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# **YOUTH HUNTER EDUCATION CHALLENGE**

**OFFICIAL  
RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**REGIONAL EVENTS**



# **YHEC**

**Caution:** Procedures and techniques outlined in this publication may require special abilities, technical knowledge, or safety considerations. The National Rifle Association of America (its agents, officers, and employees) accepts no responsibility for the results obtained by persons using these procedures and techniques and disclaims all liability for any consequential injuries or damages.

Mention of products or technical data does not necessarily mean they have been tested by the authors or NRA staff, and does not constitute endorsement or verification by the NRA.

Local restrictions may apply to some techniques, procedures, and products in your area. Check local laws and game regulations before proceeding.

These Official Rules and Regulations are located on <https://yhec.nra.org/>

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

ALL REGIONAL YHEC PARTICIPANTS/COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE OF ALL EVENT RULES, REGULATIONS AND CONTENTS OF THIS PROGRAM MANUAL.

Official Rules and Regulations Manual  
Regional Events

NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge

(A program of the National Rifle Association of America)

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# Introduction to YHEC

## About YHEC

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Sponsored by the National Rifle Association of America (NRA), the Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge (YHEC) events are open to any youth that has participated in their local/ state level NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge event for the current year. *(If a Local or State YHEC is **NOT** conducted in a participant's state, he/she may participate in the Regional YHEC without prior event participation requirements.)* All participants of the NRA Regional YHEC must have successfully completed a hunter safety course in North America.

Local, State or Regional YHEC events or venues are National Rifle Association of America (NRA) programs, sponsored by various organizations.

The YHEC program is divided into eight (8) events or activities:

### ***Shooting Events-***

1. Hunting Archery Challenge
2. Hunting Muzzleloader Challenge
3. Hunting Shotgun Challenge
4. Light Hunting Rifle Challenge

### ***Responsibility Events-***

5. Hunter Responsibility Exam
6. Hunter Safety Trail Challenge
7. Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge (Optional for host)
8. Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge

All Local and State YHEC programs are required to include at least one (1) shooting event and one (1) responsibility event (in accordance with the event rules established within this manual) to meet eligibility requirements at the Regional.

# Safety

## YHEC Safety Rules

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### Safety is Shooting's Most Important Rule

These rules provide for the efficient and orderly operation of the NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge (YHEC). Many local range regulations exist for one reason alone -- **SAFETY**. Others serve a dual purpose -- smooth range operation and safety.

It's your responsibility as a participant or as a YHEC official to become familiar with the rules and to know the meaning behind those that are safety-oriented.

### Event Safety Rules

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- A. Actions of uncased firearms must always be open except when on the firing line, ready to fire.
- B. Guns are to be unloaded except when on the firing line, ready to fire.
- C. Arrows will not be nocked until on the firing line.
- D. All firearms must have a safety device with the exception of traditional muzzleloaders. The safety will remain on at all times except when ready to fire.
- E. All firearms will be pointed and bows drawn in a safe direction at all times.
- F. Know and obey all range commands. Arrive at each activity at least 15 minutes prior to relay time to receive activity orientation.
- G. Only one shell or cartridge may be placed in a firearm at a time, unless otherwise specified in the rules for the activity or by the Event Director.
- H. Participants, coaches and volunteers must wear adequate eye and ear protection while on the firing line.
- I. Firearms and bows not in use should be placed in a gun or bow rack at the activity or stored in a secure place. The storing of firearms, ammunition and bows in vehicles is strongly discouraged. Those participants opting to utilize vehicles as a means of storage are solely responsible for their safekeeping. In the event that NRA provides on-site housing, firearms, bows and ammunition will not be permitted in the housing areas.
- J. All arrows drawn from a bow must be drawn parallel to the ground.

## Gun Safety Rules

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The fundamental NRA rules for safe gun handling are:

- **ALWAYS** keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
- **ALWAYS** keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
- **ALWAYS** keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

When using or storing a gun, always follow these NRA rules:

- Know your target and what is beyond.
- Know how to use the gun safely.
- Be sure the gun is safe to operate.
- Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
- Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.
- Never use alcohol or over-the-counter, prescription, or other drugs before or while shooting.
- Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.
- Be aware that certain types of guns and many shooting activities require additional safety precautions.

Protection of your eye sight and hearing are **YOUR** responsibility. Wear adequate eye and ear protection while on the firing line-as shooter, official or spectator.

To learn more about gun safety, enroll in a NRA safety training or basic marksmanship course, NRA hunter clinic, state hunter education class or NRA on line Hunter Education course.

## Archery Safety Rules

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The fundamental rules for safe archery/bow handling are:

- Do not nock an arrow on the bowstring until ready to use.
- Always keep the bow with a nocked arrow pointed in a safe direction.
- Never draw a bow with nocked arrow until ready to shoot.
- Always keep field points or broadheads\* covered until ready to use.
- All arrows drawn from a bow must be drawn parallel to the ground.

\* **Broadheads prohibited** in the YHEC program.

When using or storing a bow, always follow these rules:

- Be sure the bow is safe to operate.
- Know how to safely use the bow and its equipment.
- Use only the correct arrows and equipment for your bow.
- Never use alcohol or over-the-counter, prescription, or other drugs before or while shooting.
- Store bows and other archery equipment so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.
- Never dry-fire a bow.

Be aware that certain types of archery equipment and many shooting activities require additional safety precautions.

# Participation Guidelines

## Eligibility for Participation in the NRA Regional YHEC

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Participation in the NRA Regional YHEC is open to:

- A. Any person, 18 years old or younger, who is interested in attending one or more of the NRA Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge. Youth participants may register as individuals or with a five (5)-member team at the Regional level. States that conduct annual events have the option to send both teams and individuals to the Regional YHEC program.
- B. Any registered Regional YHEC Adult Coach. Coaches participate as individuals only. **(Refer to Regional YHEC Divisions detailed below.)**
- C. All participants **must have successfully completed a hunter education course in North America or completed the NRA on line Hunter Education Course**. Participants are not required to have taken the same hunter education course, nor have taken the class from the sponsoring instructor.
- D. Persons participating in NRA Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge must have:
  - 1) Participated in a current year's Local or State level NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge and meet age eligibility. Local and State level YHEC participants are subject to state level rules/requirements for participation first and foremost.

