

Agenda Item 13

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WAC 232-28-291 Special hunting season permits.

SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENTS

The following adjustments were proposed since the Code Reviser (CR 102) filing and are NOT included in your notebook WAC language.

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Add the following language under section D to provide clarity in the way accumulated points will be handled during the 2010 transition from single species permit categories to multiple categories within each species.

iii. An applicant's accumulated point totals, immediately prior to sales of the 2010 permit applications, will be replicated across all categories for that species. The point replication will only occur in 2010, during the transition from single species categories to multiple categories of the same species. Applicants for any new category added in the future will begin with the point awarded at the time of the initial application purchase.

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SUMMARY OF WRITTEN PUBLIC INPUT

WAC 232-28-291 Special hunting season permits.

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I support the new permit application options; I think it will increase the odds.	Thank you for your support. The odds of drawing a permit will depend on the number of hunters applying for each category of permit. With the proposed changes, we really don't know how it will affect the drawing odds, but the concept for the proposal was very popular.
The new special permit application proposals don't improve the odds of drawing permits.	There were several objectives to changing the way that the permit system application process is conducted. The primary objective is to provide revenue to expand the hunter access program on private lands. Another objective is to create a permit application program that provides greater options for hunters. The odds of drawing a permit within each of the proposed categories rely on the number of applicants. How the changes proposed will affect the number of applications in a category is largely unknown. The idea of increasing the odds of drawing popular permits is important, and the new structure proposed of application by category will allow for future modifications to better achieve that result. Several options for improving the odds of drawing popular permits were discussed with the public during the 2009-11 hunting season package. The one that has the greatest chance of improving the odds and the greatest public support to date is setting aside some number of these popular permits for hunters with significant numbers of permits. As mentioned previously, we would recommend waiting until we see the results of the current proposal before recommending further changes.
Spreading a hunter's current points across all categories results in an unfair advantage for hunters with a significant number of points especially for competition in the antlerless categories.	There are several reasons why hunters might have a large number of accumulated points. Certainly some of those reasons are due to applying for popular hunts over the years. The vast majority of hunters have fewer than three points, so the current proposal for addressing points should not have a significant or long lasting impact on drawing odds.
If a hunter draws more than one permit, can they harvest more than one animal?	No, a hunter is only allowed to harvest one animal unless they draw a 2 nd deer permit. Then they could harvest two deer.
How does the proposal affect hunter's current points?	A hunter's current point total for each species is replicated across all categories of that species.

<p>Why not set aside 30 to 50 percent of the permits for hunters with a large number of points?</p>	<p>This idea has a lot of support, but we plan to wait and see how the current proposals affect the odds of drawing before suggesting additional changes.</p>
<p>If a hunter gets drawn for multiple permits, they only get to harvest one animal, but they will have prevented several others from the opportunity to hunt.</p>	<p>The number of permits allocated is based on the number of animals available for harvest times the average success rate of permit holders. So over time, the allocation of permits will compensate for the number of hunters who draw multiple permits. We also suspect that the number of hunters drawing multiple permits will be small.</p>
<p>If I draw multiple permits, can I return the ones I don't want to use?</p>	<p>Yes, if you have a problem that meets our criteria, you can return your unusable permit and receive a refund of your points. Return requests must occur prior to the hunting season.</p>
<p>I understand and support the need to generate funds with the new permit proposals, but why not just increase the cost of permit applications for quality, buck and bull, mtn goat, bighorn sheep and moose permits to \$25. That would increase the odds of drawing and increase revenue.</p>	<p>We did consider this proposal during the past 2009-11 hunting season regulation package. However the majority of hunters did not support using increased fees to regulate the number of applicants. In addition, this type of change would require legislation, which is not easy to achieve.</p>
<p>I have accumulated eleven points and do not support the current proposals because I think the odds of drawing a good buck or bull permit will get worse. Too many people will put in for the most popular permits.</p>	<p>As discussed earlier, so much depends on the number of hunters willing to purchase multiple applications. In the current system, you are competing with everyone who applies for a species permit. In the proposed system, you will only be competing for those applying within your category. Any change in the odds of drawing is completely dependent on the number of hunters applying for each category.</p>
<p>I drew for both deer and elk permits last year and now have no points. If I had known the details of this proposal, I would have put in for ghost hunts.</p>	<p>You were fortunate to have drawn permits. Most hunters are probably envious. Any change cannot address every hunter's situation and make them completely satisfied. Our proposal attempts to be as fair as possible.</p>
<p>These proposals are detrimental to archers. The changes made in 2009 resulted in more restricted opportunity for archers. Please don't further restrict archers to make more permit opportunities for modern firearm hunters.</p>	<p>These are really different issues. The balance of opportunity between users is not directly impacted by this permit application proposal. This proposal takes existing permits and divides them into categories.</p>
<p>I and my sons have many points. I believe this proposal will result in reducing the odds of drawing, not increase them because so many people will purchase permit applications.</p>	<p>It certainly depends on the species, but this proposal will have very little effect on Mtn goats, bighorn sheep, and moose because the categories for them did not significantly change. The greatest issue is for deer and elk and as described previously with any change, it is hard to improve the odds of drawing because the competition and the number of hunters with a significant number of points is substantial.</p>
<p>If a person draws two special tags for one species why not give the hunter the option to turn one of the tags back so another hunter can draw the unwanted tag.</p>	<p>Harvest success is addressed annually in developing permit level recommendations. If harvest goes down due to too many hunters drawing multiple tags, then the number of permits will be increased. Re-issuing unused tags could be cumbersome and not help address harvest objectives very much. If this becomes a significant issue, it will be addressed in the future.</p>

