

3. WILDLIFE INTERACTION REGULATIONS– RULE ACTION

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“GREEN SHEET”

Meeting: June 4, 2010
Agenda Item 3: Wildlife Interaction Regulations – **Rule Action**
Prepared By: Dave Ware
Presented By: Dave Ware, Game Division Manager, Wildlife Program

Background:

At Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings held in March and April, Department staff briefed the Commission on proposed new regulations that address wildlife conflicts (Chapter 232-36 WAC). The Commission held a public hearing on these proposals during its April 9-10, 2010, meeting in Leavenworth. Staff reviewed all the public comments received and revisions were incorporated into a revised Department proposal.

The major changes include:

- Crop Adjustors – Staff recommends sharing the cost of the adjustor; at the property owner’s discretion, the department will split the cost of a negotiated fee or charge a flat fee of \$600 to each landowner submitting a valid claim, and pay the landowner’s share out of their damage payment.
- Documentation – Staff does not recommend a change in the documentation requirements. It appears that landowners are already required to use many of these same documents for U.S. Department of Agriculture programs and the Washington State Department of Revenue.
- \$500 Deductible – Staff recommends dropping this requirement. With other criteria in place, the deductible is no longer necessary to manage inefficient use of staff time on small claims.
- Public Hunting for Livestock Depredation Claims – We are recommending that this requirement be eliminated. We plan to encourage landowners who experience depredations to use hunting as a self-help technique where feasible.
- \$1000 Minimum for Livestock Claims – For livestock claims only, we are recommending that we reduce this to the legislative minimum of \$500. This minimum was designed to reduce frivolous claims, but \$1000 may not even cover the loss of a cow or several sheep.
- The definition of "Immediate threat of physical harm" was modified to delete the phrase referring to “close proximity to the human.” The term proximity is not commonly understood and there is concern that it could lead to inappropriate killing of wildlife.

Following the April 9-10, 2010 Commission Meeting, Department staff conducted follow-up discussions with several of the citizens who provided testimony and held a meeting with landowners in the Blue Mountains area. The Fish and Wildlife Commission was provided a briefing at their May 7, 2010 conference call, and they postponed consideration for adoption of the rules until the June 4, 2010 Commission Meeting. All of these discussions have been considered in the revised recommendations for the Wildlife Interaction Regulations.

Policy Issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

- Implement SHB 1778 and develop rules that address property damage and human/wildlife conflicts.
- Ensure that damage control actions are consistent with wildlife population and management objectives.
- Increase property owner flexibility; encourage the use of preventative measures; and clarify priorities and assistance available to address property damage.
- Incorporate the public comments received from the Commission hearing process as appropriate.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

Several citizens testified at the public hearing on the proposed regulations that was held during the April 9-10, 2010 Commission Meeting. Department staff addressed the comments and made changes as described in the “background” section above (HSUS’s concerns about the definition of close proximity when killing wildlife for personal safety; hunters wanting greater access requirements, which had previously been incorporated into the rules in WAC 232-36-300; trappers’ concerns about the requirements for WCO certification; ranchers and farmers concerns regarding the use and payment of licensed adjustors; documentation requirements for filing claims; public access to property; \$500 deductible in addition to other criteria; \$1000 minimum for payment of claims; and concerns expressed by cattlemen about the 12 reporting requirement for depredations, which has been changed to 24 hours with protection of the evidence at the site).

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

Adopt WAC chapter 232-36 as proposed by the department and repeal rules that are being replaced by the new chapter.

Draft motion language:

I move to adopt Chapter 232-36 WAC, Wildlife Interaction Regulations as proposed and repeal WACs 232-12-086 and 232-12-423.

Justification for Commission action:

Extensive public involvement has resulted in a very strong regulation package for addressing wildlife conflicts. This set of rules will help property owners dealing with damage caused by wildlife by clarifying the criteria and conditions for killing wildlife and to file claims for compensation of damages.

Communications plan:

(See attachment)

Communications/Outreach Plan

WDFW Wildlife Interaction Rules

May 2010

Objectives:

- Educate the public about the value of new rules designed to address property damage, nuisance, and public safety resulting from interactions with wildlife.
- Broaden public awareness of WDFW's proposals and the strategies that would be used to resolve property damage and nuisance problems caused by wildlife.
- Inform the public about what individuals can do to resolve problems and where they can go for help.

Audiences:

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Property owners | ▪ Legislature | ▪ Local stakeholders |
| ▪ Environmental groups | ▪ Timber companies | ▪ Tribes |
| ▪ Outdoors groups | ▪ Counties/Cities | ▪ State agencies |
| ▪ General public | ▪ Farmers and Ranchers | ▪ Hunters |

Messages:

- The proposed rules are designed to provide property owners with greater flexibility to prevent and mitigate damage to their property while ensuring stable and healthy wildlife populations.
- Stakeholders played an important role in drafting legislation and in the development of the rules.
- WDFW is not able to respond directly to all citizens who encounter problems with wildlife.
- The rules encourage increased partnerships that provide technical assistance to landowners and expand certification of wildlife control operators to assist them in addressing damage problems.
- The rules encourage proactive agreements with the Department and provide new incentives to landowners with more authority to address wildlife-damage issues.
- The rules clarify when lethal removal may be used to address human safety, property damage, and prevention.
- Prior to lethal removal of wildlife, property owners must employ and document preventative measures used to avoid damage.
- For significant commercial crop damage, reimbursement may be available under terms identified in the proposed rules.

- The use of licensed crop insurance adjustors for assessing crop damage is required under the proposed rules.
- Livestock depredation may be compensated if the state Legislature provides future funding

Communications:

Website:

- Post a notice of WDFW's intent to develop rules. (Posted March 2010)
- Post draft rules (WAC232-36) on the department's website. (March 2010)
- Once completed, the rules will be available on the WDFW website. (Lead: Public Affairs)
- Webpage will include a link to WDFW's Living with Wildlife information.

News releases:

- A news release issued March 2010 announcing that the department is accepting public comments on the rules. (Lead: Public Affairs)
- A news release issued April 2010 announcing that the commission heard public comments on the rules and will consider adoption in June. (Lead: Public Affairs)
- A news release announcing the completion of rules and where to find additional information. (Lead: Public Affairs)

Informational Materials:

- Develop/update brochures for commercial crop damage claims. (Lead: Enforcement Program)
- Update materials for the Living with Wildlife series to provided technical information to avoid problems. (Lead: Wildlife Program)
- Develop materials listing contact information for partners available to assist with damage and nuisance. (Lead: Enforcement Program)
- Develop procedures for customer service staff on how to assist callers with nuisance and damage information. (Lead: Wildlife Program)

Public contacts:

- Proactively make contacts with landowners who have filed chronic damage claims for commercial crop losses in the past. (Lead: Enforcement Program; Wildlife Program in Region 3)
- Make routine contacts with landowners who have access agreements with the department and experience problems with wildlife. (Lead: Wildlife Program)

Advisory group outreach:

- Work with the Game Management Advisory Council to understand the conditions of the rules. (Lead: Wildlife Program)
- Work with the Master Hunter Advisory Council to coordinate projects to help the department and landowners with herding and hazing deer and elk. (Lead: Enforcement Program)

Partnerships:

- Work with county animal control officials to increase citizen awareness of what can be done to prevent wildlife damage and develop agreements to assist landowners with nuisance problems. (Lead: Enforcement Program)
- Work with WSU County Extension programs to increase awareness of damage prevention techniques. (Lead: Wildlife and Enforcement Programs)
- Work with Rehabilitation Facilities to increase awareness of damage prevention techniques. (Lead: Wildlife Program)

Training:

- Develop training workshops for department staff on the major changes to wildlife damage rules and management. (Lead: Enforcement and Wildlife Programs)
- Revise training programs and develop certification requirements for Wildlife Control Operators to assist landowners with wildlife nuisance problems and deer and elk damage mitigation. (Lead: Enforcement Program)

Communication/outreach leads

- Policy: Enforcement Program (Sean Carroll; Steve Crown)
- Wildlife Program (Dave Ware)
- Communications: Public Affairs (Craig Bartlett)

Chapter 232-36 WAC

WILDLIFE INTERACTION REGULATIONS

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-010 Introduction. The Washington department of fish and wildlife's (department) primary responsibility is to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage the fish and wildlife species of the state (RCW 77.04.012). The department promotes conservation of fish and wildlife, while providing fishing, hunting, fish and wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreational opportunities compatible with healthy, diverse, and sustainable fish and wildlife populations. (RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055.)

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NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-020 Purpose. Public support for the recovery and management of healthy wildlife populations is an important aspect of wildlife conservation. Support for wildlife can diminish when people experience ~~with~~ negative interactions with wildlife and damage to private property. The intent of the department is to provide technical advice and ~~assist~~ assistance to property owners to prevent and mitigate damages caused by wildlife. Compensation may be necessary in situations where preventative measures are not successful or when circumstances, outside the control of the private property owner, ~~impede resolution of~~ get in the way of resolving negative wildlife interactions.

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NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-030 Definitions. Definitions used in rules of the fish and wildlife commission are defined in RCW 77.08.010, and the definitions for wildlife interactions are defined in RCW 77.36.010. In addition, unless otherwise provided, the following definitions are applicable to this chapter:

"Act of damaging" means that private property is in the process of being damaged by wildlife, and the wildlife are on the private property, which contains ~~containing~~ commercial crops, pasture, or livestock.

"Big game" means those animals listed in RCW 77.08.030.

"Claim" means an application to the department for compensation under this chapter.

"Claimant" means owner of commercial crop or livestock who has filed a wildlife damage claim for cash compensation.

"Commercial crop" means a commercially raised horticultural and/or agricultural product and includes the growing or harvested product, but does not include livestock, forest land, or rangeland. For the purposes of this chapter, Christmas trees and managed pasture grown using agricultural methods ~~(e.g., including one or more of the following: seeding, plantinged, fertilizinged, irrigatinged)~~, and all parts of horticultural trees, ~~shall be~~ are considered a commercial crop and ~~shall be~~ are eligible for cash compensation.

"Commercial livestock" means cattle, sheep, and horses held or raised by a person for sale.

"Compensation" means a cash payment, materials, or service.

"Completed written claim" means that all of the information required on a department crop or livestock damage claim form is supplied and complete, ~~to include~~ including all supplemental information and certifications required to process the claim.

"Damage" means economic losses caused by wildlife interactions.

"Damage claim assessment" means department approved methods to evaluate crop loss and value caused by deer or elk damage to commercial crops, or livestock losses and value caused by bear, cougar, or wolves.

"Eligible farmer" means an owner who satisfies the definition of eligible farmer pursuant to RCW 82.08.855 (4)(b)(i) through (iv).

"Emergent" means an unforeseen circumstance beyond the control of the landowner or tenant, that presents a real and immediate threat to crops, domestic animals, or fowl.

"Game animal" means wild animals that shall not be hunted except as authorized by the commission.

"Immediate family member" means spouse, state registered domestic partner, brother, sister, grandparent, parent, child, or grandchild.

"Immediate threat of physical harm" means that animal ~~to~~ to human bodily contact is imminent; ~~the game animal is in close proximity to the human~~; and the animal is in attack posture/mode.

"Owner" means a person who has a legal right to commercial crops, commercial livestock, or other private property that was damaged

during a wildlife interaction.

"Physical act of attacking" means actual or imminent animal_to--human physical contact.

"Public hunting" means an owner satisfies the "public hunting" requirement for his or her land, as defined in WAC 232-36-300.

"Wild animal" means those species of the class Mammalia whose members exist in Washington in a wild state.

"Wildlife Control Operator" means a person who has successfully completed the training and obtained one or more levels of certification from the department to assist landowners to prevent or control problems caused by wildlife.

"Wildlife interaction" means the negative interaction and the resultant damage between wildlife and commercial crops, commercial livestock, or other property.

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NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-040 Wildlife/human interaction and conflict resolution for private property damage ~~other than commercial crop and livestock~~. The department is the primary source for property owners seeking to determine legal and effective remedies for addressing wildlife interactions. Protection of property using nonlethal techniques is the primary response encouraged by the department. Harassment and/or lethal removal may also be important techniques to protect human safety or to protect property. The following criteria describe the compensation available to protect property that does not qualify under commercial crop or livestock damage:

(1) Unless specifically appropriated by the legislature, cash compensation will not be provided to property owners by the department.

(2) Compensation will be prioritized in the following order:

(a) Property prioritization:

(i) Private property that is primarily designed for public use, where there is a human safety risk not addressed by other entities.

(ii) Private property that directly contributes to commercial crop or livestock production.

(iii) Private property used for other business purposes.

(iv) Public property.

(v) Residential property.

(vi) Recreational property.

(b) Species prioritization:

(i) Damages caused by wildlife listed as endangered, threatened, sensitive, or categories of concern by the state or federal government.

(ii) Damages caused by big game animals.

(iii) Other federal and state protected species.

(iv) Other wildlife species except unclassified species and predatory birds.

(3) The department may make agreements with private landowners to prevent property damage. These agreements ~~which~~ may include the use of:

(a) Best management practices to reduce risk of private property damage;

(b) ~~Scare~~ Scaring or hazing materials;

(c) Fencing materials;

(d) Volunteers referred by the department for hazing, fence repair, etc; and

(e) Lethal removal options.