If an individual participates in a local or state event outside of their resident state, they will be *required* to register at the Regional event as a participant from the state in which they **participated**. (If a local or state level YHEC is **NOT** held in a participant's state, he/she may participate in the Regional YHEC without prior event participation requirements);
  - 2) At least one (1) sponsoring adult from the Local or State the individuals/teams represent.
    - a. *Individuals* may be grouped into squads of no more than seven (7), (with one sponsoring adult per every seven individuals), at the local or state discretion. The sponsoring adult will chaperon and instruct for the duration of the Regional YHEC. **If individuals are grouped into a squad of seven (7), they are still considered individuals and not eligible to participate for team awards.**
    - b. *Teams* must have five (5) members with one (1) registered adult coach per every five (5)-member team. (NOTE: Registered coaches cannot be responsible for more than 7 participants). Members of teams will be eligible for individual achievement-



level awards. **Special Notification:** Grouping of high-scoring individuals into teams after regional or state programs with the sole purpose of creating All-Star Teams is strongly discouraged.

- C. *Alternates:* Should a team member be unable to participate in the Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge after registration has been received and processed by the event staff, a replacement may be made by an individual designated by the team in **advance** of event on-site registration.
- D. Changes to 5 person team composition can be made up until the Official Check in date for the Regional Match. For example if check in date is Tuesday July 23 FROM 8AM to 6PM, then no changes after 6pm (unless emergency)
- E. Participants are required to provide copies of the following items **prior** to the NRA Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge:
  - 1) Birth Certificate
  - 2) Hunter Education Card or an NRA on line Hunter Education Course Certificate.
  - 3) Photo (not to exceed 2"x3" Color or Black & White, **no photocopies**)
- F. Registered participants are required to participate in **all** events of the NRA Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge (shooting events - archery, muzzleloader, rifle and shotgun, and responsibility events - hunter responsibility exam, hunter safety trail, orienteering and wildlife identification).

### **Registration Options**

- A. At the Local and State Event Director's discretion, states may exercise either of the following registration options.

#### Option 1

Register a participant as an individual only. Scores from registered individuals will be compiled resulting in "individual aggregate scores."

#### Option 2

Register a participant as a team member. (Team affiliation to be established at the local and state level). Affiliation will be detailed where appropriate on required YHEC registration forms (ex. - Participant Name: John Preston - Junior Division - Affiliated Team: Seneca Valley Ramrods). **To employ this option, a state must send complete five member teams per division to the Regional YHEC.** Scores from registered team members will be compiled resulting in "team aggregate scores."

Option 3

Register as a Coach. Coaches will participate as individuals only. Scores will be compiled resulting in individual coach aggregate scores. **Registered Coaches must pay required event registration fees with or without benefit of participation.**

**SPECIAL NOTIFICATION: Individuals not officially registered as participants/coaches at the Regional, are strictly prohibited from going through the Regional's eight scored/scheduled venues. Violation of this notification will result in immediate expulsion of individual(s) and/or affiliated individual(s) from the Regional program.**

## Regional YHEC Divisions

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The NRA Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge will use the following Divisions.

A. **Junior Division** (14 years of age and under)

Individuals turning 15 years of age on or before August 15 will be considered in the Senior Division classification.

**SPECIAL NOTIFICATION:** Junior Individuals achieving 15 years of age (Senior Division classification) after participating in their local/state level YHEC may exercise the option to participate in the Junior Division at the Regional level YHEC if their event is conducted in the same calendar year. **\*Division classification must be made at the time of registration submission. See Below.**

B. **Senior Division** (15 through 18 years of age)

**SPECIAL NOTIFICATION:** Senior individuals achieving 19 years of age after participating in their local/state level YHEC may participate in the Senior Division at the Regional level YHEC if their event is conducted in the same calendar year.

C. **Coach Division** (Registered Regional Event Coaches only) Participating coaches must travel through scheduled events with their registered participant(s)/teams.

Local, State sponsors are encouraged to use the youth division (junior/senior) guidelines as established above.

Local, State YHEC programs may use the team format as well as the individual format described above.

**\*NOTE: Once Regional YHEC registration forms have been submitted for processing by event staff, individuals may not alter their participation division.**

# Regulations and Code of Conduct

## Program Regulations

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- A. Safety will be the first and foremost consideration during all YHEC activities.
- B. Participants and spectators assume all risk of personal injury or property damage as noted on the required release form accompanying registration materials.
- C. Participants violating any safety rule as established within these program rules and regulations will be given one warning and face disqualification from further participation should a second infraction occur. If the safety violation is severe, the participant may not be given a warning.
- D. Participants provide their own firearms, bows and arrows, compasses, and eye and ear protection.
- E. Participants can provide their own ammunition (factory manufactured and meets event requirements and or specifications) for the rifle, shotgun and muzzleloader events.
- F. Individuals may not participate for one another in any activity.
- G. Participants are expected to exhibit behavior above reproach at all times. \*

### **NOTICE**

***\*All participants and parents/guardians must sign a release regarding program regulations and code of conduct before the event.***

## NRA Code of Conduct

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(Program regulations governing conduct for all attendees at the NRA Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge: staff, participants, coaches, volunteers, spectators, etc.).

The following regulations and conduct codes are to be adhered to at all times during the NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge.

### **It is understood that each participant will:**

1. Always follow NRA's rules of firearms safety.
2. Participate fully in all activities.
3. Know and follow all local, state, and federal laws.
4. Know and follow all rules pertaining to the event(s) in which you are participating.
5. Respect others and their property at all times.
6. Exhibit high moral and ethical standards.
7. Notify administration when situations occur that require attention.
8. Always dress in appropriate attire. Recognizing publicity attracted by the NRA and its programs, it is important to promote a positive image for the hunting and shooting sports. Clothing worn during the YHEC should be tasteful and appropriate for this type of event. Articles of clothing featuring controversial, questionable or offensive illustrations, slogans or language are prohibited. NRA officers, employees, and Event Directors are empowered to take action necessary to maintain acceptable clothing standards.

