs)** – Within the City of Duluth there are approximately 39 DHAs. Within most DHAs, there are both public and private lands. There are three options for hunting within DHAs:

**1. Public Lands.** Hunting access to the public lands within individual DHAs is capped with restrictions on the number of hunters who can hunt the public land within that DHA. No hunter may hunt public land within a DHA unless they were successfully drawn for that DHA in the lottery, placed in that DHA prior to the lottery, permitted by the ABA to hunt a late season DHA when open, or permitted to switch DHAs late-season as described below.

Public Land Vacancies. No DHA zone switching will be permitted prior to the Saturday after Thanksgiving Day. Hunters should notify their Hunt Coordinator when they are done hunting for the year if prior to the end of the season. DHA vacancies may or may not be filled at the discretion of the ABA Board.

**2. Late Season DHA's.** There are several DHA's that do not open for hunting until late October/early-mid November or December 1st. Access to hunt Late Season DHA's is by permission from the ABA Board and is not available through the lottery. See the ABA web site and DHA maps for details.

<u>DHA</u>	<u>Date Open for Hunting</u>
10E	Open upon closure by golf course management, (usually between Nov. 1 <sup>st</sup> or Nov. 15 <sup>th</sup> )
14A	Nov. 15 <sup>th</sup> .
15A	Dec. 1 <sup>st</sup> .
17C	Dec. 1 <sup>st</sup> .
19B	Open upon closure by golf course management, (usually between Nov. 1 <sup>st</sup> or Nov. 15 <sup>th</sup> )

**3. Private Lands.** Unless precluded by some previous enforcement action, any current year ABA authorized Hunter may hunt private lands within any DHA, provided the hunter can meet the hunting setback distances identified in this manual, and provided they follow the Landowner Permission requirements identified below.

**B. Hotspots.** Hotspots are areas outside of established DHA's where the ABA has received permission from landowners to hunt. Hunting access to Hotspots is highly regulated and few Hunters will be allowed to hunt Hotspots. Hotspot rules are as follows:

**1.** Hunters selected will be returning hunters in good standing (i.e. not on probation or having been

issued a higher level disciplinary action from the ABA) with demonstrated past success in the Duluth Hunt. Hunters selected will be expected to represent the bowhunting community in a positive way, and be expected to be a positive liaison between the ABA and the Duluth community.

2. Hunters will be responsible for contacting the Hotspot Coordinator to be considered for a future placement. Each Hotspot will have an individual that acts as the coordinator, and will ultimately be responsible for the placement of hunters into the Hotspot. Hotspot Coordinators are not responsible for tracking down hunters. Interested hunters are responsible for contacting the coordinator.

3. Contacting the Coordinator does not guarantee placement into the Hotspot.

4. Hotspot hunts are antlerless deer only hunts.

5. Because of the often tight quarters and the need for being discreet and unobtrusive, shots will be limited to 20 yards. Hunting spots (i.e. setback distances) will be established in coordination with the landowner and Hotspot Coordinator, and may be relaxed based upon circumstances as they arise. Safety will **ALWAYS** be paramount.

6. In many cases, hunters may be told in which exact tree stands may be hung, and can be hung nowhere else. In other cases, hunters may be limited to using ABA-placed stands and ground blinds. In fewer cases, hunters will be allowed to scout and hang their own stands. Each hunter is responsible for verifying the safety of any stand or setup that they may use.

7. Hunters will be able to use ground blinds in Hotspots only when approved by the ABA Board or the Hotspot Coordinator.

8. Each Hotspot coordinator will set up specific requirements for the reporting of harvest. Hunters participating in Hotspots unconditionally agree to file these reports with the Hotspot Coordinator. Failure to do so will result in the removal from the Hotspot, and loss of all Hotspot hunting.

9. The Hotspot Coordinator, in coordination with the landowner, will also establish and control the period(s) when the hunter will be permitted to hunt the Hotspot. The goals of these hunts are efficient harvest, safety, and minimum impact.

