

10. MOOSE, BIGHORN SHEEP, AND MOUNTAIN GOAT SEASONS AND PERMIT QUOTAS – RULE ACTION

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"GREEN SHEET"

Meeting: April 11-12, 2008

Agenda Item 10: Amend WAC 232-28-273 2006-2008 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas – **Rule Action**

Prepared By: Donny Martorello, Ph.D.

Presented By: Dave Ware, Game Division Manager, Wildlife Program

Background:

Amend seasons for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat:

1. Winter surveys indicate moose populations are stable to slightly increasing. The Department recommends increasing permits in the Mount Spokane unit (GMU 124) from 30 to 36, in the 49 Degrees North B unit (GMU 117) from 3 to 5, in the Huckleberry Range unit (GMUs 121, 124) from 6 to 8, and in the Hangman hunt area (GMUs 127, 130) from 10 to 14. These increased permit levels are to help address increasing problems with moose in surrounding areas.
 2. All bighorn sheep populations that are currently hunted either meet or exceed population objectives. The Department recommends minor changes in permit levels using the harvest guidelines outlined in the Game Management Plan; the recommendation is to increase bighorn sheep permit levels from 34 to 36, including creating an ewe-only hunt for hunters 65-and-older in the Vulcan Mountain unit to address the expanding ewe component of the population and adding a permit in the Blue Mountains in GMU 175. The Department is also recommending routine calendar date changes.
 3. Survey results indicate that mountain goat abundance is stable in all hunted populations, thus the Department is not recommending any amendments to permit levels. However, the Department is recommending changing the goat unit boundaries on Mount Baker to better focus goat harvest in the desired areas and minimize potential conflicts with other recreational users (i.e., hikers).
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Policy Issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

Minor statewide permit level changes for moose, bighorn sheep, and boundary adjustments for goat units on Mount Baker.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

These proposed recommendations were mailed to approximately 450 organizations and individuals in January for their review and consideration. These organizations and individuals were also informed of the opportunity to provide public testimony at the March 7-8, 2008 Commission meeting in Olympia.

Action requested (identify the specific Commission decisions you are seeking):

Amend WAC 232-28-273 2006-2008 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas, as presented.

Draft motion language:

I move to amend WAC 232-28-273 as proposed.

Justification for Commission action:

Maximize recreational hunting opportunities for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats within biologically sustainable limits.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 07-62, filed 5/3/07, effective 6/3/07)

WAC 232-28-273 2006-2008 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas.

Moose Permit Hunts

Who May Apply: Anyone may apply; EXCEPT those who harvested a moose previously in Washington state. An individual may only harvest one moose during their lifetime (except waived for antlerless only hunts and raffle and auction hunts).

Bag Limit: One moose.

Weapon Restrictions: Permit holders may use any legal weapon.

Hunt Name	Permit Season	Permit Hunt Boundary Description	Special Restrictions	Permits
Kettle Range	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMUs 101, 105	Any Moose	2
Selkirk Mtns. A	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 113	Any Moose	25
Selkirk Mtns. B ^d	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 113	Antlerless Only	2
Mt. Spokane A	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 124 east of Hwy 395	Any Moose	((40)) 12
Mt. Spokane B	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 124 east of Hwy 395	Antlerless Only	((12)) 14
Mt. Spokane Youth Only ^a	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 124 east of Hwy 395	Antlerless Only	((8)) 10
49 Degrees North A	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 117	Any Moose	26
49 Degrees North B ^b	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 117	Antlerless Only	((3)) 5
49 Degrees North C ^c	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 117	Antlerless Only	2
49 Degrees North Youth Only ^a	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMU 117	Antlerless Only	2
Three Forks	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMUs 108, 111	Any Moose	8
Hangman A	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMUs 127, 130	Any Moose	((5)) 7
Hangman B	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMUs 127, 130	Antlerless Only	((5)) 7
Huckleberry Range	Oct. 1-Nov. 30	GMUs 121, 124 west of Hwy 395	Any Moose	((6)) 8

^aApplicants must be eligible to purchase a youth moose license by November 30 during the license year they are applying for. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult during the hunt.

