



## Utah's Conservation and Convention Permits

*Special hunting permits benefit hunters and the economy.*

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) issues approximately 6,500 limited-entry hunting permits each year. These permits give hunters the opportunity to hunt with lower hunter pressure for quality animals. Most of the limited-entry permits are issued through the DWR's normal permit drawings, but a small percentage are available to the public through two unique programs: the Conservation Permit program and the Convention Permit program. Because of the revenue they generate, these programs benefit all Utah hunters and the local economy.



*Bull elk are among the many species for which the DWR offers conservation and convention permits.*

### How do the permits differ?

**Conservation permits** are auctioned at banquets, fundraisers and other events sponsored by various conservation groups. At least 90 percent of all proceeds go toward projects — such as habitat enhancement, transplants, aerial surveys, radio telemetry studies, education efforts and research projects — that directly benefit the species for which the permit was issued. The conservation group that auctioned the permits may retain 10 percent of the proceeds to cover administrative costs. The DWR receives the revenue from the permit fees. For 2011, the Utah Wildlife Board approved 339 conservation permits, and approximately 220 of those were for limited-entry big game hunting.

**Convention permits** are not auctioned. They are offered once per year, through a drawing held at the Western Hunting & Conservation Expo in Salt Lake City. Resident and nonresident attendees can apply for convention permits at the expo. The conservation groups that host this annual event and conduct the drawing collect a \$5 fee for each application to pay for the expo and hunt-drawing costs (e.g., convention center, drawing contractor, advertising). If any additional funds remain, the groups use the money to support and promote wildlife. The DWR receives the revenue from the permit fees. In 2012, there will be 200 convention permits in the expo drawing.

### How do the permits benefit Utah's hunters and economy?

From 2001 to 2010, the Conservation Permit program generated \$17.68 million. If not for the revenue from these permits, Utah would need to substantially raise hunting permit fees for residents or offer a larger percentage of higher-cost permits to nonresidents. Currently, the DWR issues more than 90 percent of Utah's limited-entry permits to resident hunters through its hunt drawings. Over the long term, the conservation permit program provides additional hunting opportunity by funding essential habitat work and enhancing wildlife populations.

In February 2011, the Western Hunting & Conservation Expo — and the opportunity to apply for up to 200 convention permits — brought more than 30,000 people to downtown Salt Lake City. Nonresident attendees paid for 24,567 hotel nights and spent \$10,841,205 while visiting the expo.\* Convention permits are a large part of the expo's popularity and tangibly benefit Utah's economy.

\*Source: Bureau of Economic Research