

## WDFW Help

### **Are there any circumstances when a landowner can legally set his/her own hunting seasons and regulations on private property in Washington?**

- Generally the answer is no. The [Fish and Wildlife Commission](#) is responsible for setting all formal hunting seasons and regulations.
- WDFW has created several landowner programs that benefit landowners and hunters alike. The following examples are exceptions with special circumstances and limitations:
  - The [landowner hunting permit \(LHP\) program](#) has been implemented by the Fish and Wildlife Commission ([WAC 232-28-296](#)). The program is designed to increase hunter access to private lands and to help landowners address long-standing deer/elk damage issues. LHPs can include permits issued to landowners that allow hunting without a landowner access fee; that allow hunting only if a landowner access fee is paid; or a combination of both. Permit levels, types, and seasons are allocated and approved in advance by the Commission based upon input from the LHP contractors/participants. The approved hunting seasons and regulations may, in some cases, be different than those approved for the hunting public during general seasons.
  - The Fish and Wildlife Commission also has approved damage prevention permits (DPPs) ([WAC 232-36-310](#)). DPPs provide landowners with a management tool that utilizes hunters to address property damage. Once issued to a landowner by the Commission, a DPP allows the properly licensed landowner to remove damage-causing deer/elk/turkey, or it allows another licensed hunter to be selected by the landowner to take the animal(s). Landowners and/or hunters may keep harvested wildlife, and landowners may charge and keep access fees in lieu of submitting damage claims to WDFW. The timing of a DPP harvest is not dictated by general hunting seasons, but by the occurrence of depredation.
  - Kill permits are authorized by [WAC 232-36-051](#) under the authority of the WDFW Director. A kill permit may be issued to a landowner and immediate family that have documented deer and elk damage. An animal killed under this authority may be retained by the landowner if authorized by the Director. No licenses or tags are required. Landowners may be allowed to retain the animal in exchange for agreeing to not submit damage claims. The timing of a kill permit is not dictated by general hunting seasons, but by the occurrence of depredation.
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- There are also those opportunities for people to hunt upland birds on a private shooting preserve under a license issued by WDFW. The landowner sets their own seasons, a state hunting license is not required, and all pen raised birds must be either toe clipped or banded to be legal. The license that WDFW issues to a shooting preserve does allow the taking of wild birds.

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/help/questions/90/>