^bApplicants must possess a Disabled Hunter Permit.

^cApplicants must be 65 years of age or older by November 30 during the license year they are applying for.

^dApplicants must be a certified hunter education instructor who meet program-defined eligibility criteria.

Bighorn Sheep Permit Hunts

Who May Apply: Anyone may apply; EXCEPT those who harvested a bighorn sheep previously in Washington state. An individual may only harvest one bighorn sheep during their lifetime. (Except waived for raffle and auction hunts.)

Bag Limit: One bighorn ram (except Vulcan Mountain B is one adult ewe).

Hunt Name	Permit Season	Permit Hunt Boundary Description	Special Restrictions	Permits
Vulcan Mountain A	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 2	Any Legal Weapon	((2)) 1
<u>Vulcan Mountain B^a</u>	<u>Oct. 1-10</u>	<u>Sheep Unit 2</u>	<u>Adult ewe only</u> <u>Any Legal Weapon</u>	<u>2</u>
Selah Butte	Nov. ((4)) 3-30	Sheep Unit 4	Any Legal Weapon	5
Umtanum	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 5	Any Legal Weapon	5
Cleman Mountain A	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 7	Any Legal Weapon	4
Cleman Mountain B	Nov. ((4)) 3-30	Sheep Unit 7	Any Legal Weapon	4
Mt. Hull	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 10	Any Legal Weapon	2
Wenaha	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 11	Any Legal Weapon	1
Lincoln Cliffs	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 12	Any Legal Weapon	1
Quilomene A	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 13	Any Legal Weapon	4
Swakane	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 14	Any Legal Weapon	1
Tieton	Sept. 15-Oct. 10	Sheep Unit 15	Any Legal Weapon	3
Manson	Nov. ((4)) 3-30	Sheep Unit 16	Any Legal Weapon	2

Applicants must be 65 years of age or older by November 30 during the license year they are applying for.

Bighorn Sheep Units:

Sheep Unit 2 Vulcan Mountain: Permit Area: Ferry County north of the Kettle River near Curlew.

Sheep Unit 4 Selah Butte: Permit Area: That part of Yakima and Kittitas counties between Ellensburg and Yakima east of the Yakima River and north of Selah Creek, west of Interstate 82 and south of Interstate 90.

Sheep Unit 5 Umtanum: Permit Area: Those portions of Yakima and Kittitas counties west of the Yakima River, north of Wenas Creek, and east of USFS Road 1701 to Manastash Lake and its drainage; south and east along the South Fork Manastash Creek to Manastash Creek and the Yakima River.

Sheep Unit 7 Cleman Mountain: Permit Area: That part of Yakima County south of Wenas Creek and east of USFS Road 1701, north of Highway 410 and Highway 12 and west of the Yakima River.

Sheep Unit 10 Mt. Hull: Permit Area: That part of Okanogan County within the following described boundary: Beginning at Oroville; then south along U.S. Highway 97 to the Swanson's Mill Road (old Mt. Hull Road) near Lake Andrews; then east to the Dry Gulch Road; then north to the Oroville-Toroda Creek Road (Molson Grade Road); then west to Oroville and the point of beginning.

Sheep Unit 11 Wenaha Wilderness: Permit Area: That part of GMU 169 within Crooked Creek drainage.

Sheep Unit 12 Lincoln Cliffs: Permit Area: That part of Lincoln County north of Highway 2.

Sheep Unit 13 Quilomene: Permit Area: GMUs 329, 330, and 251 south of Colockum Creek.

Sheep Unit 14 Swakane: Permit Area: GMU 250.

Sheep Unit 15 Tieton: Permit Area: GMU 360.

Sheep Unit 16 Manson: Permit Area: GMU 243.

Sheep Unit 17 Asotin: Permit Area: GMU 175.

Mountain Goat Permit Hunts

Who May Apply: Anyone may apply; except those who harvested a mountain goat in Washington state after 1998. An individual may only harvest one mountain goat during their lifetime, except for those who harvested a goat prior to 1999. (Except waived for raffle and auction hunts.)