### **It is further understood that staff, participants, coaches, volunteers and/or family members are **PROHIBITED** from:**

1. Possessing and consuming alcoholic beverages, and/or illegal drugs/narcotic substances or \*tobacco products during the YHEC program.
2. Going to, observing, and/or evaluating an event before actual participation.
3. Videotaping, taking still photographs, or written, recorded notes with the intent of showing participants (and/or coaches, non-participants, spectators), event layouts. See Special Notification in Registration Section of these rules.
4. Communicating, using physical gestures and/or electronic equipment (i.e. walkie talkies, pagers, two-ways, cell phones and cell/camera phones or other messaging/communications equipment) with the intent of assisting individuals participating in events.
5. Coaching (or attempted coaching) from spectator area(s).

**\*Use of tobacco products may be allowed in spectator areas only, with the exception of the Muzzleloading event where smoking is prohibited throughout the venue.**

**Failure to comply with the NRA Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the event and forfeiture of YHEC registration fees.**

***NOTICE: \*All participants and parents/guardians must sign a release regarding program regulations and code of conduct before the event.***

# Event Rules & Regulations

## Rules and Regulations for Shooting Events

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### A. Hunting Archery Challenge

- 1) Hunting Archery Challenge: Participants will move through a field archery course in a natural setting. The course is designed to simulate shooting situations encountered while bowhunting.
- 2) The Hunting Archery Challenge will be conducted with participants taking shots at targets varying in distance from 5 to 40 yards. Targets will be either NRA Life-size Game Targets or 3-D game targets with scoring areas directly over the vital areas of the animal. NOTE: A time limit of up to 45 seconds can be applied at each station. Time limits on some target may vary depending on shooting station requirements. Participants will be advised of time limit change upon arrival at shooting station.
- 3) Scoring - Each participant will shoot a total of 30 shots. All shots breaking or touching the vital area or body will be counted as "hits." (Shots touching leg or antler areas will not count as "hits.") Challenges must be made on the range before the next arrow is pulled. All arrows must have either glue on or screw in target or field points. The Hunting Archery Challenge has the maximum possibility of 300 points.

### Archery and Equipment

#### Required

- a. Shooters may use only one bow for this activity (exception - bow malfunction).
- b. All participants will be required to carry arrows in a quiver (not in pockets or by hand).
- c. Shooters must have at least six arrows with field points in quiver before shooting the course.

#### Permitted

- a. Compounds, recurves or long bows will be permitted.
- b. Bows may be equipped with hunting-type sights.
- c. Self-adjusting sights (i.e. Sightmaster).
- d. Binoculars

#### Prohibited

- a. Extended sight bars that measure farther than six inches from the back of riser of bow to front of sight
- b. Manually adjustable sights may have no more than six sight pins or be adjusted to more than six sight positions

- c. More than one stabilizer
- d. Stabilizers over twelve inches
- e. Range finders
- f. Crossbows
- g. Broadhead hunting tips
- h. Arrow shafts that do not have target or field points
- i. Sights that have lens with or without magnification
- j. Shocker Points
- k. Bludgeon Points
- l. Drawing of a bow in any direction other than parallel to the ground.

**B. Hunting Muzzleloader Challenge - *NOTE: Smoking prohibited on this venue. No open cans of powder on the firing line or loading bench.***

- 1) Hunting Muzzleloader Challenge: Participants will shoot the muzzleloader course in a natural setting. The course is designed to simulate shooting situations encountered while hunting.
- 2) The Hunting Muzzleloader Challenge will be conducted with participants shooting at NRA-approved action or NRA Life-Size Paper targets varying in distance, with scoring areas determined by type of target(s) used. Participants will shoot from three positions. A participant will be allowed fifteen minutes per position. This time period does not include breaks between shooting position (short, medium and long range.) Time will be at the discretion of the Event Director.
  - a) Position one (1) - (short range) may have a distance of 35 yards or less. Participant will shoot at targets from pre-determined positions either with or without props, event director will determine position and if props will be used.
  - b) Position two (2) - (medium range) may have a shooting distance of 50 yards or less. Participant will shoot at targets from pre-determined positions either with or without props, Event Director will determine position and if props will be used.
  - c) Position three (3) - (long range) may have a shooting distance of 75 yards or less. Participant will shoot at targets from pre-determined positions either with or without props, event director will determine position and if props will be used.
- 3) Scoring - Participants will shoot a total of at least 15 shots and no more than 20 shots with a total possible score of 300 points for the Muzzle Loader event. Number of shots and stations will be determined by the Event Director.

4) **Muzzleloaders and Equipment**

**Required**

- a. Participants may use only one muzzleloader rifle throughout this activity (***exception*** - muzzleloader malfunction).
- b. If participants are sharing the same firearm, they ***must*** shoot on separate relays.

**Permitted**

- a. Any flintlock, disk, percussion, musket cap or 209-primer type muzzleloading rifles .54 caliber or smaller will be permitted. Accessories for .45 and .50 caliber

- muzzleloaders will be available for use during the event. Participants choosing to use another caliber (i.e. .54) are required to furnish their own accessories.
- b. Muzzleloaders may have a set trigger, not to be set until ready to fire.
  - c. Muzzleloaders may be equipped with sporter type thumbhole stocks (non-adjustable). Muzzleloaders may also be equipped with a sling not to exceed 1.5 inches (3.81 centimeters) in width. Sights will be open, peep, hooded or tunnel with standard front post and bead.
  - d. Muzzleloaders may be loaded with single projectile patched balls or pure lead bullets.
  - e. Participants are allowed to use their own accessories, however all accessories must be inspected by event officials prior to participation.
  - f. Participants are allowed to use black powder substitutes (i.e. Triple 7, Clearshot and Pyrodex)