(4) Private property owners must utilize nonlethal abatement techniques prior to requesting other compensation from the department or before utilizing lethal techniques as ~~required~~ outlined in WAC 232-36-050.

(a) Use of nonlethal techniques must be documented and consistent with procedures and requirements established by the department.

(b) Evidence of damage (e.g., photographs) must be provided by the property owner.

(c) Property owner must comply with reporting requirements of the department.

(5) Wildlife may not be captured and transported or relocated off the owner's property (parcel where damage occurred) unless:

(a) Authorized by rule of the commission; or

(b) By written permit from the department, and ~~and the owner of the damaged private property.~~

(c) Property Owner is in compliance with department rules, permits, and reporting requirements.

(6) The department will establish written procedures for assisting private property owners, using the criteria and priorities provided in this rule. The procedures will include enlistment of partners and volunteers through agreements, permits, and incentives to help mitigate wildlife interactions.

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NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-050 Killing wildlife for personal safety ~~or for causing private property damage~~. The fish and wildlife commission is authorized to classify wildlife as game, as endangered, or protected species, or as a predatory bird consistent with RCW 77.08.010 and 77.12.020. The commission is also authorized, pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on killing or trapping wildlife that is threatening human safety ~~or causing property damage~~.

The conditions for killing wildlife vary, based primarily on the classification of the wildlife species, the imminent nature of the threat to personal safety ~~or damage to private property, the type of private property damage, and the preventive and nonlethal methods employed by the person prior to the safety or damage event~~. Additional conditions defined by the department may also be important, depending on individual situations. Killing wildlife for personal safety ~~or to address private property damage~~ is subject to all other state and federal laws including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.

(1) Killing wildlife for personal safety.

(a) It is permissible to kill wild animals engaged in the physical act of attacking a person.

(b) It is permissible to kill game animals posing an immediate

threat of physical harm to a person.

~~(2) Killing wildlife causing damage to a commercial crop or commercial livestock.~~

~~—— (a) It is permissible to kill unclassified wildlife, predatory birds, and big game animals that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock, under the following conditions:~~

~~—— (i) Unclassified wildlife and predatory birds (defined in RCW 77.12.020) that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock may be killed with the express permission of the owner at any time on private property, to protect commercial crops or livestock.~~

~~—— (ii) An individual (one) big game animal may be killed while it is in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock if the owner has a valid, written damage prevention agreement with the department.~~

~~—— (iii) Multiple big game animals may be killed while they are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock if the owner is issued a kill permit by the department.~~

~~—— (iv) A damage prevention agreement or kill permit must include: An approved checklist of the reasonable preventative and nonlethal means that must be employed; a description of the properties where lethal removal is allowed; the species and sex of the animal that may be killed; the terms of the agreement/permit; the dates when lethal removal is authorized; who may kill the animal(s) and other conditions developed within department procedural documents.~~

~~—— (b) It is unlawful to kill protected species (as defined in WAC~~

~~232-12-011) or endangered species (as defined in WAC 232-12-014) unless authorized by commission rule or with a permit from the department with the following additional requirements:~~

~~—— (i) Federally listed threatened or endangered species will require federal permits or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.~~

~~—— (ii) All migratory birds are federally protected and may require a federal permit or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.~~

~~—— (3) Killing wildlife causing damage or killing wildlife to prevent private property damage.~~

~~—— (a) Unclassified wildlife, predatory birds (as defined in RCW 77.12.020), and eastern gray squirrels may be killed with the express permission of the property owner at any time, to prevent private property damage on private real property.~~

~~—— (b) Subject to subsection (7) of this section, the following list of wildlife species may be killed with the express permission of the owner, when causing damage to private property: Raccoon, fox, bobcat, beaver, muskrat, mink, river otter, weasel, hare, and cottontail rabbits.~~

~~—— (c) The department may make agreements with landowners to prevent private property damage by wildlife. The agreements may include special hunting season permits such as: Landowner damage prevention permits, spring black bear hunting permits, permits issued through the landowner hunting permit program, kill permits, and Master Hunter permits.~~

~~—— (d) Landowners are encouraged to allow general season hunters during established hunting seasons on their property to help minimize~~

~~damage potential and concerns.~~

~~—— (4) Wildlife control operators may assist property owners under the conditions of their permit, as established in WAC 232-36-060.~~

~~—— (5) Tribal members may assist property owners under the conditions of valid comanagement agreements between tribes with off-reservation hunting rights and the department. Tribes must be in compliance with the agreements including, but not limited to, adhering to reporting requirements and harvest restrictions.~~

~~—— (6) Hunting licenses and tags are not required to kill wildlife under this section, except for subsection (3)(c) and (d) of this section; and tribal members operating under subsection (5) of this section are required to meet tribal hunting license, tag, and permit requirements.~~

~~—— (7) Except as specifically provided in a permit from the department or rule of the commission, people taking wildlife under this rule are subject to the laws and rules of the state including, but not limited to, those found in Title 77 RCW and Titles 220 and 232 WAC. Wildlife taken under this rule remains the property of the state and may be disposed of in the manner and under the conditions that follow:~~

~~—— (a) Wildlife taken under subsections (1) and (2)(b) of this section must be reported to the department within twenty-four hours, and the animal and all parts must be provided to the department or its designees.~~

~~—— (b) Wildlife taken under subsection (2)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section becomes the property of the private landowner and may be lawfully disposed consistent with state laws and rules including,~~

~~but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.~~

~~—— (c) Wildlife taken under subsection (2)(a)(iii) of this section must be disposed of consistent with the conditions identified under the permit.~~

~~—— (d) Wildlife taken under subsection (3) of this section may be lawfully possessed by the owner, licensee, and/or permit holder. Possession of wildlife taken by tribal members is subject to the laws of their tribe and must be consistent with their agreement with the state.~~

~~{ }~~

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-~~050~~ 051 Killing wildlife ~~for personal safety or for causing private property damage.~~ The fish and wildlife commission is authorized to classify wildlife as game, as endangered, ~~or~~ protected species, or as a predatory bird consistent with RCW 77.08.010 and 77.12.020. The commission is also authorized, pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on killing or trapping wildlife that is ~~threatening human safety or~~ causing property damage.

The conditions for killing wildlife vary, based primarily on the classification of the wildlife species, the imminent nature of the threat to ~~personal safety or~~ damage to private property, the type of private property damage, and the preventive and nonlethal methods employed by the person prior to the ~~safety or~~ damage event. Additional conditions defined by the department may also be important, depending on individual situations. Killing wildlife ~~for personal safety or~~ to address private property damage is subject to all other state and federal laws including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.

~~(1) Killing wildlife for personal safety.~~

~~— (a) It is permissible to kill wild animals engaged in the physical act of attacking a person.~~

~~(b) It is permissible to kill game animals posing an immediate threat of physical harm to a person.~~

(21) Killing wildlife causing damage to a commercial crop or commercial livestock.

(a) It is permissible to kill unclassified wildlife, predatory birds, and big game animals that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock, under the following conditions:

(i) ~~Unclassified wildlife and predatory~~ Predatory birds (defined in RCW ~~77.12.02077.08.010(39)~~) and unclassified wildlife that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock may be killed with the express permission of the owner at any time on private property, to protect commercial crops or livestock.

(ii) An owner with a valid, written damage prevention agreement with the department may kill an individual (one) big game animal ~~may be killed~~ while it is in the act of damaging commercial crops. ~~or livestock if the owner has a valid, written damage prevention agreement with the department.~~

(iii) An individual (one) big game animal may be killed during the physical act of attacking livestock or pets.

(iv) Multiple big game animals may be killed while they are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock if the owner is issued a ~~kill~~ permit by the department.

(ivv) A damage prevention agreement or kill permit must include: An approved checklist of the reasonable preventative and nonlethal means that must be employed prior to lethal removal; a description of the properties where lethal removal is allowed; the species and sex of the animal that may be killed; the terms of the

agreement/permit; the dates when lethal removal is authorized; who may kill the animal(s); and other conditions developed within department procedural documents.

(b) It is unlawful to kill protected species (as defined in WAC 232-12-011) or endangered species (as defined in WAC 232-12-014) unless authorized by commission rule or with a permit from the department, with the following additional requirements:

(i) Federally listed threatened or endangered species will require federal permits or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.

(ii) All migratory birds are federally protected and may require a federal permit or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.

(32) Killing wildlife causing damage or killing wildlife to prevent private property damage.

(a) ~~Unclassified wildlife, predatory~~ Predatory birds (as defined in RCW ~~77.12.020~~77.08.010(39)), unclassified wildlife, and eastern gray squirrels may be killed with the express permission of the property owner at any time, to prevent private property damage on private real property.

(b) Subject to subsection (7) of this section, the following list of wildlife species may be killed with the express permission of the owner, when causing damage to private property: Raccoon, fox, bobcat, beaver, muskrat, mink, river otter, weasel, hare, and cottontail rabbits.

(c) The department may make agreements with landowners to prevent private property damage by wildlife. The agreements may include special hunting season permits such as: Landowner damage

prevention permits, spring black bear hunting permits, permits issued through the landowner hunting permit program, kill permits, and Master Hunter permits.

(d) Landowners are encouraged to allow general season hunters during established hunting seasons on their property to help minimize damage potential and concerns.

(~~4~~3) Wildlife control operators may assist property owners under the conditions of their permit, as established in WAC 232-36-060 and 232-36-065.

(~~5~~4) Tribal members may assist property owners under the conditions of valid co-management agreements between tribes ~~with off-reservation hunting rights and the department~~ and the department. Tribes must be in compliance with the agreements including, but not limited to, adhering to reporting requirements and harvest restrictions.

(~~6~~5) Hunting licenses and tags are not required to kill wildlife under this section, unless the killing is pursuant to ~~except for~~ subsections (~~3~~2)(c) and (d) of this section. ~~and tribal~~ Tribal members operating under subsection (~~5~~4) of this section are required to meet tribal hunting license, tag, and permit requirements.

(7) Except as specifically provided in a permit from the department or a rule of the commission, people taking wildlife under this rule are subject to the laws and rules of the state including, but not limited to, those found in Title 77 RCW and Titles 220 and 232 WAC. ~~Wildlife taken under this rule remains the property of the state and may be disposed of in the manner and under the conditions that follow:~~

~~—— (a) Wildlife taken under subsections (1) and (2)(b) of this section must be reported to the department within twenty-four hours, and the animal and all parts must be provided to the department or its designees.~~

~~—— (b) Wildlife taken under subsection (2)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section becomes the property of the private landowner and may be lawfully disposed consistent with state laws and rules including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.~~

~~—— (c) Wildlife taken under subsection (2)(a)(iii) of this section must be disposed of consistent with the conditions identified under the permit.~~

~~—— (d) Wildlife taken under subsection (3) of this section may be lawfully possessed by the owner, licensee, and/or permit holder. Possession of wildlife taken by tribal members is subject to the laws of their tribe and must be consistent with their agreement with the state.~~

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-~~050~~-055 Disposal of ~~Killing~~ wildlife ~~killed~~ for personal safety or for causing private property damage. The fish and wildlife commission is authorized ~~to classify wildlife as game, endangered, protected, or as a predatory bird consistent with RCW 77.08.010 and 77.12.020.~~ The commission is also authorized, pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on disposal of wildlife ~~kill~~ed~~ing~~ or ~~trapp~~ed~~ing~~ wildlife ~~that is~~ because they were threatening human safety or causing property damage.

~~The conditions for killing wildlife vary, based primarily on the classification of the wildlife species, the imminent nature of the threat to personal safety or damage to private property, the type of private property damage, and the preventive and nonlethal methods employed by the person prior to the safety or damage event. Additional conditions defined by the department may also be important depending on individual situations. Killing wildlife for personal safety or to address private property damage is subject to all other state and federal laws including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.~~

~~(1) Killing wildlife for personal safety.~~

~~(a) It is permissible to kill wild animals engaged in the physical act of attacking a person.~~

~~—— (b) It is permissible to kill game animals posing an immediate threat of physical harm to a person.~~

~~—— (2) Killing wildlife causing damage to a commercial crop or commercial livestock.~~

~~—— (a) It is permissible to kill unclassified wildlife, predatory birds, and big game animals that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock, under the following conditions:~~

~~—— (i) Unclassified wildlife and predatory birds (defined in RCW 77.12.020) that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock may be killed with the express permission of the owner at any time on private property, to protect commercial crops or livestock.~~

~~—— (ii) An individual (one) big game animal may be killed while it is in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock if the owner has a valid, written damage prevention agreement with the department.~~

~~—— (iii) Multiple big game animals may be killed while they are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock if the owner is issued a kill permit by the department.~~

~~—— (iv) A damage prevention agreement or kill permit must include: An approved checklist of the reasonable preventative and nonlethal means that must be employed; a description of the properties where lethal removal is allowed; the species and sex of the animal that may be killed; the terms of the agreement/permit; the dates when lethal removal is authorized; who may kill the animal(s) and other conditions developed within department procedural documents.~~

~~—— (b) It is unlawful to kill protected species (as defined in WAC~~

~~232-12-011) or endangered species (as defined in WAC 232-12-014) unless authorized by commission rule or with a permit from the department with the following additional requirements:~~

~~—— (i) Federally listed threatened or endangered species will require federal permits or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.~~

~~—— (ii) All migratory birds are federally protected and may require a federal permit or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.~~

