

# Nelson Lakes National Park Ungulate Control – Terms and Conditions

## Background

The primary objective of this hunting is to reduce the effects of deer browse (by reducing the deer population) threatening the indigenous flora and fauna in Nelson Lakes National Park (NLNP).

Deer numbers in the southern part of Nelson Lakes, including the Spenser Mountains, Ella Range and Nardoo area, are rapidly increasing. Reports suggest walk-in hunting is not controlling the numbers with herds upwards of 15 hinds in these areas. In the Nelson Lakes National Park Bylaws 2006 helicopters are only allowed to land in the national park for management purposes, search and rescue and WARO at certain times of year. The Rotoiti/Nelson Lakes district is facilitating heli-assisted recreational hunter access further into the park as a method of controlling deer numbers.

For those that have taken part in this initiative before please read carefully as some of the conditions have changed. We will trial new aspects this year and reserve the right to change how this program is run at any time.

## The Proposal

The block is the southernmost section of Nelson Lakes National Park including the area west of the D'Urville River, the Ella Range, the Spenser Mountains south of Thompson Pass and Nardoo Creek. This area is outside the most popular tramping tracks (the Travers-Sabine Circuit and the Te Araroa trail) in Nelson Lakes National Park.

The target is to remove as many deer, goats, chamois and pigs as possible through recreational hunting during this period. Helicopter access allows hunters to target their efforts, remove meat from kills and minimise waste. With the help of hunters, we can reduce animal numbers and allow the vegetation to recover providing a healthy ecosystem for all our native species.

More intensive game animal management in the park will also be beneficial for future hunting potential. When the sex ratio becomes more female biased (when only large stags are targeted) this can reduce genetic variation and reduce the future viability of the population. Additionally, when the density of deer is lower the individuals in the population are healthy and larger. The Game Animal Council New Zealand has useful information about herd management.

[This year we will run blocks from Saturday to Saturday and we will be alternating blocks.](#) Blocks start/change over date: 21<sup>st</sup> October (even), 28<sup>th</sup> October (odds), 4<sup>th</sup> November (even), 11<sup>th</sup> November (odds). The 18<sup>th</sup> of November will be the final flights out.

Kill returns are required through a hunting diary (and photos appreciated) as a means of monitoring the success of this hunting activity. **If hunting parties do not provide DOC Nelson Lakes with a hunting diary, they will not be considered for this program for the following 2 years.** Checks will be carried out on landing sites to ensure there are no unfavourable impacts.

## Conditions of Entry

- All hunters entering must hold a current firearms licence and obtain a hunting permit prior to entering Nelson Lakes National Park [huntingpermits.doc.govt.nz](http://huntingpermits.doc.govt.nz)
- The focus is on hunting game animals and is not for those who seek aircraft access into the National Park for other purposes – no fishing is permitted by those flying in.
- Parties must be flown in but can have the option to walk out from a block.
- All equipment flown in must be taken out, along with all rubbish. Checks on landing sites will be carried out to ensure they have been left tidy with campfire sites dismantled.
- Campsite and landing sites are not designated but will be recorded.
- Each party leader must make their own transport arrangements and pay for helicopter access with one of the authorised operators.
- **A hunting diary is required for each party.** Each party **MUST** provide a hunting diary to DOC at the conclusion of their trip. Photos of kills would be appreciated.
- Maximum party size is up to six hunters.
- Hunters must only hunt within their allocated blocks for the duration of the hunting trip.
- All hunting parties are required to carry an inReach device.
- Changeover of hunting parties will be based on helicopter availability (or arrangements made with pilots). Seven-day (six-nights) blocks of time have been identified for hunting parties.
- No spot lighting or night vision gear is permitted.
- This is not to facilitate paying client's entry – individual recreational hunters only.
- No chainsaws, building materials or structures (other than tents) are permitted.
- If using huts, these are on a 'first come, first served' basis so all parties must also be prepared to camp if the huts are full and have purchased the appropriate hut tickets/backcountry hut pass for those huts.
- Carcasses or offal must not be left at, or in the vicinity of tracks, huts, campsites or in waterways.
- No damage to vegetation is permitted and only dead wood can be used for campfires.
- All toilet waste needs to be buried at least 50 metres clear of running water.
- No hunting dogs will be permitted. No dogs are permitted in Nelson Lakes National Park.
- Nelson Lakes National Park is relatively free of introduced weeds. You are asked to **CLEAN** gear and boots carefully, so no seeds or dirt is accidentally introduced. Special care is needed to clean tents, day packs, pack pockets, socks and Velcro fasteners that often carry seeds. Random gear checks may be carried out before you leave the hangar.

**Heli ferry options: We have secured a location at Mt Ella station where hunting parties could park up and it can be used as a site to ferry groups to and from hunting blocks. This will hopefully reduce times and cost of helicopter flights for the groups.**

## Safety Information

Pilots will brief all passengers on helicopter safety prior to take off – decisions around flights, landings and weight will be made with the helicopter operators.

Ensure all group members have adequate backcountry skills for the terrain. This is rough terrain where good navigation skills are essential. Ensure the hunting party has adequate first aid supplies and each

group has the ability to quickly call for help if required (e.g. inReach device, PLBs are available for hire from the NLNP Visitors Centre).

Weather can change quickly, and snow can fall at any time of the year. Heavy rain may make streams dangerous to cross. Ensure provisions are made in the event helicopters cannot pick you up on the designated date.

Carry additional food in case flights are delayed due to adverse weather conditions. Hunting parties will be permitted to stay in their block for longer or over the permitted period for helicopter landings if the weather conditions delay helicopter pick-ups.

German and common wasp numbers are expected to be high within the beech forest. Carry adequate medication if you are at risk. You need to manage your own wellbeing within your limits.

Other trampers, fishers and hunters may have walked into the hunting area. You do not have exclusive access to your hunting area from such users – this hunting permission provides individuals with the opportunity to fly further into the park and access areas with low hunting pressure currently. Usual firearm safety codes need to be followed at all times.

Please notify [nelsonlakeshunting@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nelsonlakeshunting@doc.govt.nz) directly of any incidents or ‘near misses’ during your hunting period, so we can make any necessary changes to prevent incidents.

## The Process

1. Read through the conditions of entry.
2. Fill in the attached form with required information on each of your hunting party members.
3. Indicate your top 3 choices in this table for blocks and time period (circle first choice, write in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choice):

Flight in date	Block number
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup> October	2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14
Sat 28 <sup>th</sup> October	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup> November	2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14
Sat 11 <sup>th</sup> November	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13
<b>Second choice:</b>	
<b>Third choice:</b>	

4. Send to [nelsonlakeshunting@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nelsonlakeshunting@doc.govt.nz) on or after 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
5. Take the unique code and allocated block you receive from Melissa Griffin at Nelson Lakes Hunting to book with one of the approved helicopter operators (a list will be provided)

6. The party lead will be emailed a form with the necessary data to be collected on the hunting trip.

Please **fill in the table** to acknowledge that the hunting party has read and understood the Conditions of Entry and understands the Safety Information provided, for helicopter access to Nelson Lakes National Park. Provide your Open Hunting Permit Number ([huntingpermits.doc.govt.nz](http://huntingpermits.doc.govt.nz)) and Firearms Licence number:

<b>Name (*identify party lead)</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Firearms Licence No.</b>	<b>Open Hunting Permit No.</b>

Please indicate if the team lead gives permission for their email address to be shared with other groups for the purpose of organising backloading flights or acquiring information about blocks.

\_\_\_\_\_ (team leader) gives permission for their email address to be shared with other hunting parties in this program.