Bag Limit: One (1) adult goat of either sex with horns four (4) inches or longer. WDFW urges hunters to refrain from shooting nannies with kids. Permit hunters may start hunting Sept. 1 with archery equipment.

Hunt Name	Permit Season	Permit Hunt Boundary Description	Special Restrictions	Permits
Chelan North	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Unit 2-1	Any Legal Weapon	1
Methow	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Unit 2-2	Any Legal Weapon	2
Naches Pass/Corral Pass	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Units 3-6, 4-38	Any Legal Weapon	2
Bumping River	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Unit 3-7	Any Legal Weapon	2
Blazed Ridge	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Unit 3-10	Any Legal Weapon	2
Tatoosh	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Unit 5-2	Any Legal Weapon	1
Smith Creek	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Unit 5-3	Any Legal Weapon	1
Goat Rocks/Tieton River	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Units 3-9, 5-4	Any Legal Weapon	5
Chowder Ridge	Sept. 15-Oct. 31	Goat Units 4-3	Any Legal Weapon	1

Mountain Goat Units:

Goat Unit 2-1 Chelan N. (Chelan County): Permit Area: Beginning at the mouth of Fish Creek on Lake Chelan (Moore Point); then northeast up Fish Creek and USFS trail 1259 to the Sawtooth crest near Deephole Spring; then southeast along the Sawtooth crest, which separates Chelan and Okanogan County, to Horsethief Basin and the headwaters of Safety Harbor Creek; then south along Safety Harbor Creek to Lake Chelan, then northwest along the north shore of Lake Chelan to the mouth of Fish Creek at Moore Point and the point of beginning.

Goat Unit 2-2 Methow Area: Permit Area: Okanogan County within the following described boundary: Beginning at the Town of Twisp, westerly along the Twisp River Road (County Road 4440) to Roads End; west up the Twisp Pass Trail 432 to Twisp Pass and the Okanogan County line; northerly along the Okanogan County line through Washington Pass to Harts Pass; southeast down Harts Pass (Road 5400) to Lost River; then along the Lost River-Mazama Road to Mazama; then southwest to State Highway 20; then southeasterly along State Highway 20 to Twisp and the point of beginning.

Goat Unit 3-6 Naches Pass: Permit Area: Yakima and Kittitas counties within the following described boundary: Beginning at Chinook Pass; then north along the Pacific Crest Trail to Naches Pass; then east to USFS Road 19 and continuing to State Highway 410; then west along State Highway 410 to Chinook Pass and point of beginning.

Goat Unit 3-7 Bumping River: Permit Area: GMU 356.

Goat Unit 3-9 Tieton River: Permit Area: GMU 364.

Goat Unit 3-10 Blazed Ridge: Permit Area: Kittitas and Yakima counties within the following described boundary: Beginning at the mouth of Cabin Creek on the Yakima River; then west along Cabin Creek to the headwaters near Snowshoe Butte; then south along the Cascade Crest separating the Green and Yakima river drainage to Pyramid Peak; then southeast along the North Fork, Little Naches, and Naches River to the Yakima River; then north along the Yakima River to the mouth of Cabin Creek and point of beginning.

Goat Unit 4-3 Chowder Ridge: Permit Area: Whatcom County within the following described boundary: Beginning where Wells Creek intersects the North Fork Nooksack River; then up Wells Creek to Bar Creek; then southwest up Bar Creek to the Mazama Glacier; then continue southwest up Mazama Glacier to the summit of Mt. Baker; then northwest between Roosevelt Glacier and Coleman Glacier to Kulshan Cabin and the headwaters of Kulshan Creek and Grouse Creek to Smith Creek; then north down Smith Creek to Glacier Creek; continue north down Glacier Creek to the North Fork Nooksack River; then east along the North Fork Nooksack River to Wells Creek and the point of beginning.

