

# Small Game Seasons

232-28-342

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## Summary Sheet

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**Meeting dates:** April 8-9, 2016

**Agenda item:** Small Game Seasons – Rule Decision

**Presenter:** Mick Cope, Game Division Manager, Wildlife Program

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**Background summary:**

This proposal amends rules for small game and other wildlife hunting seasons established during the 2015-17 three-year package for WAC 232-28-342. Recommended changes are focused on three areas of the rule adopted last year:

- Increasing fall turkey hunting opportunities in areas with strong populations by extending the season and allowing an overlap with modern firearm deer season.
  - Expanding pheasant hunting opportunities for hunters with disabilities, including an early season and the option to hunt both weekend days on westside pheasant release sites.
  - Removing sections of the rule concerning 2016-17 and 2017-18 migratory game bird seasons and regulations. WAC 232-28-436, 2016-17 Migratory game bird seasons and regulations, now includes proposals for all migratory game bird seasons established each year by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in cooperation with the Pacific Flyway Council. This change is based on the new federal regulatory process established in 2015, which combined early and late season rulemaking actions and adjusted timing to allow for more public review.
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**Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:**

- Increasing turkey hunting opportunity in areas with strong populations.
  - Providing additional pheasant hunting opportunity for hunters with disabilities.
  - Combining early and late season rulemaking for migratory game bird seasons will simplify rules and conform to the new federal regulatory process.
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**Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

Requests for comments were sent to over 28,000 individuals and organizations through the rulemaking process. Additionally, these individuals and organizations were informed of the opportunity to provide verbal testimony at the March 18-19, 2016 Commission Meeting at Moses Lake.

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**Action requested:**

Amend WAC 232-28-342 as proposed.

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**Draft motion language:**

I move to amend WAC 232-28-342 as proposed.

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**Justification for Commission action:**

- Increasing turkey hunting opportunity in areas with strong populations.
  - Providing additional pheasant hunting opportunity for hunters with disabilities.
  - Combining early and late season rulemaking for migratory game bird seasons will simplify rules and conform to the new federal regulatory process.
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**Communications Plan:**

WDFW Website  
News Releases  
Hunting Pamphlet

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AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 15-10-033, filed 4/28/15, effective 5/29/15)

**WAC 232-28-342 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations.** Hunters must comply with the bag, possession, and season limits described in this section. Failure to do so constitutes a violation of RCW 77.15.245, 77.15.400, or 77.15.430, depending on the species hunted and the circumstances of the violation.

**STATEWIDE SEASONS:**

(1) **FOREST GROUSE (BLUE, RUFFED, AND SPRUCE)**

(a) **DAILY BAG LIMIT:** 4 grouse per day, to include not more than 3 Blue Grouse, 3 Spruce Grouse, and 3 Ruffed Grouse.

(b) **POSSESSION LIMIT:** 12 grouse, to include not more than 9 Blue Grouse, 9 Spruce Grouse, and 9 Ruffed Grouse.

(c) **SEASON DATES:** Sept. 1 - Dec. 31 during the current license year.

(2) **BOBCAT**

(a) **BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:** No limit.

(b) **SEASON DATES:** Sept. 1 - Mar. 15 during the current license year.

(c) **RESTRICTION:** It is unlawful to hunt bobcat with dogs.

(3) **RACCOON**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: No limit.

(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide, EXCEPT closed on Long Island within Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

(c) SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Mar. 15 during the current license year.

(4) **FOX**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: No limit.

(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide, EXCEPT closed within the exterior boundaries of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan, Wenatchee, and Gifford Pinchot National Forests.

(c) SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Mar. 15 during the current license year.

(5) **COYOTE**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: No limit.

(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide.

(c) SEASON DATES: Year-round.

(d) RESTRICTION: It is unlawful to hunt coyote with dogs.

(6) **COTTONTAIL RABBIT AND SNOWSHOE HARE (OR WASHINGTON HARE)**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 5 cottontails or snowshoe hares per day, with a total of 15 in possession at any time, straight or mixed bag.

(b) SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Mar. 15 during the current license year.

(7) **CROWS**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: No limit.

(b) SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Dec. 31 during the current license year.

(8) JACKRABBIT:

Closed statewide.

(9) PTARMIGAN, SAGE, AND SHARP-TAILED GROUSE:

Closed statewide.

(10) WILD TURKEY:

(a) YOUTH SEASON: Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

(i) LEGAL BIRD: Male turkeys and turkeys with visible beards only.

(ii) SEASON DATES:

(A) April 4-5, 2015;

(B) April 2-3, 2016;

(C) April 1-2, 2017; and

(D) April 7-8, 2018.

(b) SPRING SEASON

(i) LEGAL BIRD: Male turkeys and turkeys with visible beards only.

(ii) SEASON DATES: April 15 - May 31 during the current license year.

(iii) BAG LIMIT: The combined spring/youth season limit is 3 birds.

Only 2 turkeys may be killed in Eastern Washington, except only one

(1) may be killed in Chelan, Kittitas, or Yakima counties. One (1) turkey may be killed per year in Western Washington outside of Klickitat County. Two (2) turkeys may be killed in Klickitat County.

(c) **EARLY FALL GENERAL SEASON**

(i) **LEGAL HUNTER:** Open to all hunters with a valid turkey tag.

(ii) **OPEN AREA:** GMUs 101-154 and 162-186.

