

## FAQ - Wye Island R3 Hunts

1. What is R3?
  - a. R3 stands for Recruitment, Retainment, and Reactivation, of hunters in this case. R3 is a national movement to Recruit, Retain, and Reactivate hunters, anglers, and shooting sports participants. Maryland DNR—along with many state, regional, and national partners—are working to increase participation in outdoor activities in Maryland.
2. Why are R3 Hunts important?
  - a. Wildlife-related recreation in Maryland generates millions in retail sales annually and supports about thousands of jobs. In addition, hunters, anglers, trappers, and shooting sports participants are essential to state fish and wildlife agencies for many reasons, including:
    - i. Funding for staff, equipment, and programs
    - ii. Fish and wildlife conservation and management
    - iii. Engaging constituents and creating the next generation of conservationists
  - b. R3 hunts provide a controlled, welcoming environment for hunters across all three stages of R3 so the hunting community may grow and stay strong. Historically, hunting skills were passed down through generations—but many of today's aspiring hunters don't have that kind of family support. By providing a welcoming, low-pressure environment, R3 hunting opportunities act as crucial stepping stones needed to help new hunters confidently transition from curious beginners to lifelong hunters.
  - c. These hunts help both with creating advocates for outdoor recreation, and contributing funds towards conservation and land management efforts. In short, a large hunting community means more funds for land management, more funds for land management mean better hunting opportunities, better hunting opportunities mean the hunting community remains strong, and so forth.
3. Why is this hunt now an R3 event?
  - a. Wye Island NRMA has traditionally offered a lottery hunt that was open to the public. We have elected to make the 3 day early muzzleloader season and the first part of firearms season an R3 event to give the learning and lapsed hunters the best chance for a positive public land hunting experience. We encourage returning and seasoned hunters to participate in the archery and general population firearms hunt at Wye Island NRMA.
4. What R3 Hunts are being offered?

- a. There are three separate opportunities to participate in an R3 hunt at Wye Island this deer season. There will be an early muzzleloader R3 hunt October 22-24 and a firearms R3 hunt November 28- December 5. There will also be an R3 opportunity focused on youth participants on November 14, 2026. Selected youth hunters must be accompanied by an unarmed licensed hunter 21 years or older for the entire duration of their hunt. Each hunt has a separate application. Hunters may apply for any of the hunt opportunities they are eligible for.
5. Who is eligible to participate in R3 Hunts?
  - a. Everyone is welcome to apply! With R3 hunts, we aim to reach people across all stages of the [Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model](#). The Wye Island NRMA R3 hunting opportunities are designed with advanced beginners and lapsed hunters in mind. Meaning we want newer hunters, hunters with a couple seasons under their belts, and lapsed hunters to take advantage of these hunting opportunities. First time or beginner hunters can elect to bring an unarmed mentor along with them to assist. Mentors do not need a permit.
6. How do I apply to participate?
  - a. \*\*\*see [DNR website](#) for links to applications\*\*\*
  - b. Applications will open for all three hunts on September 21st. The application will be posted on the Hunting and Shooting Sports webpage as well as the Wye Island hunting Webpage. To be reminded when the applications go live, make sure you follow the Wildlife and Heritage Service on [Facebook](#) and sign up for the [Hunting and Shooting Sports newsletter](#). The application for the early muzzleloader R3 hunt will close October 4th, the application for the youth R3 hunt will close October 15th, and the application for the firearms R3 hunt will close on October 28th.
7. I'm a new hunter, will DNR provide a mentor for me?
  - a. For this hunt, mentors will not be provided by DNR. However, if you would like to find a mentor or become a mentor to a new hunter, we strongly encourage you to create an account on [Learnhunting.org](#). New hunters may bring an unarmed mentor, friend, or family member to assist during their hunt(s).
8. I'm a new hunter, do I need all of my own equipment?
  - a. For this hunt, DNR will not be providing any equipment to selected participants. However, if you have a mentor that is willing to let you borrow equipment you are more than welcome to do that.

9. Is the normal lottery system gone now?
- a. Deer Hunting during archery season remains first come first served as it has been in the past. The general population lottery still exists for the second week of firearms season and for goose hunting. The only general population hunting opportunity that was removed is the 3 day early muzzleloader period, and archery hunting on youth day. The remainder of the hunting opportunities remain the same as in previous years.
10. If I am selected, am I able to bring a guest?
- a. Yes, unarmed guests are welcome to accompany the selected hunter.
11. I only have an apprentice license, am I allowed to apply for this R3 hunt?
- a. Yes! You are welcome and encouraged to participate! Apprentice license holders who have not completed a Hunter Safety Course will need to be accompanied by a licensed, unarmed hunter 21 years or older.
12. Is there still first-come first-served hunting at Wye Island?
- a. Yes, except for October 22-24, November 14, and November 28-December 5, Wye Island hunting regulations will remain the same as prior years. Deer hunting during archery season will remain first-come first-served. There is a lottery firearms hunt for the general population Dec 7th - Dec 12th.
13. When are the R3 hunts at Wye Island?
- a. There will be several dates for the R3 lottery hunts at Wye Island in 2026, including **October 22-24, November 14, and November 28 - December 5**. During these dates, hunting is only permitted to selected applicants of the R3 lottery.