

Motorized Hunting Rule

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission revised the rule regulating the use of motorized vehicles by hunters in some hunting units. The rule is in response to concerns expressed by many sportsmen about conflicts between hunter user groups, the potential vulnerability of game and meeting biological objectives.

The rule applies only to hunting big game animals and includes moose, bighorn sheep and mountain goats, in designated units from August 30 through December 31.

Between these dates in the designated units, specific to all big game hunting, hunters may use motorized vehicles only on established roadways that are open to motorized traffic and capable of being traveled by full-sized automobiles.

IDAPA Rule 13.01.08.411 affirms that motorized vehicles are an aid to hunting big game and prohibits use of motorized vehicles by hunters in designated units, unless the road is open to full-sized vehicles, or the hunter falls under one of the four exceptions to the rule.

Exceptions

The rule applies to motorized vehicle uses by hunters off an established roadway, except:

- Holders of a valid handicap person's motor vehicle hunting permit may use a motorized vehicle as allowed by the land owner or manager.
- Hunters may use a motorized vehicle to retrieve downed game if such travel is allowed by the land owner or manager.
- Hunters may use a motorized vehicle to pack camping equipment in or out if such travel is allowed by the land owner or manager. However, hunters may not hunt while packing camping equipment.
- Private landowners on their private land, their authorized agents, and persons with written landowner permission are excepted from the Motorized Hunting Rule use restriction.



If you observe or suspect illegal activity has occurred or may occur, report it to the nearest Idaho Fish and Game representative, or call the CAP toll-free number 1-800-632-5999.



For more information, visit the Fish and Game website at <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>; or <http://adminrules.idaho.gov>

For general information about recreational Off-Highway Vehicle riding see: <http://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/activities.atv-motorbike>

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MOTORIZED HUNTING RULE



Q & A SECTION

What changes were made to the Motorized Vehicle Use Rule?

Answer: The name changed to Motorized Hunting Rule to make it clear that this rule applies to hunters using motorized vehicles as an aid to hunting. The rule is now specific only to hunting of big game animals, including moose, bighorn sheep and mountain goat, in designated units, and only applies from August 30 through December 31.

Between these dates and in the designated units, specific to all big game hunting, hunters may use motorized vehicles only on established roadways that are open to motorized traffic and capable of being traveled by full-sized automobiles.

The rule no longer applies to hunting of upland game birds or upland game animals.

Why did Idaho Fish and Game apply the rule to entire units?

Answer: To improve clarity of the rule and help both hunters and other motorized recreationalists understand where and when the rule applies. Previously, the rule could have applied to hunting big game, upland game animals and upland game birds in specific hunts within designated units. Now, the new rule applies only to all Big Game animals, including moose, bighorn sheep and mountain goats in designated units, and only applies from August 30 through December 31.

The rules affirm that the use of a “motorized vehicle” is an aid to hunting and restricts travel to “established roadways.” What does that mean?

Answer: Using a motorized vehicle to travel off established roads to transport hunters to and from hunting spots is considered an “aid to hunting.” The rules do not affect travel on established roads open and capable of travel by full-sized vehicles. If in doubt, stay on the road.

What is an “established roadway?”

Answer: An established roadway is any road that is established, built, maintained, approved or designated by any governmental entity or private landowner for the purpose of travel by full-sized automobiles. An established roadway shows evidence of repeated use by full-sized automobiles, and may include a traveled way of natural earth with depressed wheel tracks and little or no vegetation on the wheel tracks.

What is considered a motorized vehicle?

Answer: Idaho statute defines a motor vehicle as any water, land or air vehicle propelled by means of steam, petroleum products, electricity or any other mechanical power. This includes pickup trucks, jeeps, SUVs, UTVs, cars, three-wheelers, four-wheelers, motorcycles, snowmobiles or other similar vehicles.

What is considered a full-sized automobile?

Answer: A full-sized automobile is any motorized vehicle with a gross weight in excess of 1,500 pounds.

What is the legal definition of a hunter?

Answer: A hunter is any person engaged in the activity of chasing, driving, flushing, attracting, pursuing, worrying, following after or on the trail of, shooting at, stalking, or lying in wait for, any wildlife whether or not such wildlife is then or subsequently captured, killed, taken or wounded.

Do these rules ban all use of motorized vehicles during hunting season?

Answer: No. Big game hunters can use motorized vehicles, but only on established roadways which are open to motorized traffic and capable of being traveled by full-sized automobiles. Successful hunters may use motorized vehicles to retrieve game on public lands where legally allowed by land management agencies. This rule only applies in designated units from August 30 through December 31. Other outdoor recreational activities such as camping, sight-seeing and berry-picking are not affected.

As a hunter, can I use a motorized vehicle on USFS or BLM designated trails in Big Game Units covered by the motorized hunting rule?

Answer: Only if the use is permissible in the exceptions in the motorized hunting rule. For example, if motorized travel is allowed by the USFS or BLM, you may use a motorized vehicle to retrieve downed game or pack in or out your camping equipment. However, you may not hunt while packing camping equipment. It's important that you know what specific type of motorized use is allowed for the area you are hunting.

Hunt Units with Motorized Hunting Rule: 29, 30, 30A, 32, 32A, 36A, 37, 37A, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 52A, 53, 56, 58, 59, 59A, 66, 66A, 69, 70, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, & 78.

Does the new rule apply to all hunting statewide?

Answer: No. The rule now applies only to hunting of big game animals, including moose, bighorn sheep and mountain goat, in designated units from August 30 through December 31. The rule does not apply to upland game animals or birds in hunts within designated units.

Where can I find out which are established roads open to use by full-sized vehicles and which are trails on national forest or BLM land?

Answer: For questions about the status of a road or trail in the area you plan to hunt, please contact the appropriate land management agency. National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Maps and BLM Travel Maps list road, trail and other allowable uses. Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation's Statewide Online Map, available at <http://www.trails.idaho.gov/>, also lists what type of motorized use is allowed on Forest Service and BLM lands statewide, as well as local land management agency contact information.

What can I do to stay out of trouble or to avoid conflicts with other hunters?

Answer: When in doubt, stay on the road. Know and follow the vehicle use restrictions for the area you are hunting, have applicable maps, and review tips on the Stay on Trails website at <http://stayontrails.com>.

