

Elk Herd Management Program at Canadian Forces Base Suffield – COVID-19 Mitigation Plan 2020-2021

1. COVID-19 Mitigation Plan Overview.

- a. Hunt participants throughout this plan includes hunters, harvesters and helpers;
- b. Interaction between Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Suffield employees, soldiers and Provincial employees will be minimal as all hunting participants will remain in their vehicles for both in and out clearances (except to use portable toilets);
- c. The COVID-19 plan will be sent to all registered hunters (Provincial hunters & First Nation harvesters) prior to arriving to CFB Suffield. The information will be sent to:
 - (1) Provincial hunters via Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), and
 - (2) Indigenous harvesters via CFB Suffield.
- d. Days two and three of each three day hunt week will mirror day one.

2. Morning briefing and registration

- a. The morning briefing and registration plan consists of having all hunt participants line their vehicles up inside the Ralston Recreation Center parking lot. All vehicles arriving prior to the parking lot being open at 6:00 a.m. must line their vehicle up along the in route as per figure 1 on page 4;
- b. Upon entry to the parking lot, each vehicle will be given an in clearance package consisting of:
 - (1) Printed version of the briefing – one per hunter in each vehicle;
 - (2) Hunt map – one per hunter in each vehicle;
 - (3) Waiver form – all hunters and helpers get one;
 - (4) Acknowledgment form that briefing is understood – all hunt participants get one; and
 - (5) COVID-19 questionnaire – all hunt participants get one.
- c. Registration will occur down the lines of vehicles, where both military personnel walking the lines and the hunt participants in the vehicles will be wearing masks (**all hunt participants must bring their own masks**);

- d. If hunters/harvesters wish to partake in the National Wildlife Area (NWA) draw they can submit their licence plate number during registration. One licence plate number per hunter, i.e. if two hunters are in same vehicle then their licence plate number can be entered twice;
- e. Once registration is complete, a “follow along” brief will be conducted using FM transmitter (frequency will be provided). Hunt participants will follow along with their handouts while listening to the brief;
- f. When the briefing is done, hunt participants will depart the parking lot in their vehicles via the exit point(s) where they will:
 - (1) Submit hunt participant waivers;
 - (2) Submit hunt participant acknowledgment of understanding the briefing forms;
 - (3) Submit hunt participant COVID-19 questionnaire;
 - (4) Receive a vehicle pass. Vehicles that were drawn for the either the NWA North, or NWA South will be issued the appropriate vehicle pass for the area they were drawn and
 - (5) Receive hunt participant wrist bands. Hunters that were drawn for the either the NWA North, or NWA South will be issued the appropriate wrist band for the area they were drawn.

The Military personnel working the exit point(s) will be masked and will be wearing gloves. Hunt participants will be masked. Paperwork collected will be sealed for several days.

3. Entering the Range and Training Area (RTA)

- a. Military Police (MP) will be conducting vehicle searches at the entrance and exit to the RTA. They will wearing appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).
- b. Military personnel will be wearing masks when checking for vehicle pass, wrist bands and NWA essentials for those with an NWA vehicle pass. Hunt participants must be masked.

4. While in the Range and Training Area (RTA). While hunting in the RTA, hunt participants can unmask. However, staff and hunt participants must wear masks for any RTA interaction.

5. Exiting the Range and Training Area (RTA)

- a. When hunt participants are done for the day, they will exit the RTA via the hunter check station at Range Control. All hunt participants will remain in their vehicles (except to use the portable toilets);
- b. Military and Provincial personnel will approach vehicles with masks. Hunt participants must also wear a mask.
- c. If hunters wish to voluntarily submit their elk heads for chronic wasting disease (CWD) testing, the heads must be removed in the RTA prior to arriving at the exit point. This will be briefed during morning registration. Information for turning heads in after leaving CFB Suffield will be provided by AEP;

- d. Vehicle passes will be collected and sealed. They will not be reused. If required, they will only be used to verify who has left the RTA;
 - e. Maps will be collected and sealed if hunters are done for the week; and
 - f. Once all required information and material is collected the hunt participants can exit the Base.
6. Canex and Esso gas station. Hunt participants wanting to use Canex and/or the Esso gas station prior to or after hunting can do so, but must follow the COVID-19 policy for hunt participants. These policies are:
- a. All hunt participants must wear a mask if they wish to enter the Canex store.
 - b. All hunt participants must sign the register inside the Canex store.
 - c. All hunt participants must sign use the hand sanitizer inside the Canex store.
 - d. All hunt participants that use the Esso gas station in the morning following the morning safety brief must wipe the handle down when finished. Wipes will be provided at the gas pumps in the morning. Canex has a policy of wiping down the pumps throughout the day, which will be sufficient for staggered use by hunt participants.
7. Non-compliance. Non-compliance with any COVID-19 direction given will result in hunt participants being banned from hunting at CFB Suffield for the remainder of the 2020/21 season.

Figure 1.