~~—— (3) Killing wildlife causing damage or killing wildlife to prevent private property damage.~~

~~—— (a) Unclassified wildlife, predatory birds (as defined in RCW 77.12.020), and eastern gray squirrels may be killed with the express permission of the property owner at any time, to prevent private property damage on private real property.~~

~~—— (b) Subject to subsection (7) of this section, the following list of wildlife species may be killed with the express permission of the owner, when causing damage to private property: Raccoon, fox, bobcat, beaver, muskrat, mink, river otter, weasel, hare, and cottontail rabbits.~~

~~—— (c) The department may make agreements with landowners to prevent private property damage by wildlife. The agreements may include special hunting season permits such as: Landowner damage prevention permits, spring black bear hunting permits, permits issued through the landowner hunting permit program, kill permits, and Master Hunter permits.~~

~~—— (d) Landowners are encouraged to allow general season hunters during established hunting seasons on their property to help minimize~~

~~damage potential and concerns.~~

~~—— (4) Wildlife control operators may assist property owners under the conditions of their permit, as established in WAC 232-36-060.~~

~~—— (5) Tribal members may assist property owners under the conditions of valid comanagement agreements between tribes with off-reservation hunting rights and the department. Tribes must be in compliance with the agreements including, but not limited to, adhering to reporting requirements and harvest restrictions.~~

~~—— (6) Hunting licenses and tags are not required to kill wildlife under this section, except for subsection (3)(c) and (d) of this section; and tribal members operating under subsection (5) of this section are required to meet tribal hunting license, tag, and permit requirements.~~

~~—— (7) Except as specifically provided in a permit from the department or a rule of the commission, people taking wildlife under this rule-title are subject to the laws and rules of the state including, but not limited to, those found in Title 77 RCW and Titles 220 and 232 WAC. Wildlife taken under this rule-chapter remains the property of the state and may be disposed of in the manner and under the conditions that follow:~~

(a) Wildlife taken under WAC 232-36-050 and WAC 232-36-051, ~~subsections (1)(b) and WAC 232-36-051 under subsection (1)(a)(iii) and (2)(b) of this section~~ must be reported to the department within twenty-four hours, and the animal and all parts must be provided to the department or its designees.

(b) Wildlife taken under subsections ~~(21)~~(a)(i) and (ii) of ~~this section~~ WAC 232-36-051 becomes the property of the private landowner

and may be lawfully disposed consistent with state laws and rules including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.

(c) Wildlife taken under subsection (~~21~~)(a)(~~iiiiv~~) of ~~this section~~— WAC 232-36-051 must be disposed of consistent with the conditions identified under the permit.

(d) Wildlife taken under subsection (~~32~~) of ~~this section~~— WAC 232-36-051 may be lawfully possessed by the owner, licensee, and/or permit holder. Possession of legally taken wildlife ~~taken~~ by tribal members is subject to the laws of their tribe and must be consistent with their agreement with the state.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-060 Director or his/her designee is empowered to ~~issue grant~~ wildlife control operator ~~permits certificationste~~ ~~address wildlife interactions~~. ~~When the department determines that a wildlife interaction can be controlled by persons, political subdivisions of this state, or the United States,~~ For purposes of training individuals to assist landowners with employing non-lethal management techniques, or to harass, kill, trap, release, and dispatch animals that are causing damage to private property, the director or his/her designee may issue wildlife control operator (WCO) ~~permits certificationsfor control of said wildlife~~.

(1) ~~To qualify for Wildlife control operators~~ WCO certification, ~~applicants must~~shall:

(a) Be at least eighteen years of age;

(b) ~~Have completed~~ Take and complete the department's WCO certifications course;

(c) Be certified by the department and ~~H~~have the equipment, knowledge, and ability to control the wildlife species causing conflict or property damage;

(d) Be legally eligible to possess a firearm and without a felony or domestic violence conviction including, but not limited to, convictions under chapter 9.41 RCW, unless firearm possession rights have been restored; ~~and~~

(e) Not have a gross misdemeanor fish and wildlife conviction

within the last five years-; and

~~——(2)(f) Pay The enrollment fee for certification training/education. After ~~provided by the department after~~ July 1, 2010, this fee shall be fifty dollars (RCW 77.12.184). This enrollment fee is waived for participants seeking certification, but do not charge a fee for their services.~~

~~(2) Once a person is granted WCO certification, he or she must apply for a permit pursuant to WAC 232-36-065 in order to harass, kill, trap, release, or dispatch animals causing damage to private property.~~

~~(3) Depending on certifications authorized by the department, wildlife control operators may use live traps to capture any animal causing an animal problem as that term is defined in chapter 77.15 RCW.~~

~~——(4) Depending on certification, wildlife control operators may only use body gripping traps in compliance with RCW 77.15.194.~~

~~——(5) Wildlife trapped under the authority of a wildlife control operator permit may not be released or disposed of without written consent of the property owner where the wildlife is to be released.~~

~~——(6) Wildlife control operators must submit a complete annual report of all control activity on the form supplied by the department. The report must be received or postmarked on or before the fifteenth day of January. Failure to submit a report may result in certification permit being revoked and future certifications suspended.~~

~~——(7) Wildlife control operator permits shall be revoked and future permits denied by the director or issuing authority when, in the judgment of the department:~~

~~—— (a) Information contained in the application was inaccurate or false;~~

~~—— (b) The permittee or person controlling wildlife fails to comply with department statutes or rules; or~~

~~—— (c) The person violates a trapping or other wildlife law.~~

~~—— (8) If the certification permit is denied or revoked, the department shall provide the applicant, in writing, a statement of the specific reason(s) for the denial or revocation. The applicant may request an appeal in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW. Appeal request shall be filed in writing and returned within twenty days from the mailing date of the denial and be addressed to WDFW Legal Services Office, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091.~~

~~—— (9) Wildlife control certification permits are valid for three years.~~

~~—— (10) It is unlawful to trap, harass, or otherwise control wildlife on the property of another for a fee or other consideration without a wildlife control certification permit.~~

~~—— (11) The department may develop additional conditions and procedures to include training requirements from wildlife control operators consistent with this rule.~~

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-065 Director or his/her designee is empowered to issue wildlife control operator permits to address wildlife interactions.

For purposes of assisting property owners in managing animals causing damage to private property, the director or his/her designee may issue permits to wildlife control operators (WCOs). Only WCOs who are certified by the department qualify for such a permit.

(1) If the certification for a WCO included training for the use of live traps, the WCO may use live traps to capture any animal causing an animal problem, as that term is defined in 77.15.192 RCW.

(2) Depending on a WCO's certification training, he or she may use body gripping traps, but only if he or she complies with RCW 77.15.194.

(3) WCOs who trap wildlife under the authority of a department permit may not release or dispose of such wildlife without written consent of the property owner where the wildlife is to be released or disposed.

(4) WCOs must submit a complete annual report of all control activity on the form supplied by the department. The report must be received or postmarked on or before the twentieth day of April each year. Failure to submit a report may result in the department revoking the WCO's certification and permit and suspending the person's right to future certification and permits.

(5) WCO certification and permits will be revoked and future certification and permits denied by the director or issuing authority when, in the judgment of the department:

(a) Information contained in a WCO's application was inaccurate

or false;

(b) The WCO fails to comply with department statutes or rules;

or

(c) The WCO violates a trapping or other wildlife law.

(6) A WCO who provides false or misleading information in his or her WCO certification application may be punished under RCW 9A.76.175 or 40.16.030. A WCO who fails to comply with department statutes or rules as required by his or her WCO certification and permit may be punished under RCW 77.15.750. A WCO who violates trapping or other wildlife laws may be punished under the appropriate statute in Title 77 RCW for that crime.

(7) If the initial application for WCO certification is denied or revoked, or the application to renew a WCO's certification is denied or revoked, the department shall provide the applicant, in writing, a statement of the specific reason(s) for the denial or revocation. The applicant may request an appeal in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW. Appeal requests shall be filed in writing and returned within twenty days from the mailing date of the denial and be addressed to WDFW Legal Services Office, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091.

(8) WCO certification and permits are valid for three years.

(9) It is unlawful to trap, harass, or otherwise control wildlife on the property of another for a fee or other consideration without a WCO certification and permit.

(10) The department may develop additional conditions and procedures, to include training requirements, for WCOs consistent with this rule.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-100 Payment for commercial crop damage--Limitations. Owners, who have worked with the department to prevent deer and elk damage, but continue to experience losses, may be eligible to file a damage claim and receive cash compensation from money appropriated by the legislature. Damages payable under this section are limited to the lost or diminished value of a commercial crop, whether growing or harvested, and shall be paid only to the owner of the crop at the time of damage, without assignment. Cash compensation for claims from deer and elk damage shall not include damage to other real or personal property, including other vegetation or animals, lost profits, consequential damages, or any other damages. The department is authorized to pay up to ten thousand dollars to the owner per claim.

Claims for cash compensation will be denied when:

- (1) The claim is for a noncommercial crop;
- (2) The owner of the commercial crop does not meet the definition of "eligible farmer" in RCW 82.08.855 (4)(b)(i) through (iv);
- (3) The loss estimate is less than one thousand dollars;
- (4) No claim will be processed unless the owner provides the department with an approved checklist of the preventative and nonlethal means that have been employed, and the owner has complied with the terms and conditions of his or her agreement(s) with the

department;

(5) An owner or lessee has accepted noncash compensation to offset crop damage in lieu of cash. Acceptance of noncash compensation will constitute full and final payment for crop damages within the growing season of the damaged crop;

(6) Damages to the commercial crops claimed are covered by insurance or are eligible for payment from other entities. Any portion of the actual damage not covered by others is eligible for compensation from the department;

(7) The property where the damage occurred was not open to public hunting consistent with WAC 232-36-300 for the species causing the damage, unless, as determined by the department, the property is inconsistent with hunting or hunting would not address the damage problem. This includes all properties owned or leased by the owner adjacent to, contiguous to, or in the vicinity of the property where crop damage occurred;

(8) The crop is grown or stored on public property;

(9) The owner or lessee fails to provide on-site access to the department or designee for inspection and investigation of alleged damage or to verify eligibility for a claim;

(10) The owner has not provided a completed written claim form and all other required information, or met required timelines prescribed within WAC 232-36-110;

(11) The owner fails to sign a statement affirming that the facts and supporting documents are truthful to the best of the owner's knowledge;

(12) The owner or designee has harvested commercial crops

without an investigation completed under the direction of the department; or

(13) The department has expended all funds appropriated for payment of such claims for the current fiscal year.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-110 Application for cash compensation for commercial crop damage--Procedure. Pursuant to this section, the department may distribute money appropriated by the legislature to pay commercial crop damage caused by wild deer or elk in the amount of up to ten thousand dollars per claim, unless following an appeal the department is ordered to pay more (see RCW 77.36.130(2)). The department shall develop claim procedures and application forms consistent with this section for cash compensation of commercial crop damage. Partnerships with other public and private organizations to assist with completion of applications, assessment of damage, and to provide funding for compensation are encouraged.

Filing a claim:

(1) Owners who have worked with the department to prevent deer or elk damage, yet who still experience loss and meet eligibility requirements, may file a claim for cash compensation.

(2) The claimant must notify the department within seventy-two hours of discovery of crop damage and at least seventy-two hours prior to harvest of the claimed crop.

(3) A complete, written claim must be submitted to the department within sixty days of when the damage stops.

(4) Owners may only file one claim per year. Multiple partners in a farming operation are considered one owner. Operations

involving multiple partners must designate a "primary grower" to receive payment from the department.

(5) The claim form declaration must be signed, affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful per the certification set out in RCW 9A.72.085, before the department will process the claim.

(6) In addition to a completed claim form, an applicant must provide:

(a) A copy of applicant's Schedule F of Form 1040, Form 1120, or other applicable forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service indicating the applicant's gross sales or harvested value of commercial crops for the previous tax year.

(b) The assessment method used consistent with WAC 232-36-120, valuation of property damage.

(c) Applicant must provide proof of ownership of claimed commercial crops or contractual lease of claimed commercial crops consistent with department procedural requirements for submission of documents.

(d) Written documentation of approved methodology used to assess and determine final crop loss and value.

(e) Applicant must provide records documenting average yield on claimed crop and parcel, certified yield reports, production reports and certified third-party weight certificates completed at the time weighed for claimed year, and other applicable documents that support yield loss and current market price. Current market price will be determined less transportation and cleaning costs when applicable.

(f) Declaration signed under penalty of perjury as provided in RCW 9A.72.085, indicating that the applicant is eligible for the claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this section, and that all claim evaluation and assessment information in the claim application is to the best knowledge of the claimant true and accurate.

(g) Copy of the insurance policy and payment on the commercial crop where loss is claimed.

(h) Copy of application for other sources of loss compensation and any payment or denial documentation.

Damage claim assessment:

(7) Damage claim assessment of amount and value of commercial crop loss is the primary responsibility of the claimant. A crop damage evaluation and assessment must be conducted by a licensed crop insurance adjustor:

(a) The owner must submit a damage claim assessment prepared by a crop insurance adjustor licensed by ~~both~~ the state of Washington and certified by the Federal Crop Insurance Service~~the federal government~~.

(b) ~~If requested, the~~ The department will provide the claimant with a list of ~~known-approved~~ adjustors. The owner must select an adjustor from the approved list and arrange for the completion of a crop damage assessment. Adjustor fees will be the ~~sole~~ shared responsibility of the owner and the department.