Goat Unit 4-7 Avalanche Gorge: Permit Area: Whatcom County within the following described boundary: Beginning at the intersection of the Baker Lake Road (USFS Road 394) and Park Creek; then northwest up Park Creek to Park Glacier; then continue ((~~northwest~~)) westerly up Park Glacier to the summit of

~~((Mt.-)) Mount Baker; then ((northeast)) northerly down Mazama Glacier to ((the 6,500 ft. elevation; then east to the Portals; then continue east along the ridge line to Coleman Pinnacle; then northeast along the Camp Kiser Trail 683 (Ptarmigan Ridge) to the extreme southeast extension of Kulshan Ridge; then due east to the Lake Ann Trail 600; then east along the Lake Ann Trail 600 to the boundary of North Cascades National Park; then south and east along the park boundary to the Baker River and down the Baker River)) Bar Creek; then northeast down Bar Creek to the confluence of Wells Creek; then southeast up Wells Creek to waypoint 593106 E 5410010 N (NAD27); then southeast about 1/2 mile to Ptarmigan Ridge Trail 682.1 at waypoint 593674 E 5409462 N; then south and southwest along said trail about 1/2 mile to upper tributary of Swift Creek at waypoint 593425 E 5408803 N; then east and southeast down said tributary to confluence with Swift Creek; then south and southeast down Swift Creek to the Baker Lake Road (USFS Road 394); then west along the Baker Lake Road (USFS Road 394) to Park Creek and the point of beginning.~~

Goat Unit 4-38 Corral Pass: Permit Area: Pierce County within the following described boundary: Beginning where Goat Creek intersects the Corral Pass Road; then southeast up Goat Creek to the Cascade Crest; then north along the Crest to USFS Trail 1188; then northwest along said trail to USFS Trail 1176; then north along said trail to Corral Pass; then west along Corral Pass Road to its intersection with Goat Creek and the point of beginning.

Goat Unit 5-2 Tatoosh: Permit Area: Lewis County within the following described boundary: Beginning at the junction of the

southern Mount Rainier National Park Boundary and State Highway 123; then south along State Highway 123 to U.S. Highway 12; then southwest along said highway to Skate Creek Road (USFS Road 52); then northwest along said road to the junction of Morse Creek Road (old road to Longmire Campground); then north along said road to the Mount Rainier National Park Boundary; then east along the southern park boundary to the point of beginning.

Goat Unit 5-3 Smith Creek: Permit area: Lewis County within the following described boundary: Beginning at the Town of Randle; then east along U.S. Highway 12 to USFS Road 21; then southeast along USFS Road 21 to USFS Road 22; then northeast and northwest along USFS Road 22 to USFS Road 23; then east and northwest on USFS Road 23 to USFS Road 25; then north along USFS Road 25 to Randle and point of beginning.

Goat Unit 5-4 Goat Rocks: Permit Area: Lewis County south of the White Pass Highway (U.S. Highway 12) and east of the Johnson Creek Road (USFS Road 1302).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210. 07-11-017 (Order 07-62), § 232-28-273, filed 5/3/07, effective 6/3/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. 06-11-032 (Order 06-92), § 232-28-273, filed 5/8/06, effective 6/8/06; 05-11-022 (Order 05-89), § 232-28-273, filed 5/10/05, effective 6/10/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047 and 77.12.020. 04-11-036 (Order 04-98), § 232-28-273, filed 5/12/04, effective 6/12/04. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. 03-13-047 (Order 03-129), § 232-28-273, filed 6/12/03, effective 7/13/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.655, 77.12.020. 02-

11-069 (Order 02-98), § 232-28-273, filed 5/10/02, effective 6/10/02. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.040, 77.12.020, 77.32.070, 77.32.530. 01-10-048 (Order 01-69), § 232-28-273, filed 4/26/01, effective 5/27/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.040, 77.12.010, 77.12.020, 77.12.770, 77.12.780. 00-11-137 (Order 00-50), § 232-28-273, filed 5/23/00, effective 6/23/00. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.040. 99-10-102 (Order 99-40), § 232-28-273, filed 5/5/99, effective 6/5/99; 98-10-005 (Order 98-58), § 232-28-273, filed 4/22/98, effective 5/23/98.]