**C. LANDOWNER PERMISSION (LOP).** A hunter who wishes to hunt private land must complete Landowner Permission requirements for each private parcel prior to hunting or setting up a stand or ground blind in that parcel. The LOP requirements has two parts:

1. **On-Line Registration.** The parcel must be registered with the ABA on line through the ABA website prior to establishing a Hunter Setup Location.

2. **Downloaded Paper LOP Form.** The hunter must have a paper copy of the LOP form, signed by the landowner, in their possession or in their vehicle available for inspection immediately upon request of law enforcement or ABA officials. This form is available on the ABA website.

## **Part IV. HUNTER AND EQUIPMENT IDENTIFICATION**

All hunting equipment identified below must comply with the Hunter and Equipment Identification requirements. The identifying Hunter ID Number must be legible, clearly visible and in a conspicuous location with numbers at least 3/4" high. Duct tape or similarly durable tape can be used with numbers clearly written in permanent ink. Alternatively, the hunter number can be written directly onto stands and climbing sticks with a metallic silver permanent marker (such as a "Sharpie").

**A. Armband.** An ABA-issued armband with hunter number must be in possession and visible while participating in the Hunt or related activities such as stand preparation or tracking/recovery of a wounded deer.

**B. Equipment Identification.** Equipment Identification requirements apply to both public and private lands.

**C. Tree Stands and Climbing Sticks.** An ABA Hunter ID number and a current year color coded locking tag must be on all tree stands left unattended. Hunters concerned with treestand theft and do not want to leave their stands unattended but want to reserve their hunter setup location can do so with a climbing stick with the hunter's ID number and color coded locking tag.

**D. Ground Blinds.** An ABA Hunter ID number and a current year color coded locking tag must be on all ground blinds if left unattended.

**E. Arrows.** All Arrows must be labeled with the Hunter's ID number. The number shall be clearly legible in a contrasting color, on both the arrow shaft within approximately 1" of the broadhead, **and** on the arrow shaft within approximately 1" of the fletching, or directly on the fletching. Acceptable methods of marking include using a permanent ink marker in a colored ink that contrasts with the arrow shaft, e.g. with a silver metallic permanent marker such as a Sharpie™ Marker, or applying a custom "arrow wrap" with the Hunter's ID number.

## Part V. HUNTING METHODS

**A. Archery Only.** Participating hunters are allowed to use only archery equipment compliant with the rules and regulations established by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) to harvest deer from within the Duluth City limits. Only white-tailed deer may be lawfully harvested in this hunt. No other animals or birds may be harvested.

All hunting will be restricted to tree stands, or in some instances, ground blinds as identified below. Under no circumstance will hunting on foot be permitted.

**B. Setback Distances.** It is every hunter's responsibility to know the ownership of the land they are hunting, and where the property lines are located. On both public and private lands, no hunting is allowed within 400 feet from occupied buildings without written permission from the occupants of those buildings. No hunting is allowed within 200 feet from designated walking or hiking trails. Additionally, no hunting is allowed within 100 feet of any designated mountain bike trails. Under no circumstances will any hunter be allowed to shoot across or down any designated walking, hiking or mountain bike trails. No tree stand or ground blind may be located closer than 50 feet to a private property line unless permission is obtained from the adjacent landowner. For setback distances in Hotspots, see the Hotspot Hunts Section of this manual.

**C. Hunter Setup Locations.** Collectively, tree stands and ground blinds are referred to as Hunter Setup Locations. Except as expressly permitted in this manual, a Hunter Setup Location on either public or private property is considered hunting.

1. Hunter Setup Locations can be installed no earlier than the last Saturday in August on public lands.

2. Within the Late Season DHAs, Hunter Setup Locations are not allowed to be placed in the woods until after the Late Season DHA opens.

3. No more than two (2) Hunter Setup Locations may be installed per hunter on public land. There are no restrictions on the number of Hunter Setup Locations allowed on private land.

4. Hunter Setup Locations not left in the woods overnight will not be counted in this total.
5. The ABA strongly recommends that only TMA rated tree stands be used.
6. Tree stands must be installed a minimum of twelve (12) feet up from the base of the stand tree.