(c) The department ~~or its designee~~ or the owner may ~~evaluate~~ accept the damage claim assessment provided by the ~~owner of a damaged~~ or licensed adjustor or may hire a state licensed adjustor of their

~~choosing and~~ conduct a separate assessment ~~or evaluation of the~~ ~~to~~
~~verify~~ crop loss ~~amount~~ and value. ~~The party hiring an adjustor to~~
~~conduct a separate assessment or evaluation is responsible for~~
~~payment of all fees.~~

(8) Disagreement between the claimant and the department over the crop loss value may be settled through an adjudicative proceeding.

Settlement of claims:

(9) Subject to money appropriated to pay commercial crop damage, undisputed claims will be paid, less ~~a five hundred dollar deductible~~ one half of the crop adjustor's fee or a maximum of six hundred dollars for the owner's share of the crop adjustor's fee. The crop adjustor's fee is not subject to the ten thousand dollar payment limit per owner. ~~The deductible will only be applied once in three consecutive years per owner if the damage is on the same type of commercial crop or on the same parcel of land.~~

(10) Compensation paid by the department, in addition to any other compensation received by the claimant, may not exceed the total value of the assessed crop loss.

(11) The owner will be notified by the department upon completion of the evaluation and has sixty days to accept or appeal the department's offer for settlement of the claim, or the claim is considered satisfied and not subject to appeal.

(12) The department shall prioritize payment for commercial crop damage in the order the claims were received or upon final adjudication of an appeal. If the department is unable to make a payment for commercial crop damage during the first fiscal year of

a biennium, the claim shall be held over until the following fiscal year when funds become available. Claims that are carried over will take first priority and receive payment before any new claims are paid. Claims will not be carried from one biennium to the next.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-120 Valuation methods for crop damage assessment.

Several methods may be used to determine the extent of a crop damaged by deer and elk and the lost value of the crop resulting from the damage. Assessment methods used by qualified crop adjustors licensed by ~~both~~ the state and certified by the Federal Crop Insurance Service~~federal government~~ will be accepted by the department. Evaluation of crop losses must consider other impacts to crop production, including fertilization, irrigation, precipitation, weather, timing of planting or harvest, and weed control. The following methods are listed in preferred order based on reliability:

(1) Amount consumed - relies on wildlife-proof exclosures in the field; clipping similar sized plots inside and outside of exclosures; then comparing yields.

(2) Amount of stored crops consumed or damaged - determine the bales or pounds of stored crops consumed or destroyed; then determine replacement value.

(3) Replacement value of horticultural trees lost as a result of damage; partial loss due to damage can be estimated per tree based on the percentage destroyed.

(4) Damage vs. undamaged areas - using random sampling methods to compare the yields of damaged to undamaged portions of a field or two similar fields can provide an estimate of loss. Comparing

similar fields assumes the fields are truly "similar" (soil type, aspect, slope, irrigation, fertilization, stand age, etc.).

(5) Animal use - count the number of animals causing damage and the number of days they were present; then estimate the percentage of daily intake provided by the crop (generally less than fifty percent), and the amount of waste, trampling, or trailing; the result should also consider the timing of the damage and potential recovery of the vegetation prior to crop harvest.

(6) Decrease from average yield - historic yields can be used for comparison; the difference between average yield and current yield may shed light on the extent of damage; changing weather or crop growing conditions from one year to the next make this technique less reliable.

~~The department or its designee will review and evaluate the damage claim assessment and valuation method submitted by the owner of a damaged crop and may conduct a separate assessment to verify crop loss and value.~~

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-200 Payment for commercial livestock damage--Limitations. Owners⁷ who have worked with the department to prevent depredation⁷ but continue to experience losses, or who experience unforeseen losses₁, may be eligible to file a damage claim and receive cash compensation. Cash compensation will only be provided to livestock owners by the department when specifically appropriated by the legislature. Damages payable under this section are limited to the lost or diminished value of commercial livestock caused by wild bears, cougars, or wolves and shall be paid only to the owner of the livestock at the time of damage, without assignment. Cash compensation for livestock losses from bears, cougars, and wolves shall not include damage to other real or personal property₁, including other vegetation or animals, lost profits, consequential damages, or any other damages including veterinarian services. The department is authorized to pay up to two hundred dollars per sheep and one thousand five hundred dollars per head of cattle or per horse₁, and no more than ten thousand dollars to the commercial livestock owner per claim.

Claims for cash compensation will be denied when:

(1) Funds for livestock compensation have not been specifically appropriated by the legislature;

(2) The claim is for livestock other than sheep, cattle, or

horses;

(3) The owner of the commercial livestock does not meet the definition of "eligible farmer" in RCW 82.08.855 (4)(b)(i) through (iv);

(4) The loss estimate is less than five hundred dollars;

(5) The owner fails to provide the department with an approved checklist of the preventative and nonlethal means that have been employed, or the owner failed to comply with the terms and conditions of ~~their~~ his or her agreement(s) with the department;

(6) The owner has accepted noncash compensation to offset livestock losses in lieu of cash. Acceptance of noncash compensation will constitute full and final payment for livestock losses within a fiscal year;

(7) Damages to the commercial livestock claimed are covered by insurance or are eligible for payment from other entities. ~~Except~~ However, any portion of the damage not covered by others is eligible for filing a claim with the department;

~~(8) The property where the damage occurred is not open to public hunting as defined in WAC 232-36-300, unless, as determined by the department the property is inconsistent with hunting or where public hunting would not help mitigate the damage. This includes all properties owned or leased by owner adjacent to or contiguous with the property where livestock damage occurred;~~

~~(9)~~ The owner fails to provide on-site access to the department or designee for inspection and investigation of alleged attack or to verify eligibility for claim;

~~(10)~~ The owner has not provided a completed written claim form

and ~~provided~~ all other required information, or met required timelines prescribed within this chapter;

(~~1110~~) No claim will be processed if the owner fails to sign a statement affirming that the facts and supporting documents are truthful to the best of the owner's knowledge;

(~~1211~~) The owner or designee has salvaged or rendered the carcass or allowed it to be scavenged without an investigation completed under the direction of the department; or

(~~1312~~) The department has expended all funds appropriated for payment of such claims for the current fiscal year.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-210 Application for cash compensation for commercial livestock damage--Procedure. Pursuant to this section, the department may distribute money specifically appropriated by the legislature to pay commercial livestock losses caused by wild bear, cougar, or wolves in the amount of up to ten thousand dollars per claim unless, following an appeal, the department is ordered to pay more (see RCW 77.36.130(2)). The department ~~shall~~will develop claim procedures and application forms consistent with this section for cash compensation of commercial livestock losses. Partnerships with other public and private organizations to assist with completion of applications, ~~and~~assessment of losses, and to provide funding for compensation are encouraged.

Filing a claim:

(1) Owners who have worked with the department to prevent livestock depredation, yet who still experience loss or losses that occur under emergent situations, may file a claim for cash compensation if they meet eligibility requirements.

(2) Claimant must notify the department within ~~twelve~~twenty-four hours of discovery of livestock attack.

(3) Damage claim assessment of amount and value of commercial livestock loss is the primary responsibility of the claimant.

(4) Assessment of loss will be conducted by the department:

(a) The owner must provide access to department staff or designees to investigate the cause of death or injury to livestock and use reasonable measures to protect evidence at the depredation site.

(b) Federal officials may be responsible for the investigation when it is suspected that the attack was by a federally listed species.

(5) Claimant must request a damage claim application ~~from the department's Olympia office~~ within ten days of a loss.

(6) A complete, written claim must be submitted to the department within sixty days of an attack on commercial livestock.

(7) The claim form declaration must be signed, , affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful, , before the department will process a claim.

(8) In addition to a completed claim form, an applicant must provide:

(a) A copy of applicant's Schedule F of Form 1040, Form 1120, or other applicable forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service indicating the applicant's gross sales or value of commercial livestock for the previous tax year.

(b) Claimant must provide proof of legal ownership or contractual lease of claimed livestock.

(c) Claimant must provide records documenting livestock value based on current market price.

(d) Declaration signed under penalty of perjury indicating that the applicant is eligible for the claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this section, , and all claim evaluation and

assessment information in the claim application is to the best knowledge of the claimant true and accurate.

(e) Copy of any insurance policy covering livestock loss claimed.

(f) Copy of application for other sources of loss compensation and any payment or denial documentation.

Settlement of claims:

(9) Subject to money appropriated to pay for commercial livestock losses, undisputed claims will be paid up to ten thousand dollars. less a five hundred dollars deductible. The deductible will only be applied once in three consecutive years per livestock owner.

(10) Compensation paid by the department, in addition to any other compensation, may not exceed the total value of the assessed livestock loss.

(11) Upon completion of the evaluation, the department will notify the owner of its decision to either deny the claim or make a settlement offer (order). The owner has sixty days from the date received to accept the department's offer for settlement of the claim or to submit an appeal of the order. The response must be in writing, and the signed document may be mailed or submitted by fax or e-mail. If no written acceptance or request for appeal is received, the offer is considered rejected and not subject to appeal.

(12) The department ~~shall~~will prioritize payment for commercial livestock losses in the order the claims were received or upon final adjudication of an appeal. If the department is unable to make a payment for commercial livestock losses during the first

fiscal year of a biennium, the claim shall be held over until the following fiscal year when funds become available. Claims that are carried over will take first priority and receive payment before any new claims are paid. Claims will not be carried from one biennium to the next.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-300 Public hunting requirements. "Public hunting" generally means that land is open for licensed hunters. The intent of the provision in this chapter is to allow hunting at an appropriate time, manner, and level to help prevent property damage.

As specified in WAC 232-36-100 ~~and 232-36-200~~, cash compensation will only be paid when the property where the damage occurred is open to public hunting. Public hunting is defined as:

(1) The landowner opens the property on which the damage or loss is claimed for general access to all licensed hunters during the season prior to the occurrence of damage; or

(2) The landowner has entered into and complied with any agreement with the department covering the land(s) on which the damage is claimed. Access agreements shall require that:

(a) The land is open to general access to licensed hunters; or

(b) The landowner allows the department to select a limited number of hunters who are authorized to access the land; or

(c) The landowner and the department determine how hunters will be selected and authorized to hunt on the landowner's property in order to effectively prevent damage.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-400 Commercial crop or livestock damage claim--Dispute resolution. For ~~Claims~~ claims where the owner has met all claim eligibility criteria and procedures, but ultimately rejects the written settlement offer (order) for crop or livestock loss and/or value assessment, the provisions of this section shall apply:

Informal resolution:

(1) If the owner rejects the property loss or value assessment and would like to discuss a negotiated settlement, they ~~he or she~~ can request a meeting by notifying the department in writing within ten days of receiving the settlement offer or claim denial (order).

(2) A department representative and the owner or designee(s) will meet and attempt to come to mutual resolution.

(3) Monetary compensation or noncash compensation, mutually agreed upon by both the department and owner, shall be binding and constitute full and final payment for claim.

(4) If parties cannot agree upon damages, the owner may elect to apply for an adjudicative proceeding pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW.

Adjudicative proceeding:

(5) If the owner wishes to appeal the claim denial or the department settlement offer (order), the owner may request an adjudicative proceeding consistent with chapter 34.05 RCW within

sixty days of receiving the original order.

(6) The request must comply with the following:

(a) The request must be in writing, and the signed document may be mailed or submitted by fax or e-mail;

(b) It must clearly identify the order being contested (or attach a copy of the order);

(c) It must state the grounds on which the order is being contested and include the specific facts of the order that are relevant to the appeal; and

(d) The request must identify the relief being requested from the proceeding (e.g., modifying specific provisions of the order).

(7) The proceeding may only result in the reversal or modification of an order when the preponderance of evidence shows:

(a) The order was not authorized by law or rule;

(b) A fact stated in the order is materially incorrect;

(c) The award amount offered is inconsistent with applicable and accepted procedures, rule, and/or law; or

(d) Material information or evidence was made available by the owner at the time of the damage assessment, but was not considered in the order.

(8) The burden of proof is on the appellant (owner) to show that ~~they are~~ he or she is eligible for a claim and that the damage assessment is reliable (see RCW 77.36.130(4)).

(9) Findings of the hearings officer are subject to the annual funding limits appropriated by the legislature and payment rules (WAC 232-36-110(12) and 232-36-210(9)) of the commission.

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-500 Unlawful taking or possession of wildlife for personal safety or causing property damage--Penalties. (1) ~~Except as authorized by WAC 232-36-050(7), the~~ The unlawful trapping, killing, or possession of wildlife is punishable under Title 77 RCW including, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) RCW 77.15.120 for endangered wildlife;
- (b) RCW 77.15.130 for protected wildlife;
- (c) RCW 77.15.140 for unclassified wildlife;
- (d) RCW 77.15.170 for wildlife wastage;
- (e) RCW 77.15.190 and 77.15.194 for unlawful trapping or traps;
- ~~(e)-(f)~~ (f) RCW 77.15.290 for transportation of wildlife;
- ~~(f)-(g)~~ (g) RCW 77.15.400 for wild birds;
- ~~(g)-(h)~~ (h) RCW 77.15.410 for big game;
- ~~(h)-(i)~~ (i) RCW 77.15.420 for illegally taken or possessed wildlife;

and

- ~~(i)-(j)~~ (j) RCW 77.15.430 for wild animals.