### **Prohibited**

- a. Shooting mats
  - b. Binoculars, monoculars, spotting scopes or telescopic sights (optical devices)
  - c. Range finders
  - d. Open cans and/or dispensers of powder on the line
  - e. No more than 60 grains ignition components by volume
  - f. Pure lead bullets/balls weighing more than 385 grains
  - g. Adjustable competition sling swivels
  - h. Any smokeless or nitro cellulose-based powder
  - i. Muzzleloaders larger than .54 caliber
  - j. More than one shooting position per shooting sequence
  - k. Wooden ramrods
  - l. Metal-jacketed bullet sabots
  - m. Any sight that has crosshairs. ADD: Including peep sights with cross hairs.
  - n. No sights with glass or magnification.
- 4) Shooting Procedures - Participants only will be allowed on the station or firing line while shooting each station. The score judge or range officer will oversee firing line, loading bench and the participant as required. The participant will shoot his/her quota of rounds and return the gun to the bench. This sequence is repeated for each participant until all have completed the activity. No Fouling shot allowed before loading, only a cap can be fired. Participants will be allowed to clean firearms between shots, time allotted for cleaning will be determined by the Event Director, no disassembly of muzzleloaders during cleaning.

### **C. Hunting Shotgun Challenge**

- 1) Hunting Shotgun Challenge: Participants will move through a multiple-station Hunter's Clays course. This course is not patterned after conventional skeet and trap shooting, but is designed to simulate hunting conditions and situations. The layout will vary depending on the available topography. Shooting stations could make use of available cover to best depict running animals, bird flight and shooting obstacles.
- 2) The Hunting Shotgun Challenge will be conducted with participants taking shots at clay targets. Sizes of the clay targets may vary depending on different situations. Single and Double targets will be thrown. Double targets may be presented as report,

following or true pair.

- 3) Scoring - Each participant will shoot a total of 30 shots, each worth 10 points for a hit (broken target) and zero points for a miss (lost target). The Hunting Shotgun Challenge has a maximum possibility of 300 points.

Designated NRA YHEC officials will do Regional YHEC event scoring. Only legal targets will be scored and the score judge will be sole judge of whether or not a target is broken. Officials may ask assistance from the trap puller or the range official if they feel their assistance is required. The scorers will call "lost" for any target they determine is missed. The participant must make any challenge to the call immediately. The score judge will then make the final decision with assistance from the trap operator and/or the range official.

#### Scoring Pairs

Should the participant break both targets with either the first or second shot, they will both be scored as "dead" targets.

In the event of a "no bird" call on the second target of a report pair, the first bird is established as "dead" or "lost" and the shooter will repeat the pair to establish the result of the second target. When repeating the pair, the shooter must make a legitimate attempt at breaking the first target.

In the event of a "no bird" call on true pair or following pair, nothing is established. The shooter will repeat the pair.

In the event of a "shooter malfunction" on the first target of a report pair, the first target is established as "lost." The shooter will repeat the pair to establish the result of the second target. When repeating the pair, the shooter must make a legitimate attempt at breaking the first target.

Rule and/or procedure violations may be referred to event staff and officials for settlement, but legality of targets is the responsibility of the score judge. Only targets with a visible piece broken off will be scored "dead". Dusters, targets deflected or redirected in flight (but with no visible breakage) will be scored "lost". Based on the scorer's judgment, should a target hit an obstruction (i.e. tree or tree limb) before the participant has had ample time to fire, a new target will be thrown. However, should the participant have ample time to fire (in the scorer's judgment), and fails to do so before the target hits an object near the end of its path and breaks, the target will be scored "lost".

#### Required

- a. Participants may only use one shotgun throughout the activity, (**exception** - gun malfunction).

#### Permitted

- a. Any shotgun 12 gauge or smaller will be permitted.
- b. Double targets will be thrown in some instances; therefore the shotgun should be capable of holding two shells. NRA Regional YHEC officials will furnish 12- and



20- gauge ammunition in low brass target loads (the specific manufacturer and type of loads will be at the discretion of the NRA). Those choosing a gauge other than that detailed above are required to furnish their own shells.

- c. Participants can use their own ammunition, if desired. Only factory-loaded target shells with shot size between 7 ½ and 9 (inclusive) will be permitted. It will be the responsibility of the participant/coach to provide this ammunition to the event officials prior to the activity.

### **Prohibited**

- a. Release triggers
- b. Shot size larger than 7 1/2
- c. Shot size smaller than 9
- d. Ventilated rib greater than 1/2 inch in height or width
- e. Shotguns 10 gauge or larger
- f. Shotguns without safety or safety has been disabled
- g. Reloaded ammunition.

#### 4) Shotgun Shooting Rules

- a. Safety and courtesy are first in gun handling; therefore, all guns will be carried unloaded and with actions open.
- b. Shotguns, shotguns with choke tubes as well as shotgun barrels are not to be changed during the shotgun activity. Participants may use only one shotgun throughout the activity (exception - shotgun malfunction).
- c. Cheek stocks or butt plates may be adjusted prior to event orientation. No further adjustments will be allowed once competition has begun.

#### 5) Shooting Procedures

Each participant may or may not be allowed to see one legal target from each trap prior to shooting the activity at the station. Only participants will be allowed on the station or firing line while shooting each station. The score judge or range officer will hand shells to the participant as required. The participant will shoot his/her quota of targets and return the gun to the rack. This sequence is repeated for each participant until all have completed the activity.

The sequence for calling for a target to be thrown is:

- a. The participant will say "Trapper ready."
- b. The trapper will acknowledge.
- c. Upon the trapper's acknowledgement, the participant will say, "Pull."
- d. The trapper will have up to 3 seconds to release the target.

The "ready position" in calling for the target requires the gun to be off the shoulder with the butt plate below the armpit, safety on. The firearm may not be shouldered and safety off until after the target is visible. In other words, in case of a delay pull, the participant cannot call for the target and immediately shoulder the gun. The participant must wait for the target to appear.

- a. Legal Target - whole clay target that is thrown from the trap in a prescribed pattern within the three-second time limit after the participant calls for the target.
- b. Illegal Target - Target broken by the trap or another obstruction. Illegal targets will be re-thrown for the participant, regardless of whether or not the participant fires

at the target.

