



# Information for Tribal Members on Hunting on the Yakama Reservation and Ceded Areas

## Introduction

The following guidelines are designed to help inform Yakama Tribal Members and the General Public on the Hunting Rights of Yakamas and to help alleviate any confusion about these rights. These only highlight some of the laws, and are not meant to replace the existing wildlife codes and laws regarding these activities, which more fully define the tribal laws regarding hunting. These can be obtained by contacting the Yakama Nation Wildlife, Range, & Vegetation Resources Management Program.

Members of the Yakama Nation, and other tribes, hunt throughout their ancestral lands in Washington State for the purpose of gathering meat for sustenance and ceremonial purposes. It is not the custom of tribal people to hunt or gather food for sport or leisure, but is instead a traditional and cultural activity that is needed to provide food for funerals, memorials, name givings, food feasts, and family dinners. On the reservation and ceded areas, these laws and rights override the jurisdiction of the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife.

## Yakama Nation Reservation

Within the 1.2 million acre reservation of the Yakama Nation, enrolled members can hunt within and outside of the closed area with the following restrictions:

- No hunting of female deer and elk from Jan. 1—Aug. 31 (except with Special Permit). When in the field, heads or genitals must remain attached to the animals during this period as proof of sex.
- No hunting 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise.
- No hunting of mountain goat, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope (except with Special Permit).
- No hunting of bald eagles or other protected animals (as defined by Tribal Council).
- No wasting of game meat normally used for human consumption
- No hunting using artificial lighting at night, from the air, from snow vehicles or ATV, using dogs, using rifle less than 24 caliber for elk, or using toxic materials/bait.
- You must have permission to hunt private lands on the Reservation.

## Yakama Nation Reservation (cont.)

Other restrictions can be found in the Revised Yakama Nation Wildlife Code, Title XXXII.

Hunting is prohibited to all people in the **Upper Toppenish Creek Wildlife Reserve (Tribal Game Refuge) and the Lower Toppenish Creek Wildlife Reserves**. Within these reserves, it is a gross misdemeanor to hunt, carry firearms, or otherwise harass wildlife within the reserve boundaries. Ceremonial hunting can be done with a Special Permit. Nowhere on the reservation are there any restrictions to the gathering of other foods and medicines by tribal members.

### Ceded Area (off-reservation)

The Yakama Nation's ceded area encompasses 12 million acres, covering nine separate counties in eastern Washington State.

Any enrolled member of the Yakama Nation has the right to hunt, fish, and gather other food, medicine, or ceremonial supplies in open and unclaimed lands within the ceded area. **One restriction is the taking of female deer or elk from Jan. 1 through August 31.** Enrolled tribal members hunting in the ceded areas must carry their enrollment card and other I.D., for game enforcement officers. Unclaimed lands include Federal, State, and other government land, and does not include private land, refuges (such as feeding stations), and safety game zones. Within the ceded areas, there are winter wildlife sanctuaries within Yakima County, where seasonal restrictions do apply:

- **Winter Feeding Areas (no hunting Dec. 15—March 31)**
  - \* Includes Oak Creek Feeding Area, Clover Springs Feeding Area, and Cleman Mountain Feeding Area.
- **Winter Wildlife Sanctuary (no hunting Dec. 31—March 31)**
  - \* Sanford Pasture Winter Range.

Again, ceremonial hunting can be done during restricted seasons, with a Special Permit. Nowhere in the ceded area are there any restrictions on the gathering of other food and medicine by tribal members.

### Special Permit

If you are an enrolled member of the Yakama Nation, you may obtain a Special Permit to hunt for ceremonial purposes in restricted areas or at restricted times. Please contact the Yakama Nation Wildlife, Range, & Vegetation Resources Management Program for information or a permit application.