(2) A person trapping or killing wildlife who fails to notify the department pursuant to WAC 232-36-~~050-055~~ may be in violation of ~~an infraction pursuant to RCW 77.15.160~~ 77.15.750(1).

[]

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-510 Failure to abide by the conditions of permits, provide completed forms, or submit required documents or reports.

(1) Failure to ~~provide reports or~~ abide by the conditions of ~~agreements or permits stipulated in this chapter~~ is ~~an infraction~~ a misdemeanor pursuant to RCW ~~77.15.160~~77.15.750.

(2) Failure to provide reports or abide by the conditions of landowner agreements is an infraction pursuant to RCW 77.15.160.

(3) Failure to abide by the conditions of Wildlife Conflict Operator permits is a misdemeanor pursuant to RCW 77.15.750.

(~~24~~) A person who provides false or misleading information required by this chapter may be in violation of RCW 9A.76.175 or 40.16.030.

[]

REPEALER

The following section of the Washington Administrative Code is repealed:

WAC 232-12-086

Director or his designee is empowered to issue nuisance wildlife control operator certifications to control nuisance or problem wildlife.

WAC 232-12-423

Public hunting defined and access contracts.

WAC 232-36 Wildlife interaction regulations.

Recommended Adjustments

The following adjustments are proposed since the Code Reviser (CR 102) filing and are included in your notebook language.

WAC 232-36-020

Page 2: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

WAC 232-36-030

Pages 3-5: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

Page 4: The definition of “immediate threat of physical harm” was modified to delete the phrase: “the game animal is in close proximity to the human”. The term proximity was too vague and not commonly understood; therefore concerns were expressed that animals may be killed when not warranted.

Page 5: A definition of a “Wildlife Control Operator” was added to clarify what qualifies a person to become certified to assist landowners in addressing conflicts caused by wildlife.

WAC 232-36-040

Page 6: The title was modified to more accurately reflect the content of the rule.

Pages 7 & 8: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

WAC 232-36-050

Pages 9-13: This rule was separated into two rules, one dealing with killing wildlife for personal safety and another for addressing killing wildlife to address property damage. This rule is now specific to personal safety.

Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

WAC 232-36-051

Pages 14-18: This rule was separated into two rules, one dealing with killing wildlife for personal safety and another for addressing killing wildlife to address property damage. This rule is now specific to killing wildlife to address property damage.

Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

Page 15: The language in sub-section (1)(a)(ii) was modified to clarify that the authority to kill a big game animal while damaging crops is only available when the owner has an agreement with the department. Sub-section (1)(a)(iii) was added to clarify that one big game animal may be killed in the act of attacking pets or livestock.

Pages 17 & 18: The rules for disposal of wildlife taken under this chapter are deleted from this rule and addressed in a separate rule 232-36-055.

WAC 232-36-055

Pages 19-23: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

The legal disposal of wildlife taken under this chapter is identified in this rule.

WAC 232-36-060

Pages 24-26: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

Page 25: The language under sub-section (1)(f) was modified to delete the sentence regarding a waving of the fee for participants who do not plan to charge a fee. It would be difficult to monitor whether fees are charged and everyone should pay for the cost of developing and providing the training.

This rule was modified so that the requirements for certification of Wildlife Control Operators (WCO) are distinct from the permit regulations for WCOs addressed in 232-36-065.

WAC 232-36-065

Pages 27 & 28: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

This rule stipulates the permit conditions and regulations for WCOs.

WAC 232-36-110

Pages 34-35: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

Sub-section (7)(a) was modified to stipulate that crop damage assessments must be performed by state licensed crop insurance adjustors who are certified by the federal crop insurance corporation. Sub-section (7)(b) was modified to require owners to use an adjustor who is approved by the department and that the cost of the assessment will be shared between the owner and the department. This was changed because of public comment and to make the payment of adjustor fees more consistent and fair. Sub-section (7)(c) was modified to clarify that both the department or the owner could hire and pay for a separate assessment or evaluation of the initial assessment of crop loss and value.

Page 35: Sub-section (9) was modified to eliminate a deductible and clarify how the licensed crop adjustor's fees would be paid by the department. This was changed because of public comment and to clarify how an adjustor would be paid.

WAC 232-36-120

Pages 37: The language was modified to stipulate that crop damage assessments must be performed by state licensed crop insurance adjustors who are certified by the federal crop insurance corporation.

Page 38: The last sentence of this rule was deleted because the process for conducting a separate assessment or evaluation was included in WAC 232-36-110.

WAC 232-36-200

Pages 39-41: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

Page 40: The requirement for an owner to open their property for hunting in order to receive payment for livestock losses was deleted. This was changed because of public comment and because hunting access would be encouraged regardless of whether it is a condition for payment of losses.

WAC 232-36-210

Page 42: The notification period was changed from twelve hours to twenty-four hours to provide a more reasonable amount of time to contact the department.

Pages 42-44: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

Page 43: Language was added to sub-section (2)(a) to ensure that with the added notification time the evidence at the depredation site is preserved.

Page 44: The deductible was removed, there are other criteria in the rules that ensure that use of department staff time will be efficient.

WAC 232-36-300

Page 46: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

Language was added to clarify that the property where crop damage is claimed must have been open to public hunting the year prior to the damage occurrence. In those cases where the landowner did not have an agreement in place with the department, this is to ensure that the landowner attempted to control the damage prior to when it occurred.

WAC 232-36-400

Pages 47 & 48: Several language and grammatical edits were made throughout this chapter WAC 232-36 to improve readability and understanding of the rules.

WAC 232-36-500

Page 49: Several edits were made throughout this rule to improve understanding of the penalties associated with violation of these rules.

WAC 232-36-510

Page 50: Changes were made to this rule to improve understanding of the penalties for violation of permit conditions and agreements developed under the authority of this chapter WAC 232-36.

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN PUBLIC INPUT

WAC 232-36 “Wildlife Interaction Regulations”

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Why should we compensate landowners for crop damage? I am not in favor of providing any support to land owners who do not allow hunting. I respectfully submit my frustration about property owners who post their land and then allow fee hunting or special permission to a select few, then turn around and get a check from the other hunters out of our fund.</p>	<p>The Legislature has determined that commercial crop and livestock owners are eligible for payment of damages. The intent is to provide technical advice and assistance to property owners to prevent and mitigate damages caused by wildlife. However, compensation may be necessary in situations where preventative measures are not successful or when circumstances, outside the control of the private property owner, impede resolving negative wildlife interactions.</p> <p>The proposed rules require property owners to allow hunting that is sufficient to help alleviate the damage. Often times the damage occurs outside of the general hunting seasons and a select number of special permits may be all that is required to effectively deal with the damage.</p>
<p>Hunting is the best option for reducing overly abundant game. Spending hunter fees on building landowner fences is a slap in the face.</p>	<p>The current source of funding for “cost share” fencing comes out of the state’s general fund not the wildlife fund.</p>
<p>Having private land open to hunting should not be a requirement for compensating losses from predators.</p>	<p>The language in 232-36-200 (8) was developed such that the person’s property only needed to be open to hunting if that would help with the depredation issue. For example, there are some situations where if the land is open to hunting cougar, it might reduce the potential for a depredation.</p>
<p>Elk can cause a lot of crop damage on farms. The proposed regulations impose a number of unwarranted costs, administrative and paperwork obligations and time burdens on busy farmers. The rules are also difficult to understand and will result in frustrating and discouraging the filing of claims.</p>	<p>In the past, the details of what was needed to file a claim were not as clear as the current proposed rules. So landowners should have a better understanding in the future about what is required to file a claim. Some of your concern will be addressed once procedures are developed for WDFW staff in handling claims.</p>
<p>There is an unnecessarily complicated and burdensome claims process and it takes too long for payment of a claim.</p>	<p>The claims process should be shorter if licensed adjustors are used to process the assessments of damage.</p>
<p>What is a small business?</p>	<p>Any business that employs fewer than 50 employees.</p>

<p>Why does WDFW need the Schedule F of a farmer’s tax return? Why is proof of ownership needed when the landowner already signs an affirmation that they meet the eligibility criteria?</p>	<p>The law requires that a farmer meet specific requirements in order to be eligible for compensation. One of those requirements is that farmers meet the threshold for what is defined as an eligible farmer. This is to ensure that the farming enterprise is a valid commercial venture. In addition, the state will only pay for crop damage to the valid owner of the crop. Therefore it is important that proof of eligibility and ownership be provided with the claim.</p>
<p>Why does a farmer have to hire and pay a claims adjuster? WDFW should pay for the adjuster.</p>	<p>The process of determining the value and cause of crop loss requires a significant level of expertise. Landowners and WDFW enforcement officers have a difficult time staying current with the appropriate techniques for assessing damage. Requiring the assessment to be conducted by a professional removes much of the guess work and time for review and evaluation of claims out of the process.</p>
<p>The fencing materials provided by WDFW are only a small portion of the cost of building the fence. Building a fence could cost several hundred thousand dollars and a damage claim is capped at \$10,000. Who is responsible for the fence once constructed?</p>	<p>Mitigating wildlife damage to crops is a joint responsibility between the property owner and the state. Fencing a crop field or farm from encroachment by deer or elk may be the best long term solution for chronic problem areas. This solution must be evaluated by both to determine if it is the best fit for the situation. Once constructed, the responsibility for maintenance, etc. belongs to the landowner.</p>
<p>The farmer only gets to claim the costs for the loss of the crop. What about all the costs associated with the filing of the claim, record keeping, and the appraiser?</p>	<p>The state does not often accept responsibility for problems caused by nature. Due to unique circumstances, crop damage from deer and elk is an exception. By the time a damage claim is filed, the state has incurred significant time and expense in attempting to mitigate the problems. As previously described, this issue is a joint responsibility and both the state and the landowner end up sharing the costs of addressing crops being eaten and otherwise damaged in areas managed for healthy deer and elk populations.</p>
<p>Where does the authority come from for WDFW to require the loss to exceed \$1000 or require that the landowner meet the definition of an “eligible farmer” in RCW 82.08.855?</p>	<p>Both of these stipulations come from the new statutes passed during the 2009 Legislative session.</p>

<p>WDFW should pay for herders to chase elk off farmer's lands.</p>	<p>With the current budget issues the state is facing, paying for herding elk is no longer feasible. We have solicited the assistance of volunteers to help with hazing elk off of property with fairly good success in many cases.</p>
<p>WDFW proposes no compensation to a farmer unless all of his adjacent or contiguous lands are open to hunting. What is adjacent and contiguous? Why does a farmer need to open up all of the land if it is not where the damage is occurring?</p>	<p>The reason for this language in the rule to ensure that hunting can be used to effectively address the damage problem. If only the damaged portion of a farmer's property is open for hunting, but adjacent areas are closed, the deer or elk could seek refuge in the closed areas and continue to damage crops. This situation often occurs when elk come into the crop fields in the evening from adjacent refugia.</p>
<p>The regulations do not provide any assurances that a farmer has a reasonable say and control over who hunts on their land. A landowner wants to meet and approve people who want to hunt on their land.</p>	<p>Most legitimate scenarios can be accommodated for providing hunting at a level that is sufficient to help mitigate damage problems. This would include allowing a landowner to know and approve who is on their property.</p>
<p>The proposed regulations indicate that a primary owner/operator is the one eligible for a claim. This disregards lease arrangements and can affect claims where family run operations have been divided up for purposes of efficiency and responsibility.</p>	<p>Actually, this would only require that an operation determine who would be the point person to deal with the department in resolution of a damage claim. The lease agreement or division of the farm remains under the purview of the partners or family members in the operation.</p>
<p>Hot spot hunts should be addressed in the regulations and the dates should include all of the times when elk are in the crops doing damage.</p>	<p>The timing of hot spot hunts are not limited by statute or rule. We tend to avoid the fawning or calving season, but the timing of a hunt is mainly addressed through department policy.</p>
<p>Why is there a \$500 dollar deductible and what is the authority?</p>	<p>The deductible is designed to focus department efforts on addressing significant damage claims.</p>
<p>I am informed that there are no licensed adjusters within 100 miles of my farm. With this travel requirement, my cost for assessing damage could be over \$1000. Why must a farmer pay for the assessment when their claim is capped at \$10,000?</p>	<p>The legislation specifies that assessment of claims is the responsibility of the landowner. The requirement that assessments be conducted professionally by licensed adjustors helps reduce uncertainty and guesswork. Claims are capped at \$10,000, but the new statutes allow appeals for damage claims in excess of the cap to be heard by hearings officers. This should significantly expedite payments of legitimate claims that exceed the \$10,000 cap.</p>
<p>Can cougar and bear caught in the act of attacking livestock or pets be killed?</p>	<p>Yes, that is the intent; however, after reviewing the language in the proposed rule, this needs to be clarified. We will modify the rule to make this more apparent.</p>

Everyone should pay the \$50 fee for the training and certification process for a Wildlife Control Operator.	This may not be a significant impediment, but the thought was to allow cooperators such as local animal control officers to assist landowners with nuisance and property damage through certification as Wildlife Control Operators.
A WCO should not have to get written permission to dispose of carcasses.	The department feels that as certified WCOs, we want to ensure that there are no issues between sanctioned operators and landowners with regard to disposal of animal carcasses.
The \$1000 minimum for claims should not apply for livestock depredations. It doesn't cover incidents involving one cow or multiple sheep. There are already limits on compensation for each animal.	This minimum was carried over from the crop limitation section. The concept is the same, which is that we want to be able to focus on significant losses and problems.
One claim per landowner per year may be problematic for livestock depredations. These are usually isolated incidents, but may occur more than once in a year.	The intent is to minimize paperwork with multiple claims and associated documentation requirements. We could establish a process that allows for amendment of an original claim.
Filing a claim or notification of a depredation might be difficult within the 12 hour timeframe in the proposed rule. It takes a rancher more time than that to get their livestock off the range. I would suggest 24 hours as long as the rancher addresses the predation site so that the evidence is protected.	The key issue is the ability for the department to respond quickly to determine the cause of the livestock mortality. If the predation site is secured, the 12 hour timeframe for notification may not be as important.