6) Malfunctions -

- a. The following occurrences will be considered malfunctions and new target(s) will be thrown:
  - i. Ammunition malfunction
  - ii. Trap or trap operator failure
- b. The following malfunctions **will not be** allowed and targets will be scored "lost":
  - i. Participant error
  - ii. Failure to load gun
  - iii. Failure of gun to fire (other than defective ammunition)
  - iv. Failure of gun to reload
  - v. Failure to select safety to off
- c. Should a gun break through no fault of the participant, another gun may be borrowed and the activity continued. However, if the breakage occurs during the firing at a target, and the target is missed, it will be scored as "lost".

In the case of an ammunition malfunction, the shooter must remain in place, the gun pointing safely down range, and must not open the gun or tamper with the trigger, safety or barrel selector until instructed to do so by the NRA staff or volunteer present.

The NRA staff or volunteer will determine if the firing pin came in contact with the primer. If the firing pin did, an ammunition malfunction will be called and the targets will be re-thrown. A second ammunition malfunction by the same participant will require the Event Director to determine if it is a gun malfunction or true ammunition malfunction.

**D. Light Hunting Rifle Challenge**

- 1) Light Hunting Rifle Challenge: Participants will move through a walk-through rifle course in a natural setting. The course is designed to simulate shooting situations encountered while hunting.
- 2) The Light Hunting Rifle Challenge will be conducted with participants shooting at NRA Life-Size Paper or NRA-approved action targets varying in distance, with scoring areas determined based upon type of target (s) used. Participants will shoot from three positions.
  - a. Position one (1) – (short range) may have a distance of 30 yards or less. Participant will shoot at targets from pre-determined positions either with or without props, Event Director will be determine position and if props will be used.
  - b. Position two (2) - (medium range) may have a distance of 60 yards or less. Event Director will determine position and if props will be used.
  - c. Position three (3) - (long range) may have a distance of 75 yards or less. Participant will shoot at targets from pre-determined positions either with or without props, event director will determine position and if props will be used.

- 3) Scoring - Each participant will shoot a total of 30 shots. All shots breaking or touching the vital area will be scored as a "hit" on the NRA Life size game paper target or any shot knocking down the NRA approved action target will be scored a "hit." A participant will be allowed 2 ½ minutes per shooting station with the complete course to be fired in 15 minutes. At each shooting station the range officer will indicate when the time begins. This time period does not include breaks between shooting stations (short, medium and long range.) The Hunting Rifle Challenge has a maximum possibility of 300 points.

#### 4) Rifles and Equipment

##### Required

- a. Participants may only use one rifle throughout the activity, (**exception** - gun or scope malfunction).
- b. Participants supplying their own ammunition must have it in the original container or box.

##### Permitted

- a. Only standard type .22 caliber rifles designed primarily for hunting will be permitted.
- b. All action types, excluding fully automatic, will be permitted. A rifle and scope may not exceed eight pounds-eight ounces in weight without a sling and must have a minimum trigger pull of two pounds (907 grams). Trigger weight will be tested after trigger is set on firearm.
- c. Rifles may be equipped with a hunting sling not to exceed 1.5" (3.81 centimeters) in width. Slings must be attached at both ends of the firearm (forearm and butt stock) during the course of fire.
- d. Slings and scopes may be adjusted after the instructions and the order to commence firing at each station. Adjustments must be completed prior to the first shot. After the first shot at each station NO adjustments may be made. The maximum time for each station includes any scope and/or sling adjustments.
- e. Adjustments to the scope include power and/or focus adjustments.
- f. Rifles that are equipped with adjustable stocks (cheek or butt) must be set before the order to commence is given on the first target on the course and cannot be adjusted afterwards.
- g. Rifles may also be equipped with sporter-type thumbhole stocks (non-adjustable).
- h. Sights will be open, peep with standard front post and bead, or hunting scopes, fixed or variable power optics nine power or less.
- i. All ammunition used in this activity will be .22 caliber long rifle standard velocity cartridges. Participants are allowed to furnish their own ammunition; however, ammunition must be presented to range officials for inspection prior to participation.
- j. Distribution of ammunition provided by the Regional event will be at its discretion
- k. Shooting sticks permitted on certain shooting stations at the discretion of the event director. Shooting sticks will be provided.

## Prohibited

- a. Clothing with added padding, stiffness or shirt cup designed to assist shooter in remaining steady
- b. Shooting mats
- c. Kneeling rolls
- d. Competitive thumbhole stocks
- e. Palm rests or forearm of stocks exceeding 2 1/2 inches wide or 2 1/2 inches deep as measured from the center line of the bore
- f. Scopes, fixed or variable power optics with capabilities **greater** than nine power -  
***NOTE:** Taping of scopes will not be allowed.*
- g. Range finders
- h. Spotting scopes
- i. More than one shooting position per shooting sequence
- j. Shooting sticks\*, bipods or other similar equipment
- k. Scopes with internal range finders
- l. Rifle with a weight in excess of 8lbs 8ozs without a sling
- m. Reloaded Ammunition
- n. Fouling shot

### 5) Crossfire(s) -

- a. If a participant's target has been shot more than the rounds fired by that participant, the target has been "cross fired."
  - i. Event Director must determine that the crossfire was unintentionally caused (with no malicious intent) by participants on the firing line. If this is established, the cross-fired target will receive the total score of rounds inside the scoring area (not to exceed the maximum score for that round of shooting). The participant committing a crossfire act will only be scored for the amount of rounds inside their actual target's scoring areas.
  - ii. Should the Event Director find that cross firing was an intentional act by participants to gain unfair advantage, all parties involved will be immediately disqualified from the event and will subsequently receive "DQ" (amounting to "0") under both individual and team scores.

## Rules and Regulations for Responsibility Events

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### E. Hunter Responsibility Exam

- 1) Hunter Responsibility Exam: Participants will complete a written examination that includes 60 objective questions, which may be multiple choice, true or false or fill-in-the-blank.