(iii) **SEASON DATES:**

(A) Sept. 19 - Oct. 16, 2015;

(B) Sept. 17 - Oct. 14, 2016(~~;~~ and

~~(C)~~), (GMUs 145-154, 162-186);

(C) Sept. 17 - Oct. 31, 2016, (GMUs 101-142);

(D) Sept. 23 - Oct. 13, 2017, (GMUs 145-154, 162-186);

(E) Sept. 23 - Oct. 31, 2017, (GMUs 101-142).

(iv) **BAG LIMIT:** Three (3) turkeys during the early fall general season with the following area restrictions:

Game Management Units (GMUs)	Legal Bird and Limit
105-121	Two (2) beardless turkeys
101, 145-154, 162-186	One (1) either sex turkey
124-142	Two (2) beardless plus one (1) either sex turkey

(d) **FALL PERMIT SEASONS**

(i) **LEGAL BIRD:** Either sex.

(ii) **LEGAL HUNTER:** All hunters who are selected in the fall turkey special permit drawing and who also possess a valid turkey tag.

Hunt Name	Permit Season Dates	Special Restrictions	Boundary Description	Permits	Bag Limit*
Klickitat	Sept. 19 - Oct. 16, 2015, Sept. 17 - Oct. 14, 2016, Sept. 23 - Oct. 13, 2017	Either sex	GMUs 382, 388, 568-578	150	1
Methow	Nov. 15 - Dec. 15, 2015, 2016, 2017	Either sex	GMUs 218-231 and 242	50	1
Teanaway	Nov. 15 - Dec. 15, 2015, 2016, 2017	Either sex	GMU 335	50	1

\*BAG LIMIT: During the fall permit hunting seasons.

(e) **LATE FALL SEASON**

(i) **LEGAL BIRD:** Either sex.

(ii) **LEGAL HUNTER:** Open to all hunters with a valid turkey tag.

(iii) **OPEN AREA:** GMUs 105-154, 162-186.

(iv) **SEASON DATES:** Nov. 20 - Dec. 15 during the current license year.

(v) **BAG LIMIT:** One (1) turkey.

(f) **HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR INCENTIVE PERMITS**

(i) **LEGAL BIRD:** Male turkeys and turkeys with visible beards only.

(ii) **LEGAL HUNTER:** Qualified hunter education instructors who are selected through a random drawing. Hunter education instructors qualify if the instructor is certified and has been in active status for a minimum of 3 consecutive years, inclusive of the year prior to the permit drawing.

(iii) OPEN AREA: Statewide.

(iv) SEASON DATES: April 1 - May 31 during the current license year.

(v) PERMITS: 2 individuals will be drawn for this permit per year.

(vi) BAG LIMIT: 1 male turkey or turkey with visible beard in addition to other spring season turkey harvest.

(g) OFFICIAL HUNTING HOURS FOR WILD TURKEY:

1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset during spring and fall seasons.

(h) SPECIAL RULES FOR WILD TURKEY:

(i) It is unlawful to hunt turkey unless the hunter possesses a turkey tag.

(ii) It is unlawful to hunt turkeys with dogs.

(iii) It is unlawful to bait game birds.

**EASTERN WASHINGTON SEASONS:**

(11) RING-NECKED PHEASANT

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: Three (3) cock pheasants per day. Hunters may possess up to 15 cock pheasants at any one time.

(b) YOUTH SEASON DATES: Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

(i) Sept. 19-20, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 17-18, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 23-24, 2017.



(c) HUNTERS SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND HUNTERS WITH DISABILITIES SEASON

DATES:

(i) Sept. 21-25, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 19-23, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 25-29, 2017.

(d) REGULAR SEASON DATES:

(i) Oct. 24, 2015 - Jan. 18, 2016;

(ii) Oct. 22, 2016 - Jan. 16, 2017; and

(iii) Oct. 21, 2017 - Jan. 15, 2018.

(12) **CHUKAR**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 6 chukar per day. Hunters may possess up to 18 chukar at any one time.

(b) YOUTH SEASON DATES: Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

(i) Sept. 19-20, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 17-18, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 23-24, 2017.

(c) REGULAR SEASON DATES:

(i) Oct. 3, 2015 - Jan. 18, 2016;

(ii) Oct. 1, 2016 - Jan. 16, 2017; and

(iii) Oct. 7, 2017 - Jan. 15, 2018.

(13) **GRAY (HUNGARIAN) PARTRIDGE**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 6 gray partridges per day. Hunters may possess up to 18 gray partridges at any one time.

(b) YOUTH SEASON DATES: Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

(i) Sept. 19-20, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 17-18, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 23-24, 2017.

(c) REGULAR SEASON DATES:

(i) Oct. 3, 2015 - Jan. 18, 2016;

(ii) Oct. 1, 2016 - Jan. 16, 2017; and

(iii) Oct. 7, 2017 - Jan. 15, 2018.

(14) **MOUNTAIN QUAIL**

Closed throughout Eastern Washington.

(15) **CALIFORNIA (VALLEY) QUAIL AND NORTHERN BOBWHITE**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 10 quail per day. Hunters may possess up to 30 quail at any one time, straight or mixed bag.

(b) YOUTH SEASON DATES: Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

(i) Sept. 19-20, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 17-18, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 23-24, 2017.

(c) REGULAR SEASON DATES:

(i) Oct. 3, 2015 - Jan. 18, 2016;

(ii) Oct. 1, 2016 - Jan. 16, 2017; and

(iii) Oct. 7, 2017 - Jan. 15, 2018.

**WESTERN WASHINGTON SEASONS:**

(16) RING-NECKED PHEASANT

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 2 pheasants of either sex per day.

