

**Know before you go.** All Colorado public roads, areas and trails are categorized as open, closed or restricted in some manner. Find out what the regulations are in the area where you will be hunting.

## Please observe the following types of signs:

ROAD SIGNS	AREA SIGNS	TRAIL SIGNS
	<p>Information in this brochure supported by:</p>	

Visit These Web Sites:

Colorado Wildlife Federation - [www.coloradowildlife.org](http://www.coloradowildlife.org) • Colorado Bureau Of Land Management - [www.co.blm.gov](http://www.co.blm.gov)

COHVCO - [www.cohvco.org](http://www.cohvco.org) • Colorado Division Of Wildlife - [www.wildlife.state.co.us](http://www.wildlife.state.co.us)

Colorado State Parks - [www.coloradoparks.org](http://www.coloradoparks.org) • Western Slope Environmental Resource Council - [www.wserc.org](http://www.wserc.org)



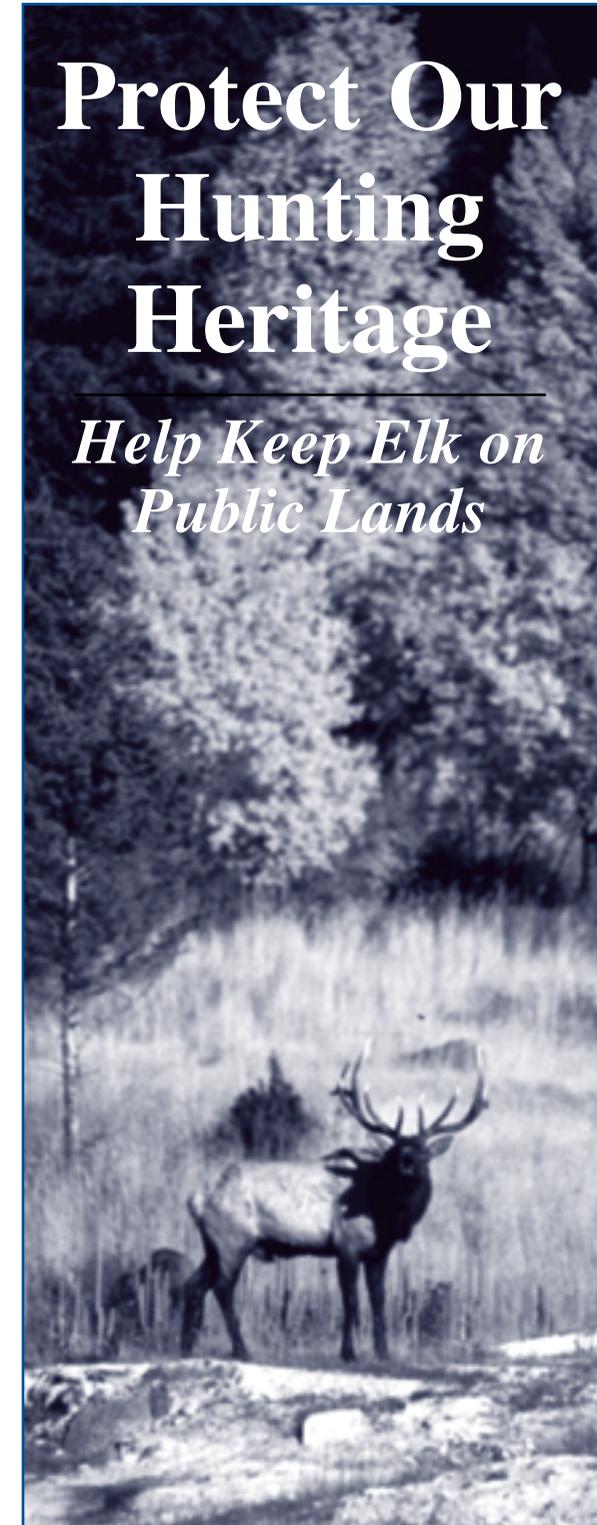
### Tips to Better Hunting

Didn't see anything last year? It might not have been a result of your hunting skills, but rather the impact of too much activity before you got there. For a better hunt for everyone, follow these simple rules:

- Keep scouting to a minimum. If necessary, scout for hunting access but don't penetrate hiding cover.
- Sight weapons before you leave home or away from hunting areas to avoid spooking game.
- Limit driving to required trips only.
- When you must drive, stay on existing roads and trails. Check with your local forest service or BLM office in the area you are hunting to determine which roads and trails are open.
- It's illegal to hunt, take or harass any wildlife from or with any vehicle including an ATV.
- Be prepared to pack game out of areas that do not have existing roads or trails.
- Minimize trail riding, especially in forested habitat, to maintain elk security.

# Protect Our Hunting Heritage

*Help Keep Elk on Public Lands*



# Protecting Habitat and Improving Hunting

Over the last decade, Colorado has seen a significant increase in recreational use of public land, especially during hunting season.

