



Hunting should be reconsidered under Level 3

The Game Animal Council is recommending to government that further consideration is given to allow deerstalking and other large game animal hunting to take place under COVID-19 Alert Level 3.

The Game Animal Council has requested that consideration be given to allow easy one-day hunts under the following conditions:

- Hunters must stay within their region.
- Experienced hunters may undertake day hunts close to home and in areas they are familiar with. This is not the time to be learning how to hunt or embarking on overnight hunts.
- People may only hunt with others in their bubble.
- Firearms safety must be paramount.
- Hunters must create a safety plan including location, estimated return time and keep a log of who they come into contact with.

“We believe these conditions meet the requirements set out for other forms of recreation currently allowed under Level 3 and allows for compliance with COVID-19 safe practice,” says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale.

“As we know hunting has many social and community benefits especially when it comes to mental health and wellbeing as well as being an important food source for many people.”

“There are a number of questions we are also asking regarding the inequities when it comes to the recreation activities allowed and those that are not allowed under current Level 3 rules,” says Gale. “Another issue that is not clear in current guidance is whether people can hunt on their own private land or farm.”

“No matter what rules are ultimately decided upon it is important that hunters comply with them and maintain the social distancing that is vital to reduce the cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand.”

The Game Animal Council has consulted closely with the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association (NZDA) on hunting under COVID-19 and we appreciate their constructive support and advocacy on this issue.

Please keep a watch on the Government's official advice at <https://covid19.govt.nz>.

The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation responsible for the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, commerce and conservation.

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