Hunters may possess up to 15 pheasants at any one time.

(b) YOUTH SEASON DATES: Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

(i) Sept. 19-20, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 17-18, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 23-24, 2017.

(c) HUNTERS SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND HUNTERS WITH DISABILITIES SEASON

DATES:

(i) Sept. 21-25, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 19-23, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 25-29, 2017.

(d) REGULAR SEASON DATES: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

(i) Sept. 26 - Nov. 30, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 24 - Nov. 30, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 30 - Nov. 30, 2017.

(e) EXTENDED SEASON DATES:

(i) Dec. 1-15, during the current license year.

(ii) 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. only at the following release sites:

Belfair, Fort Lewis, Kosmos, Lincoln Creek, Scatter Creek, Skookumchuck, and all Whidbey Island release sites EXCEPT Bayview.

(iii) The department will not release pheasants during the extended season.

(f) SPECIAL RESTRICTION: Western Washington pheasant hunters must choose to hunt only on odd-numbered or even-numbered weekend days from 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. at all units of Lake Terrell, Tennant Lake, Snoqualmie, Skagit, Skookumchuck, and Scatter Creek Wildlife Areas, and all hunting sites on Whidbey Island. Hunters must indicate their choice of odd-numbered or even-numbered weekend days on the Western Washington Pheasant Permit by choosing "odd" or "even." Hunters who select the three day option, hunters possessing a valid disabled hunter permit, hunters 65 years of age or older, and youth hunters may hunt in the morning on both odd-numbered and even-numbered weekend days. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or

older, and the adult must have an appropriately marked pheasant permit if hunting.

(17) **MOUNTAIN QUAIL**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 2 mountain quail per day. Hunters may possess up to 4 mountain quail at any one time.

(b) SEASON DATES:

(i) Sept. 26 - Nov. 30, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 24 - Nov. 30, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 30 - Nov. 30, 2017.

(18) **CALIFORNIA (VALLEY) QUAIL AND NORTHERN BOBWHITE**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 10 California (valley) quail or northern bobwhite per day. Hunters may possess up to 30 California (valley) quail or northern bobwhite at any one time, straight or mixed bag.

(b) SEASON DATES:

(i) Sept. 26 - Nov. 30, 2015;

(ii) Sept. 24 - Nov. 30, 2016; and

(iii) Sept. 30 - Nov. 30, 2017.

**FALCONRY SEASONS:**

(19) **UPLAND GAME BIRD AND FOREST GROUSE - FALCONRY**

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:

(i) 2 pheasants (either sex);

(ii) 6 partridge;

(iii) 5 California (valley) quail or northern bobwhite;

(iv) 2 mountain quail (in Western Washington only);

(v) 3 forest grouse (blue, ruffed, spruce) per day; and

(vi) Possession limit is twice the daily bag limit.

(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide.

(c) SEASON DATES: Aug. 1 - Mar. 15 during the current license year.

(20) **TURKEY - FALCONRY**

(a) A turkey tag is required to hunt turkey during the turkey falconry season.

(b) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: One (1) turkey (either sex) per turkey tag, with a maximum of 2 turkeys. Hunters may possess up to 2 turkeys at any one time.

(c) OPEN AREA: Eastern Washington.

(d) SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Feb. 15 during the current license year.

(21) (~~MOURNING DOVE - FALCONRY~~)

~~(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 3 mourning doves per day, straight bag or mixed bag with snipe, coots, ducks, and geese during established seasons. The possession limit is three times the daily limit.~~

~~(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide.~~

~~(c) SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Dec. 16 during the current license year.~~

~~(22)) COTTONTAIL RABBIT AND SNOWSHOE HARE - FALCONRY~~

(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 5 cottontails or snowshoe hares per day, straight or mixed bag. Hunters may possess up to 15 cottontails or snowshoe hares at any one time, straight or mixed bag.

(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide.

(c) SEASON DATES: Aug. 1 - Mar. 15 during the current license year.

**OTHER SEASONS:**

~~((23) CANADA GOOSE SEPTEMBER SEASON~~

~~(a) WESTERN WASHINGTON:~~

~~(i) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:~~

~~(A) 5 Canada geese per day; hunters may possess up to 15 Canada geese at any time, EXCEPT as otherwise provided below.~~

~~(B) In Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties and that part of Clark County north of the Washougal River: 3 Canada geese per day; hunters may possess up to 9 at any one time.~~

~~(C) In Pacific County: 15 Canada geese per day; hunters may possess up to 45 at any one time.~~

~~(ii) SEASON DATES: Sept. 10-15 during the current license year, EXCEPT Pacific County: Sept. 1-15 during the current license year.~~

~~(b) EASTERN WASHINGTON:~~

~~(i) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 3 Canada geese per day; hunters may possess up to 6 at any one time.~~

~~(ii) SEASON DATES: Sept. 12-13, 2015; Sept. 10-11, 2016; Sept. 9-10, 2017.~~

~~(24) MOURNING DOVE~~

~~(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 15 mourning doves per day. Hunters may possess up to 45 mourning doves at any one time.~~

~~(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide.~~

~~(c) SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Oct. 30 during the current license year.~~

~~(25) BAND-TAILED PIGEON~~

~~(a) BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: 2 band-tailed pigeons per day. Hunters may possess up to 6 band-tailed pigeons at any one time.~~

~~(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide.~~

~~(c) SEASON DATES: Sept. 15-23 during the current license year.~~

~~(26))~~ (22) BIRD DOG TRAINING SEASON

(a) Wild upland game birds may be pursued during the dog-training season but may not be killed except during established hunting seasons. A small game license is required to train dogs on wild game birds. A Western Washington Pheasant Permit is required to train dogs on pheasants in Western Washington. Captive raised game birds may be released and killed during dog training if the hunter has proof of



lawful acquisition (invoices) and the birds are appropriately marked (WAC 232-12-271 and 232-12-044).