**NOTE:** The exam may also be read aloud to accommodate participants with specific learning requirements.

- 2) The Hunter Responsibility Exam consists of broad-based hunting and conservation information. The following publication will serve as a reference text: NRA's *The Hunter's Guide*. (Ordering information may be obtained by contacting the NRA Outdoor Recreational Programs Department, 703-267-1503.)
- 3) Scoring - Participants will be asked to answer all or as many questions possible in the allotted amount of time. Participants must answer all test questions with no assistance from other participants, written materials or coaches. Students will have 60 minutes (one hour) to complete the test. Correct answers are worth five points; incorrect answers are worth zero points. The Hunter Responsibility Exam will consist of 60 questions, with a maximum possibility of 300 points.
- 4) Prohibited
  - a. Hunter education books
  - b. Written, taped or transcribed information and reference materials
  - c. Talking between two or more participants/coaches once exam has started
  - d. Use of cell phones, texting or other forms of communications or communication devices between the participants, coaches or other individuals while taking the exam.

### F. Hunter Safety Trail Challenge

- 1) Hunter Safety Trail Challenge: Participants will walk through a multiple-station, pre-determined trail, designed to simulate actual hunting conditions and situations. Participants will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of hunter safety on this practical field course. NOTE: Participants will receive a YHEC hunting license (valid for Regional YHEC Event only) and regulations at registration. Participants must sign their hunting license before starting the Hunter Safety Trail.
- 2) The Hunter Safety Trail Challenge will be conducted with participants moving from station to station with each situation varying greatly. Participants may be tested and scored on the "dos" and "don'ts" of firearms safety and "shoot/don't shoot situations" encountered in a hunting environment. Stations may include, but are not limited to, hunter game situations, target identification, landowner relationships, and safe gun handling afield. NOTE: Participants may be required to be knowledgeable of game laws and bag limits. Information will be provided at event check-in.
- 3) Participants are permitted to utilize their own shotguns on the event if they are pump

or break actions. A loner firearm will be provided to a participant if one is not available. Firearms will be safety checked by an event staff or volunteer at a designated staging area prior to the participant going out on the course/trail.

- 4) Coaches will be permitted to participate in the Hunter Safety Trail event. If coaches chose to participate they must go through the event with their designated team.
- 5) Participants must be able to physically handle and carry a firearm throughout the Hunter Safety Trail event.
- 6) Scoring - Each participant may travel to 20 stations with each station worth 15 points for correct answers and zero for incorrect answers. Participants may also encounter stations where points are awarded on a sliding scale based on a multiple choice or multi-answer station. Points from fifteen to zero may be awarded based on a participant's answer or choice at a designated station. *A ten (10) point penalty will be assessed for each occurrence if a participant violates a safety rule.* The Hunter Safety Trail Challenge has a maximum possibility of 300 points.

Failure to provide a signed hunting license at the start of the Hunter Safety Trail will result in a 20 point penalty.

**Safety Penalties:** Any participant who receives a safety infraction on the Hunter Safety Trail will receive a 10 point penalty per infraction. Safety infractions may include but are not limited to, improper muzzle control, finger on the trigger, or unsportsmanlike conduct.

- 7) Prohibited
  - a. Hunter education books
  - b. Written, taped or transcribed information and reference materials
  - c. Use of cell phones, texting or other forms of communications or communication devices between the participants, coaches or other individuals while on the course.
  - d. No phones, cameras or video equipment are allowed at this event.
  - e. Conversing with or coaching others about the Hunter Safety Trail event prior to **all** teams or individuals participation in the event. Coaches or participants witnessed conversing or coaching regarding the Hunter Safety Trail event may result in a no-score by the participants or coaches involved for the event.

### **G. Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge**

(OPTIONAL) event determined by the Event Director

- 1) Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge: Participants will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of outdoor skills by completing a written test and accomplishing field compass skills at pre-determined outdoor stations. A participant may request to have the written test read to them.
- 2) The Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge will be conducted with participants taking field bearings with their compass and also using their compasses for mapping. Participants may also be asked to close a triangle, identify map symbols, or define words (i.e. contour lines, scale, or declination).

Note: All compass calibration & pacing checks must be complete at the Practice Area

before entering the Orienteering Event.

Participants may be asked to describe how nature provides individuals with different directions of travel (north, south, east and west, etc.). These situations, as well as others, may be used in the Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge (not to be announced before the program).

Note: Participating coaches must travel through course with their teams or individuals.

Participants will have a two (2) hour time limit to complete both the map and field courses. A penalty of five points will be deducted for every ten minutes of time over the two hour time limit.

- 3) **Scoring** - Participants will be asked to demonstrate compass skills and complete written, map and field questions. The Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge has a possibility of 300 points.
- 4) Only compasses may be used on the Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge course. The information for this event has been taken from NRA's *The Hunter's Guide* (see Section V, E. 2 for ordering information), the U.S. Department of the Interior - U.S. Geological Survey *Topographic Map Symbols* publication - ISBN 0-607- 94962-3 (contact 1-888-275-8747 for ordering information), *The Backcountry Classroom* by Jack Drury and Bruce F. Bonney, *Compass and Map Navigator Book - The Complete Guide to Staying Found* by Michael Hodgson. (These Nexus publications as well as other orienteering resource materials, may be purchased through The Brunton Co., 620 East Monroe Avenue, Riverton, WY 82501 - 800-443-4871), *Be Expert With Map And Compass – The Complete Orienteering Handbook* by Bjorn Kjellstrom. *Wilderness Navigation 3rd.* By Bob Burns and Mike Burns. *Essential Wilderness Navigation* by Craig Caudill and Tracy Trimble
- 5) **Permitted**
  - a. Pacing chart for yardage.
  - b. Magnetic Compass
  - c. Mapping protractors (Grids, corner rulers, roamers and rules.

**Prohibited**

- a. Calculators
- b. Orienteering books
- c. Written, taped or transcribed information and reference materials
- d. Electronic equipment including electronic or battery-operated compasses and GPS devices.
- e. Cell phones, texting or other forms of communication or communication devices between the participants, coaches or other individuals while on the course.
- f. Tripods or other means of support for compass
- g. Crossing established boundary (marked/orange ribboned) lines.