Our hunting seasons are longer and more varied, and more and more people enjoy the spectacular scenery and great big game hunting. It is a significant part of this state's economy and community — something we hope to sustain for a long time.

But longer seasons, increased use and new technologies, such as the All Terrain Vehicle (ATV), also cause problems.

More hunters than ever before now access isolated forest habitat, rugged mountain hideaways, and places that previously saw little human activity.

We hope this brochure will help you understand these concerns, and provide suggestions on how to avoid problems when possible.



## Having a Successful Hunt

Hunting season is critical to Colorado, providing an economic boost. Hunting also serves as the primary method of controlling the size of big game herds. A significant portion of winter range is on private ranches, farms and BLM lands. Poor success during hunting season often means crowding on limited winter range, which can result in weakness,



starvation, disease and damage to private property. In turn, high winter mortality can lead to unhealthy big game herds and will sometimes cause restrictions on the next year's hunting.

## Elk Avoid Roads and ATVs

One of the critical factors affecting hunting success is wildlife migration and movement. A number of factors affect movement, including weather, forage, and cover. Recently, however, increases in hunter density and vehicle traffic have become additional variables that affect wildlife movement.

During hunting season, elk retreat to the most isolated and remote locations they can find. These are called Security Zones — areas with excellent hiding cover and minimal disturbance that will hold big game during periods of stress (i.e. hunting season).

With more roads and more traffic, big game have fewer Security Zones. So instead, they tend to move to private land, which reduces hunting success while increasing early pressure on winter range. Bad weather magnifies this problem.

## Increased ATV Use by Hunters

While ATVs travel lightly on the ground and cause less damage, they provide greater access than jeeps or trucks. As a result, more areas are receiving increased ATV use with a potential for more resource damage.

## Preserving the Hunting Experience

A good hunt includes respecting the land and other hunters. ATVs make hunting easier, because you can cover a lot of ground quickly. But they also make it easier to unintentionally cross an area someone else is already hunting, scaring game away.

Similarly, with more hunters, scouting for game can often backfire. Rather than pinpointing the best place to hunt, scouting often just adds to the overall traffic displacing game from an area. Scouting during a prior season can also hurt other hunters' chances. Try scouting for hunting access locations only, and minimize your presence and activity in the woods.

**Where you go and how you get there can mean the difference between a successful hunt and an unsuccessful hunt - both for you and other hunters.**

## Environmental Damage

Some tracks you see are in inappropriate locations. When you drive off a designated road or trail, you leave a track that others will follow, and you may be creating resource damage.

Please consider the problems this causes:

- **Operating your vehicles on muddy roads and trails, meadows and riparian areas, can create damage that can take a long time to recover.**
- Erosion from stream and creek crossings can harm survival of our native trout.
- Straying off designated roads and trails into areas that are closed can disturb wildlife and reduce hunter success.

## Tread Lightly Pledge

Travel and recreate with minimum impact

Respect the environment and the rights of others

Educate yourself, plan and prepare before you go

Allow for future use of the outdoors, leave it better than you found it

Discover the rewards of responsible recreation



## Game Damage on Private Lands

Deer and elk disperse to secure habitat when disturbed. In this region, hunting season is the major disturbance period to elk, and secure habitat is often on private land where hunters usually can't go. Crowding of big game on private land often leads to damage of crops, hayfields, haystacks, fruit trees, ornamental trees, flower gardens and lawns. This is expensive, and it leaves less forage for wildlife during the winter.

### *Know Colorado Laws*

- **It is illegal to shoot from or use a motor vehicle, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, snowmobile or aircraft to hunt, chase, harass, or drive wildlife.**
- **It is illegal to shoot from, across or within 50 feet of the centerline of a public road with a firearm, bow or crossbow.**
- **All firearms, except handguns, must be COMPLETELY UNLOADED (no cartridge in chamber or magazine) while being carried on an OHV. Muzzleloaders cannot be primed to fire (no percussion cap on the nipple or powder in the flashpan).**
- **With the exception of handguns, ALL firearms, muzzleloaders, and bows must be fully enclosed in either a hard or soft case while being carried on an OHV. Scabbards or cases with open ends or sides are prohibited.**
- **An OHV is any motorized, wheeled or tracked vehicle, which is designed for use off a public highway and which is generally and commonly used to transport persons for recreational purposes.**
- **The DOW offers a special permit to qualifying disabled hunters granting reasonable accommodations in methods of take. Hunters must apply for the permit at least 30 days before hunting.**
- **Residents' ATVs must be registered with the Colorado State Parks for \$15.25 a year.**
- **Nonresidents who own and/or operate ATVs are required to obtain a permit in lieu of a Colorado off-highway vehicle registration unless their ATV is registered in their state.**