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN PUBLIC INPUT

WAC 232-28-273 2006-2008 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons
and permit quotas

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Support the recommendations, based on the belief that Department biologists use the best scientific information possible.	Thank you for your support.

SUPPLEMENTAL SUMMARY OF WRITTEN PUBLIC INPUT

WAC 232-28-273 2006-2008 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Concerned that goat hunting on Mt. Baker may impact the recovery of goats in the area, hinder any future translocation efforts, and conflict with other recreational users (i.e., hikers).	Thank you for the comments. The current permit level (2) for goats on Mt. Baker is extremely conservative and represents a harvest rate of about 0.5%. At that level we don't believe it will impact population growth or the availability of surplus animals if future translocation efforts occur. In terms the potential conflict with hikers, the Department did recently meet with the Forest Service and alter the hunt unit boundary to reduce the potential for conflict.



PROPOSED RULE MAKING

CR-102 (June 2004)

(Implements RCW 34.05.320)
Do NOT use for expedited rule making

Agency: Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Preproposal Statement of Inquiry was filed as WSR 07-24-061 ; or
 Expedited Rule Making--Proposed notice was filed as WSR _____ ; or
 Proposal is exempt under RCW 34.05.310(4).

- Original Notice
 Supplemental Notice to WSR _____
 Continuance of WSR _____

Title of rule and other identifying information: (Describe Subject)

WAC 232-12-004 Classification of wild birds
 WAC 232-12-045 Hunting equipment restrictions
 WAC 232-28-273 2006-2008 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas
 WAC 232-28-295 Landowner hunting permits
 WAC 232-28-337 Deer and elk area descriptions
 WAC 232-28-342 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09 Small game seasons
 WAC 232-28-351 2006-2008 Deer general seasons and definitions
 WAC 232-28-352 2006-2008 Elk general seasons and definitions

Hearing location(s):

Natural Resources Building, Room 172
 1111 Washington Street Southeast
 Olympia, WA 98504
 (360) 902-2515

Submit written comments to:

Name: Wildlife Program Commission Meeting Public Comments
 Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia WA 98501-1091
 e-mail Wildthing@dfw.wa.gov
 fax (360) 902-2162

By: Friday, February 15, 2008

Date: March 7-8, 2008 Time: 8:00 am

Assistance for persons with disabilities:

Contact: Susan Yeager by March 5, 2008

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

Date of intended adoption: April 11-12, 2008

(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: 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210

Statute being implemented: 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210

Is rule necessary because of a:

- Federal Law? Yes No
 Federal Court Decision? Yes No
 State Court Decision? Yes No
 If yes, CITATION:

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 STATE OF WASHINGTON
 FILED

DATE: January 23, 2008

TIME: 9:30 AM

WSR 08-03-141

DATE
January 23, 2008

NAME
Lori Preuss

SIGNATURE

TITLE
Rules Coordinator

(COMPLETE REVERSE SIDE)

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

None

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

- Private
- Public
- Governmental

Name of agency personnel responsible for:

Name	Office Location	Phone
Drafting..... Dave Brittell	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(306) 902-2504
Implementation.... Dave Brittell	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(360) 902-2504
Enforcement..... Bruce Bjork	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(360) 902-2373

Has a small business economic impact statement been prepared under chapter 19.85 RCW?

Yes. Attach copy of small business economic 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 regulate recreational hunters and do not directly regulate 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: Not hydraulics rules.

ATTACHMENT A

WAC 232-12-004 Classification of wild birds

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:
The amendment adds Eurasian collared dove to the list of predatory birds in Washington.

Reasons supporting proposal:

The Eurasian collared dove is a non-native species that has recently expanded its range into Washington. The effects of this species are not known, but there is some evidence that it may compete with our native mourning doves. The proposed amendment would classify the species as a predatory bird, which would allow it to be taken year-round with a hunting license as provided under WAC 232-12-005.

WAC 232-12-045 Hunting equipment restrictions

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:
This proposal will restrict the use of telemetry equipment for hunting deer, elk, bear, moose, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep that have radio transmitters attached to them.

Reasons supporting proposal:

It is too easy for hunters to find and harvest wildlife with transmitters attached to them and hunting in this manner may bias the results of research projects.