SUMMARY OF ORAL PUBLIC INPUT
Taken at the Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
April 9-10, 2010

WAC 232-36 "Wildlife Interaction Regulations"

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
The techniques used by the Dept to assess crop damage need to be improved. The use of professional crop adjustors is a good step, but even they must conduct the assessment correctly or the crop loss estimate will be excessive. There isn't any science in the assessment; it is an estimate/guess that is negotiated with the landowner.	The use of a licensed adjustor who must be approved by the Department will improve the damage assessment process. In addition, we plan to set up training exercises as part of our approval of adjustors to ensure they are conducted as consistently as possible.
The Department should be responsible for the adjustor's fees. That way you know the assessment will be done fairly and consistently.	Based on the comments we heard from several landowners, we are changing the recommendation so that the cost will be shared between the landowner and the Department. The maximum that the landowner will be responsible for is \$600.

<p>The Department should come and talk with the landowners in the Blue Mountains and get their input on the rules before they are finalized.</p>	<p>We conducted a meeting with the landowners in the Blue Mountains and followed up with others who expressed an interest. The result was a modification of our recommendation including the responsibility for payment of the adjustor and clarification of several other issues.</p>
<p>There are concerns about the cost of an adjustor, the documentation required, and what will be in an agreement with a property owner.</p>	<p>Many of these issues were either addressed by the modification of the recommendation or will be dealt with in the policies and procedures being developed.</p>



PROPOSED RULE MAKING

CR-102 (June 2004)

(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 10-01-034 on 12-7-09;
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)
Wildlife Interaction Rules, WAC chapter 323-36.

Hearing location(s):
Best Western Icicle Inn
505 Highway 2
Leavenworth, WA 98826
509-548-7000

Date: April 9-10, 2010 Time: 8:00 am

Date of intended adoption: May 7, 2010
(Note: This is NOT the effective date)

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: Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Assistance for persons with disabilities:

Contact: Susan Yeager by April 5, 2010

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

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

The purpose of this new chapter is to implement legislation passed in 2009 establishing by rule the conditions and criteria for compensation for property damage from wildlife.

Reasons supporting proposal:

The new chapter establishes the criteria for landowners to get compensation and services from the state for wildlife damage, increases property owner flexibility, encourages the use of preventative measures, and clarifies priorities and assistance available to address property damage.

Statutory authority for adoption: 77.04.012; 77.04.020; 77.04.055;

Statute being implemented: 77.04.012; 77.04.020; 77.04.055

Is rule necessary because of a:

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

DATE
March 3, 2010

NAME
Lori Preuss

SIGNATURE

TITLE
Rules Coordinator

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

DATE: March 03, 2010
TIME: 12:00 PM

WSR 10-06-123

(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 Department of Fish and Wildlife

- 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: Lori Preuss

Address: WDFW Enforcement, 600 Capitol Way, N., Olympia, WA 98501-1091

phone (360) 902-2930

fax (360) 902-2155

e-mail lori.preuss@dfw.wa.gov

No. Explain why no statement was prepared.

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.

Small Business Economic Impact Statement

Wildlife Interaction

1. Description of the reporting, record keeping, and other compliance requirements of the proposed rule.

Anyone filing a claim with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for cash compensation for commercial crop damage caused by wild deer or elk must:

- Notify the department within seventy-two hours of discovery of crop damage and at least seventy-two hours prior to harvest of the claimed crop;
- Submit a complete, written claim within sixty days of when the damage stops;
- File one claim per year. Operations involving multiple partners must designate a "primary grower" to receive payment from the department;
- Sign the claim form declaration, affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful per the certification set out in RCW 9A.72.085; and
- Provide:
 - ✓ A copy of applicant's Schedule F of Form 1040, Form 1120, or other applicable forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service indicating the applicant's gross sales or harvested value of commercial crops for the previous tax year;
 - ✓ The assessment method used consistent with WAC 232-36-120, valuation of property damage;
 - ✓ Proof of ownership of claimed commercial crops or contractual lease of claimed commercial crops consistent with department procedural requirements for submission of documents;
 - ✓ Written documentation of approved methodology used to assess and determine final crop loss and value;
 - ✓ Records documenting average yield on claimed crop and parcel, certified yield reports, production reports and certified third-party weight certificates completed at the time weighed for claimed year, and other applicable documents that support yield loss and current market price. Current market price will be determined less transportation and cleaning costs when applicable;
 - ✓ A declaration signed under penalty of perjury as provided in RCW 9A.72.085, indicating that the applicant is eligible for the claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this section, and that all claim evaluation and assessment information in the claim application is to the best knowledge of the claimant true and accurate;

- ✓ A copy of the insurance policy and payment on the commercial crop where loss is claimed; and
- ✓ A copy of application for other sources of loss compensation and any payment or denial documentation.

Anyone filing a claim with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for cash compensation for livestock losses caused by wild bear, cougar, or wolves must:

- Notify the department within twelve hours of discovery of livestock attack;
- Provide access to department staff or designees to investigate the cause of death or injury to livestock;
- Request a damage claim application from the department's Olympia office within ten days of a loss;
- Submit a complete, written claim to the department within sixty days of an attack on commercial livestock;
- Sign the claim form declaration, affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful; and
- Provide:
 - ✓ A copy of applicant's Schedule F of Form 1040, Form 1120, or other applicable forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service indicating the applicant's gross sales or value of commercial livestock for the previous tax year;
 - ✓ Proof of legal ownership or contractual lease of claimed livestock;
 - ✓ Records documenting livestock value based on current market price;
 - ✓ A declaration signed under penalty of perjury indicating that the applicant is eligible for the claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this section, and all claim evaluation and assessment information in the claim application is to the best knowledge of the claimant true and accurate;
 - ✓ A copy of any insurance policy covering livestock loss claimed; and
 - ✓ A copy of applications for other sources of loss compensation and any payment or denial documentation.

Wildlife control operators (WCOs) must:

- Complete the WCO certification course;
- Pay \$50 per certification;
- Be at least 18 years old;
- Have the equipment, knowledge, and ability to control the wildlife species causing the conflict;
- Be legally eligible to possess a firearm and be without a felony or domestic-violence conviction;
- Not have a gross-misdemeanor fish and wildlife conviction within the past 5 years; and

- Submit a complete annual report of all control activity on or before the 15th day of January each year.

2. Kinds of professional services that a small business is likely to need in order to comply with such requirements.

Applicants for claims of commercial crop damage are responsible for hiring assessors to establish the amount (quantity) of the damage and the value of the damage. Applicants for claims of livestock losses must pay WDFW and/or federal officials to assess the amount and value of commercial livestock loss.

Owners of commercial crops and commercial livestock may need to hire wildlife control operators (WCOs) to try to employ preventive nonlethal and lethal means to prevent damage. Owners of commercial crops and commercial livestock may need to hire professional fence installers to help install fencing materials provided by WDFW to keep wildlife out of crops and away from commercial livestock. Some small businesses may need to hire bookkeepers or accountants to assist with required paperwork.

3. Costs of compliance for businesses, including costs of equipment, supplies, labor, and increased administrative costs.

This is hard to estimate because some businesses may not have to hire bookkeepers, accountants, WCOs, or fence installers because they can do this work themselves. Some small businesses may have friends or family who are qualified crop adjusters licensed by both the state and federal government, so these businesses won't have to pay for crop assessment or may get a discount.

Assuming, however, that a small business must pay for all of these things, costs may average the following:

- Crop assessment: \$70/hr. for 3-4 hours
- Bookkeepers/Accountants: \$70-\$100/hr. for 3-4 hours
- WCOs: These range from \$50-\$100 hr., to \$50-\$500 per job.
- Fencing: \$14/ft. for installation; average fence is 10-ft. tall and $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 mile long.

4. Will compliance with the rule cause businesses to lose sales or revenue?

No. The intent of these rules is to help businesses avoid crop and livestock losses in the first place, and compensate them if they take appropriate steps but experience losses anyway. If businesses follow the procedures in these rules, they should not lose sales or revenue.

5. Cost of compliance for the ten percent of businesses that are the largest businesses required to comply with the proposed rules, using one or more of the following as a basis for comparing costs:

- 1. Cost per employee;**
- 2. Cost per hour of labor; or**
- 3. Cost per one hundred dollars of sales**

Larger commercial growers will experience more costs than smaller growers for things like fence installation, crop assessment, WCOs, and bookkeeping/accounting, but the reason for this is that they have a larger land mass, more trees or plants, or more livestock. Their cost per hour of labor or per one hundred dollar of sales has little correlation to the costs of complying with these rules, especially since these rules are designed to help businesses avoid crop and livestock losses.

6. Steps taken by the agency to reduce the costs of the rule on small businesses, or reasonable justification for not doing so.

The Department works closely with commercial crop and livestock growers to deter wildlife that cause damage so that the growers experience fewer losses. Costs that growers incur as a result of these rules are reasonable, considering the benefits. For example, WDFW provides fencing to commercial growers who request it, which is very costly. Therefore, it is reasonable to require the grower to install the fence himself/herself, or pay to have someone else do it, if the fencing will keep wildlife out of the crops and prevent damage.

7. A description of how the agency will involve small businesses in the development of the rule.

The Department has collaborated on an ongoing basis with commercial growers and livestock owners to develop rules that are fair to everyone but that also help to deter abuses. WDFW will notify commercial growers and livestock owners of the opportunity to comment on these rules and to continue collaborating on changes.

8. A list of industries that will be required to comply with the rule.

Growers of commercial crops and livestock; and wildlife control operators.

Chapter 232-36 WAC

WILDLIFE INTERACTION REGULATIONS

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-010 Introduction. The Washington department of fish and wildlife's (department) primary responsibility is to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage the fish and wildlife species of the state (RCW 77.04.012). The department promotes conservation of fish and wildlife, while providing fishing, hunting, fish and wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreational opportunities compatible with healthy, diverse, and sustainable fish and wildlife populations. (RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055.)

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-020 Purpose. Public support for the recovery and management of healthy wildlife populations is an important aspect of wildlife conservation. Support for wildlife can diminish with negative interactions and damage to private property. The intent of the department is to provide technical advice and assist property owners to prevent and mitigate damages caused by wildlife. Compensation may be necessary in situations where preventative measures are not successful or when circumstances, outside the control of the private property owner, impede resolution of negative wildlife interactions.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-030 Definitions. Definitions used in rules of the fish and wildlife commission are defined in RCW 77.08.010 and the definitions for wildlife interactions are defined in RCW 77.36.010. In addition, unless otherwise provided, the following definitions are applicable to this chapter:

"Act of damaging" means that private property is in the process of being damaged by wildlife and the wildlife are on the private property containing commercial crops, pasture, or livestock.

"Big game" means those animals listed in RCW 77.08.030.

"Claim" means an application to the department for compensation under this chapter.

"Claimant" means owner of commercial crop or livestock who has filed a wildlife damage claim for cash compensation.

"Commercial crop" means a commercially raised horticultural and/or agricultural product and includes the growing or harvested product, but does not include livestock, forest land, or rangeland. For the purposes of this chapter, Christmas trees and managed pasture grown using agricultural methods (e.g., planted, fertilized, irrigated), and all parts of horticultural trees shall be considered a commercial crop and shall be eligible for cash compensation.

"Commercial livestock" means cattle, sheep, and horses held or raised by a person for sale.

"Compensation" means a cash payment, materials, or service.

"Completed written claim" means all information required on department crop or livestock damage claim form is supplied and complete to include all supplemental information and certifications required to process the claim.

"Damage" means economic losses caused by wildlife interactions.

"Damage claim assessment" means department approved methods to evaluate crop loss and value caused by deer or elk damage to commercial crop or livestock losses and value caused by bear, cougar, or wolves.

"Eligible farmer" means owner satisfies the definition of eligible farmer pursuant to RCW 82.08.855 (4) (b) (i) through (iv).

"Emergent" means an unforeseen circumstance beyond the control of the landowner or tenant that presents a real and immediate threat to crops, domestic animals, or fowl.

"Game animal" means wild animals that shall not be hunted except as authorized by the commission.

"Immediate family member" means spouse, state registered domestic partner, brother, sister, grandparent, parent, child, or grandchild.

"Immediate threat of physical harm" means animal to human bodily contact is imminent; the game animal is in close proximity to the human; and the animal is in attack posture/mode.

"Owner" means a person who has a legal right to commercial crops, commercial livestock, or other private property that was damaged during a wildlife interaction.

"Physical act of attacking" means actual or imminent animal to human physical contact.

"Public hunting" means owner satisfies public hunting defined in WAC 232-36-300.