(b) OPEN AREA: Statewide.

(c) SEASON DATES: Aug. 1 - Mar. 31 during the current license year.

(d) Only youth and seniors may train dogs during their respective seasons on designated Western Washington pheasant release sites.

(e) Bird dog training may be conducted year round on areas posted for bird dog training on portions of:

(i) Region One - Espanola (T24N, R40E, E 1/2 of section 16);

(ii) Region Three - South L. T. Murray Wildlife Area;

(iii) Region Four - Skagit Wildlife Area, Lake Terrell Wildlife Area, and Snoqualmie Wildlife Area;

(iv) Region Five - Shillapoo/Vancouver Lake Wildlife Area;

(v) Region Six - Scatter Creek Wildlife Area, Fort Lewis Military Base.

~~((27))~~ (23) **YAKAMA INDIAN RESERVATION:**

The 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 upland bird seasons within the Yakama Indian Reservation are the same as the season established by the Yakama Indian Nation.

~~((28))~~ (24) **COLVILLE INDIAN RESERVATION:**

The 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 upland bird seasons within the Colville Indian Reservation are the same as the season established by the Colville Indian Tribe.

~~((HIP REQUIREMENTS:~~

~~(29) All hunters of migratory game birds (duck, goose, coot, snipe, mourning dove, and band-tailed pigeon) age 16 and over are required to complete a Harvest Information Program (HIP) survey at a license dealer and possess a Washington Migratory Bird permit as evidence of compliance with this requirement when hunting migratory game birds.~~

~~(30) Youth hunters are required to complete a HIP survey and possess a free Washington Youth Migratory Bird permit as evidence of compliance with this requirement when hunting migratory game birds.))~~

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.150, and 77.12.240. WSR 15-10-033 (Order 15-95), § 232-28-342, filed 4/28/15, effective 5/29/15. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.240, and 77.32.070. WSR 14-10-019 (Order 14-95), § 232-28-342, filed 4/25/14, effective 5/26/14; WSR 13-11-078 (Order 13-94), § 232-28-342, filed 5/16/13, effective 6/16/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. WSR 12-11-005 (Order 12-70), § 232-28-342, filed 5/2/12, effective 6/2/12. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.020,

77.12.570, 77.12.210, 77.12.150, 77.12.240, 77.32.070, 77.32.530. WSR 10-10-061 (Order 10-94), § 232-28-342, filed 4/30/10, effective 5/31/10. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210, 77.12.150, 77.12.240. WSR 09-09-083 (Order 09-53), § 232-28-342, filed 4/15/09, effective 5/16/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210. WSR 08-09-090 (Order 08-78), § 232-28-342, filed 4/18/08, effective 5/19/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. WSR 06-11-031 (Order 06-91), § 232-28-342, filed 5/8/06, effective 6/8/06.]

## **Summary of Public Comments Received during Official Public Comment Period and WDFW Response:**

### WAC 232-28-342 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations.

Most comments provided by the public were targeted to only a small portion of this overall rule. In general, comments that addressed the proposed changes were in support and the proposed changes remain.

Comments related to turkey season were the most common, although most of them were not directed at the proposed changes. Comments provided were generally recommending expanded hunting opportunities (dates and bag limits) in several parts of the state. The proposed rule change would expand hunting opportunities in the eastern-most part of the state, which addresses some of this desire. Requests to expand the season or bag limit beyond what is proposed will likely require broader discussion due to overlapping seasons with other species. These discussions are better addressed during the 3-year season setting process. More than one comment was received asking for cheaper turkey tags; however, tag prices are set by the legislature and cannot be changed by Commission rule.

Others commented on a desire to start the western Washington pheasant season later and extend the season into late December. This has been discussed in past years, but many of the pheasant hunting sites are also waterfowl hunting areas and there is a desire to keep the seasons from conflicting.

Additional comments included requests to extend crow seasons (something that is regulated by a federal season framework and thus is not easily changed) and to consider wolf seasons (something that is not legally done in Washington). One comment asked for air-rifles to be made legal, which is something that we will put on our list of topics for discussion during the 2017-21 3-year package. A couple of comments were received addressing bag limits for pheasant and grouse. Bag limits for all upland birds have been discussed in the past. For pheasant, since only rooster pheasants are harvested, reducing the bag limit by one would not likely impact overall pheasant populations. For grouse, the 3 birds of one species restriction was meant to reduce potential harvest of 4 spruce grouse, which are the more vulnerable of the forest grouse species.

It is important to note that the migratory bird rules that are proposed to be removed from this rule are not being deleted entirely, but rather being added to a migratory bird rule.