**H. Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge**

- 1) Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge: Participants will walk through a multiple

station field and/or woodland course in a natural setting. The course is designed to simulate actual wildlife-sign encounters while outdoors.

- 2) The Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge will be conducted with participants observing North American game animal tracks, mounted (game or non-game) animals, or other identifying animal parts/ signs that could be used to readily be used to identify the specimen., and reading and identifying wildlife signs. All specimens can be hunted or trapped somewhere in North America. Wildlife will constitute mounted or tanned hides, depending upon availability. Animal tracks may be original or molds made of prints. Other wildlife signs may be real or reproduced. A participant will be allowed 60 seconds per station. Stations may not be revisited.

**Reference Material includes:**

NRA. The Hunter's Guide. (2017). Fairfax, Virginia: NRA

Carney, S.M. (1992). Species, Age and Sex Identification of Ducks Using Wing Plumage. Washington, DC: USFWS. Available at <http://www4.ncsu.edu/~csdepem/documents/WaterfowlWings.pdf>

Elbroch, M. (2006). Animal Skulls: A Guide to North American Specie. Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books

Hines, B. (2006). Ducks at a Distance: A Waterfowl Identification Guide. Available at <http://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/Ducks%20at20a%20Distance-OCR.pdf>

Rezendes, P. (1999). Tracking & the Art of Seeing: How to Read Animal Tracks and Sign. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). New York: HarperCollins

Lowery, James (2013). Tracker's Field Guide: A Comprehensive Manual for Animal Tracking (Falcon Guides: Field Guides)

Reid, Fiona (2006). – Petersen Field Guide to Mammals of North America: Fourth Edition (Petersen Field Guides)

Sibley, David A. (2014). The Sibley Guide to Birds, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Also Eastern and Western North America Editions)

State Fish & Wildlife Agency Websites/Publications (Var.) – Go online to state Fish & Wildlife (Game) Agency sites (e.g. AK, AZ, FL, PA, TX, WA.) to determine most popular North American game species that are allowed to be hunted, photos, references and information.

NOTE: Participating coaches must travel through course **after** their teams or individuals have gone through.

- 3) Scoring - Participants may be asked to identify 30 animals, tracks or wildlife signs, each worth 10 points for correct answers and zero for incorrect answers. The Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge has a maximum possibility of 300 points.



## **Prohibited**

- a. Wildlife identification books
- b. Written, taped or transcribed information and reference materials
- c. Electronic equipment
- d. Use of cell phones, texting or other forms of communications or communication devices between the participants, coaches or other individuals while on the course.

## **Rules and Regulations for Cherokee Run** **Optional Event**

Cherokee Run, a long-time tradition of YHEC is a timed-field course open to participants of all ages. The ultimate goal of the Cherokee Run is to promote friendly and fun competition.

All participants will be required to follow additional rules posted for the Cherokee Run, as well as the Program Regulations, Safety Rules and Codes of Conduct set forth in this manual.

- 1) Participants will be required to use the equipment provided at the venue. Personal equipment **will not** be permitted.
- 2) Stations of the Cherokee Run are specifically designed to be achievable by all participants in both Junior and Senior Divisions.
- 3) Cherokee Run scoring is intended to be equal and fair to all participants.
- 4) All participants will demonstrate good sportsmanship. Non-sportsmanlike conduct can and will result in disqualification and dismissal from the venue.
- 5) If an issue arises, the decision of the Event Director is final.

## **Scoring Criteria for YHEC Events**

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Correctly answering a predetermined number of questions, making a certain number of hits in a prescribed target area, or correctly completing a prescribed activity accumulate event points. The maximum possible points for each event are 300.

Whenever possible, Local, State and Regional sponsors are required to use the scoring criteria as established in this manual.

All Local, State and Regional YHEC programs utilizing rules and regulations contained in this manual will provide eligibility for their participants to take part in the YHEC program (i.e. Local, State and Regional levels).

## **Tie Breaking Criteria for YHEC Events**

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Scoring ties for all individuals/teams per event, and overall will be broken. The following tie breaking criteria will be used in the Regional program:

In the event of a tie, the individual/team with the highest level of achievement in the Hunter Responsibility Exam will be declared the winner(s). If a tie remains, the individual/team with the highest level of achievement on the Hunter Safety Trail Challenge will be declared the winner(s). Should a tie remain, the individual/team with the highest combined level of achievement in the four (4) responsibility events (Hunter Responsibility Exam, Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge, Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge, Hunter Safety Trail Challenge), will be declared the winner(s). The final tiebreaker will be based on a combined score of the four (4) shooting events (Hunting Shotgun Challenge, the Light Hunting Rifle Challenge, Hunting Archery Challenge and the Hunting Muzzleloader Challenge).

Should individuals/teams tie in the Hunter Responsibility Exam, the tie breaking formula will start at the second criteria (Hunter Safety Trail Challenge).

All Local, State and sponsors are required to use the tie breaking criteria as established above.

## **Challenges During YHEC Events**

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Challenges concerning the value of shots as scored must be made immediately by the participant and will be resolved at each event. When shot value scores cannot be determined between the participant and the volunteer scoring judge, the Event Director will make the final determination. Only participants may challenge and all challenges must be made during the challenge period. (The challenge period is immediately before the next participant comes to the station or firing line or as outlined in the specific event regulations.)

*(All Local, State and Regional sponsors are required to resolve challenges as established above.)*

## **Protests During YHEC Events**

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Protests are to be brought to the attention of the Event Director. If the individual receives no satisfaction, a written protest may then be submitted to the YHEC Protest Committee within two hours of the protest, for review, consideration and final decision. The committee will be comprised at the NRA YHEC Director's discretion to determine written protest.

For YHEC Shooting Events Only! If the participants protest is approved, the participant has the option of reshooting the entire event course or taking the score that they have already received. The participant must notify the NRA YHEC Program Director of their decision immediately, upon notification of the protest decision.