"Wild animal" means those species of the class Mammalia whose members exist in Washington in a wild state.

"Wildlife interaction" means the negative interaction and the resultant damage between wildlife and commercial crops, commercial livestock, or other property.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-040 Wildlife/human interaction and conflict resolution for private property damage other than commercial crop and livestock. The department is the primary source for property owners seeking to determine legal and effective remedies for addressing wildlife interactions. Protection of property using nonlethal techniques is the primary response encouraged by the department. Harassment and/or lethal removal may also be important techniques to protect human safety or to protect property. The following criteria describe the compensation available to protect property that does not qualify under commercial crop or livestock damage:

(1) Unless specifically appropriated by the legislature, cash compensation will not be provided to property owners by the department.

(2) Compensation will be prioritized in the following order:

(a) Property prioritization:

(i) Private property that is primarily designed for public use, where there is a human safety risk not addressed by other entities.

(ii) Private property that directly contributes to commercial crop or livestock production.

(iii) Private property used for other business purposes.

(iv) Public property.

(v) Residential property.

(vi) Recreational property.

(b) Species prioritization:

(i) Damages caused by wildlife listed as endangered, threatened, sensitive, or categories of concern by the state or federal government.

(ii) Damages caused by big game animals.

(iii) Other federal and state protected species.

(iv) Other wildlife species except unclassified species and predatory birds.

(3) The department may make agreements with private landowners to prevent property damage which may include the use of:

(a) Best management practices to reduce risk of private property damage;

(b) Scare or hazing materials;

(c) Fencing materials;

(d) Volunteers referred by the department for hazing, fence repair, etc; and

(e) Lethal removal options.

(4) Private property owners must utilize nonlethal abatement techniques prior to requesting other compensation from the department or before utilizing lethal techniques as required in WAC

232-36-050.

(a) Use of nonlethal techniques must be documented consistent with procedures and requirements established by the department.

(b) Evidence of damage (e.g., photographs) must be provided by the property owner.

(c) Property owner must comply with reporting requirements of the department.

(5) Wildlife may not be captured and transported or relocated off the owner's property (parcel where damage occurred) unless:

(a) Authorized by rule of the commission; or

(b) By written permit from the department and the owner of the damaged private property.

(c) Property is in compliance with department rules, permits, and reporting requirements.

(6) The department will establish written procedures for assisting private property owners using the criteria and priorities provided in this rule. The procedures will include enlistment of partners and volunteers through agreements, permits, and incentives to help mitigate wildlife interactions.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-050 Killing wildlife for personal safety or for causing private property damage. The fish and wildlife commission is authorized to classify wildlife as game, endangered, protected, or as a predatory bird consistent with RCW 77.08.010 and 77.12.020. The commission is also authorized, pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on killing or trapping wildlife that is threatening human safety or causing property damage.

The conditions for killing wildlife vary, based primarily on the classification of the wildlife species, the imminent nature of the threat to personal safety or damage to private property, the type of private property damage, and the preventive and nonlethal methods employed by the person prior to the safety or damage event. Additional conditions defined by the department may also be important depending on individual situations. Killing wildlife for personal safety or to address private property damage is subject to all other state and federal laws including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.

(1) Killing wildlife for personal safety.

(a) It is permissible to kill wild animals engaged in the physical act of attacking a person.

(b) It is permissible to kill game animals posing an immediate threat of physical harm to a person.

(2) Killing wildlife causing damage to a commercial crop or commercial livestock.

(a) It is permissible to kill unclassified wildlife, predatory birds, and big game animals that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock, under the following conditions:

(i) Unclassified wildlife and predatory birds (defined in RCW 77.12.020) that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock may be killed with the express permission of the owner at any time on private property, to protect commercial crops or livestock.

(ii) An individual (one) big game animal may be killed while it is in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock if the owner has a valid, written damage prevention agreement with the department.

(iii) Multiple big game animals may be killed while they are in the act of damaging commercial crops or livestock if the owner is issued a kill permit by the department.

(iv) A damage prevention agreement or kill permit must include: An approved checklist of the reasonable preventative and nonlethal means that must be employed; a description of the properties where lethal removal is allowed; the species and sex of the animal that may be killed; the terms of the agreement/permit;

the dates when lethal removal is authorized; who may kill the animal(s) and other conditions developed within department procedural documents.

(b) It is unlawful to kill protected species (as defined in WAC 232-12-011) or endangered species (as defined in WAC 232-12-014) unless authorized by commission rule or with a permit from the department with the following additional requirements:

(i) Federally listed threatened or endangered species will require federal permits or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.

(ii) All migratory birds are federally protected and may require a federal permit or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.

(3) Killing wildlife causing damage or killing wildlife to prevent private property damage.

(a) Unclassified wildlife, predatory birds (as defined in RCW 77.12.020), and eastern gray squirrels may be killed with the express permission of the property owner at any time, to prevent private property damage on private real property.

(b) Subject to subsection (7) of this section, the following list of wildlife species may be killed with the express permission of the owner, when causing damage to private property: Raccoon, fox, bobcat, beaver, muskrat, mink, river otter, weasel, hare, and cottontail rabbits.

(c) The department may make agreements with landowners to prevent private property damage by wildlife. The agreements may include special hunting season permits such as: Landowner damage prevention permits, spring black bear hunting permits, permits issued through the landowner hunting permit program, kill permits, and Master Hunter permits.

(d) Landowners are encouraged to allow general season hunters during established hunting seasons on their property to help minimize damage potential and concerns.

(4) Wildlife control operators may assist property owners under the conditions of their permit, as established in WAC 232-36-060.

(5) Tribal members may assist property owners under the conditions of valid comanagement agreements between tribes with off-reservation hunting rights and the department. Tribes must be in compliance with the agreements including, but not limited to, adhering to reporting requirements and harvest restrictions.

(6) Hunting licenses and tags are not required to kill wildlife under this section, except for subsection (3)(c) and (d) of this section; and tribal members operating under subsection (5) of this section are required to meet tribal hunting license, tag, and permit requirements.

(7) Except as specifically provided in a permit from the department or rule of the commission, people taking wildlife under this rule are subject to the laws and rules of the state including, but not limited to, those found in Title 77 RCW and Titles 220 and 232 WAC. Wildlife taken under this rule remains the property of the state and may be disposed of in the manner and under the

conditions that follow:

(a) Wildlife taken under subsections (1) and (2)(b) of this section must be reported to the department within twenty-four hours, and the animal and all parts must be provided to the department or its designees.

(b) Wildlife taken under subsection (2)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section becomes the property of the private landowner and may be lawfully disposed consistent with state laws and rules including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 232 WAC.

(c) Wildlife taken under subsection (2)(a)(iii) of this section must be disposed of consistent with the conditions identified under the permit.

(d) Wildlife taken under subsection (3) of this section may be lawfully possessed by the owner, licensee, and/or permit holder. Possession of wildlife taken by tribal members is subject to the laws of their tribe and must be consistent with their agreement with the state.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-060 Director or his/her designee is empowered to issue wildlife control operator permits to address wildlife interactions. When the department determines that a wildlife interaction can be controlled by persons, political subdivisions of this state, or the United States, the director or his/her designee may issue wildlife control operator (WCO) permits for control of said wildlife.

(1) Wildlife control operators shall:

(a) Be at least eighteen years of age;

(b) Have completed the WCO certification course;

(c) Have the equipment, knowledge, and ability to control the wildlife species causing conflict or property damage;

(d) Be legally eligible to possess a firearm and without a felony or domestic violence conviction including, but not limited to, chapter 9.41 RCW unless firearm possession rights have been restored; and

(e) Not have a gross misdemeanor fish and wildlife conviction within the last five years.

(2) The enrollment fee for certification training/education provided by the department after July 1, 2010, shall be fifty dollars (RCW 77.12.184). This enrollment fee is waived for participants seeking certification, but do not charge a fee for their services.

(3) Depending on certifications authorized by the department, wildlife control operators may use live traps to capture any animal causing an animal problem as that term is defined in chapter 77.15 RCW.

(4) Depending on certification, wildlife control operators may only use body gripping traps in compliance with RCW 77.15.194.

(5) Wildlife trapped under the authority of a wildlife control operator permit may not be released or disposed of without written consent of the property owner where the wildlife is to be released.

(6) Wildlife control operators must submit a complete annual report of all control activity on the form supplied by the department. The report must be received or postmarked on or before the fifteenth day of January. Failure to submit a report may result in certification permit being revoked and future certifications suspended.

(7) Wildlife control operator permits shall be revoked and future permits denied by the director or issuing authority when, in the judgment of the department:

(a) Information contained in the application was inaccurate or false;

(b) The permittee or person controlling wildlife fails to comply with department statutes or rules; or

(c) The person violates a trapping or other wildlife law.

(8) If the certification permit is denied or revoked, the department shall provide the applicant, in writing, a statement of the specific reason(s) for the denial or revocation. The applicant may request an appeal in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW. Appeal request shall be filed in writing and returned within twenty days from the mailing date of the denial and be addressed to WDFW Legal Services Office, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091.

(9) Wildlife control certification permits are valid for three years.

(10) It is unlawful to trap, harass, or otherwise control wildlife on the property of another for a fee or other consideration without a wildlife control certification permit.

(11) The department may develop additional conditions and procedures to include training requirements from wildlife control operators consistent with this rule.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-100 Payment for commercial crop damage--
Limitations. Owners, who have worked with the department to prevent deer and elk damage, but continue to experience losses, may be eligible to file a damage claim and receive cash compensation from money appropriated by the legislature. Damages payable under this section are limited to the lost or diminished value of a commercial crop, whether growing or harvested, and shall be paid only to the owner of the crop at the time of damage, without assignment. Cash compensation for claims from deer and elk damage shall not include damage to other real or personal property, including other vegetation or animals, lost profits, consequential damages, or any other damages. The department is authorized to pay up to ten thousand dollars to the owner per claim.

Claims for cash compensation will be denied when:

- (1) The claim is for a noncommercial crop;
- (2) The owner of the commercial crop does not meet the definition of "eligible farmer" in RCW 82.08.855 (4) (b) (i) through (iv);
- (3) The loss estimate is less than one thousand dollars;
- (4) No claim will be processed unless the owner provides the department with an approved checklist of the preventative and nonlethal means that have been employed, and the owner has complied with the terms and conditions of his or her agreement(s) with the department;
- (5) An owner or lessee has accepted noncash compensation to offset crop damage in lieu of cash. Acceptance of noncash compensation will constitute full and final payment for crop damages within the growing season of the damaged crop;
- (6) Damages to the commercial crops claimed are covered by insurance or are eligible for payment from other entities. Any portion of the actual damage not covered by others is eligible for compensation from the department;
- (7) The property where the damage occurred was not open to public hunting consistent with WAC 232-36-300 for the species causing the damage, unless, as determined by the department, the property is inconsistent with hunting or hunting would not address the damage problem. This includes all properties owned or leased by the owner adjacent to, contiguous to, or in the vicinity of the property where crop damage occurred;
- (8) The crop is grown or stored on public property;
- (9) The owner or lessee fails to provide on-site access to the department or designee for inspection and investigation of alleged damage or to verify eligibility for a claim;
- (10) The owner has not provided a completed written claim form and all other required information, or met required timelines

prescribed within WAC 232-36-110;

(11) The owner fails to sign a statement affirming that the facts and supporting documents are truthful to the best of the owner's knowledge;

(12) The owner or designee has harvested commercial crops without an investigation completed under the direction of the department; or

(13) The department has expended all funds appropriated for payment of such claims for the current fiscal year.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-110 Application for cash compensation for commercial crop damage--Procedure. Pursuant to this section, the department may distribute money appropriated by the legislature to pay commercial crop damage caused by wild deer or elk in the amount of up to ten thousand dollars per claim, unless following an appeal the department is ordered to pay more (see RCW 77.36.130(2)). The department shall develop claim procedures and application forms consistent with this section for cash compensation of commercial crop damage. Partnerships with other public and private organizations to assist with completion of applications, assessment of damage, and to provide funding for compensation are encouraged.

Filing a claim:

(1) Owners who have worked with the department to prevent deer or elk damage, yet who still experience loss and meet eligibility requirements, may file a claim for cash compensation.

(2) The claimant must notify the department within seventy-two hours of discovery of crop damage and at least seventy-two hours prior to harvest of the claimed crop.

(3) A complete, written claim must be submitted to the department within sixty days of when the damage stops.

(4) Owners may only file one claim per year. Multiple partners in a farming operation are considered one owner. Operations involving multiple partners must designate a "primary grower" to receive payment from the department.

(5) The claim form declaration must be signed, affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful per the certification set out in RCW 9A.72.085, before the department will process the claim.

(6) In addition to a completed claim form, an applicant must provide:

(a) A copy of applicant's Schedule F of Form 1040, Form 1120, or other applicable forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service indicating the applicant's gross sales or harvested value of commercial crops for the previous tax year.

(b) The assessment method used consistent with WAC 232-36-120, valuation of property damage.

(c) Applicant must provide proof of ownership of claimed commercial crops or contractual lease of claimed commercial crops consistent with department procedural requirements for submission of documents.

(d) Written documentation of approved methodology used to assess and determine final crop loss and value.

(e) Applicant must provide records documenting average yield on claimed crop and parcel, certified yield reports, production reports and certified third-party weight certificates completed at

the time weighed for claimed year, and other applicable documents that support yield loss and current market price. Current market price will be determined less transportation and cleaning costs when applicable.