# PROPOSED RULE MAKING

## CR-102 (June 2012)

(Implements RCW 34.05.320)

Do NOT use for expedited rule making

**Agency:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

**Preproposal Statement of Inquiry was filed as WSR 15-24-136 on 12/2/15 and WSR 15-22-107 on 11/4/15 ; or**

**Expedited Rule Making--Proposed notice was filed as WSR \_\_\_\_\_; or**

**Proposal is exempt under RCW 34.05.310(4) or 34.05.330(1).**

**Original Notice**

**Supplemental Notice to WSR \_\_\_\_\_**

**Continuance of WSR \_\_\_\_\_**

**Title of rule and other identifying information:** (Describe Subject) The subject of this proposed rule-making effort is the development and/or amendment of deer and elk seasons and permits; baiting regulations for deer and elk; deer and elk area boundaries; special closures and firearm restriction areas; importation of dead wildlife; possession of dead wildlife; reducing the spread of elk hoof disease; cougar seasons and regulations; spring black bear seasons and regulations; bighorn sheep seasons and permits; special hunting season permits; auction, raffle, and special incentive permits; landowner hunting permit program; hunting by persons with a disability; migratory waterfowl seasons, regulations, and closures; upland game bird and other small game seasons and regulations; hunter education deferrals; and other hunting regulations.

**Hearing location(s):**

Moses Lake Civic Center  
401 S. Balsam  
Moses Lake, Washington 98837

Date: March 18-19, 2016 Time: 8:30 a.m.

**Submit written comments to:**

Online: [http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/hunting\\_regulations](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/hunting_regulations)  
Name: Wildlife Program Commission Meeting Public Comments  
Address: 600 Capitol Way North  
Olympia, WA 98501-1091  
e-mail: [Wildthing@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Wildthing@dfw.wa.gov)  
fax: (360) 902-2162 by (date) February 25, 2016

**Assistance for persons with disabilities:** Contact

Tami Lininger by February 26, 2016

TTY (800) 833-6388 or (360) 902-2267

**Date of intended adoption:** on or after April 8, 2016

(Note: This is **NOT** the **effective** date)

**Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

See Attachment A

**Reasons supporting proposal:**

See Attachment A

**Statutory authority for adoption:** RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.150, 77.12.240, 77.12.800, 77.32.090, 77.32.155.

**Statute being implemented:** RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.150, 77.12.240, 77.12.800, 77.32.090, 77.32.155.

**Is rule necessary because of a:**

Federal Law?  Yes  No  
Federal Court Decision?  Yes  No  
State Court Decision?  Yes  No  
If yes, CITATION:  Yes  No  
CFR Title 50, Part 20, Migratory Bird  
Treaty Act

**DATE**  
February 3, 2016

**NAME** (type or print)  
Jacalyn Hursey

**SIGNATURE** *Jacalyn M. Hursey*

**TITLE**  
Acting Rules Coordinator

**CODE REVISER USE ONLY**

**OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER  
STATE OF WASHINGTON  
FILED**

**DATE: February 03, 2016**

**TIME: 9:33 AM**

**WSR 16-04-126**

**Agency comments or recommendations, if any, as to statutory language, implementation, enforcement, and fiscal matters:**

None.

**Name of proponent:** (person or organization) Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Private
- Public
- Governmental

**Name of agency personnel responsible for:**

Name	Office Location	Phone
Drafting..... Nate Pamplin	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(360) 902-2515
Implementation....Nate Pamplin	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(360) 902-2515
Enforcement..... Steven Crown	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(360) 902-2936

**Has a small business economic impact statement been prepared under chapter 19.85 RCW or has a school district fiscal impact statement been prepared under section 1, chapter 210, Laws of 2012?**

Yes. Attach copy of small business economic impact statement or school district fiscal impact statement.

A copy of the statement may be obtained by contacting:

Name:

Address:

phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

No. Explain why no statement was prepared.

These rules apply to recreational hunting and do not affect small business.

**Is a cost-benefit analysis required under RCW 34.05.328?**

Yes A preliminary cost-benefit analysis may be obtained by contacting:

Name:

Address:

phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

No: Please explain: This proposal does not involve hydraulics.

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Existing Rules Proposed for Amendment**

- WAC 232-12-021 Importation and retention of dead nonresident wildlife.
- WAC 232-12-228 Hunter education deferral.
- WAC 232-12-286 Reducing the spread of hoof disease—Unlawful transport of elk hooves.
- WAC 232-12-287 Possession of dead wildlife.
- WAC 232-12-828 Hunting of game birds and animals by persons with a disability.
- WAC 232-16-740 Columbia, Snake, and Yakima River waterfowl, coot, and snipe closures.
- WAC 232-28-248 Special closures and firearm restriction areas.
- WAC 232-28-283 Big game and wild turkey auction, raffle, and special incentive permits.
- WAC 232-28-286 2016, 2017, and 2018 Spring black bear seasons and regulations.
- WAC 232-28-296 Landowner hunting permits.
- WAC 232-28-297 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations.
- WAC 232-28-337 Elk area descriptions.
- WAC 232-28-342 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations.
- WAC 232-28-358 2015-2017 Elk general seasons and definitions.
- WAC 232-28-357 2015-2017 Deer general seasons and definitions.
- WAC 232-28-359 2015 Deer special permits.
- WAC 232-28-360 2016 Elk special permits.
- WAC 232-28-436 2015-2016 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations.
- WAC 232-28-622 2015-2017 Bighorn sheep seasons and permit quotas.
- WAC 232-28-624 Deer area descriptions.

### **New Rule(s) Proposed for Adoption**

**Department staff is requesting the Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt one of the following three proposed rules.**

- WAC 232-12-239 Baiting for the purposes of hunting deer or elk.
- WAC 232-12-245 Baiting for the purposes of hunting deer or elk.
- WAC 232-12-246 Bait volume limits for the purpose of hunting deer or elk.