*(All Local, State and Regional sponsors are required to handle protests as established above.)*

## **Alibis During YHEC Events**

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Only range, trap, target or ammunition malfunction will constitute an alibi. Alibis will not be allowed for firearm, arrow or bow malfunctions. In the event of a firearm or bow malfunction, participants may borrow a firearm or bow and continue the relay. No practice or sighting-in will be allowed for borrowed firearms once the NRA Regional Youth Hunter Education Challenge activities have begun.

*(All Local, State and Regional sponsors are required to follow alibi criteria as established above.)*

## **YHEC Event Dates**

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NRA Local, State and Regional YHEC programs may be held throughout the year.

## Entries and Cancellations for YHEC Participants

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For Local or State level participants to become eligible to participate in the current year's Regional YHEC program, an official Regional YHEC Registration Form, with accompanying hunter education card must be submitted to Regional YHEC host by the deadline date as established by the Regional YHEC event committee.

***NOTE: Once registration has been received and processed by the Regional YHEC event staff, individuals may not alter their participation division. See Section III. - Participation Guidelines.***

## YHEC Participant Accommodations, Meals and Travel

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Any and all accommodations, meals, and travel-related expenses incurred while participating in the Regional YHEC will be the sole responsibility of participants/coaches.

## Interstate Transportation of Personally Owned Firearms

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Federal law does not restrict an individual (except convicted felons, persons under indictment for felonies, mental defectives or incompetents, illegal users of controlled drugs, illegal aliens, veterans dishonorably discharged, those who have renounced their U.S. citizenship, and fugitives from justice) from transporting firearms across state lines. Thus, there is no federal interstate transportation permit for firearms.

Many states have laws governing the transportation of firearms. In addition, many cities and localities have ordinances restricting transportation of firearms. Travelers must be aware of these laws and comply with the legal requirements in each jurisdiction. Additional details on transporting firearms may be found in the NRA publication *Guide to the Interstate Transportation of Firearms* now available for download at <https://www.nraila.org/articles/20150101/guide-to-the-interstate-transportation>

### **Firearms Aboard Aircraft**

**URGENT NOTICE:** Federal law prohibits the carrying of any firearms, concealed or unconcealed on or about the person or in carry-on baggage while aboard an aircraft. **Contact Your Relevant Airline Carrier Prior To Your Departure To Obtain Up-To-The-Minute Regulations Regarding The Transport of Firearms.**

For additional information regarding airline transportation of firearms, visit <https://www.nraila.org/articles/20150101/guide-to-the-interstate-transportation>

### **Firearms Aboard Other Carriers**

Any passenger who owns or legally possesses a firearm being transported aboard any common or

contract carrier for movement with the passenger in interstate or foreign commerce, must deliver the unloaded firearm into the custody of the pilot, captain, conductor, or operator of such common or contract carrier for the duration of the trip. Check with each carrier before your trip to avoid problems or delays.

- A. Bus companies usually refuse to transport firearms.
- B. Trains usually allow the transportation of encased long guns if they are disassembled or the bolt is removed. Please contact your local rail carrier and AMTRAK for current regulations.

## **Local and State Sponsor Requirements for Participant Eligibility in YHEC**

In addition to following the rules and regulations set forth in this manual, local and State level sponsors must meet established administrative criteria to ensure eligibility for their participants to participate in the current year's NRA regional YHEC program.

The Local or State Sponsor must:

- A. Apply for official NRA YHEC sponsorship approval or have event(s) recognized as YHEC qualifying events by NRA Headquarters. Sponsorship forms must be received by the NRA Hunter Services Department by established deadline dates.

*(Required forms):*

- 1) Request to Sponsor a YHEC Program - (Local or State level)
- B. Promote and conduct a Local or State level YHEC program.
  - C. Adhere to the NRA YHEC established line of communication.
  - D. Properly complete and submit **all** required paperwork by established deadline dates. In addition to documents detailed above, these documents include, but may not limited to:
    - 1) Local/State Registration Form
    - 2) Participant Aggregate Scores (Final Results Bulletin - C-5)
    - 3) Participant Address List
    - 4) Coach Address List
    - 5) Volunteer Address List

# National Rifle Association

The National Rifle Association of America was founded in New York in 1871 "for the improvement of its members in marksmanship." From this modest beginning, the NRA has evolved into a nationwide, nonprofit organization with a membership in the millions.

Today, the NRA is a nationwide educational, recreational, and public service organization dedicated to the rights of responsible citizens to own and use firearms for recreation and defense.

The NRA is a nonprofit corporation supported entirely by its membership and affiliated clubs. It is not affiliated with any arms or ammunition manufacturers or with any commercial firearm businesses and receives no appropriations from Congress. The NRA cooperates with all branches of the U.S. armed forces, federal agencies, and state and local governments interested in teaching firearm marksmanship, safety, and hunting skills to all interested persons.

The NRA has long recognized the importance of hunters in its fight to protect our right to keep and bear arms. Because hunters comprise a vast segment of the gun-owning public, the image they project reflects on all gun owners. The NRA has worked to promote safe and responsible conduct by hunters in the field since its beginning more than a century ago.

The NRA believes that well-managed hunting is a beneficial use of renewable wildlife resources, which, when left to nature, are lost to predation, disease, starvation, or old age. Proper hunting is in complete accord with the moral tenets and historical facts of human existence. The hunting heritage predates recorded history by many centuries. The hunter's participation in the chase today is a healthy exercise, both physically and spiritually.

The hunter's interest in wildlife has been the principal factor in fostering sound management and conservation practices. The commitment of hunters and the funds they provide through special taxes and licenses safeguards the future of all wildlife species.

Hunting is dominant among American traditions and has contributed substantially to our strong national character. Its future is a primary concern of the National Rifle Association.

To join NRA today, or for additional information regarding membership, please call 1-800-368-5714.

**NOTE:** The NRA reserves the right to make modifications in this NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge Rules and Regulations manual as they may pertain to the NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge. These changes may occur to accommodate shooting range facilities, schedules, manpower limitations, safety, promotional needs or other requirements, as NRA deems necessary. The NRA will make every effort to notify the Local or State program director in the event of significant changes in this publication.