(f) Declaration signed under penalty of perjury as provided in RCW 9A.72.085, indicating that the applicant is eligible for the claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this section, and that all claim evaluation and assessment information in the claim application is to the best knowledge of the claimant true and accurate.

(g) Copy of the insurance policy and payment on the commercial crop where loss is claimed.

(h) Copy of application for other sources of loss compensation and any payment or denial documentation.

Damage claim assessment:

(7) Damage claim assessment of amount and value of commercial crop loss is the primary responsibility of the claimant. A crop damage evaluation and assessment must be conducted by a licensed crop insurance adjustor:

(a) The owner must submit a damage claim assessment prepared by a crop insurance adjustor licensed by both the state of Washington and the federal government.

(b) If requested, the department will provide the claimant with a list of known adjustors. Adjustor fees will be the sole responsibility of the owner.

(c) The department or its designee may evaluate the damage claim assessment provided by the owner of a damaged crop or may conduct a separate assessment to verify crop loss and value.

(8) Disagreement between the claimant and the department over the crop loss value may be settled through an adjudicative proceeding.

Settlement of claims:

(9) Subject to money appropriated to pay commercial crop damage, undisputed claims will be paid, less a five hundred dollar deductible. The deductible will only be applied once in three consecutive years per owner if the damage is on the same type of commercial crop or on the same parcel of land.

(10) Compensation paid by the department, in addition to any other compensation received by the claimant, may not exceed the total value of the assessed crop loss.

(11) The owner will be notified by the department upon completion of the evaluation and has sixty days to accept or appeal the department's offer for settlement of the claim, or the claim is considered satisfied and not subject to appeal.

(12) The department shall prioritize payment for commercial crop damage in the order the claims were received or upon final adjudication of an appeal. If the department is unable to make a payment for commercial crop damage during the first fiscal year of a biennium, the claim shall be held over until the following fiscal year when funds become available. Claims that are carried over will take first priority and receive payment before any new claims are paid. Claims will not be carried from one biennium to the

next.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-120 Valuation methods for crop damage assessment.

Several methods may be used to determine the extent of a crop damaged by deer and elk and the lost value of the crop resulting from the damage. Assessment methods used by qualified crop adjustors licensed by both the state and federal government will be accepted by the department. Evaluation of crop losses must consider other impacts to crop production, including fertilization, irrigation, precipitation, weather, timing of planting or harvest, and weed control. The following methods are listed in preferred order based on reliability:

(1) Amount consumed - relies on wildlife-proof exclosures in the field; clipping similar sized plots inside and outside of exclosures; then comparing yields.

(2) Amount of stored crops consumed or damaged - determine the bales or pounds of stored crops consumed or destroyed; then determine replacement value.

(3) Replacement value of horticultural trees lost as a result of damage; partial loss due to damage can be estimated per tree based on the percentage destroyed.

(4) Damage vs. undamaged areas - using random sampling methods to compare the yields of damaged to undamaged portions of a field or two similar fields can provide an estimate of loss. Comparing similar fields assumes the fields are truly "similar" (soil type, aspect, slope, irrigation, fertilization, stand age, etc.).

(5) Animal use - count the number of animals causing damage and the number of days they were present; then estimate the percentage of daily intake provided by the crop (generally less than fifty percent), and the amount of waste, trampling, or trailing; the result should also consider the timing of the damage and potential recovery of the vegetation prior to crop harvest.

(6) Decrease from average yield - historic yields can be used for comparison; the difference between average yield and current yield may shed light on the extent of damage; changing weather or crop growing conditions from one year to the next make this technique less reliable.

The department or its designee will review and evaluate the damage claim assessment and valuation method submitted by the owner of a damaged crop and may conduct a separate assessment to verify crop loss and value.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-200 Payment for commercial livestock damage--
Limitations. Owners, who have worked with the department to prevent depredation, but continue to experience losses, or experience unforeseen losses may be eligible to file a damage claim and receive cash compensation. Cash compensation will only be provided to livestock owners by the department when specifically appropriated by the legislature. Damages payable under this section are limited to the lost or diminished value of commercial livestock caused by wild bears, cougars, or wolves and shall be paid only to the owner of the livestock at the time of damage, without assignment. Cash compensation for livestock losses from bears, cougars, and wolves shall not include damage to other real or personal property including other vegetation or animals, lost profits, consequential damages, or any other damages including veterinarian services. The department is authorized to pay up to two hundred dollars per sheep and one thousand five hundred dollars per head of cattle or per horse and no more than ten thousand dollars to the commercial livestock owner per claim.

Claims for cash compensation will be denied when:

- (1) Funds for livestock compensation have not been specifically appropriated by the legislature;
- (2) The claim is for livestock other than sheep, cattle, or horses;
- (3) The owner of the commercial livestock does not meet the definition of "eligible farmer" in RCW 82.08.855 (4) (b) (i) through (iv);
- (4) The loss estimate is less than five hundred dollars;
- (5) The owner fails to provide the department with an approved checklist of the preventative and nonlethal means that have been employed or the owner failed to comply with the terms and conditions of their agreement(s) with the department;
- (6) The owner has accepted noncash compensation to offset livestock losses in lieu of cash. Acceptance of noncash compensation will constitute full and final payment for livestock losses within a fiscal year;
- (7) Damages to the commercial livestock claimed are covered by insurance or are eligible for payment from other entities. Except, any portion of the damage not covered by others is eligible for filing a claim with the department;
- (8) The property where the damage occurred is not open to public hunting as defined in WAC 232-36-300, unless, as determined by the department the property is inconsistent with hunting or where public hunting would not help mitigate the damage. This includes all properties owned or leased by owner adjacent to or contiguous with the property where livestock damage occurred;

(9) The owner fails to provide on-site access to the department or designee for inspection and investigation of alleged attack or to verify eligibility for claim;

(10) The owner has not provided a completed written claim form and provided all required information or met required timelines prescribed within this chapter;

(11) No claim will be processed if the owner fails to sign a statement affirming facts and supporting documents are truthful to the best of the owner's knowledge;

(12) The owner or designee has salvaged or rendered the carcass or allowed it to be scavenged without an investigation completed under the direction of the department; or

(13) The department has expended all funds appropriated for payment of such claims for the current fiscal year.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-210 Application for cash compensation for commercial livestock damage--Procedure. Pursuant to this section, the department may distribute money specifically appropriated by the legislature to pay commercial livestock losses caused by wild bear, cougar, or wolves in the amount of up to ten thousand dollars per claim unless, following an appeal, the department is ordered to pay more (see RCW 77.36.130(2)). The department shall develop claim procedures and application forms consistent with this section for cash compensation of commercial livestock losses. Partnerships with other public and private organizations to assist with completion of applications and assessment of losses and to provide funding for compensation are encouraged.

Filing a claim:

(1) Owners who have worked with the department to prevent livestock depredation, yet still experience loss or losses that occur under emergent situations may file a claim for cash compensation if they meet eligibility requirements.

(2) Claimant must notify the department within twelve hours of discovery of livestock attack.

(3) Damage claim assessment of amount and value of commercial livestock loss is the primary responsibility of the claimant.

(4) Assessment of loss will be conducted by the department:

(a) The owner must provide access to department staff or designees to investigate the cause of death or injury to livestock.

(b) Federal officials may be responsible for the investigation when it is suspected that the attack was by federally listed species.

(5) Claimant must request a damage claim application from the department's Olympia office within ten days of a loss.

(6) A complete, written claim must be submitted to the department within sixty days of an attack on commercial livestock.

(7) The claim form declaration must be signed affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful before the department will process a claim.

(8) In addition to a completed claim form, applicant must provide:

(a) A copy of applicant's Schedule F of Form 1040, Form 1120, or other applicable forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service indicating the applicant's gross sales or value of commercial livestock for the previous tax year.

(b) Claimant must provide proof of legal ownership or contractual lease of claimed livestock.

(c) Claimant must provide records documenting livestock value based on current market price.

(d) Declaration signed under penalty of perjury that applicant

is eligible for claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this section and all claim evaluation and assessment information in claim application is to the best knowledge of claimant true and accurate.

(e) Copy of any insurance policy covering livestock loss claimed.

(f) Copy of application for other sources of loss compensation and any payment or denial documentation.

Settlement of claims:

(9) Subject to money appropriated to pay for commercial livestock losses, undisputed claims will be paid less a five hundred dollars deductible. The deductible will only be applied once in three consecutive years per livestock owner.

(10) Compensation paid by the department, in addition to any other compensation, may not exceed the total value of the assessed livestock loss.

(11) Upon completion of the evaluation, the department will notify the owner of its decision to either deny the claim or make a settlement offer (order). The owner has sixty days from the date received to accept the department's offer for settlement of the claim or to submit an appeal of the order. The response must be in writing and the signed document may be mailed or submitted by fax or e-mail. If no written acceptance or request for appeal is received, the offer is considered rejected and not subject to appeal.

(12) The department shall prioritize payment for commercial livestock losses in the order the claims were received or upon final adjudication of an appeal. If the department is unable to make a payment for commercial livestock losses during the first fiscal year of a biennium, the claim shall be held over until the following fiscal year when funds become available. Claims that are carried over will take first priority and receive payment before any new claims are paid. Claims will not be carried from one biennium to the next.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-300 Public hunting requirements. "Public hunting" generally means that land is open for licensed hunters. The intent of the provision in this chapter is to allow hunting at an appropriate time, manner, and level to help prevent damage.

As specified in WAC 232-36-100 and 232-36-200, cash compensation will only be paid when the property where the damage occurred is open to public hunting. Public hunting is defined as:

(1) The landowner opens the property on which the damage or loss is claimed for general access to all licensed hunters; or

(2) The landowner has entered into and complied with any agreement with the department covering the land(s) on which the damage is claimed. Access agreements shall require that:

(a) The land is open to general access to licensed hunters; or

(b) The landowner allows the department to select a limited number of hunters who are authorized to access the land; or

(c) The landowner and the department determine how hunters will be selected and authorized to hunt on the landowner's property in order to effectively prevent damage.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 232-36-400 Commercial crop or livestock damage claim--
Dispute resolution.** Claims where the owner has met all claim eligibility criteria and procedures, but ultimately rejects the written settlement offer (order) for crop or livestock loss and/or value assessment, the provisions of this section shall apply:

Informal resolution:

(1) If the owner rejects the property loss or value assessment and would like to discuss a negotiated settlement, they can request a meeting by notifying the department in writing within ten days of receiving the settlement offer or claim denial (order).

(2) A department representative and the owner or designee(s) will meet and attempt to come to mutual resolution.

(3) Monetary compensation or noncash compensation, mutually agreed upon by both the department and owner, shall be binding and constitute full and final payment for claim.

(4) If parties cannot agree upon damages, the owner may elect to apply for an adjudicative proceeding pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW.

Adjudicative proceeding:

(5) If the owner wishes to appeal the claim denial or the department settlement offer (order), the owner may request an adjudicative proceeding consistent with chapter 34.05 RCW within sixty days of receiving the original order.

(6) The request must comply with the following:

(a) The request must be in writing and the signed document may be mailed or submitted by fax or e-mail;

(b) It must clearly identify the order being contested (or attach a copy of the order);

(c) It must state the grounds on which the order is being contested and include the specific facts of the order that are relevant to the appeal; and

(d) The request must identify the relief being requested from the proceeding (e.g., modifying specific provisions of the order).

(7) The proceeding may only result in the reversal or modification of an order when the preponderance of evidence shows:

(a) The order was not authorized by law or rule;

(b) A fact stated in the order is materially incorrect;

(c) The award amount offered is inconsistent with applicable and accepted procedures, rule, and/or law; or

(d) Material information or evidence was made available by the owner at the time of the damage assessment, but was not considered in the order.

(8) The burden of proof is on the appellant (owner) to show that they are eligible for a claim and that the damage assessment is reliable (see RCW 77.36.130(4)).

(9) Findings of the hearings officer are subject to the annual funding limits appropriated by the legislature and payment rules (WAC 232-36-110(12) and 232-36-210(9)) of the commission.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-500 Unlawful taking or possession of wildlife for personal safety or causing property damage--Penalties. (1) Except as authorized by WAC 232-36-050(7), the unlawful trapping, killing, or possession of wildlife is punishable under Title 77 RCW including, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) RCW 77.15.120 for endangered wildlife;
- (b) RCW 77.15.130 for protected wildlife;
- (c) RCW 77.15.140 for unclassified wildlife;
- (d) RCW 77.15.170 for wildlife wastage;
- (e) RCW 77.15.290 for transportation of wildlife;
- (f) RCW 77.15.400 for wild birds;
- (g) RCW 77.15.410 for big game;
- (h) RCW 77.15.420 for illegally taken or possessed wildlife;

and

- (i) RCW 77.15.430 for wild animals.

(2) A person trapping or killing wildlife who fails to notify the department pursuant to WAC 232-36-050 may be in violation of an infraction pursuant to RCW 77.15.160.

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-510 Failure to provide completed forms or submit required documents or reports. (1) Failure to provide reports or abide by the conditions of agreements or permits stipulated in this chapter is an infraction pursuant to RCW 77.15.160.

(2) A person who provides false or misleading information required by this chapter may be in violation of RCW 9A.76.175 or 40.16.030.