### **WAC 232-12-021 Importation and retention of dead nonresident wildlife.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of the proposal is to add Michigan to the list of states and provinces requiring additional processing of deer, elk, and moose carcasses before they can be brought into Washington. The states and provinces listed in the WAC have confirmed chronic wasting disease (CWD) in their wild, free-ranging populations of cervids.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

The proposal reduces the risk of CWD being imported into Washington State via carcasses of animals harvested in other states. Reducing disease risk helps in sustaining deer, elk, and moose populations and hunting opportunities in Washington.

### **WAC 232-12-228 Hunter education deferral.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The proposed rule changes will remove language pertaining to outdated practices, clarify language, and allow the department (Hunter Education and Licensing Divisions) to provide improved customer service.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

The existing rules contain outdated elements that are no longer implemented. The proposal will also enable a much higher level of customer service, including: additional payment methods for the hunter education deferral; reduction or elimination of mail costs and delays; elimination of original and replacement deferral cards; opportunity for immediate hunting license purchase; and minor rule clarifications. Department cost savings will be realized via a reduction in staff time to process deferral applications and fees and the reduction or elimination of mailing and printing costs.

### **WAC 232-12-239 Baiting for the purposes of hunting deer or elk.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to further the public discussion regarding hunting deer and elk using bait. If adopted the rule would make it unlawful to use bait to hunt deer or elk for all hunters.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

In the last three years the Department has been approached by hunters and landowners that do not approve of the practice of baiting for the purposes of hunting deer or elk. Additional input was received as part of the 3-year hunting season package, public process in 2015.

The non-random input the Department received via the website during the 3-year package process indicated that 23% of hunters wanted a ban on baiting with an exception for food plots and agricultural operations. Fourteen percent (14%) of hunters wanted to disallow the use of bait by hunting guides and restrict the manner and volume of baiting by hunters not using guides. A 63% majority of the hunters commenting wanted no change to the rules pertaining to baiting deer and elk.

In a random telephone survey of deer hunters conducted as part of the 2015-17 3-year package, 59% either opposed or strongly opposed baiting for deer. Deer hunters that supported or strongly supported baiting for deer made up 21% of the respondents. Eleven percent (11%) of those surveyed were neutral and 9% didn't know.

In the same random telephone survey, 68% of elk hunters either opposed or strongly opposed baiting for elk. Elk hunters that supported or strongly supported using bait to hunt elk were 14%. Eleven percent (11%) of those surveyed were neutral and 8% didn't know.



Although some potential exists, the Department has no data at this time to suggest that the practice of baiting for deer and elk hunting has a negative population or natural resource effect.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission discussed this issue in March and April 2015 and decided to not make changes to the existing rule (baiting for deer and elk hunting is allowed). Since then, the Department has facilitated further discussion with a group of hunters interested in the issue. That group met several times over the past year. Through that process, and input received from the Game Management Advisory Council in 2015, it is clear that there is no consensus on this issue other than scents and natural agricultural practices should not be considered baiting. Members expressed several points of view ranging from banning all baiting for deer and elk hunting to retaining the ability to bait using any quantity. The committee discussed alternatives to the “all or none” scenario, which resulted in several options that will be presented to the Commission for discussion and possible decision. The Commission will consider options that range from banning all baiting to retaining all baiting, including two specific options that consider a volume limit on the amount of bait allowed.

### **WAC 232-12-245 Baiting for the purposes of hunting deer or elk.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to further the public discussion regarding hunting deer and elk using bait. If adopted the rule would make it unlawful to hunt deer or elk using bait in excess of 10 gallons and bait located closer than 200 yards from another bait site.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

In the last three years the Department has been approached by hunters and landowners that do not approve of the practice of baiting for the purposes of hunting deer or elk. Additional input was received as part of the 3-year hunting season package, public process in 2015.

The non-random input the Department received via the website during the 3-year package process indicated that 23% of hunters wanted a ban on baiting with an exception for food plots and agricultural operations. Fourteen percent (14%) of hunters wanted to disallow the use of bait by hunting guides and restrict the manner and volume of baiting by hunters not using guides. A 63% majority of the hunters commenting wanted no change to the rules pertaining to baiting deer and elk.

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options that range from banning all baiting to retaining all baiting, including two specific options that consider a volume limit on the amount of bait allowed.

### **WAC 232-12-246 Bait volume limits for the purpose of hunting deer or elk.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to further the public discussion regarding hunting deer and elk using bait. If adopted the rule would make it unlawful to hunt deer or elk using bait in excess of 10 gallons.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

In the last three years the Department has been approached by hunters and landowners that do not approve of the practice of baiting for the purposes of hunting deer or elk. Additional input was received as part of the 3-year hunting season package, public process in 2015.

The non-random input the Department received via the website during the 3-year package process indicated that 23% of hunters wanted a ban on baiting with an exception for food plots and agricultural operations. Fourteen percent (14%) of hunters wanted to disallow the use of bait by hunting guides and restrict the manner and volume of baiting by hunters not using guides. A 63% majority of the hunters commenting wanted no change to the rules pertaining to baiting deer and elk.

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### **WAC 232-12-286 Reducing the spread of hoof disease—Unlawful transport of elk hooves.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to allow, under certain circumstances, the legal transport of elk hooves coming from GMUs with treponeme associated hoof disease. The amendment would help facilitate current research on treponeme associated hoof disease and make the emergency rule permanent.

**Reasons supporting proposal:** This proposal helps facilitate research on treponeme associated hoof disease in elk while also helping reduce the probability of the disease spreading.

