



White Tail Deer Archery Only Hunting Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide the Bur Oak Land Trust Board of Directors and staff members regarding archery hunting of antlerless white-tailed deer on Bur Oak Land Trust properties.

This policy aims to maintain ecological balance on the Trust's properties by managing the white-tailed deer population. Overpopulation of deer can harm forest regeneration, reduce biodiversity, and cause conflicts with neighboring agricultural and residential areas. Regulated hunting will ensure sustainable wildlife populations and healthy ecosystems.

Objectives

- Protection of native vegetation to support the overall biodiversity of the region
- Implementation of hunting as a tool to manage white-tailed deer numbers within ecologically sustainable limits
- Prioritization of the safety of permitted hunters, the public, Trust staff, and neighboring communities

The Trust will conduct regular assessments of its lands, which will guide decisions related to hunting.

The Board, working with staff and reviewing as necessary, will determine the following:

- Designation of properties where hunting is allowed or restricted
- Number of hunting permissions offered per property

The properties allowing hunting will be listed on the Trust website along with instructions for the permit request process.

Properties allowing archery antlerless white-tail deer hunting:

- Big Grove Preserve
- Hora Woods
- Kessler Prairie
- Muddy Creek Preserve
- O'Mara-Newport Woods
- Schoenmaker Woods
- Turkey Creek Nature Preserve

Hunting Eligibility:

- Hunters must be 18 years of age or older.
- Hunters must possess all required State hunting licenses and permits, including deer-specific tags.
- Applicants must have their hunter safety certificate.
- Permission to hunt will be granted at the discretion of the Land Stewardship Director.
- Permission is requested by completing a permission form, Exhibit B, attached to this policy.
- Hunting seasons will align with State regulations, but may include additional restrictions based on ecological needs.

Hunters:

- Submitting a hunting request form does not guarantee hunting permissions. Forms must be submitted annually by each individual hunter.
- Only hunting by archery is permitted; no other method of hunting is allowed, including trapping or hunting with firearms.
- When permission is granted by Bur Oak Land Trust, it applies only to the applicant and *specifically does not allow guests or companions*.
- Hunters must follow State bag limits. The Trust may implement additional limits to manage population growth effectively.
- Hunters are encouraged to donate unused venison to local food banks or community programs to minimize waste.
- Hunters must adhere to ethical hunting practices, respecting the land, wildlife, and other Trust guests.
- Hunters are responsible for their personal safety, and being granted permission to hunt shall not waive or release any of the protections granted to Bur Oak Land Trust under Chapter 461C of the Code of Iowa.

Policy Enforcement:

Failure to comply with this policy may result in revocation of hunting privileges on Trust properties. Severe infractions may be reported to State authorities.

This policy will be reviewed annually based on population surveys, hunter feedback, and ecological assessments.

This policy integrates wildlife conservation, safety, and ethical hunting practices to manage deer populations and promote healthy ecosystems on the Trust's properties.

Bur Oak Land Trust reviews policies on an as-needed basis. Changes to policies and practices require approval by the Board of Directors.

Attached is Exhibit A: Information for Authorized Hunters. This information is subject to change. Previously approved hunters should annually review this Exhibit for the most updated information.

Exhibit A: Information for Authorized Hunters

Methods and Equipment

- Authorized hunters will be issued a placard at the beginning of every season which will be used to alert the public that hunting is taking place on the property. This placard is to be placed on the property's entry kiosk or sign when the hunter arrives at the property and removed when the hunter leaves the property. Placard states: "Hunter on site while posted".
- Hunters will report their total harvest of deer at the end of the season through a mandatory annual hunting survey.
- Deer may be field dressed and entrails allowed to remain in the field, but should be 50 feet from any trails or parking lots.
- Bur Oak Land Trust reserves the right to revoke or modify the granted permission at any time and for any reason, upon notice to the hunter.

Permitted

- Only bow hunting with approved archery equipment is allowed.
- Hunters will submit stand and trail camera locations to staff following placement.
- Each hunter is allowed one stand and one trail camera that will be tagged with the hunter's first name and last initial.
- Stands must be placed no less than 50 feet from established hiking trails and parking lots.
- Temporary hang-on or ladder tree stands may be non-invasively attached to the tree via straps.
- Use of temporary apparatus is limited to no longer than 4 weeks prior to the season, through and including 2 weeks following the season.