<p>If you want to be serious about increasing peoples odds eliminate the number of choices one gets. One choice would do way more for increasing an individuals odds, or even making it so that a person had to choose between applying for a once in a lifetime tag or special permits for deer and elk.</p>	<p>We looked at this option, but the majority of hunters don't support reducing the number of choices on a permit application. The deer and elk category that received the most support for reducing the choices was for the quality category, so we are recommending only two choices for this category.</p>
<p>If a master hunter is not contacted in a given year for a special permit, why should their accumulated points be lost? Even if they are contacted, it would be for damage control. Why should they be penalized?</p>	<p>The majority of hunts for master hunters are now limited to hunt coordinator type hunts. You are only competing against each other so it makes sense to gain and lose points within this category.</p>
<p>The notion of allowing hunters to draw multiple permits for the same species may be problematic. Concern is that some hunters may think this equates to multiple tags/animals. Another possible concern is that you have a significant number of hunters that put in for multiple hunts per species, and if drawn they could call the WDFW and claim that they apply for one of the hunts in error (per your proposal, hunters drawn for hunt can call the WDFW before the hunt starts and state they didn't intend to put in for that hunt and get their points back for that hunt). You need to account for this scenario IMO. Simplest way is to provide applicants with a way to prioritize hunt categories per species. Implementing a software solution to prioritized scheme across hunt choices isn't that complicated - much easier overall that managing hunters phoning the WDFW to back out of 1 category because they drew a hunt in a preferred category.</p>	<p>We have been working very hard to reach out to hunters to make sure they understand the rules. As addressed previously, there are many questions that are really unknown and will have to be dealt with if they become problematic. The idea that lots of folks will draw multiple tags is really questionable.</p> <p>The simplest way to manage the drawing of multiple permits is the limitation of one animal harvested per year and hunters must make the choice of which permit to utilize. No programming or special software is required.</p>
<p>It is not possible to accurately predict what revenues will do. It is possible that more money will be generated from applicants. It is also possible that widespread dissatisfaction with these changes will result in fewer applications and revenues, and possibly even fewer hunters.</p>	<p>There is certainly some question about increased revenues, but judging from the responses we received during the 2009-11 hunting season process, these changes will be well received.</p>
<p>Finally, I am somewhat surprised and truly disillusioned by the process that has been used to draft these proposed changes. What does this say about the public input process? Why are resources (people and money?) being spent on making system changes before adequate and full public input about the specific proposals has been heard?</p>	<p>As described in the information provided on the web page, this proposal has received significant support from hunters during development of the 2009-11 hunting regulation package. What remains and what is being worked out currently are the details of making this concept acceptable and workable.</p>

<p>To make better opportunities' for more hunters to be drawn, consider two things...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For 3pt or better deer and branched antler elk permits, impose a one year waiting period. (you can still buy a point, but can't be drawn) 2. Give points based on number of years an applicant has applied..... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-3 years receive 1 point (1-5 yrs) • 4-6 years receive 2 points (6-10yrs) • 7-9 years receive 3 points (11+ yrs) • 10+ years receive 4 points <p>These two changes would increase the odds of drawing a special permit to those who have waited for years and can't beat the odds. I've talked to a number of hunters, who have 10-14 points and can't get drawn, but know others who've been drawn 2-3 consecutive years.</p>	<p>We plan to wait and determine the impacts from the current proposals, but will consider other ideas if there are remaining concerns about drawing odds in the future.</p>
<p>If a hunter gets drawn for an antlerless tag & Buck/Bull permit, chances are they won't use the tag harvesting an antlerless animal. In addition, this reduces other hunters opportunities by allowing more than one permit. Make it so you have to rank your preference...buck/bull permit #1, Antlerless #2 etc.</p>	<p>As mentioned previously, department biologists include success rates to achieve harvest objectives. A relatively high percentage of permit holders do not participate currently. Future participation rate changes will be incorporated into harvest objectives and recommended permit levels.</p>
<p>Another proposed regulation states that if an archery hunter or a muzzle loader hunter applies for youth, senior, disabled, or master hunts for elk they will be pooled with modern firearm hunters. The way the proposal reads "weapon must be consistent with weapon/tag restriction noted for hunt". All the weapon types hunt the same season but it seems only archery and muzzle loaders are being restricted or penalized. As far as these hunts go there is no incentive or equity as an archer or muzzle loader to apply for those hunts if required to hunt alongside a hunter with a modern firearm. Please consider making archery, muzzle loader, and modern firearm seasons separate.</p>	<p>Applicants for youth, senior, or hunters with disabilities permits will be pooled in these categories and not pooled by weapon/tag restriction. For the most part, separate pools of permits were developed for all three tag types within each category if applicable.</p>