WAC 232-28-273 2006-2008 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:
Rule amends 2008 seasons and permit quotas for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats. The purpose of the rule is to maximize recreational hunting opportunities for these species while meeting the population and recreational objectives for each herd as indicated in the Game Management Plan. The rule changes include minor statewide permit level changes for moose (+14 permits) and bighorn sheep (+2 permits), as well as hunt boundary changes for mountain goat. The anticipated effect is stable to increase populations of these hunting species.

Reasons supporting proposal:

Recommended adjustments in permit quotas are based on meeting population objectives for each species as indicated in the Game Management Plan.

WAC 232-28-295 Landowner hunting permits

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:
The proposal identifies permit levels and season dates for Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP) program participants for the 2008 hunting seasons. There are calendar date modifications for some permits, but no changes in permit levels are being proposed. If adopted, the proposal will allocate 70 deer permits and 186 elk permits among 5 LHP cooperators. Sixty percent of the permits will be for antlerless animals while 24% will be for antlered animals and 16% for any elk.

Reasons supporting proposal:

The proposed permits are consistent with the Commission's private lands hunter access program policy (C-6002). The permits will result in general public hunter access on private property and will help mitigate deer and elk foraging on private agricultural lands.

WAC 232-28-337 Deer and elk area descriptions

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

The proposed change removes elk feeding areas from GMU 368.

Reasons supporting proposal:

This proposal allows the continuation of December hunting seasons without impacting feeding activities or creating unethical hunting situations.

WAC 232-28-342 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09 Small game seasons

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

Since 2003, the Department has proposed liberalized fall, either sex turkey hunting seasons in northeastern and southeastern Washington, to provide expanded hunting opportunity and to address undesired turkey population increases. This proposal would change fall turkey hunting opportunities by increasing fall turkey permit levels in some southeastern Washington Game Management Units (GMUs), while moving some northeastern GMUs from "early fall permit only" to "early fall general season" designations.

The amendment also extends the mourning dove season from 15 to 30 days in September, modifies the mourning dove falconry season to be consistent with federal rules, and makes the September goose season in Grays Harbor consistent with the remainder of Goose Management Area 3.

Reasons supporting proposal:

The proposed changes provide: 1) greater turkey population control in areas experiencing unwanted population growth or, 2) increased turkey hunter opportunity in areas where expanding populations can support increased fall harvest.

The 2003-09 WDFW Game Management Plan prescribes a restrictive dove season until a significant increase is observed in the 10-year Washington breeding population index. In 2007, a significant increase was observed in this index, and the department is recommending an increase in the 2008 dove season length from 15 to 30 days, with season dates September 1-30. Grays Harbor County was included in Goose Management Area 3 in 2006, and the 2008 September goose season in Grays Harbor County is proposed for change to be consistent with season dates in the remainder of Goose Management Area 3.

WAC 232-28-351 2006-2008 Deer general seasons and definitions

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

This rule amends the 2008 seasons for deer. The rule clarifies the antler restriction in GMU 554; focuses late season opportunity in a portion of GMU 162; and retains a late deer season in the main part of GMU 368.

Reasons supporting proposal:

Recommended adjustments clarify restrictions, and helps focus harvest where desired. The change from GMU 368 to Deer Area 3682 helps retain the late hunt without impacting elk feeding operations.

WAC 232-28-352 2006-2008 Elk general seasons and definitions

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

This rule amends the 2008 seasons for elk. The rule modifies the season dates for the Elk Area 3911 damage hunt to provide better incentives for harvesting elk early in the season. Hunts that end in January are amended to end on January 20th to allow time for hunters to report prior to the January 31 reporting deadline. This proposal also establishes a hunt in Elk Area 3681, which avoids conflict with elk feeding stations and ethical issues while retaining the late elk season in the main part of GMU 368.

Reasons supporting proposal:

Recommended adjustments clarify restrictions, and helps focus harvest where desired. The change from GMU 368 to Elk Area 3681 helps retain the late hunt without impacting elk feeding operations.