Prohibited

- Crossbows and any firearms
- Placement of tree stands in living oak or shagbark hickory trees
- Permanent or self-climbing tree stands
- Spikes, climbers, screw-in pegs, or other apparatus that impale trees
- Cutting of branches or clearing of vegetation from trees or surrounding areas
- Ground blinds, either manufactured or utilizing natural materials
- Use of motorized vehicles and any other power equipment without special and specific written permission from Bur Oak Land Trust

Exhibit B: LIMITED PERMISSION FOR HUNTING

Bur Oak Land Trust Hunting Agreement

As a condition of being granted permission to hunt on Bur Oak Land Trust property (hereafter referred to as "Trust property"), I, the undersigned hunter, acknowledge and understand the following:

- Observing or participating in any type of hunting is potentially dangerous to me.
- Operating weapons or participating in any way in shooting, handling, and/or carrying weapons is potentially dangerous to me.
- Hiking in natural areas poses both exposed and hidden risks due to terrain, flora, fauna, and other natural features.
- My permission to hunt on Trust property is not exclusive; others may also be hunting at the same time, which poses a potential danger to me.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND WAIVER OF ALL CLAIMS

I fully assume all such risks of personal injury in connection with any and all of my permitted hunting or other activities on Trust property. As consideration and a material inducement for Bur Oak Land Trust to grant this limited permission, I hereby waive any and all claims against Bur Oak Land Trust and its directors, officers, employees, volunteers, AmeriCorps members, representatives, and agents for any injuries or damages I may incur on Trust property or elsewhere, arising directly or indirectly from my hunting-related activities permitted under this document. This waiver includes any claims for injuries or damages caused by the fault or negligence of Bur Oak Land Trust and its directors, officers, employees, volunteers, representatives, AmeriCorps members, and agents.

Responsibility for Others and Property

I acknowledge and understand that:

- Participating in any type of hunting activity is potentially dangerous to others.
- I am responsible for all of my hunting activities, including but not limited to the operation of my weapon and any injury or damage I may inadvertently or intentionally cause to:
 - Any guest of mine or any other person on or near Trust property.
 - Any property belonging to Bur Oak Land Trust or any other person on or near Trust property.

Compliance and Competency

I represent that I have read and understand all Iowa laws and regulations governing the hunting activities permitted under this document, and I agree to fully comply with all such laws and regulations while on or near Trust property. I also represent that I have read and understand the Bur Oak Land Trust Hunting Policy and agree to comply with all rules and restrictions therein. Furthermore, I affirm that I have sufficient experience, training, and/or knowledge in safe hunting practices to participate in the permitted activities without creating a hazard to myself or others.

Equipment and Environmental Stewardship

I acknowledge that I am solely responsible for the sufficiency, safety, and operation of all my hunting equipment and gear, and that Bur Oak Land Trust assumes no responsibility for such matters.

I understand that maintaining and preserving the natural features of Trust property is a primary mission of the Trust. I agree not to damage any natural or other features of Trust property. I will use tree stands that comply with the Bur Oak Land Trust Hunting Policy. I will not use motorized vehicles or any other power equipment on Trust property unless I have received special and specific written permission from the Bur Oak Land Trust Land Stewardship Director.

Substance Use

I acknowledge and understand that the consumption of alcohol, marijuana, and/or other drugs—legal or otherwise—may impair my ability to safely hunt and properly operate weapons. I agree not to hunt while under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or any drug, whether legal or illegal.

Indemnification

As further consideration and a material inducement for Bur Oak Land Trust to grant this limited permission, I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Bur Oak Land Trust and its directors, officers, employees, volunteers, AmeriCorps members, representatives, and agents from and against any and all claims, judgments, settlements, costs, fines, penalties, expenses (including but not limited to attorney fees, defense costs, and court costs), and any other liabilities resulting from injury, loss, or damages to any third party arising directly or indirectly from my hunting or other activities on Trust property.

Binding Agreement

I agree that this document shall be binding upon me and upon my personal representatives, beneficiaries, heirs, and successors in interest. I further agree that I shall be responsible for any damage I may cause to Trust property and shall promptly restore such damage or, upon the Trust's election and invoice, promptly reimburse Bur Oak Land Trust for the reasonable costs of restoration.

Amended and adopted by the JCHT Board of Directors July 27, 2009

Reviewed and updated by the Property Stewardship Committee, August 6, 2015

Reviewed, corrected to reflect name change to Bur Oak Land Trust, and adopted by the Board of Directors, November 16, 2015

Updated and reviewed by Governance Committee and approved by the Bur Oak Land Trust Executive Committee, August 14, 2025

Signature Section

Hunter's Name (Printed): _____

Hunter's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State & Zip Code _____

Phone: _____

Vehicle License Plate: State _____ Plate # _____

Provided that the above signed hunter agrees to and remains in full compliance with all provisions contained in the Bur Oak Land Trust White Tail Deer Archery Only Hunting Policy, then subject to this document the hunter may hunt on the Trust property identified below for antlerless white-tailed deer during the legal hunting season(s), subject to any additional limitations/conditions as follows:

Bur Oak Land Trust Property Name: _____

Specific game: Antlerless White-tail Deer Only _____

Dates of Applicable Archery Season(s) _____

Additional Limitations/Conditions

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APPROVAL BY BUR OAK LAND TRUST

Bur Oak Land Trust Representative (Printed): _____

Representative's Signature: _____

Date: _____