**D. Ground blinds.** The use of ground blinds within the City of Duluth is a privilege that is permitted on a case-by-case basis. Usage of ground blinds may not be permitted whatsoever in certain DHA's.

1. Only commercially produced, portable, tent-type, blinds in good repair, will be allowed on either public or private property.
2. Every hunter that intends to use a ground blind on either public or private property must first get written permission from the ABA, and the landowner, if applicable. Hunters must request permission from the ABA through the official ABA email address detailing the location where they want to set up the ground blind, including DHA and GPS coordinates and the dates the blind will be left in the field. In some cases, a representative of the ABA Board, or its designee may need to review the site of placement prior to granting permission.
3. Hunt Coordinators may be provided complete listings upon request of all hunters permitted to hunt with a ground blind in their DHA.
4. Safety of both the hunter and the public is paramount and under no circumstances should safety be jeopardized for the sake of attempting to take a deer.

## **Part VI. END OF SEASON REQUIREMENTS**

All hunters are required to check in with their originally assigned Hunt Coordinator (even if there has been a DHA change) by no later than January 5<sup>th</sup> following the end of the Hunt. Hunters are required to verify the number and type of deer harvested, and the DHA of harvest. Even if zero deer were harvested, hunters are still required to check in and verify this with their HC. Failure to do so will result in the hunter being put on probation and losing "Returning Hunter" status for the following year. Repeat violations may result in removal from the Hunt.

All stands and hunting equipment (not including deer cameras) must be removed from public lands by January 15<sup>th</sup> of the following year. Any stand or hunting equipment left on public property after January 15<sup>th</sup> of the following year will be considered abandoned and may become property of the City of Duluth. At a minimum, the owner of a stand or hunting equipment found on public property after January 15<sup>th</sup> of the following year will result in the hunter being put on probation and losing "Returning Hunter" status for the following year. Repeat violations may result in removal from the Hunt. Note that this requirement does NOT apply to stands owned by the ABA Board of Directors and that are set up within designated Hot Spots, defined in Pt III.B. above. The intent of the rule above is to prohibit individuals from staking claims to areas from one year to the next. This is not applicable to Hot Spots, which are not open and available to the general hunting public.

## **Part VII. ENFORCEMENT**

The Rules of this hunt may be enforced by the MNDNR, Duluth Police Department, and/or the ABA Board of Directors. Aiding and abetting another hunter is the same as committing the violation.

**A. Revocation of Hunting Privileges.** Any hunter found in violations of these Rules or cited by either MN DNR or Duluth Police for any violation whatsoever, be it a game or even a non-game violation, while participating in any activity related to this hunt, may have their privilege of hunting in Duluth revoked. Additionally, they may face other

disciplinary action otherwise restricting their participation in this hunt, pending a review by the ABA Board. The ABA also reserves the right to deny entry into the hunt, and/or revoke hunting privileges for hunters convicted of game law violations in the State of Minnesota and/or other States, Territories, or Provinces. The ABA Board will determine the duration of any suspension after a review of the circumstances and severity of the violation.

**B. ABA Board Authority.** Any member of the ABA Board may immediately suspend any Hunter's privileges if they have reason to believe a violation has occurred relating to the Hunt, or if the Hunter is becoming a nuisance to other hunters, landowners, the public, and/or the ABA Board. The ABA Board will subsequently review any such actions and render a decision as soon as is possible but not before the next scheduled Board meeting.

Any Hunter removed from the Hunt has 72 hours to remove all their hunting equipment (stands, climbing sticks, ground blinds, etc.) from all lands, both public and private.

Any Hunter notified by the ABA during the Season to remove any hunting equipment from a location where it is deemed unacceptable by the ABA, will have 72 hours to remove all such equipment, or the equipment will be considered abandoned and may become property of the City of Duluth or its designee.