### **WAC 232-12-287 Possession of dead wildlife.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

Currently there is no legal way to salvage and possess deer, elk, or moose that have been killed by a motor vehicle. Per a request by the Fish and Wildlife Commission, the Department has investigated a strategy that would allow salvage and possession of those animals. The proposed amendments to WAC 232-12-287 would facilitate the legal salvage of road-killed deer and elk.

**Reasons supporting proposal:** This proposal would allow citizens to salvage meat from a deer or elk that has been killed in a vehicle collision.

### **WAC 232-12-828 Hunting of game birds and animals by persons with a disability.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The proposal is intended to reinstitute a rule that was deleted in 2014 related to shooting firearms from vehicles. The anticipated effects would be greater clarity for hunters and enforcement officers.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

Currently, all hunters with disabilities are permitted to shoot from their vehicles under RCW 77.32.238. In 2014, WAC 232-12-828 provided language that described how hunters with disabilities can shoot from a vehicle. This language was removed in preparation for an RCW change that was anticipated in 2015. That RCW change never occurred. Hunters with disabilities currently do not have defined guidance for shooting from a vehicle. Recommended language addition reinstitutes how, when, and where hunters with disabilities may shoot from their vehicles. WDFW Enforcement staff and county prosecutors have requested more defined language. The proposed rule change is recommended to stay in rule until the RCW is changed.

### **WAC 232-16-740 Columbia, Snake, and Yakima River waterfowl, coot, and snipe closures.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The proposal amends WAC 232-16-740, Columbia, Snake, and Yakima River waterfowl, coot, and snipe closures, to correct an inaccurate boundary description for the closure on the Snake River contained in subsection 6.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

Need to provide a clear, accurate description of the boundary for effective enforcement and conservation of migratory bird resources.

### **WAC 232-28-248 Special closures and firearm restriction areas.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of the proposal is to change the Special Closures and Firearm Restriction Areas rule to clarify a restriction in Grays Harbor County. The restriction in question should only apply during modern firearm deer and elk seasons. The restriction is unnecessary during other times of the year. The restriction still allows hunting to be used as a management tool.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

Special closures and firearm restriction areas allow the Fish and Wildlife Commission to restrict or close hunting activity in certain areas and during certain time periods to optimize safety, discourage trespass on restricted lands, and protect sensitive species.

## **WAC 232-28-283 Big game and wild turkey auction, raffle, and special incentive permits.**

### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

We are recommending a few minor changes to big game and wild turkey auction, raffle, and special incentive permits hunting for 2016: 1) A new "Three-deer auction permit", valid September 1 - December 31. 2) Allow the Department to extend the areas open to the holder of the single, statewide moose auction permit beyond those open to holders of moose draw permits. 3) Remove GMU 175 from areas available to the holder of the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep raffle permit.

### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

1) Increase hunter interest in deer hunting and provide additional revenue for the deer/elk section. This was suggested by a citizen group as likely to be attractive to hunters, and will help raise revenue and interest in deer hunting without adverse effects to the resource. This will complement the existing, three-deer raffle permit, which contains similar stipulations.

2) Increase revenue available to monitor moose populations. This was suggested by involved citizens as a way to enhance interest in moose and increase available revenue for moose. For the past 3 years, the Department has documented an expanding front of moose colonization to the west and south of the primary moose areas. We have not had resources to formally survey these areas, but know that there are a few large bull moose that could safely be harvested without interrupting this expansion. We recommend beginning with the auction permit, because hunters bidding for this generally do their own scouting, and thus can actually help us understand moose distribution in these areas.

3) GMU 175 represents the area typically used by the Asotin bighorn sheep herd. Although the herd appears to be slowly rebounding from a disease-related reduction, the number of mature rams has become sufficiently low to generate a biological concern. There are currently an insufficient number of rams in this herd to justify a ram hunt for 2016.

## **WAC 232-28-286 2016, 2017, and 2018 Spring black bear seasons and regulations.**

### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The proposal is intended to establish harvest guidelines for 22 spring bear hunts around the state. The anticipated effects include timber damage or public safety mitigation and providing for hunting recreation within harvest levels described in the 2015-21 Game Management Plan.

### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

Proposed harvest is anticipated to be consistent with the Game Management Plan. In addition, these proposals provide additional tools for landowners to deal with timber damage. Some proposals may help the agency address concerns over public safety.

## **WAC 232-28-296 Landowner hunting permits.**

### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

This proposal modifies hunt dates on properties enrolled in WDFW's Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP) program for the 2016 hunting seasons. These sites offer special hunting opportunities to the public through permits issued by WDFW, raffles, or selection by the landowner.

### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

Several years ago, the Fish and Wildlife Commission developed a policy to expand the private lands available to the general public for hunting. One of the programs that was authorized was the Landowner Hunting Permit Program. This program encourages landowners to provide opportunity to the general hunter in exchange for customized hunting seasons and the ability to generate funding to offset the cost of providing public access.

### **WAC 232-28-297 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

This proposal includes three alternative options for modifying existing rules. The proposal establishes harvest guidelines for 50 cougar units around the state. Cougar guidelines are designed to provide a long season and hunting opportunity for hunters without the use of dogs (i.e., spot and stalking in snow and/or calling). The anticipated effects are harvest levels consistent with the game management plan, balancing hunting opportunity with sustainable cougar populations.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

To provide early and late season hunting opportunity for hunters without the use of dogs (i.e., spot and stalking in snow and/or calling), while maintaining sustainable cougar populations.

### **WAC 232-28-337 Elk area descriptions.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

One new Elk Area is being proposed for Asotin County. The proposed addition is intended to reduce agricultural damage.

