



Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation

**2026 Muzzleloader and General Firearm Deer Hunt at
Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve
Lottery Information and Application**

This is an opportunity to hunt **Deer** at Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve in Stafford County, Virginia. Hunters will be selected by lottery. **Hunt dates will be November 10th and 11th 2026 for the muzzleloader hunt, and November 17th and 18th for the shotgun hunt.** There will be two separate drawing for these dates (one for the muzzleloader hunt and one for the general firearms hunt). Successful applicants will be randomly assigned a hunt zone and will be permitted to hunt this zone on the dates listed above. **Hunters will be able to apply for both hunts with one application.**

- To hunt Deer at Crow's Nest, hunters must apply and be chosen by lottery. Application deadline is 5:00 PM on **Friday, September 11, 2026**. A \$5.00 non-refundable application fee is required (**one fee will cover entries into both hunts**). A random drawing will be held on **Tuesday September 15, 2026, at 1:00 PM** at the Richmond Office of DCR's Division of Natural Heritage located at 600 East Main Street. **Hunters must be 16 years of age or older to apply for this hunt.**
- Selected hunters (Chief-of-Party) will have the option of purchasing one (1) permit for themselves **\$30 for both hunt days** and one (1) additional permit for a guest hunter @ **\$30 each**. The Chief-of-Party will make payment to DCR, distribute permit to guest party member **and must be present in order for the guest to hunt.**
- **AS WITH ALL DCR HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES, PROOF OF COMPLETION OF A HUNTER SAFETY COURSE IS REQUIRED FOR EACH HUNTER. HUNTER SAFETY CERTIFICATES MUST BE IN POSSESSION BY EACH MEMBER OF THE PARTY AND PRESENTED ALONG WITH LICENSES WHEN CHECKED DURING THE HUNT.**
- Only Muzzleloaders permitted during the muzzleloader hunt. Muzzleloaders, shotguns (slugs only), and rifles will be allowed during the general firearms hunt. Other weapons are prohibited. Hunters **must use non-lead ammunition.**
- Only deer may be killed in accordance with the Code of Virginia. No other wildlife species may be killed during this hunt.

Hunting Zones

- Each Chief-of-Party will be assigned one (1) Hunt Zone for the 2026 hunting season. The Chief-of-Party will be able to bring up to one guest to hunt in their zone with them.
- Hunters will be allowed to use portable tree stands; however, safety harnesses are required. Screw peg steps will not be allowed. Trimming of trees for shooting lanes or to secure stands is prohibited.
- Hunting zones will be randomly assigned during the lottery draw.

Each hunter must abide by all rules and regulations, including but not limited to ammunition restrictions, hunting **ONLY** within the assigned hunting zone, and possessing a valid hunting

license, and hunter safety certificate. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Specific information including hunter permits, hunt rules and regulations, and a map showing hunt zone locations will be sent as a packet to each successful applicant following receipt of the **\$30 per hunter permit fee due by November 1, 2026.**

Questions about this hunting opportunity may be directed to Officer James Watling, Northern Operations Steward at 540-824-2019.

How to Apply:

1. **Hunters must be 16 years of age or older to apply for this hunt.** Complete and mail the following application along with your \$5.00 application fee (check only) payable to NAPF (Natural Area Preservation Fund) to:

Attention: Crow's Nest Deer Hunt
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Natural Heritage
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219
 2. Applications will be accepted until the close of business (5:00 PM) on **Friday, September 11, 2026.** A computerized random drawing will be conducted on September 15, 2026, to select hunters and assign hunt zones.
 3. Only successful applicants will be notified – within one week of the drawing. **Selected hunters must return the \$30 per hunter permit fee by 5:00 PM on Friday, November 1, 2026 to the above address.**
 4. Your name can only appear one time in the drawing. **ALL DUPLICATE ENTRIES WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.**
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**CROW'S NEST NATURAL AREA PRESERVE
2026 Muzzleloader and General Firearms Deer HUNT APPLICATION**

****** ALL INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE DISCARDED ******

Please Check the boxes below

☐

I would like to apply for the Muzzleloader Hunt

☐

I would like to apply for the General Firearms Hunt

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

E-mail address _____

Telephone No. (____) _____ - _____ Date of Birth _____

The Department of Conservation and Recreation reserves the right to manage hunter access and hunter use on Department owned lands as deemed appropriate.

***** HUNTER SAFETY CERTIFICATION IS REQUIRED OF ALL HUNTERS ***
FOR PARTICIPATION ON THIS AND ALL HUNTS ON DEPARTMENT OWNED LANDS**