**C. Game Violations.** Hunters cited for any violation, either game or non-game, in the Duluth Hunt by either the MNDNR or by the Duluth Police Department (DPD) must notify the ABA via the official ABA email address within 24 hours of given notice by either the MNDNR or the DPD explaining in detail why the hunter is being investigated. Failure to notify the ABA may result in immediate revocation of privileges to participate in this Hunt.

Upon receiving a citation from any law enforcement officer, privileges to participate in the Hunt are immediately suspended until the case has been adjudicated. The cited hunter must notify the ABA via the official ABA email address within 72 hours of their case being adjudicated. If applicable, the term of the hunter's suspension will begin on the date the case is concluded by the law enforcement authority. Failure to notify the ABA within 72 hours of the adjudication date will result in a delay of reinstatement. The term of the suspension will begin upon the hunter notifying the ABA via the official ABA email address.

Reinstatement into the Hunt may or may not occur, and it will depend upon a review of the circumstances and a decision rendered by the ABA Board. Even if found not guilty in a court of law, hunting privileges within Duluth may, or may not, be reinstated. The hunter will not be reinstated to the Hunt if, in the opinion of the City and the ABA, the hunter is still found to be guilty of a hunt ethics violation or deemed to be non-compliant with the rules in the ABA rulebook. A not-guilty verdict or a dismissal in a court of law does not necessarily guarantee reinstatement back into the hunt. Suspended hunters will not be reinstated until the next hunting season following the end of their suspension.

**D. Appeals Process.** Any hunter that believes they have been unfairly treated or removed from the hunt may appeal their case to the ABA within 15 calendar days of the written notification of the violation by the ABA.

**1. Deposit.** All appellants are required to submit a \$100 deposit to the ABA. If the appellant is successful in overturning the ABA Board's decision, the \$100 deposit will be returned. Unsuccessful appellants will forfeit their \$100.00 deposit. The deposit must be in the form of a money order or certified check made payable to the "Arrowhead Bowhunters Alliance". The hunter's written appeals must be addressed to The ABA Appeals Committee, at the official ABA mailing address: PMB 346, 23 West Central Entrance, Duluth, MN 55811.

**2. Notice of Appeal.** In addition, the appellant must send a Notice of Appeal email to the official ABA email address.

**3. ABA Appeal Review.** The ABA Appeals Committee will consist of a group of citizens who have no direct affiliation with the ABA. The Committee will meet in a timely manner to review the written appeal and render a decision on whether or not to uphold, reduce, or dismiss the ABA's decision. Until they have issued a ruling, the original

enforcement decision will stand in effect. The ABA Board will attempt to contact the appellant within 48 hours of the Appeal Committee's decision to inform the hunter of the outcome of the appeal.

**4. City Appeal.** In the event the Appeals Committee upholds the ABA Board's disciplinary action, the appellant may further appeal the Appeals Committee's decision, in writing, to the City's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), or his/her designee, within fifteen (15) calendar days of the notification by the ABA. The ABA will provide its written statement and relevant evidence to the CAO within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of an appeal from the appellant. The CAO will review the information provided, schedule a hearing if he or she determines it necessary, and will render a final decision in writing within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of information from both parties.

**5. CAO Ruling.** The CAO's decision is final, and no administrative appeals will be allowed beyond this level.

**6. Refunds.** If the CAO and/or the Appeals Committee finds the accusations against the hunter do not warrant any disciplinary action, the hunter will be reinstated immediately back into the hunt and the \$100 deposit will be returned to the hunter. If the Appeals Committee and/or the CAO uphold the ABA's original decision and enforcement action, or recommend a more severe enforcement action, the hunter will not be refunded the \$100 deposit. Should the Appeals Committee and/or the CAO still find the hunter guilty, but issue a less severe enforcement action, the hunter will be entitled to receive a refund on the \$100 deposit.

**Final Note:** These rules are designed to help layout a framework for a safe and effective hunt. The ABA Board reserves the right to act on any matter regarding the safety and/or effectiveness of this hunt without the prior consent of participating hunters. In addition, the ABA strongly supports and requires ethical conduct of its Hunters participating in this Hunt.