A change to Elk Area 6054 in Pierce County is proposed. The purpose is to make the boundary more discernable and make hunts held in the Elk Area more effective at mitigating elk damage.

The proposed change to Elk Area 6064 in Grays Harbor and Jefferson Counties removes some public land that was unnecessarily included. The Elk Area was established due to safety concerns but the original boundary included some USFS lands where this concern does not exist.

The proposal removes one Elk Area (EA 6063) in Grays Harbor and Jefferson Counties that is no longer needed.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

Elk Areas allow the Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt hunting seasons that can be conducted at a smaller scale than the Game Management Unit. Setting seasons at this scale allows for more strategic wildlife management using hunting as a tool to control populations and mitigate wildlife conflict.

### **WAC 232-28-342 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The proposal amends WAC 232-28-342, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations, to specify legal season dates, bag limits, and open areas to hunt small game and other wildlife for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 hunting seasons. In this proposal HIP requirements are removed from WAC 232-28-342 and are included in WAC 232-28-436.

#### **Reasons supporting proposal:**

Minor modifications to WAC 232-28-342 are needed to provide additional recreational hunting opportunities for disabled hunters, and consolidate migratory game bird regulations due to changes in the federal regulatory process.

### **WAC 232-28-358 2015-2017 Elk general seasons and definitions.**

#### **Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to retain general season elk hunting opportunity for 2016. The purpose is also to balance the elk hunting opportunity between user groups. The proposal also increases elk hunting opportunity when elk populations allow.

**Reasons supporting proposal:** This proposal provides for recreational elk hunting opportunity and protects elk from overharvest. The proposal would maintain sustainable general elk hunting season opportunities for 2016. The proposal helps address elk agricultural damage problems and provides for elk population control when needed.

#### **WAC 232-28-357 2015-2017 Deer general seasons and definitions.**

**Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to retain general season deer hunting opportunity for 2016. In addition, the purpose of the proposal is to balance the hunting opportunity between user groups. The proposal also increases the opportunity when deer populations allow, and reduces the opportunity when declining deer numbers warrant a change.

**Reasons supporting proposal:** These proposals provide for recreational deer hunting opportunity and protects deer from overharvest. The proposal would maintain sustainable general deer hunting season opportunities for 2016. The proposal helps address deer agricultural damage problems and provides for deer population control when needed.

#### **WAC 232-28-359 2015 Deer special permits.**

**Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to retain special permit deer hunting opportunity for 2016. In addition, the purpose of the proposal is to balance the hunting opportunity between user groups. The proposal also increases the opportunity when deer populations allow, and reduces the opportunity when declining deer numbers warrant a change.

**Reasons supporting proposal:** These proposals provide for recreational deer hunting opportunity and protects deer from overharvest. The proposal would also maintain sustainable deer special permit hunting season opportunities for 2016. The proposal helps address deer agricultural damage problems and provides for deer population control when needed.

#### **WAC 232-28-360 2015 Elk special permits.**

**Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The purpose of this proposal is to retain elk special permit hunting opportunity for 2016. The purpose is also to balance the elk hunting opportunity between user groups. The proposal also increases elk hunting opportunity when elk populations allow, and reduces elk hunting opportunity when declining elk numbers warrant a change. The proposal makes minor adjustments to season dates.

**Reasons supporting proposal:** This proposal provides for recreational elk hunting opportunity and protects elk from overharvest. The proposal would maintain sustainable elk special permit hunting opportunity for 2016. The proposal helps address elk agricultural damage problems and provides for elk population control when needed.

#### **WAC 232-28-436 2015-2016 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations.**

**Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The proposal amends WAC 232-28-436, 2015-16 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations, to specify legal season dates, bag limits, and open areas to hunt waterfowl, coot, snipe, band-tailed pigeon, and mourning dove for the 2016-17 hunting season. In this proposal HIP requirements are removed from WAC 232-28-342 and are included in WAC 232-28-436.

**Reasons supporting proposal:**

Migratory game bird seasons and regulations are developed based on cooperative management programs among states of the Pacific Flyway and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, considering population status and other biological parameters. The rule establishes migratory game bird seasons and regulations to provide recreational opportunity, control waterfowl damage, and conserve the migratory game bird resources of Washington.

**WAC 232-28-622 2015-2017 Bighorn sheep seasons and permit quotas.**

**Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

We are recommending a few minor changes to bighorn hunting for 2016: 1) Discontinuing ewe permits for the Selah Butte herd (which is declining); 2) Adding ewe permits for the Cleman Mountain herd (which is over-abundant); 3) Adding ram permit opportunity for the Swakane and Chelan Butte herds; 4) Adding ewe permits for disabled hunters, as well as a new category of "immature ram" for disabled hunters, both in the Chelan Butte bighorn sheep herd; and 5) making minor adjustments to season dates.

**Reasons supporting proposal:**

Maintain population size and hunter opportunity and reduce the risk of bacterial infection from domestic sheep/goats by reducing the tendency of animals in over-abundant herds to foray from their core ranges.

**WAC 232-28-624 Deer area descriptions.**

**Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:**

The proposed changes to the Deer Area Descriptions rule will create three new Deer Areas: one each in Chelan, Kittitas, and Yakima Counties. The proposed additions will accommodate using hunting as a management tool and are intended to reduce agricultural damage in these locations.

**Reasons supporting proposal:**

Deer Areas allow the Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt hunting seasons that can be conducted at a smaller scale than the Game Management Unit. Setting seasons at this scale allows for more strategic wildlife management, using hunting as a tool to control populations and mitigate wildlife conflict.