

ORDINANCE NO. 321 (2026)*AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHEROKEE CODE SECTION 113-8(c) TO RESTORE THE BEAR HUNTING SEASON TO SEPTEMBER 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31*

WHEREAS, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians has the inherent authority and responsibility to regulate the taking of wildlife on Tribal lands; and

WHEREAS, Cherokee Code Section 113-8 establishes the seasons, limits, and regulations governing the hunting of big game on Tribal lands; and

WHEREAS, the bear hunting season has historically been established as running from September 1 through December 31, and this season has traditionally been recognized as the established bear hunting season on Tribal lands; and

WHEREAS, the current language of Cherokee Code Section 113-8(d)(c) provides that the bear hunting season begins on the first Monday in September at sunrise and continues through December 31, thereby altering the longstanding September 1 opening date; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council desires to revert the bear hunting season to the September 1 through December 31 season that has historically been used and recognized by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; and

WHEREAS, returning the season to September 1 restores the longstanding calendar date and provides consistency and clarity for Tribal hunters, wildlife managers, and Natural Resources Enforcement personnel; and

WHEREAS, this amendment is intended solely to restore the historical bear season dates and does not alter the existing bear harvest limit or the existing protections concerning bears weighing less than 100 pounds, female bears with cubs, or bear cubs;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, in council assembled, at which a quorum is present Cherokee Code Chapter 113-8(c) is hereby amended as follows:

Sec. 113-8. - Big game.

(c)The hunting of bear shall be from ~~the first Monday in~~ September 1 ~~at sunrise~~ through December 31.

Section 2. Purpose and Intent.

The purpose of this amendment is to restore the bear hunting season to September 1 through December 31 dates that have historically governed bear hunting on Tribal lands. This amendment shall not be construed as establishing a new hunting season, but rather as reverting the opening date to the longstanding September 1 date.

Section 3. Remaining Provisions.

Except as expressly amended by this Ordinance, all other provisions of Cherokee Code Section 113-8 shall remain in full force and effect.

BE IT FINALLY ORDAINED, that this Ordinance shall become effective upon ratification by the Principal Chief and all other ordinances inconsistent with this one are hereby rescinded.

Submitted by Vice Chief Alan B Ensley (Wᵂᵂ ᵂᵂᵂᵂ ᵂᵂᵂ)