

2022 Spring Black Bear Permits Briefing and Public Hearing March 11, 2022

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Introduction

- Brief background
- Proposed rule changes
- Commissioner concerns
- Questions / Discussion



Background

- ❑ The Fish and Wildlife Commission requested the Department to initiate rule making for an annual spring black bear special permit season that would start in 2022.
- ❑ Mandate (RCW 77.04.012)
- ❑ Game Management Plan (2015-2021)



Proposed Rule Changes

WAC 220-415-080

Spring Black Bear Special Permits



Spring black bear special permits:

- Petition request - to remove year from title of the rule
- WDFW staff included a take prohibition for female black bear with offspring and offspring.
- Request for potential delegation for rulemaking authority not in the CR102



Spring black bear special permits:

Proposal

- **Changes:** Remove the year from the title and adjust the season dates.
 - » Proposed season dates: May 1 – June 15
 - » Hunt units would remain the same



Spring black bear special permits

Proposal:

- **Changes:** Reduce the number of permits from 10 to 6 in Hunt Unit 684 (Long Beach).
 - » Due to access and overcrowding
 - » October 20, 2022 – Presentation, slide 17: GMU 684 - Reasons should include:
 - *Human-bear conflict*
 - » Total statewide 644 permits are proposed



Spring black bear special permits

Proposal:

- **Changes:** Add a provision prohibiting harvest/take of female black bear accompanied by offspring and harvest of offspring less than one year old or less than 50 pounds.
 - » Adds a definition of "offspring"
 - » Address public concerns, align with other western states and provinces that offer spring bear seasons.



Spring black bear special permits

Proposal:

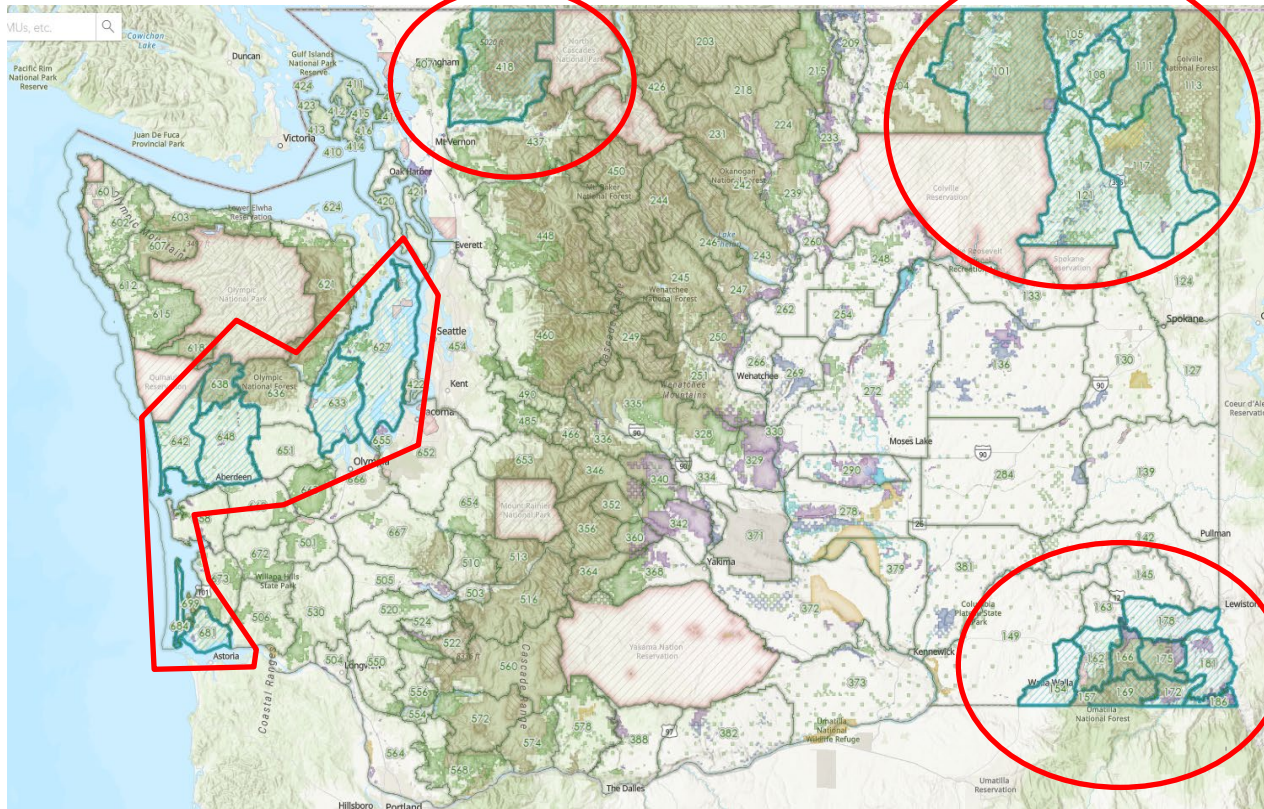
- **Changes:** Add language associated with the harvest inspection.
 - » Unfrozen pelt and head with evidence of sex and head must be attached.
 - » Call within 72 hours to schedule inspection.



Summary

North Skagit
30 permits
in 1 GMU

Northeast WA
390 permits in
6 GMUs



Olympic
Peninsula
86 permits
in 7 GMUS

Blue
Mountains
158 permits
in 9 GMUs



Commission Concerns

- **Themes**
 - Game Management Plan
 - Status and Trends Report
 - Status of Knowledge (Science)



Commission Concerns

Game Management Plan

- Provides guidance and direction
- Sets the framework



Commissioner concerns

Topic	Game Management Plan	Status and Trends
Intent	WDFW guidance	Progress report
Duration	5–7-year rotation	Annual
Authors	Regional staff HQ staff Senior Management	HQ Game Division staff
WDFW Internal Review	Same as above	Same as above
Director Review	Yes	No
Public Review	Yes	No
Commission Approval	Yes	No



Commission Concerns

Status and Trends

- Progress report of WDFW work
- Explains the current state of knowledge



Commissioner concerns

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Commission Concerns

Status of knowledge

- WDFW black bear population monitoring
 - Viable bear population
- Spring black bear special permits
 - No indication of negative population impacts
- Social / Biological
 - Responsive and adaptive



Questions / Discussion

WAC 220-415-080
Spring black bear
special permits

